

# San Joaquin County and Delta Water Quality Coalition and California Farm Bureau Federation

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Mike Wackman, Executive Director SJC & DWQC

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Federation

# Overview

- Agriculture and Environmental Justice Groups Conversations
- Effects of the Revised order on San Joaquin County & Delta Water Quality Coalition
- Water supply well testing requirements and statewide effects of changes to surface water program

# Agriculture and Environmental Justice Group Conversation

Jennifer Spaletta, Legal Counsel, San Joaquin County & Delta  
Water Quality Coalition

# San Joaquin County & Delta Water Quality Coalition

Mike Wackman

Executive Director

# Acreages in San Joaquin County and Delta Water Quality Coalition

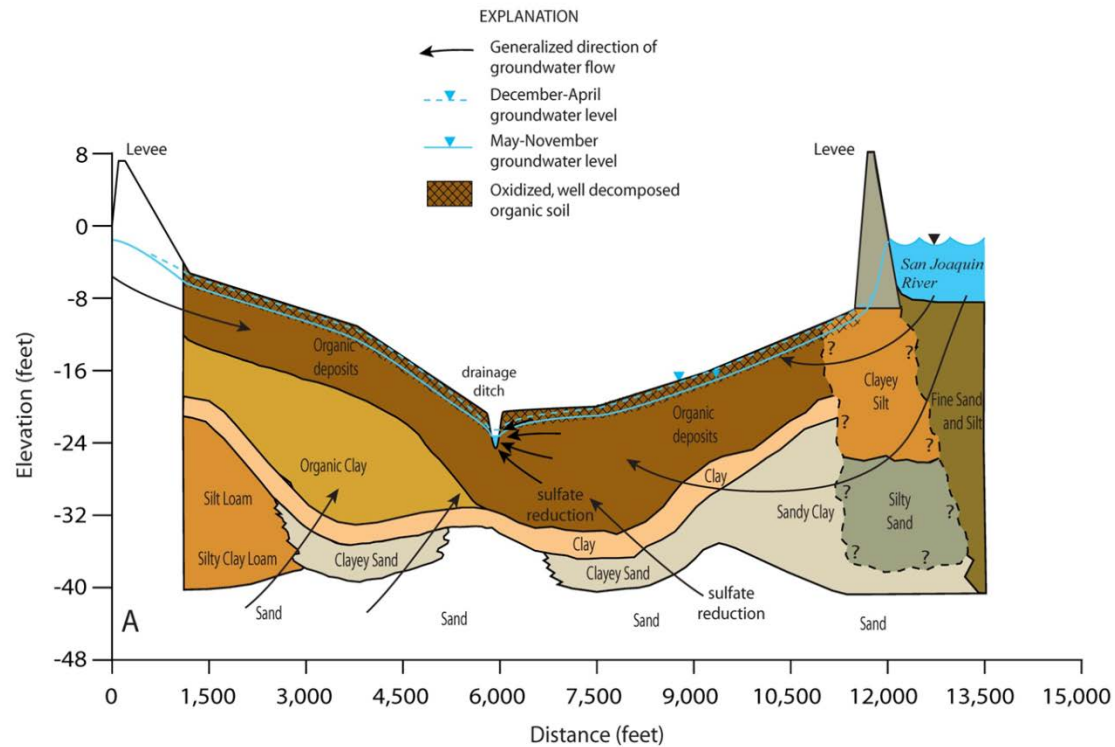
- Total 3,434,118 total acres in Coalition area, San Joaquin, Contra Costa, Calaveras and Alpine
- 618,000 acres of irrigated cropland in Coalition Area
- 646,547 acres in High Vulnerability areas
  - Includes roads, urban, water
- 2,787,571 in Low Vulnerability areas
- **240,000** acres in Delta Artesian Effect
- This figures from GIS layers which includes roads, urban, water

# Surface Water Program

- Current program is working and gives a clear representation of water quality in the individual watersheds both spatially and temporally.
- Program developed with Regional Board expertise and local expertise in the regions
  - Reviewed by Technical Advisory Committee
  - Program is a reiterative process that is able to address issues as they arise
- Changes in the surface water program would greatly impact the San Joaquin County and Delta Water Quality Coalition both in cost and effectiveness.

# The Delta Artesian Effect

## 240,000 acres

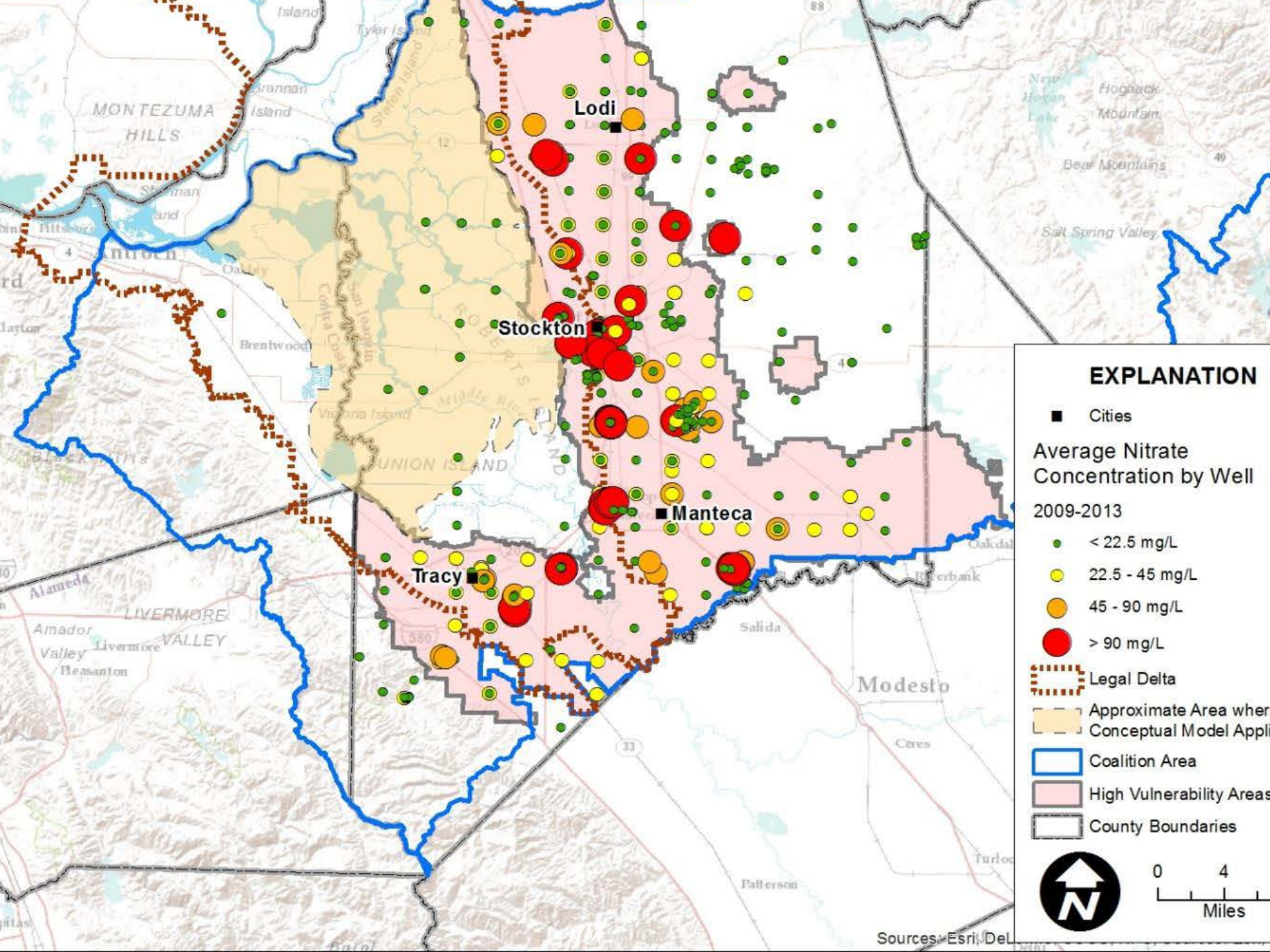




# Changes to order to address unique Delta situation

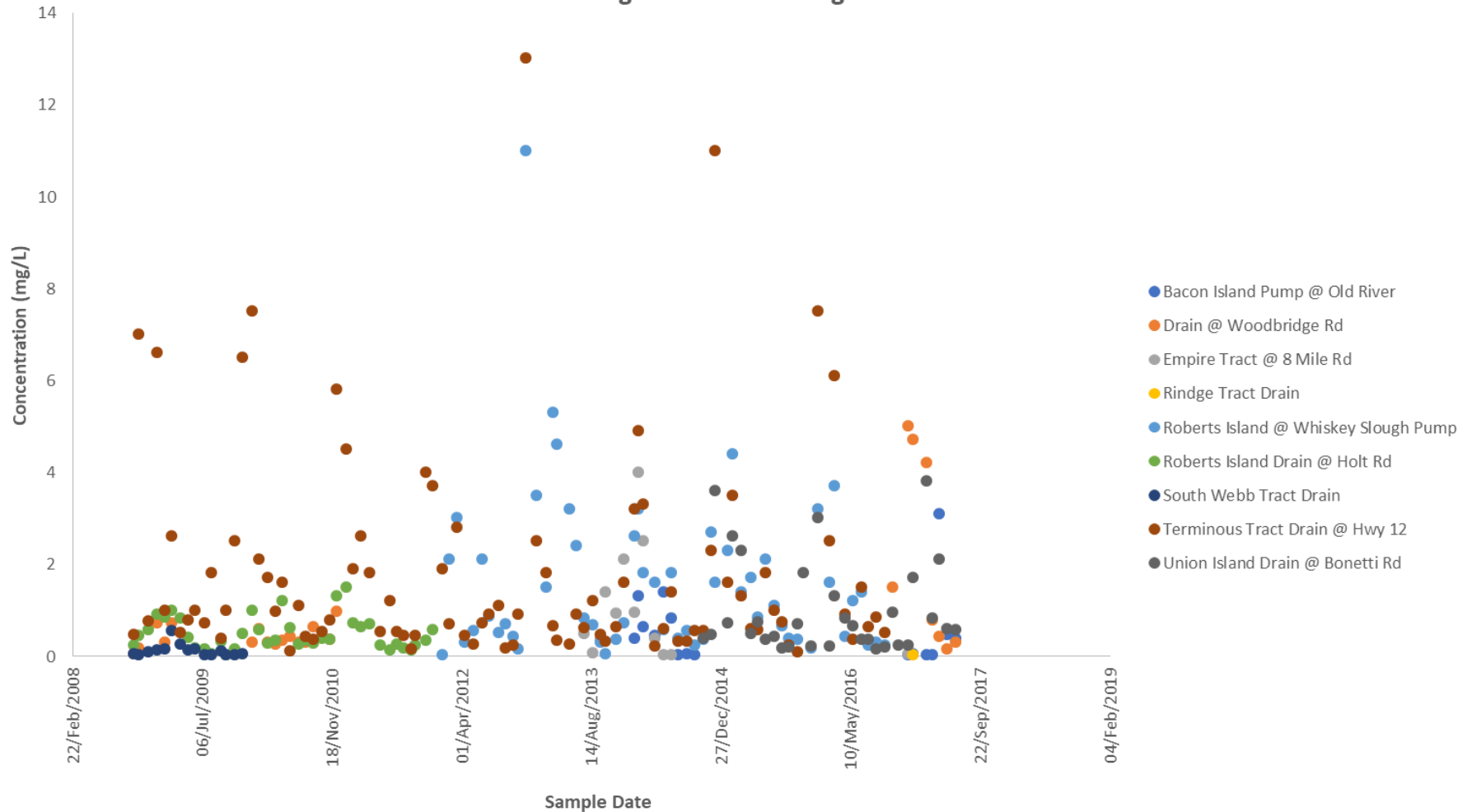
- Order acknowledges the issue however does not address adequately – it's a footnote
  - “Instead, any category of Members (such as growers of a particular crop or growers in a particular area) seeking to be exempted from irrigation and nitrogen planning and reporting requirements shall make a demonstration, for approval by the relevant regional water board, that nitrogen applied to the fields does not percolate below the root zone in any significant amount and does not migrate to surface water through discharges, including drainage, runoff, or sediment erosion.” page 39
  - Foot note: “Similarly, members in the San Joaquin County and Delta Water Quality Coalition may have demonstrated that nitrogen applied to the fields does not percolate below the root zone, but must, at a minimum, additionally **demonstrate that the applied nitrogen does not migrate to the surface water before the Central Valley Water Board could exempt them from the irrigation and nitrogen planning and reporting requirements.**”





# In the channel sampling 2008-2017

Nitrate + Nitrite as N Concentrations in Delta Islands:  
Monitoring from 2008 through 2017 WY



# Delta uniqueness

- 240,000 acres in artesian area
- Regional Board has already reviewed and approved the analysis of the Delta
- To redo and resubmit to the Regional Board is duplicative and unnecessary
- Request findings which acknowledges the current Regional Board approval of the exemption and eliminate the necessity to work already done

# High and Low Vulnerability in SJC & DWQC

- 206,980 acres in High Vulnerability area enrolled in Coalition
- 327,486 acres in Low Vulnerability area enrolled in Coalition





# Low vulnerable areas in San Joaquin County and Delta Water Quality Coalition

- Eliminates unnecessary data collection and certifications
- Allows Coalitions to concentrate on those areas of greatest concerns
- Focuses limited resources
- Capacity to Certify Nitrogen Plans enormous undertaking

# Effect of removal of low and high vulnerable areas

- Currently 2,202 members in SJC & DWQC need certified Nitrogen Management Plans
  - Of those, approximately 500 have taken the class which began in 2016
- 1335 additional members are in low vulnerable areas
- Capacity to get certification – big concern
  - our classes usually are 90 people to make it manageable. Looking at 40 classes if all get certified –
  - also have 2 hours of continuing education every year, so 40 classes per year for ever.

# Other Factors

- Average age of those in farming – USDA 2012 census
  - 58 years old
  - 30% are over 65 years old
- Language barriers
  - Have a land owner who speaks Farsi and leases to a grower who is Mong and English is barely understood by either
- Diverse community in agriculture



# Regional Differences

- Orders were developed because of regional differences
- One size approach does not fit
- Agriculture is a highly variable system
- Soils, groundwater levels, temperatures, rainfall, - all have different effect in different regions
- Farmers in different regions need to farm differently in order to be sustainable

# California Farm Bureau Federation

Kari Fisher, Legal Counsel, California Farm Bureau Federation

# Drinking Water Well Testing

- Not feasible to link to irrigated agriculture/ILRP
- Landlord/Tenant Issues due to different owners, control

# Summary

- Coalitions interface, educate and help growers improve water quality
- Regional Board provides oversight, compliance, enforcement
- Recognize the uniqueness of the Delta
- Understand the complexity of requiring all growers to complete and certify Irrigation and Nitrogen Management plans
- Let Coalitions spend limited resources on education and outreach to improve water quality in specific area