

CALIFORNIA REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD
CENTRAL VALLEY REGION

RESOLUTION NO. R5-2008-0181
IN SUPPORT OF DEVELOPING A
GROUNDWATER STRATEGY FOR THE
CENTRAL VALLEY REGION

WHEREAS, the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Central Valley Region (Regional Water Board) finds that:

1. Groundwater is a critically important resource, as evidenced by the State Water Board's recently adopted Strategic Plan 2008-2012, Goal 2, to Improve and protect groundwater quality in high-use basins by 2030.
2. California Water Code, Section 13000, states: "The Legislature finds and declares that the people of the state have a primary interest in the conservation, control, and utilization of the water resources of the state, and that the quality of all the waters of the state shall be protected for use and enjoyment by the people of the state." The State and Regional Water Boards have the responsibility and authority under the California Water Code to protect the quality of ground and surface waters through policy, regulations, permitting, and enforcement.
3. The *California Water Plan Update 2005* provides recommendations for the next 25 years directed at decision-makers throughout California, the executive and legislative branches of State Government, and DWR and other State agencies. Update 2009 updates and expands many of the features introduced in Update 2005.
4. The *California Water Plan Update 2005* recommended that California must: diversify regional water portfolios; invest in reliable, high quality, sustainable, and affordable water conservation; improve water management efficiency; develop water supplies to protect public health; and improve California's economy, environment, and standard of living.
5. The *California Water Plan Update 2005* established a recommendation that California must remediate surface water and groundwater contaminants. State government must lead an effort with local agencies and governments to remediate the causes and effects of contamination of surface water and groundwater quality.
6. The Central Valley Region has the second largest contiguous groundwater basin in the United States, and the largest groundwater basin in California.
7. Groundwater accounts for almost 50 percent of the domestic (private) and public drinking-water supply in the Central Valley.
8. Over 18% of State's population is within Central Valley and the expected population growth within the State over the next decade/century is focused in the Central Valley. Population in the Valley is anticipated to increase 39% by the year 2020

9. The Central Valley is home to a multi-billion dollar agriculture industry with over 80% of irrigated agricultural lands and over 80% of all the dairies in the State located in the valley. Agriculture has been a dominant industry in the valley since the progression of subsistence farming to commercial agriculture, and to date Central Valley agriculture accounts for over 73% of \$36.6 billion in receipts for 2007.
10. Nearly 50 percent of all facilities in California that are regulated for discharges to land, and over 42 percent of all septic systems in California are situated in the Central Valley Region.
11. Some groundwater supplies throughout the Central Valley have been degraded or polluted which, in part, may be due to historical practices of the agricultural and dairy industries; commercial, industrial and military discharges; failing septic systems; and other land discharges.
12. High concentrations of nitrates in groundwater are a serious public health problem. Recent groundwater monitoring results from the State Board's groundwater monitoring program found private drinking water wells sampled exceeded Department of Public Health (DPH) maximum contaminant levels (MCLs) for nitrates.
13. Many municipalities and other water purveyors using groundwater are facing high costs of well-head treatment to remove dry cleaning solvents and other industrial waste pollutants. The Central Valley Water Board dedicates nearly 50 percent of its technical staff to a number of groundwater protection regulatory programs but recognizes that regulatory programs alone will not ensure protection of all waters.
14. The Water Quality Control Plans for the Sacramento River, San Joaquin River, and Tulare Lake basins generally designate groundwater as being beneficial to use as municipal and domestic supply (MUN), agricultural supply (AGR), industrial service supply (IND), and industrial process supply (PRO), unless specifically exempted from the uses.
15. There are multiple agencies that have roles in protecting the quality of groundwater and have on-going programs that address management and protection of groundwater within the Central Valley. A partial list of these agencies includes the Department of Pesticide Regulations, Department of Food and Agriculture, Department of Toxic Substance Control, the Department of Public Health Services, and Department of Water Resources. There are also a variety of local agencies implementing AB3030 and SB1938 Groundwater Management Plans and Integrated Regional Water Management Plans. In an effort to identify existing programs and avoid duplication of programs, a Groundwater Strategy would provide the public and elected officials with a readily-available document that identifies the work that is being done and/or will be done by the Central Valley Water Board and others to protect groundwater quality.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Regional Water Board:

1. Directs staff to work with stakeholders and interested persons, including, but not limited to, the Department of Public Health, the Department of Water Resources, the Department of Pesticide Regulation, Department of Food and Agriculture, along with other state and local agencies, industry, local partners, nonprofit organizations, environmental, and environmental justice groups to develop a Groundwater Strategy to assure comprehensive, consistent, and coordinated protection of the beneficial uses of groundwater throughout the region, and to ensure a sustainable, high quality water supply for the Central Valley.
2. Recognizes the need to consider and /or incorporate the following items into this collaborative planning approach: (1) clearly define the Central Valley Water Board's objectives and priorities; (2) describe how strategy development and implementation will be coordinated with and informed by other regulatory and planning activities, including but not limited to, Central Valley Salinity Alternatives for Long-Term Sustainability (CV-SALTS), the State Water Board's Small Community Wastewater Strategy, local agencies AB3030 and SB1938 Groundwater Management Plans; (3) describe the scope of individual activities and resources available to implement them; (4) reference detailed project-specific workplans as needed.
3. Directs staff to report on the status of the Groundwater Strategy development by 30 June 2009, and complete strategy by 31 December 2009.

I, PAMELA C. CREEDON, Executive Officer, do hereby certify the foregoing is a full, true, and correct copy of a Resolution adopted by the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Central Valley Region, on 4 December 2008.



PAMELA C. CREEDON, Executive Officer