

EXECUTIVE OFFICER SUMMARY REPORT
September 13, 2017

ITEM: 6

SUBJECT: Informational Item: Update on Enrollment in the Waste Discharge Requirements for Commercial Agriculture (*Barry Pulver*)

PURPOSE: To provide an update on enrollment in General Orders Nos. R9-2016-0004 and R9-2016-0005.¹

RECOMMENDATION: There is no recommendation because the Board will take no action on this item.

KEY ISSUES: The General Agricultural Orders require owners or operators of commercial agricultural operations to have submitted a Notice of Intent (NOI) to enroll in the Orders to the San Diego Water Board by August 7, 2017.

PRACTICAL VISION: Compliance oversight of the General Agricultural Orders furthers the goals of the Monitoring and Assessment chapter and the Recovery of Streams, Wetlands, and Riparian Areas chapter of the Practical Vision.

DISCUSSION: Enrollment in the General Agricultural Orders (Orders) is ongoing and the number of enrollees will be presented at the Board Meeting to provide the most up-to-date information. Staff is currently reviewing the submitted NOIs for completeness, and working with the region's Third-Party Groups to ensure that their unenrolled members submit NOIs as soon as possible.

Since adoption of the Orders in November 2016, the San Diego Water Board has approved four Third-Party Groups. Enrolling through a Third-Party Group is now an option for every commercial agricultural operation in the region. Staff contacted and coordinated with water districts to notify agricultural rate payers of the enrollment deadline. Program staff have now responded to over 231 phone calls and emails from the agricultural community. Assisting with this effort is a bilingual scientific aid recruited for the

¹ General Orders Nos. R9-2016-0004 and R9-2016-0005 are collectively referred to as General Agricultural Orders.

program, who has effectively responded to phone calls, emails, and questions; and assisted dischargers with enrollment issues. The program was moved into the Groundwater Protection and Site Restoration Branch under supervisor Craig Carlisle where recruitment efforts are underway to fill a new position granted to the San Diego Water Board for this program.

Finally, the electronic NOI feature of the State's GeoTracker database became active for the San Diego Region in July 2017. The San Diego Region is now the third region in the State to get on-line enrollment and program management capability through GeoTracker, and dischargers in the region are using GeoTracker to submit electronic NOIs to enroll in the Orders. One of the most important program management features of GeoTracker is its ability to integrate facility location information with GIS mapping and satellite imaging features to aid in identifying commercial agricultural facilities not in the GeoTracker database. Our ability to locate non-filers and prioritize enforcement actions will be greatly enhanced through this feature, and will be used after we complete our review of the submitted electronic NOIs submitted through GeoTracker.

The online enrollment interface in GeoTracker was not available to the San Diego Region when the General Agricultural Orders were adopted in November 2016. Thus, the Orders don't require dischargers to enroll using GeoTracker. Staff is encouraging the Third-Party Groups to instruct their members to use the online enrollment feature. Staff is also working closely with the San Diego Region Irrigated Lands Third-Party Group (SDRILG) and State Water Board GeoTracker staff to import enrollment information from the SDRILG's membership database into GeoTracker. Staff expects to receive a download of members' enrollment information from the SDRILG's database on August 31, 2017. GeoTracker staff will then work with us to upload as much of the SDRILG members' enrollment information into GeoTracker as feasible. The upload will not be seamless because GeoTracker's electronic NOI, which is based on the Central Coast Regional Water Board's agricultural waiver of waste discharge requirements, doesn't perfectly mirror the NOI and enrollment information required in our Orders.

To remedy this situation going forward, Staff intends to amend the Orders to require online enrollment through GeoTracker. The Orders also need to be amended to ensure that the information required to enroll in the Orders mirrors the GeoTracker electronic NOI. Submission of monitoring and annual reports through GeoTracker will also be required. These amendments will help facilitate a “paperless” Commercial Agriculture Regulatory Program in the region creating administrative efficiencies, program tracking and reporting capabilities, compliance assurance and enforcement capabilities, and environmental data management and analysis capabilities.

LEGAL CONCERNS: None.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS: None.

PUBLIC NOTICE: Notice was provided in the agenda for the September 13, 2017 Board Meeting.