

Agenda Item 21: Late Revisions – 5 December 2012

**WASTE DISCHARGE REQUIREMENTS GENERAL ORDER
FOR
GROWERS WITHIN THE EASTERN SAN JOAQUIN RIVER WATERSHED
THAT ARE MEMBERS OF THE THIRD-PARTY GROUP**

Waste Discharge Requirements General Order

Attached are the pages with proposed late revisions for the above document.

- 4 "Irrigated lands" means land irrigated to produce crops or pasture used for commercial purposes including lands that are planted to commercial crops that are not yet marketable (e.g., vineyards and tree crops). Irrigated lands also include nurseries, and privately and publicly managed wetlands.
- 5 This Order is not intended to regulate water quality as it travels through or remains on the surface of a Member's agricultural fields or the water quality of soil pore liquid- within the root zone.²
- 6 This Order does not apply to discharges of waste that are regulated under other Water Board issued WDRs or conditional waiver of WDRs. If the other Water Board WDRs/waiver of WDRs only regulates some of the waste discharge activities (e.g., application of treated wastewater to crop land) at the regulated site, the owner/operator of the irrigated lands must obtain regulatory coverage for any discharges of waste that are not regulated by the other WDRs/waiver. Such regulatory coverage may be sought through enrollment under this Order or by obtaining appropriate changes in the owner/operator's existing WDRs or conditional waiver of WDRs.
- 7 This Order implements the long-term ILRP in the Eastern San Joaquin River Watershed. The long-term ILRP has been conceived as a range of potential alternatives and evaluated in a programmatic environmental impact report (PEIR).³ The PEIR was certified by the Central Valley Water Board on 7 April 2011; however, the PEIR did not specify any single program alternative. The regulatory requirements contained within this Order fall within the range of alternatives evaluated in the PEIR. This Order, along with other orders to be adopted for irrigated lands within the Central Valley, together will constitute the long-term ILRP. Upon adoption of this Order, Order R5-2006-0053, Coalition Group Conditional Waiver of Waste Discharge Requirements for Discharges from Irrigated Lands (Coalition Group Conditional Waiver), is rescinded as applied to irrigated lands within the Eastern San Joaquin River Watershed. Existing Members that had previously enrolled under the Coalition Group Conditional Waiver will be enrolled under this Order upon timely submittal of a Notice of Confirmation (see section VII.A of this Order).

GROWERS REGULATED UNDER THIS ORDER

- 8 This Order regulates both landowners and operators of irrigated lands from which there are discharges of waste that could affect the quality of any waters of the state. In order to be covered by this Order, the landowners or operators must be Members. Because this Order regulates both landowners and operators, but does not require enrollment of both parties, the provisions of this Order require that the Member provide notification to the non-Member responsible party of enrollment under this Order. The third-party group representing Members will assist with carrying out the conditions of this Order. Both the landowner and operator are ultimately responsible for complying with the terms and conditions of this Order.

² Water that travels through or remains on the surface of a Member's agricultural fields includes ditches and other structures (e.g., ponds, basins) that are used to convey supply or drainage water within that Member's parcel or between contiguous parcels owned or operated by that Member.

³ ICF International. 2011. *Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program, Program Environmental Impact Report*. Final and Draft. March. (ICF 05508.05.) Sacramento, CA. Prepared for: Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board, Sacramento, CA

- 13 The Eastern San Joaquin River Watershed region contains all or portions of seven groundwater sub basins and has approximately 3,000 linear miles of surface water courses (including 700 linear miles of named surface water courses) that are, or could be, affected by discharges of waste from irrigated lands. This does not include surface water courses in the foothill and mountainous regions of the third-party area, where there are few irrigated lands operations. Discharges of waste from irrigated lands could adversely affect the quality of the "waters of the state," as defined in Attachment E to this Order.
- 14 Within the third-party area, there are approximately 359,000 acres of irrigated lands within Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) Groundwater Protection Areas (GWPA's). DPR identifies these areas as vulnerable to groundwater contamination from the agricultural use of certain pesticides, based upon either pesticide detections in groundwater or upon the presence of certain soil types (leaching and/or runoff) and a depth to groundwater shallower than 70 feet. Of the 359,000 acres, approximately 236,000 acres of the irrigated lands are within DPR GWPA's that are characterized as vulnerable to leaching of pesticides (leaching areas), approximately 120,000 acres are within GWPA's that are characterized as vulnerable to movement of pesticides to groundwater by runoff from fields to areas where they may move to groundwater (runoff areas), and 2,510 acres of irrigated lands are characterized as both leaching and runoff areas. For leaching areas, certain water soluble pesticides are carried mainly with excess irrigation water or rainwater through the soil profile and potentially to the underlying aquifer. For runoff areas, certain water soluble pesticides are carried mainly with runoff over the land surface to potential conduits to groundwater. However, DPR has not established or analyzed the GWPA's with fertilizers and nitrate contamination in mind, and its GWPA's are established based upon detections of certain pesticides, many of which are of lower solubility. Solubility is one factor that can lead to groundwater contamination. Depending on the frequency of application and amount applied, certain water soluble constituents, such as nitrate, may share common pathways to groundwater with soluble pesticides. This Order requires that includes consideration of DPR's vulnerability factors and GWPA's ~~be considered~~ by the third-party in the determination of high vulnerability areas for nitrate contamination.
- 15 The Central Valley Water Board's *Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program Existing Conditions Report* (ECR)⁵ identifies waters of the state with impaired water quality attributable to or influenced by irrigated agriculture, including within the third-party area. The *Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program Environmental Impact Report* (PEIR) describes that "[f]rom a programmatic standpoint, irrigated land waste discharges have the potential to cause degradation of surface and groundwater...."
- 16 Approximately 25 water bodies encompassing 450 linear miles of surface water courses have been listed as impaired pursuant to Clean Water Act section 303(d)⁶ within the third-party area. Approximately 15 of those water bodies identify the potential source of the impairment as agriculture, and the remaining water bodies identify an unknown source impairment. For example, Berenda Creek, Berenda Slough, Deadman Creek, Dry Creek, Duck Slough, Harding Drain, Highline Canal, Merced River, Mustang Creek, San Joaquin River, Stanislaus River, and the Tuolumne River are listed as impaired by the pesticide chlorpyrifos. Agriculture is identified as the potential source of impairment.

⁵ California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Central Valley Region, and Jones and Stokes. 2008. *Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program Existing Conditions Report*. Sacramento, CA.

⁶ 2008-2010 303(d) List.

17 Elevated levels of nitrates in drinking water can have significant negative health effects on sensitive individuals. The Basin Plan contains a water quality objective for nitrate to protect the drinking water uses. The water quality objective for nitrate is the maximum contaminant level (MCL) of 10 mg/L for nitrate plus nitrite as nitrogen (or 45 mg/L of nitrate as nitrate) established by the California Department of Public Health (22 CCR § 64431) that has been set at a level to protect the most at risk groups – infants under six months old and pregnant ~~woman~~women.⁷ Nitrate

In some areas, nitrate from both agricultural and non-agricultural sources has resulted in degradation and/or pollution of groundwater beneath agricultural areas in the Central Valley.⁸ Available data (see Information Sheet and the PEIR) indicate that there are a number of wells within the Eastern San Joaquin River Watershed that have exceeded the MCL for nitrate. Groundwater in the Eastern San Joaquin Watershed has been designated for drinking water uses; therefore, the water quality objective of 10 mg/L for nitrate plus nitrite (as nitrogen) applies to groundwaters in the Eastern San Joaquin River Watershed. Where nitrate groundwater quality data are not available, information on the hydrogeological characteristics of the area suggest that significant portions of the Eastern San Joaquin River Watershed are vulnerable to nitrate contamination. Sources of nitrate in groundwater include leaching of excess fertilizer, confined animal feeding operations, septic systems, discharge to land of wastewater, food processor waste, unprotected well heads, improperly abandoned wells, and lack of backflow prevention on wells.

1718 The Central Valley Water Board's authority to regulate waste discharges that could affect the quality of the waters of the state, which includes both surface water and groundwater, is found in the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act (California Water Code Division 7).

1819 Water Code section 13263 requires the Central Valley Water Board to prescribe WDRs, or waive WDRs, for proposed, existing, or material changes in discharges of waste that could affect water quality. The board may prescribe waste discharge requirements although no discharge report under Water Code section 13260 has been filed. The WDRs must implement relevant water quality control plans and the Water Code. The Central Valley Water Board may prescribe general waste discharge requirements for a category of discharges if all the following criteria apply to the discharges in that category:

- a. The discharges are produced by the same or similar operations.
- b. The discharges involve the same or similar types of waste.
- c. The discharges require the same or similar treatment standards.
- d. The discharges are more appropriately regulated under general requirements than individual requirements.

The rationale for developing general waste discharge requirements for irrigated agricultural lands in the Eastern San Joaquin River Watershed includes: (a) discharges are produced by similar operations (irrigated agriculture); (b) waste discharges under this Order involve similar types of wastes (wastes associated with farming); (c) water quality management practices are similar for irrigated agricultural operations; (d) due to the large number of operations and their

⁷ See, for example, the California Department of Public Health Nitrate Fact Sheet:

<http://www.cdph.ca.gov/certlic/drinkingwater/Documents/Nitrate/FactSheet-Nitrate-05-23-2012.pdf>.

⁸ PEIR, Appendix A

contiguous location, these types of operations are more appropriately regulated under general rather than individual requirements; and (e) the geology and the climate are similar, which will tend to result in similar types of water quality problems⁹ and similar types of solutions.

~~19~~20 Whether an individual discharge of waste from irrigated lands may affect the quality of the waters of the state depends on the quantity of the discharge, quantity of the waste, the quality of the waste, the extent of treatment, soil characteristics, distance to surface water, depth to groundwater, crop type, management practices and other site-specific factors. These individual discharges may also have a cumulative effect on waters of the state. Waste discharges from some irrigated lands have impaired or degraded and will likely continue to impair or degrade the quality of the waters of the state within the Central Valley Region if not subject to regulation pursuant to the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act (codified in Water Code Division 7).

~~20~~21 Water Code section 13267(b)(1) states: “(1) *In conducting an investigation specified in subdivision (a), the regional board may require that any person who has discharged, discharges, or is suspected of having discharged or discharging, or who proposes to discharge waste within its region, or any citizen or domiciliary, or political agency or entity of this state who has discharged, discharges, or is suspected of having discharged or discharging, or who proposes to discharge, waste outside of its region that could affect the quality of waters within its region shall furnish, under penalty of perjury, technical or monitoring program reports which the regional board requires. The burden, including costs, of these reports shall bear a reasonable relationship to the need for the report and the benefits to be obtained from the reports. In requiring those reports, the regional board shall provide the person with a written explanation with regard to the need for the reports, and shall identify the evidence that supports requiring that person to provide the reports. (2) When requested by the person furnishing a report, the portions of a report that might disclose trade secrets or secret processes may not be made available for inspection by the public but shall be made available to governmental agencies for use in making studies. However, these portions of a report shall be available for use by the state or any state agency in judicial review or enforcement proceedings involving the person furnishing the report.*”

~~21~~22 Technical reports are necessary to evaluate Member compliance with the terms and conditions of this Order and to assure protection of waters of the state. Consistent with Water Code section 13267, this Order requires the implementation of a monitoring and reporting program (MRP) that is intended to determine the effects of Member waste discharges on water quality, to verify the adequacy and effectiveness of the Order's conditions, and to evaluate Member compliance with the terms and conditions of the Order. The requirements for reports and monitoring specified in this Order and attached MRP are based in part on whether an operation is within a high or low vulnerability area. The third-party is tasked with describing high and low vulnerability areas based on definitions provided in Attachment E to this Order and guidance provided in the MRP for development of the Groundwater Assessment Report. The Executive Officer will review third-party proposed high and low vulnerability areas and make the final determination of these areas. High and low vulnerability areas may will be reviewed and updated throughout the implementation of this Order. A Member who is covered under this Order must comply with MRP Order R5-2012-XXXX which is part of this Order, and future revisions thereto by the Executive Officer or board.

⁹ “Water quality problem” is defined in Attachment E.

²²23 The surface water quality monitoring and trend groundwater quality monitoring under this Order are regional in nature instead of individual field discharge monitoring. The benefits of regional monitoring include the ability to determine whether water bodies accepting discharges from numerous irrigated lands are meeting water quality objectives and to determine whether practices, at the watershed level, are protective of water quality. However, there are limitations to regional monitoring's effectiveness in determining possible sources of water quality problems, the effectiveness of management practices, and individual compliance with this Order's requirements.

Therefore, through the Management Practices Evaluation Program and the Surface Water Quality Management Plans and Groundwater Quality Management Plans, the third-party must evaluate the effectiveness of management practices in protecting water quality. In addition, Members must report the practices they are implementing to protect water quality. Through the evaluations and studies conducted by the third-party, the reporting of practices by the Members, and the board's compliance and enforcement activities, the board will be able to determine whether a Member is complying with the Order.

Where regionalrequired monitoring and evaluation does not allow the Central Valley Water Board to determine potential sources of water quality problems or identify whether management practices are effective, this Order requires the third-party to provide technical reports at the direction of the Executive Officer. Such technical reports are needed when regional monitoring or other available information is not sufficient to determine the effects of irrigated agricultural waste discharges to state waters. It may also be necessary for the board to conduct investigations by obtaining information directly from Members to assess individual compliance.

²³24 The Central Valley Water Board's *Water Quality Control Plan for the Sacramento River and San Joaquin River Basins* (hereafter Basin Plan) designates beneficial uses, establishes water quality objectives, contains programs of implementation needed to achieve water quality objectives, and references the plans and policies adopted by the State Water Board. The water quality objectives are developed to protect the beneficial uses of waters of the state. Compliance with water quality objectives will protect the beneficial uses listed in Finding 26.

²⁴25 This Order implements the Basin Plan by requiring the implementation of management practices to achieve compliance with applicable water quality objectives and requiring the prevention of nuisance. The Order requires implementation of a monitoring and reporting program to determine effects of discharges on water quality and the effectiveness of management practices designed to comply with applicable water quality objectives.

²⁵26 Pursuant to the Basin Plan and State Water Board plans and policies, including State Water Board Resolution 88-63, and consistent with the federal Clean Water Act, the existing and potential beneficial uses of waters in the Eastern San Joaquin River Watershed may include:

- a. Municipal and Domestic Supply
- b. Agricultural Supply
- c. Industrial Service Supply
- d. Hydropower Generation
- e. Water Contact Recreation
- f. Non-Contact Water Recreation
- g. Warm Freshwater Habitat
- h. Cold Freshwater Habitat

including pesticides, nitrates, and salts. Many water bodies have been listed as impaired pursuant to Clean Water Act section 303(d). Such impaired water bodies are not high quality waters with respect to those constituents within the meaning of Resolution 68-16, and therefore it is not necessary for the board to analyze discharges to such waters under Resolution 68-16. This Order does not authorize further degradation of such waters.

Appendix A to the PEIR for the Irrigated Lands Program describes that *"there may be cases where irrigated agricultural waste discharges threaten to degrade high quality waters."* For discharges to water bodies that are high quality waters, this Order is consistent with Resolution 68-16. Attachment A to this Order summarizes applicable antidegradation requirements and provides detailed rationale demonstrating how this Order is consistent with Resolution 68-16. *The As indicated in the summary indicates that,* this Order authorizes limited degradation of high quality waters, not to exceed water quality objectives, threaten beneficial uses, or cause a condition of pollution or nuisance. The Order will also result in the implementation of BPTC by those discharging to high quality waters and assure that any change in water quality will be consistent with maximum benefit to the people of the state.

CALIFORNIA WATER CODE SECTIONS 13141 AND 13241

³⁶³⁷ California Water Code section 13141 states that *"prior to implementation of any agricultural water quality control program, an estimate of the total cost of such a program, together with an identification of potential sources of financing, shall be indicated in any regional water quality control plan."* Section 13141 concerns approvals or revisions to a water quality control plan and does not necessarily apply in a context where an agricultural water quality control program is being developed through waivers and waste discharge requirements rather than basin planning. However, the Basin Plan includes an estimate of potential costs and sources of financing for the long-term irrigated lands program. The estimated costs were derived by analyzing the six alternatives evaluated in the PEIR. This Order, which implements the long-term ILRP within the Eastern San Joaquin River Watershed, is based on Alternatives 2-6 of the PEIR; therefore, estimated costs of this Order fall within the Basin Plan cost range.¹⁰ The total annual cost of compliance with this Order, e.g., summation of costs for administration, monitoring, reporting, tracking, implementation of management practices, is expected to be approximately \$4.10 per acre greater than the current surface water only protection program under the Coalition Group Conditional Waiver. The total estimated cost of compliance of continuation of the previous Coalition Group Conditional Waiver within the Eastern San Joaquin River Watershed is expected to be approximately 96 million dollars per year (\$114.45 per acre annually). The total estimated cost of compliance with this Order is expected to be approximately 99 million dollars per year (\$118.55 per acre annually).

Approximately \$113.34 of the estimated \$118.55 per acre annual cost of the Order is associated with implementation of management practices. This Order does not require that Members implement specific water quality management practices.¹¹ Many of the management practices that have water quality benefits can have other economic and environmental benefits (e.g., improved irrigation can reduce water and energy consumption, as well as reduce runoff).

¹⁰ When compared on a per irrigated acre basis; as the Basin Plan cost range is an estimate for all irrigated lands in the Central Valley versus this Order's applicability to a portion thereof (irrigated lands in Eastern San Joaquin River Watershed).

¹¹ Per Water Code section 13360, the Central Valley Water Board may not specify the manner in which a Member complies with water quality requirements.

Member an opportunity to return to compliance as soon as possible. The highest level of informal enforcement is a Notice of Violation.

The Enforcement Policy recommends formal enforcement actions for the highest priority violations, chronic violations, and/or threatened violations. Violations of this Order that will be considered a priority include, but are not limited to:

- a) Failure to obtain required regulatory coverage.
- b) Failure to meet receiving water limitations, unless the Member¹³ is implementing a Central Valley Water Board approved SQMP or GQMP in accordance with the time schedule provisions of this Order (section XII).¹⁴
- c) The discharge of waste to lands not owned, leased, or controlled by the Member without written permission from the landowner.
- d) Failure to prevent future exceedances of water quality objectives once made aware of an exceedance.
- e) Falsifying information or intentionally withholding information required by applicable laws, regulations or an enforcement order.
- f) Failure to implement a SQMP/GQMP.
- g) Failure to pay annual fees, penalties, or liabilities.
- h) Failure to monitor or provide information to the third-party as required.
- i) Failure to submit required reports on time.

⁴⁹⁵⁰Under this Order, the third-party is tasked with developing monitoring plans, conducting monitoring, developing water quality management plans, and informing Members of requirements. It is intended that the following progressive enforcement steps will generally be taken in the event that the third-party fails to comply with the terms and conditions of this Order or attached MRP:

- a) First notification of noncompliance to the third-party. The Central Valley Water Board intends to notify the third-party of the non-compliance and allow a period of time for the third-party to come back into compliance. This notification may be in the form of a verbal notice, letter, or written notice of violation, depending on the severity of the noncompliance.
- b) Second notification of noncompliance to the third-party. If the third-party fails to adequately respond to the first notification, the board intends to provide written notice to the third-party and potentially affected Members of the failure to address the first notice.
- c) Failure of the third-party to adequately respond to the second notification. Failure to adequately respond to the second notification may result in partial (e.g., affected areas or Members) or full disapproval of the third-party to act as a lead entity, depending on the severity of noncompliance. Growers that were Members affected by a partial or full third-party disapproval would be required to obtain coverage for their waste discharge under

¹³ ~~Including Members participating in a Management Practices Evaluation Program study (i.e., the study is taking place on the Member's farm) where data indicate the discharge from the study area is not meeting receiving water limitations.~~

¹⁴ ~~A Member participating in a Management Practices Evaluation Program study (i.e., the study is taking place on the Member's farm) where data indicate the discharge from the study area is not meeting receiving water limitations will not be a priority for enforcement, if the Member is implementing a Central Valley Water Board approved SQMP or GQMP in accordance with the time schedule provisions of this Order (section XII).~~

other applicable general waste discharge requirements or submit a Report of Waste Discharge to the Central Valley Water Board.

GENERAL FINDINGS

5051 This Order does not authorize violation of any federal, state, or local law or regulation.

5152 This Order does not authorize any act that results in the taking of a threatened or endangered species or any act that is now prohibited, or becomes prohibited in the future, under either the California Endangered Species Act (Fish and Game Code sections 2050 to 2097) or the Federal Endangered Species Act (16 U.S.C.A. sections 1531 to 1544). If a "take" will result from any action authorized under this Order, the Member shall obtain authorization for an incidental take prior to construction or operation of the project. The Member shall be responsible for meeting all requirements of the applicable Endangered Species Act.

5253 This Order does not supersede the Central Valley Water Board's Basin Plans and policies, including prohibitions (e.g., pesticides) and implementation plans (e.g., Total Maximum Daily Loads), or the State Water Board's plans and policies.

5354 As stated in California Water Code section 13263(g), the discharge of waste into waters of the state is a privilege, not a right, and regulatory coverage under this Order does not create a vested right to continue the discharge of waste. Failure to prevent conditions that create or threaten to create pollution or nuisance will be sufficient reason to modify, revoke, or enforce this Order, as well as prohibit further discharge.

5455 ~~All discharges of waste into waters of the state are privileges, not rights. (Wat. Code § 13263, subd. (g).) Accordingly, the State Water Board, in Order No. WQO 2004-0003 (Agricultural Water Quality Coalition) has stated "[i]t is appropriate that where a discharger seeks the right to discharge to waters of the state, that it should be expected to consent to reasonable access to its property."~~ This Order requires Members to provide the third-party with contact information of the person(s) authorized to provide access to the enrolled property for inspections. ~~The Order requires the identified persons~~ This requirement provides a procedure to allow enable board staff to contact grower representatives of the Central Valley Water Board reasonable access to the Member's property for inspections to determineso that it may more efficiently monitor compliance with the provisions of this Order.

55 ~~This Order provides a procedure to enable Board staff to efficiently contact grower representatives and obtain access to the Member's property so that it may more efficiently monitor compliance with the provisions of this Order. Given that discharges are a privilege, it is reasonable to require Members to provide access to its property pursuant to the procedure outlined in the Order.~~

56 Any instance of noncompliance with this Order constitutes a violation of the California Water Code and its regulations. Such noncompliance is grounds for enforcement action, and/or termination of coverage for waste discharges under this Order, subjecting the discharger to enforcement under the Water Code for further discharges of waste to surface or groundwater.

57 All discharges from the irrigated agricultural operation are expected to comply with the lawful requirements of municipalities, counties, drainage districts, and other local agencies regarding discharges to storm drain systems or to other courses under their jurisdiction.

2. Irrigated lands owners or operators with waste discharges to state waters (or “Dischargers”) that are not Members of the third-party group, or whose property is not enrolled by a Member of the third-party group, shall not be subject to coverage provided by the terms of this Order. Such Dischargers shall be required to obtain coverage for their waste discharge under individual waste discharge requirements or any applicable general waste discharge requirements that apply to individuals that are not represented by a third-party.
3. Members who are subject to this Order shall implement water quality management practices, as necessary, to protect water quality and to achieve compliance with applicable water quality objectives. Where applicable, the implementation of practices must be in accordance with the time schedule contained in an approved Groundwater Quality Management Plan or Surface Water Quality Management Plan.
4. Installation of groundwater monitoring wells or implementation of management practices to meet the conditions of this Order at a location or in a manner that could cause an adverse environmental impact as identified in the *Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program, Final Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR)*¹⁷ shall be mitigated in accordance with the mitigation measures provided in Attachment C of this Order.
5. The provisions of this Order are severable. If any provision of the Order is held invalid, the remainder of the Order shall not be affected.

B. Requirements for Members of the Third-Party Group

1. Members shall comply with all applicable provisions of the California Water Code, the *Water Quality Control Plan for the Sacramento and San Joaquin River Basins*, and State Water Board plans and policies.
2. All Members shall comply with the attached Monitoring and Reporting Program (MRP) R5-2012-XXXX, and future revisions thereto.
3. Members who are covered under this Order shall comply with the terms and conditions contained in this Order.
4. Each Member shall participate in third-party outreach events, at least annually, if any of the Member’s parcels are in a designated “high vulnerability” area or governed by a SQMP/GQMP. The Member shall review outreach materials to become informed of any water quality problems to address and the management practices that are available to address those issues. The Member shall provide annual confirmation to the third-party that the Member has attended an outreach event during the previous year and reviewed the applicable outreach materials.
5. All Members shall provide the third-party with information requested for compliance with this Order.
6. All Members shall implement water quality management practices in accordance with any water quality management plans approved by the Central Valley Water Board Executive Officer, and/or as necessary to protect water quality and to achieve compliance with surface

¹⁷ On 7 April 2011, the Central Valley Water Board adopted Resolution R5-2011-0017, certifying the PEIR for the long-term irrigated lands regulatory program.

and groundwater receiving water limitations of this Order (sections III.A and B). Water quality management practices can be instituted on an individual basis, or implemented to serve multiple growers discharging to a single location.

7. All Members shall implement effective sediment discharge and erosion prevention practices to minimize or eliminate the discharge of sediment above ~~natural~~ background levels. Members with the potential to cause erosion and discharge sediment that may degrade surface waters, as identified by the Member in their Farm Evaluation, by the third-party in the Sediment Discharge and Erosion Assessment Report, or by the Executive Officer shall prepare and implement a Sediment and Erosion Control Plan as specified in section VII.C below.
8. All Members shall implement practices that minimize excess nutrient application relative to crop need. ~~A nitrogen management plan is recommended, but not required for Members in low vulnerability groundwater areas. Members in high vulnerability groundwater areas~~ Members shall prepare and implement a farm-specific nitrogen management plan as required by section VII.D of this Order.
9. In addition to the reports identified in section VII of this Order, the Executive Officer may require the Member to submit additional technical reports pursuant to California Water Code section 13267.
10. The requirements prescribed in this Order do not authorize the commission of any act causing injury to the property of another, or protect the Member from liabilities under other federal, state, county, or local laws. However, enrollment under this Order does protect the Member from liability alleged for failing to comply with Water Code 13260.
11. This Order does not convey any property rights or exclusive privileges.
12. This Order shall not create a vested right, and all such discharges of waste shall be considered a privilege, as provided for in Water Code section 13263.
- ~~13. The Member or any representative with authority to provide site access shall, upon receiving notice, permit representatives of the Central Valley Water Board, at reasonable hours, to:~~
 - ~~a. Enter premises where wastes are treated, stored, or disposed or where any records required by the Order are kept;~~
 - ~~b. Copy any records required to be kept under the terms and conditions of the Order;~~
 - ~~c. Inspect irrigated lands, facilities, equipment (monitoring and control), practices, or operations regulated or required by the Order; and~~
 - ~~d. Sample, photograph, and/or video tape any discharge, waste, waste management unit, or monitoring device.~~

13. The Member understands that the Central Valley Water Board or its authorized representatives, may, at reasonable hours, inspect the facilities and irrigated lands of persons subject to this Order to ascertain whether the purposes of the Porter-Cologne Act are being met and whether the Member is complying with the conditions of this Order. To the extent required by Water Code section 13267(c) or other applicable law, the inspection shall be made with the consent of the Member, owner or authorized representative, or if consent is withheld, with a duly issued warrant pursuant to the procedure set forth in Title 13 Code of Civil Procedure Part 3 (commencing with section 1822.50). In the event of an emergency affecting

the public health and safety, an inspection may be performed without the consent or the issuance of a warrant.

14. The Member shall provide the third-party with the phone number(s) of the individual(s) with authority to provide consent to access its facilities as ~~required by~~ described in provision IV.B.13 above.
15. The Member shall properly operate and maintain in good working order any facility, unit, system, or monitoring device installed to achieve compliance with the Order.
16. Settling ponds, basins, and tailwater recovery systems shall be constructed, maintained, and operated to prevent groundwater degradation, erosion, slope failure; and minimize the discharge of sediment. The construction and operation must be consistent with the applicable Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) conservation practice standard, an NRCS or University of California Cooperative Extension recommendation, or an equivalent alternative standard.
17. Where applicable, the Member shall follow state, county or local agency standards with respect to water wells and groundwater quality when constructing new wells, modifying existing wells, or destroying wells. Absent such standards, at a minimum, the Member shall follow the standards and guidelines described in the California Department of Water Resources' *Water Well Standards (Bulletins 74-81 & 74-90 combined)*.
18. The Member shall maintain a copy of this Order at the primary place of business, or the Member's headquarters for its farming operation so as to be available at all times to operations personnel. The Member and his/her designee shall be familiar with the content of this Order.
19. The Member, or the third-party on its behalf as applicable, shall submit all required documents in accordance with section IX of this Order.
20. Members shall, at a minimum, implement water quality management practices that meet the following farm management performance standards:
 - a. Minimize waste discharge offsite in surface water,
 - b. Minimize percolation of waste to groundwater,
 - c. Prevent pollution and nuisance,
 - d. Achieve and maintain water quality objectives and beneficial uses,¹⁸
 - e. Protect wellheads from surface water intrusion.
21. Members shall implement the applicable management practices, or equivalent practices, identified as protective of groundwater in the Management Practices Evaluation Report.

C. Requirements for the Third-Party Group

In order to remain eligible to serve as a third-party representative to Members, the third-party shall perform the following:

1. Provide the Central Valley Water Board documentation of its organizational or management

¹⁸ For provisions 20 c & d, the performance standards must be met in accordance with section III of the Order, receiving water limitations, and the time schedule contained in the applicable approved Groundwater Quality Management Plan or Surface Water Quality Management Plan (section XII).

2. Within 120 days of Executive Officer issuance of an NOA to the third-party, all other growers within this Order's boundaries must become Members of the third-party to avoid additional fees and administrative requirements (see section VII.A.3 below). To obtain membership, a grower must submit a completed third-party Membership application to the third-party group. As part of the membership application, growers must provide certification that they have provided written notice to any responsible non-Member parties of the Member's enrollment under this Order and of the requirements of this Order. Upon submittal of a complete application, the third-party group may confirm membership, after which the Member will be considered covered under this Order. This provision does not apply to Members of the San Joaquin County and Delta Coalition; Westside San Joaquin River Watershed Coalition; or Southern San Joaquin Valley Water Quality Coalition governed by the Coalition Group Conditional Waiver whose parcel(s) are located in the Eastern San Joaquin River Watershed.
3. Beginning 121 days after Executive Officer issuance of an NOA to the third-party, any growers within this Order's boundaries that are not yet Members of the third-party or a Coalition governed by the Coalition Group Conditional Waiver must submit (1) a completed Notice of Intent (NOI) to the Central Valley Water Board to comply with the conditions of this Order, (2) any required State Water Board administrative processing fee for the NOI, and (3) a Membership application to the third-party group. Upon submittal of a complete NOI, and after receiving confirmation from the third-party group that the grower is now a Member, the Central Valley Water Board Executive Officer may then issue a Notice of Applicability (NOA), after which the Member will be considered covered under this Order. In lieu of issuing an NOA, the Executive Officer may deny the NOI and require the submittal of a report of waste discharge or issue an NOA for regulatory coverage under any applicable general waste discharge requirements for individual dischargers not represented by a third-party.
4. As an alternative to receiving regulatory coverage under this Order, a discharger may submit a report of waste discharge in accordance with Water Code section 13260 or a Notice of Intent for regulatory coverage under any applicable general waste discharge requirements for individual dischargers not represented by a third-party.

B. Farm Evaluation

After the Executive Officer approves the Farm Evaluation Template (see Section VIII.C. below), Members shall complete a Farm Evaluation and submit a copy of the completed Farm Evaluation to the third-party group according to the schedule below. The Member must use the Farm Evaluation Template approved by the Executive Officer (see section VIII.C below). A copy of the Farm Evaluation shall be maintained at the Member's farming headquarters or primary place of business, and must be produced upon request by Central Valley Water Board staff. In addition, Members shall comply with the following requirements where applicable:

1. Members in Low Vulnerability Areas

a. Members with Small Farming Operations

By 1 March 2017, Members with Small Farming Operations must prepare their Farm Evaluation and submit it to the third-party. An updated Farm Evaluation must be prepared and submitted to the third-party every five years thereafter.

b. All other Members¹⁹

By 1 March 2014~~2015~~, all other Members must prepare their Farm Evaluation and submit it to the third-party. An updated Farm Evaluation must be prepared and submitted to the third-party every five years thereafter.

2. All Members in High Vulnerability Areas (Surface/Groundwater)

By 1 March 2014, all Members within a high vulnerability area must prepare their Farm Evaluation and submit it to the third-party. An updated Farm Evaluation must be prepared and submitted to the third-party by 1 March annually thereafter. As part of the Farm Evaluation, the Member shall provide information on any outreach events attended in accordance with section IV.B.4 of this Order. After 1 March 2017, the Executive Officer may approve reduction in the frequency of updates and submission of Farm Evaluations, if the third-party demonstrates that year to year changes in Farm Evaluation updates are minimal, and the Executive Officer concurs that the practices identified in the Farm Evaluations are consistent with practices that, when properly implemented, will achieve receiving water limitations or best practicable treatment or control, where applicable.

C. Sediment and Erosion Control Plan

The requirements and deadlines of this section apply as specified to Members that are required to develop a Sediment and Erosion Control Plan per section IV.B.7 of this Order. The Member must use the Sediment and Erosion Control Plan Template approved by the Executive Officer (see section VIII.C below), or equivalent. The Sediment and Erosion Control Plan must be prepared in one of the following ways:

- The Sediment and Erosion Control Plan must adhere to the site-specific recommendation from the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), NRCS technical service provider, the University of California Cooperative Extension, the local Resource Conservation District; or conform to a local county ordinance applicable to erosion and sediment control on agricultural lands. The Member must retain written documentation of the recommendation provided and certify that they are implementing the recommendation; or
- The Sediment and Erosion Control Plan must be prepared and self-certified by the Member, who has completed a training program that the Executive Officer concurs provides necessary training for sediment and erosion control plan development; or
- The Sediment and Erosion Control Plan must be written, amended, and certified by a Qualified Sediment and Erosion Control Plan Developer possessing one of the following registrations or certifications, and appropriate experience with erosion issues on irrigated agricultural lands: California registered professional civil engineer, geologist, engineering geologist, landscape architect; professional hydrologist registered through the American Institute of Hydrology; certified soil scientist registered through the American Society of Agronomy; Certified Professional in Erosion and Sediment Control (CPSEC)TM/Certified Professional in Storm Water Quality (CPSWQ)TM registered through Enviro Cert International, Inc.; professional in erosion and sediment control registered through the National Institute for Certification in Engineering Technologies (NICET); or
- The Sediment and Erosion Control Plan must be prepared and certified in an alternative manner approved by the Executive Officer. Such approval will be provided based on the Executive

¹⁹ Members with parcels that do not meet the Small Farming Operation definition (see Attachment E).

Advisors²¹ certified by the American Society of Agronomy, or Technical Service Providers certified in nutrient management in California by the National Resource Conservation Service (NRCS).

- Certified in an alternative manner approved by the Executive Officer. Such approval will be provided based on the Executive Officer's determination that the alternative method for preparing the Nitrogen Management Plan meets the objectives and requirements of this Order.

a. Deadlines for Members with Small Farming Operations

By 1 March 2016, Members with Small Farming Operations shall prepare, and update by 1 March annually thereafter, a Nitrogen Management Plan. By 1 March 2017, and by 1 March annually, thereafter, Members with Small Farming Operations shall submit to the third-party the Nitrogen Management Plan Summary Report for the previous year.

b. Deadlines for all other Members²²

By 1 March 2014, all other Members shall prepare, and update by 1 March annually thereafter, a Nitrogen Management Plan. By 1 March 2015, and by 1 March annually, thereafter, all other Members shall submit to the third-party the Nitrogen Management Plan Summary Report for the previous year.

c. Deadlines for Members ~~in areas initially re-designated from Low Vulnerability to High Vulnerability~~ Groundwater Areas

Members with parcel(s) ~~initially in re-designated from~~ low vulnerability ~~to high vulnerability~~ groundwater areas must prepare a Nitrogen Management Plan in compliance with this section, ~~if the designation of the location of their parcel(s) changes to a high vulnerability area. (VII.D.1).~~²³

The schedule for ~~submitting~~certifying the initial Nitrogen Management Plan and ~~submitting the initial~~ Nitrogen Management Plan Summary Report will be established by the Executive Officer.

After 1 March 2017, the Executive Officer may approve reduction in the frequency of submission of Nitrogen Management Plan Summary Reports, if the third-party demonstrates that year to year changes in Nitrogen Management Summary Reports are minimal. ~~and the Executive Officer concurs that the implemented practices are achieving the performance standard (see section IV.B.8).~~

2. Members within a Low Vulnerability Groundwater Area

~~By 1 March 2016, all~~ Members within low vulnerability areas ~~are not required to~~shall prepare, ~~and update by 1 March annually thereafter,~~ a Nitrogen Management Plan; ~~however, these Members are strongly encouraged to attend educational classes/training regarding nitrogen management and voluntarily prepare.~~ The Member must use the Nitrogen Management Plan Template approved by the Executive Officer (see section VIII.C below), or equivalent. Certification of the Nitrogen Management Plan and submittal of a Nitrogen Management Plan Summary Report are not required.

²¹ Should the California Department of Food and Agriculture and the California Certified Crop Adviser's establish a specific nitrogen management certification, any Certified Crop Adviser who certifies a nitrogen management plan must have a nitrogen management certification.

²² Members with parcels that do not meet the Small Farming Operation definition (see Attachment E).

²³ The designation of the vulnerability area may change based on updates to the Groundwater Quality Assessment Report (see the MRP – Attachment B).

B. Membership (Participant) List

The third-party shall submit a list of its Members to the Central Valley Water Board within 180-days of receiving an NOA from the board and then annually by 31 July of each year (beginning the year following initial submission of the list). The membership list shall identify Members. The list shall also identify growers that have had their membership revoked and Members that are pending revocation. The membership list shall contain, at a minimum, the following information for each member: all parcel numbers covered under the membership, the county of each parcel, the section, township, and range associated with each parcel, the number of irrigated acres for each parcel, the Member's name, mailing address, the contact name and phone number of the individuals authorized to provide access to the enrolled parcels, the name of the farm operator for each parcel, if different from the Member, and identification of each parcel that is part of a Small Farming Operation, if applicable. In lieu of providing Members' phone numbers as part of the membership list, the third-party may provide the office contact name(s) and phone number(s) of a representative of the third-party. Any listed third-party office contact must be available for Central Valley Water Board staff to contact Monday through Friday (except established state holidays) from 8 am to 5 pm.

C. Templates

~~The~~Through the process described below, the Central Valley Water Board intends to provide templates to all Members that must be used to comply with the requirements of this Order. The board intends ~~to develop that~~ these templates be developed by the third-party or Central Valley Water Board staff in coordination with ~~the third-party and~~ other agricultural groups and experts to ensure the templates are applicable and relevant for Members. To the extent possible, the templates need to collect information consistently across irrigated agricultural areas and commodities. Consistent information collection will facilitate analysis within a geographic area and across the Central Valley. However, the board recognizes that templates may vary (e.g., by commodity group) and may need to be tailored more specifically to ensure relevant information is collected. For example, templates for irrigated pasture would focus on collecting different types of data than templates for orchards.

1. Farm Evaluation Template

Template development shall be in accordance with the requirements specified in Attachment B to this Order. Templates will be developed as follows:

a. Farm Evaluation Template Group Option

The third-party may develop a Farm Evaluation Template with other agricultural water quality coalitions and agricultural commodity groups. Should it choose the group option, the third-party shall submit a Farm Evaluation Template to the Central Valley Water Board within 90-days from receiving an NOA from the board. The third-party shall make the Farm Evaluation Template available to its Members within 30-days of approval by the Executive Officer. Requirements for the Farm Evaluation Template Group Option are described in MRP section VI.A., or

b. Central Valley Water Board Farm Evaluation Template

The third-party shall work with Central Valley Water Board staff in the development of a Farm Evaluation Template. Should it choose this option, the third-party shall make the Farm Evaluation Template available to its Members within 30-days of receiving the final Farm Evaluation Template as provided by the Central Valley Water Board's Executive Officer.

2. Nitrogen Management Plan Template

Template development shall be in accordance with the requirements specified in Attachment B to this Order. Templates will be developed as follows:

discharges, or inform such Members that they shall cease all discharges of waste to surface and groundwaters.

K. Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Requirements

Approved TMDLs in the Basin Plan that apply to water bodies within the third-party's geographic area and have allocations for irrigated agriculture shall be implemented in accordance with the applicable Basin Plan provisions. Where required, the third-party shall coordinate with Central Valley Water Board staff to develop a monitoring design and strategy for TMDL implementation. Where applicable, SQMPs shall address TMDL requirements.

IX. Reporting Provisions

1. Members and the third-party must submit required reports and notices in accordance with the requirements in this Order and attached Monitoring and Reporting Program Order R5-2012-XXXX, unless otherwise requested by the Executive Officer.
2. All reports shall be accompanied by a cover letter containing the certification specified in section IX.3 below. The cover letter shall be signed by a person identified below, or by a duly authorized representative of that person:

For all reports:

- a. For a sole proprietorship: by the proprietor;
- b. For a partnership: by a general partner;
- c. For a corporation or the third-party: by a principal executive officer of at least the level of senior vice-president.

A person is a duly authorized representative only if:

- i. The authorization is made in writing by a person described in subsection a, b, or c of this provision; and
 - ii. The authorization specifies either an individual or a position having responsibility for the overall operation of the facility or organization, such as the position of manager. A duly authorized representative may thus be either a named individual or an individual occupying a named position; and
 - iii. The written authorization is submitted to the Central Valley Water Board.
3. Each person signing a report required by this Order or other information requested by the Central Valley Water Board shall make the following certification:

"I certify under penalty of law that this document and all attachments were prepared under my direction or supervision in accordance with a system designed to assure that qualified personnel or represented Members properly gather and evaluate the information submitted. Based on my inquiry of the person or persons who manage the system, or those persons directly responsible for gathering the information, the information submitted is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, true, accurate, and complete. I am aware that there are significant penalties for knowingly submitting false information, including the possibility of fine and imprisonment for violations."

4. All reports prepared and submitted to the Executive Officer in accordance with the terms of this Order will be made available for public inspection at the offices of the Central Valley Water Board, except for reports, or portions of such reports, subject to an exemption from public disclosure in accordance with California law and regulations, including the Public Records Act,

Water Code section 13267(b)(2), and the California Food and Agriculture Code. If the third-party or a Member or the third-party asserts that all or a portion of a report is subject to an exemption from public disclosure, it must clearly indicate on the cover of the report that it asserts that all or a portion of the report is exempt from public disclosure. The complete report must be submitted with those portions that are asserted to be exempt in redacted form, along with separately-bound unredacted pages (to be maintained separately by staff). The Member/third-party shall identify the basis for the exemption. If the Executive Officer cannot identify a reasonable basis for treating the information as exempt from disclosure, the Executive Officer will notify the Member/third-party that the information will be placed in the public file unless the Central Valley Water Board receives, within 10 calendar days, a satisfactory explanation supporting the claimed exemption. Data on waste discharges, water quality, meteorology, geology, and hydrogeology shall not be considered confidential. NOIs shall generally not be considered exempt from disclosure.

5. To the extent feasible, all reports submitted by Members shall be submitted electronically to irrlands@waterboards.ca.gov, unless the Member is unable to submit the report electronically. If unable to submit the report electronically, the grower shall mail or personally deliver the report to the Central Valley Water Board. All reports from the third-party shall be submitted electronically to its Central Valley Water Board-assigned staff liaison. Upon notification by the Central Valley Water Board, all reports shall be submitted directly into an online reporting system, to the extent feasible.

X. Record-keeping Requirements

The Member and the third-party shall maintain any reports or records required by this Order for five years. Records maintained by the third-party include reports and plans submitted by Members to the third-party for purposes of complying with this Order. Individual Member information used by the third-party to prepare required reports must be maintained electronically and associated with the Member submitting the information. The maintained reports or records, including electronic information, shall be made available to the Central Valley Water Board upon request of the Executive Officer. This includes all monitoring information, calibration and maintenance records of sampling equipment, copies of reports required by this Order, and records of all data used to complete the reports. Records shall be maintained for a minimum of five years from the date of sample, measurement, report, or application. This five-year period shall be extended during the course of any unresolved litigation regarding the discharge or when requested in writing by the Executive Officer.

XI. Annual Fees

1. Water Code section 13260(d)(1)(A) requires persons subject to waste discharge requirements to pay an annual fee established by the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board).
2. Members shall pay an annual fee to the State Water Board in compliance with the Waste Discharge Requirement fee schedule set forth at 23 CCR section 2200. The third-party is responsible for collecting these fees from Members and submitting them to the State Water Board on behalf of Members.

XII. Time Schedule for Compliance

When a SQMP or GQMP is required pursuant to the provisions in section VIII.H, the following time schedules shall apply as appropriate in order to allow Members sufficient time to achieve compliance with the surface and groundwater receiving water limitations described in section III of