

ITEM: 7c.

SUBJECT: Conditional Waiver of Waste Discharge Requirements for Discharges from Irrigated Lands

BOARD ACTION *Consideration of Resolution Adding Information Sheet to Resolution No. R5-2003-0105*

BACKGROUND On 11 July 2003, the Regional Water Quality Control Board, Central Valley Region (Central Valley Water Board) adopted Resolution No. R5-2003-0105, *Conditional Waivers of Waste Discharge Requirements for Discharges From Irrigated Lands Within the Central Valley Region* (Conditional Waivers) and associated Monitoring and Reporting Programs (MRPs). In August 2003, agricultural and environmental organizations submitted petitions to the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) regarding the Conditional Waivers and MRPs. On 22 January 2004, the State Water Board adopted Order WQO 2004-0003, which upheld the Conditional Waivers and MRPs with minor revisions.

In February and March 2004, various environmental groups and the California Farm Bureau filed separate lawsuits alleging that the Conditional Waivers are not in accordance with the law. Additional parties also filed a petition as “Intervenors.” The lawsuits were combined and a hearing was held in the Sacramento County Superior Court (Court) on 28 April 2005.

On 10 May 2005, the Court substantially upheld the Conditional Waivers and issued a ruling requiring the Central Valley Water Board and the State Water Board to address three issues. The Central Valley Water Board addressed two issues – the concerns regarding staff inspections on private property and confidentiality of certain documents submitted to the Central Valley Water Board – by adopting Resolution R5-2005-0107 at the 5 August 2005 Board meeting amending Attachments B and C of Resolution No. R5-2003-0105. At the 15 September 2005 Board meeting, staff proposed a resolution to address the third issue – application of the tributary rule – by adding an Information Sheet to Resolution No. R5-2003-0105. Numerous comments were submitted, and based on requests by several parties, the Central Valley Water Board did not take action and continued the hearing. The Information Sheet now has been revised based on comments received.

Staff recommends adoption of Resolution Adding Information Sheet to Resolution No. R5-2003-0105.

Mgmt. Review

Legal Review

20/21 October 2005
Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board
11020 Sun Center Drive, No. 200
Rancho Cordova, CA