

**ITEM:**

**SUBJECT:** Oil Field Food Safety Expert Panel Update

**BOARD ACTION:** Information Item Only

**BACKGROUND:**

Oil field produced water (produced water) is used to supplement other sources of irrigation water in the southern Central Valley. In these areas, produced water is used to irrigate approximately 94,000 acres of crops such as oranges, lemons, grapes, almonds, pistachios, garlic, and carrots.

Currently, four oil companies supply three water districts and two water companies with produced water (collectively, “dischargers”), most of which is blended with surface and groundwater before it is used. The discharges are regulated by individual waste discharge requirements and monitoring and reporting programs. Dischargers submit monitoring reports on a quarterly basis. Monitoring reports include analytical data on effluent and irrigation water, oil field chemicals and additives, flow volumes, and facility information. Monitoring ensures that the discharge remains in compliance with State laws and regulations.

In response to growing public concern, Central Valley Water Board staff expanded their investigation into the practice and convened the Food Safety Expert Panel (Panel). The Panel provides expertise in areas such as toxicology, food and agricultural, local wildlife, and public health. In addition to the Panel, the Board also engaged a scientific advisor. The Panel provides the Board guidance on studies conducted under a memorandum of understanding between the dischargers and the Central Valley Water Board (MOU). Under the MOU, three studies were conducted by a third-party consulting firm (GSI Environmental, Inc. or “GSI”). The studies (Tasks 1-3) include an assessment of constituents that might be found in produced water (naturally occurring and additives), a literature review on chemicals of interest, and a crop sampling study which compares crops grown with produced water to crops grown with conventional irrigation sources.

Tasks 1-3 are complete, and reports on the Tasks are being produced by GSI. The reports have been given to the Panel for review and comment. GSI revises the Task 1-3 reports as comments are provided. Results from the studies, Panel member recommendations on next steps, data gaps, and reports on Tasks 1-3 will be summarized in a white paper prepared by Central Valley Water Board staff. The white paper and Task 1-3 reports will be provided to the public after review.

**RECOMMENDATION:** N/A

**REVIEWS:**

Management Review:	wdh
Legal Review:	
Date:	16/17 April 2020
Board Meeting Street Address:	
Board Meeting City, State, Zip:	