

ITEM: 12

SUBJECT: Preparation of a Management Agency Agreement with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation to Address Salinity in the San Joaquin River – A Status Report

BOARD ACTION: This is an information item.

BACKGROUND: The Basin Plan's control program for salt and boron discharges into the lower San Joaquin River (LSJR) states that the Board will attempt to enter into a Management Agency Agreement (MAA) with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) to address salt imported into the basin by Reclamation via the Delta-Mendota Canal (DMC). The MAA must require Reclamation to:

- meet the DMC load allocations prescribed in the Basin Plan; or
- provide mitigation and/or dilution flows to create additional assimilative capacity for salt in the LSJR equivalent to DMC salt loads in excess of their allocation.

The Basin Plan also states that the Water Board will request a Report of Waste Discharge from Reclamation if a MAA is not established by 28 July 2008.

Since July 2006, Water Board and Reclamation staff has met on a regular basis, and management of the two agencies has met twice. Reclamation staff is in the process of developing a salinity management plan that includes development of a real-time salt management program. Regional Board staff has also been working on a basic framework for the MAA and negotiating many of the critical issues with Reclamation.

Staff will provide the Board with an overview of Reclamation's plan, report to the Board on the status of its effort to develop the draft MAA, and present a proposed schedule for the period of time remaining to establish the MAA.

ISSUES: Reclamation's current projects and activities that provide salt mitigation or dilution flow benefits are not adequate to offset the excess DMC salt load. Therefore, Reclamation has proposed taking steps to develop a comprehensive real-time management program to provide the additional mitigation that is needed. The Basin Plan encourages real-time management as one of the primary mechanisms for achieving the goal of the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) control program of maintaining compliance with the salinity objectives while at the same time, exporting as much salt from the basin as possible.

Mgmt. Review _____

Legal Review _____

6 December 2007 meeting

Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board

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