

IRRIGATED LANDS REGULATORY PROGRAM UPDATE

April 2014

This month's ILRP monthly report will provide an update on activities of the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) ILRP, as reported in the Central Valley Water Board's March 27-28, 2014 Executive Officer's report. Current and past ILRP program monthly reports can be found on the [State Water Boards program website](#).

STATE WATER BOARD

On April 2, 2014, ILRP and Nonpoint Source (NPS) staff met with Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) staff to discuss Grant funding for pesticide related agricultural water quality projects.

On April 3, 2014, ILRP staff participated in a California Certified Crop Advisors Board of Directors meeting.

On April 7, 2014, ILRP staff participated in a Farm Food Safety Conservation Network steering committee meeting to discuss proposed revisions to the United States Department of Agriculture Food Safety Modernization Act.

On April 9-10, 2014, ILRP staff participated in a joint ILRP/NPS roundtable. Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) staff presented an update on agricultural related NRCS conservation plan development and implementation projects in the Ventura watershed. Staff discussed the benefits of forming and strengthening a partnership to assist growers comply with ILRP regulations.

On April 15, 2014, ILRP staff attended a California Biodiversity Council meeting at the UCCE agricultural and natural resource center in Davis.

On April 17, 2014, ILRP and NPS staff met with Tetra Tech to discuss development of a monitoring network to assess the National Water Quality Initiative projects in Calleguas Creek and the Salt River.

On April 18, 2014, ILRP staff participated in a Farm Food Safety Conservation Network planning committee meeting to finalize an agenda for the August 2014 annual symposium.

On April 23, 2014, ILRP staff met with CalRecycle staff to discuss ILRP/Water Board regulation regarding soil amendments of green waste, food processing waste, mulch, etc.

On April 24 – 25, 2014, ILRP staff participated in the Western US Irrigation Water

Conference. Conference was sponsored by the Western Center for Food Safety and UC Davis Cooperative Extension.

On April 30, 2014 ILRP and NPS staff met with NRCS staff to discuss how our agencies could develop a formal partnership to assist growers comply with ILRP regulations.

CENTRAL VALLEY REGION

General Waste Discharge Requirements (WDRs) Development:

The Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) has completed adoption of all ILRP long-term program Waste Discharge Requirements (WDRs). The Regional Water Board adopted the Sacramento Watershed, San Joaquin County and Delta area, and rice in the Sac Valley WDRs in March 2014. The Regional Water Board ILRP conditional waiver no longer applies.

Eastern San Joaquin River Watershed WDRs:

On January 10, 2014, the Regional Water Board filed the administrative record and submitted a written response to petitions for review of the Waste Discharge Requirements General Order for Growers within the Eastern San Joaquin River Watershed that are Members of the Third-Party Group Order R5-2012-0116. Three separate petitions were filed with the State Water Resources Control Board. [Petitions and responses](#) can be found on the Regional Board website.

Grasslands Bypass Project:

On February 13, 2014, Regional Water Board staff attended the Technical Policy Review Team meeting for the Grassland Bypass Project in Firebaugh. The meeting discussed the Grassland Drainage Parties plan to manage drainage to 2019 with updates on current projects. Regional Water Board staff answered questions about the new WDR. A tour of the San Joaquin River Improvement Project (SJRIP) and the new Demonstration Treatment Plant preceded the meeting.

Regional Water Board staff is working on a draft administrative WDR that will reflect new compliance dates for meeting selenium objectives in Mud Slough(north) and incorporate relevant requirements from the ILRP. The administrative draft is expected to be released in April/May 2014.

Western San Joaquin River Watershed WDRs:

On January 9, 2014 the Regional Water Board adopted the Waste Discharge Requirements General Order for Growers within the Western San Joaquin River Watershed that are Members of a Third-Party Group, Order R5-2014-0002 (Order). By the February 10, 2014 deadline for submitting a Notice of Intent, only San Joaquin Valley Drainage Authority (Drainage Authority) applied to serve as a third-party to represent growers in the Western San Joaquin River Watershed. The Drainage Authority has been serving as the umbrella organization for the irrigated lands served

by the Westside San Joaquin River Watershed Coalition since 2003. The Notice of Intent submitted by the San Joaquin Valley Drainage Authority is under review.

Coalition Groups:

East San Joaquin Water Quality Coalition

On January 13, 2014, the East San Joaquin Water Quality Coalition (Coalition) submitted the Groundwater Quality Assessment Report, and the Sediment Discharge and Erosion Assessment Report as required by the Waste Discharge Requirements General Order R5-2012-0116-R1. The Assessment Reports are under Regional Water Board staff review and will be discussed at a general ILRP stakeholder meeting on February 26, 2014 in Modesto. The stakeholder meeting will be an opportunity for the Coalition to present key results from the assessment reports and answer any questions interested persons may have, and for the Regional Water Board staff to hear stakeholder comments before the review of the Assessment Reports is finalized.

On January 14, 2014, the Regional Water Board received the Management Practices Evaluation Program (MPEP) Agreement for the Group Option for the East San Joaquin Water Quality Coalition, the San Joaquin County and Delta Water Quality Coalition, and the Westside San Joaquin River Watershed Coalition. The signed MPEP Agreement was received on February 18, 2014. The Group Option allows multiple entities to prepare a joint MPEP Workplan to determine the effects, if any, irrigated agricultural practices may have on first encountered groundwater under different conditions that could affect the discharge of waste from irrigated lands to groundwater, and to address the conditions relevant to high vulnerability groundwater areas. The MPEP agreement is under review.

On January 17, 2014, the Coalition submitted a Farm Evaluation Survey and instructions for Coalition members. The Survey is based on the template approved on December 9, 2013 and includes minor modifications. The Executive Officer approved the revised Farm Evaluation Survey template on 17 January. The [approved template](#) can be found on the Regional Board website.

On January 22, 2014, Regional Water Board staff held the 21st quarterly meeting with the Coalition to discuss progress of implementing the Coalition's Management Plan, performance goals and status of other activities in progress. The Coalition provided an update on the monitoring results and outreach in the subwatersheds that have active management plans.

On January 24, 2014, the Executive Officer issued a letter to the Coalition. The letter informs the Coalition that once high vulnerability designations developed in the Groundwater Quality Assessment Report are approved, the Coalition must submit a Groundwater Quality Management Plan within 60 days.

On January 28, 2014, the Executive Officer approved the Coalition's September 23, 2013 proposal for Management Plan Performance Goals and Measures schedule for the 2014-2016 priority subwatersheds. The proposed schedule is like the previously

approved performance goals and measures, although the completion deadlines may change when the Coalition's Management Plan is updated on May 1, 2014 to conform to the Waste Discharge Requirements General Order R5-2012-0116-R1.

On February 12, 2014, the Executive Officer sent a letter to the East San Joaquin Water Quality Coalition providing guidance for Surface Water Quality Management Plan (SQMP) update to conform to the requirements of the Waste Discharge Requirements General Order R5-2012-0116-R1 (Order). The updated SQMP must include a proposed timeframe for compliance. The letter clarifies how the compliance time schedule requirement should be applied to management plans that were developed and approved before the Order was adopted and how the compliance time schedule applies when it is unknown whether irrigated agriculture is causing or contributing to a water quality problem.

On February 12, 2014, Regional Water Board staff's review of the 2013 Annual Monitoring Report for the San Joaquin River Chlorpyrifos and Diazinon TMDL Compliance Monitoring prepared jointly by the East San Joaquin Water Quality Coalition and the Westside San Joaquin River Watershed Coalition (Coalitions) was provided to the Coalitions. The report covers the period of October 1, 2011 through September 30, 2012. The [review and the report](#) are posted on the Regional Board website.

On February 13, 2014, the Executive Officer approved the Coalition's June 4, 2013 Silva Drain at Meadow Drive monitoring site removal request. In its letter and a follow-up technical memorandum, the Coalition provided sufficient evidence that the waterbody mistakenly monitored instead of Silva Drain does not discharge to other surface waterbodies, and that the monitored reach is not representative of agriculture in the area.

On February 13, 2014, the Executive Officer approved the Coalition's revised Monitoring Program Update report for the 2014 water year, required by the Waste Discharge Requirements General Order R5-2012-0116-R1. The revised monitoring plan was submitted timely on December 10, 2013, and adequately addressed all items requested in the October 9, 2013 conditional approval. The monitoring plan provides the surface water monitoring schedule through September 30, 2014.

Kings River Watershed Coalition Authority (KRWCA)

On January 16, 2014, the KRWCA submitted their proposed Surface Water Monitoring Plan outline. On February 19, 2014, the KRWCA submitted their proposed Groundwater Quality Assessment Report (GAR) outline. Staff is reviewing both documents.

From January 29th through February 21st, 2014, Regional Water Board staff issued 7,305 outreach letters to potential growers within the KRWCA area. The outreach letters included an application to join the KRWCA, streamlining the grower sign-up process during the 180-day open enrollment period.

Sacramento Valley Water Quality Coalition (SVWQC)

On January 17, 2014, the Executive Officer approved a change in monitoring locations for Pine Creek in Butte County. This change will provide more reliable flows for representative monitoring, especially during irrigation season.

On January 24, 2014, the Executive Officer determined that the management plans for chlorpyrifos and for toxicity to *Ceriodaphnia* on Walker Creek in Glenn County had been completed. The SVWQC provided four years of monitoring results and documentation of extensive member outreach and education to show that the water quality problems in this waterway, and the waterways represented by Walker Creek, had been resolved.

On January 30, 2014, Regional Water Board staff met with the SVWQC and their consultants to discuss their proposed approach for their Groundwater Quality Assessment Report.

San Joaquin County and Delta Water Quality Coalition

On February 6, 2014, the San Joaquin County and Delta Water Quality Coalition submitted its 2014 monitoring schedule. Staff will review the schedule and determine if it meets the minimum monitoring requirements as per the current conditional waiver requirements.

Westside Coalition

On January 7, 2014, the Executive Officer approved the Westside San Joaquin River Watershed Coalition's Quality Assurance Program Plan. Staff determined that each element was adequately addressed in the QAPP. On January 8, 2014, the Executive Officer approved the Westside San Joaquin River Watershed Coalition's Focus Plan IV. The focus management plan identifies actions and performance goals to reduce pesticide detections, aquatic toxicity, and sediment discharge in the Blewett drain and Marshall Road Drain watersheds.

On February 12, 2014, Regional Water Board staff held the Westside San Joaquin River Watershed Coalition quarterly meeting. Topics included a summary of prior quarter activity, QA/QC feedback package results, outreach status, and Order implementation.

On February 12, 2014, Regional Water Board staff provided a review of the combined Westside Joaquin River Watershed Coalition and East San Joaquin Water Quality Coalition's San Joaquin River chlorpyrifos and Diazinon 2012 Annual Monitoring Report. The review concluded that the diazinon and chlorpyrifos water quality objectives in the San Joaquin River are currently being met, although exceedances in some tributaries still occur.

Western Tulare Basin Area

Applications to serve as a third-party representing growers under General Order R5-

2013-0120 (Tulare Lake Basin Area Irrigated Lands General Order) have been received from all prospective third parties in the Tulare Lake Basin Area. Staff reviewed the applications and the Executive Officer issued a conditional Notice of Applicability (NOA) to the Kaweah, Tule, Kern, Western Kern, Cawelo, and Buena Vista Water Quality Coalitions. The conditional NOAs allow 14 days for the third-party to comment on the conditions of the notice. Staff anticipate meeting with the third parties in the upcoming weeks to discuss their comments.

On 9 January, the Board adopted Order R5-2014-0001 Waste Discharge Requirement for Growers within the Western Tulare Lake Basin Area that are Members of a Third-party Group.

On 3 February, the prospective Westlands Water Quality Coalition applied to serve as a third-party representing growers under the Order. Staff reviewed the application and on 14 February the Executive Officer issued a conditional Notice of Applicability to the Westlands Water Quality Coalition.

Compliance and Enforcement:

In February 2014 Regional Water Board staff conducted foothill inspections in the East San Joaquin River Watershed looking for parcels that may have sediment discharges. Regional Water Board staff conducted inspections in the areas east of Oakdale and Modesto Reservoir following a significant storm event the weekend of February 8th and 9 2014. No significant sediment discharges were found by Regional Water Board staff.

On February 11, 2014, Regional Water Board staff investigated two citizen complaints of excessive sediment discharges from a vineyard in the foothills east of Sacramento and a vineyard located west of Georgetown. In both cases Regional Water Board staff found evidence of sediment discharges that warrant issuance of Notices of Violation. Further enforcement may be recommended by staff pending the results of the investigation.

Compliance and Outreach:

East San Joaquin Agricultural Parcel Inspections

In January and February 2014, Regional Water Board staff inspected 104 parcels in the East San Joaquin River Watershed. The purpose of these inspections is to determine if the parcels are commercial irrigated lands that require coverage under the Eastern San Joaquin River Watershed General Order. Data gathered during these inspections will be used to focus and prioritize the issuance of 13260 directives to commercial irrigated lands that are not covered by the Eastern San Joaquin River Watershed General Order.

Pre-ACL Settlement Letters for Failure to Comply with 13260 Directives

In January 2014, Regional Water Board staff mailed pre-Administrative Civil Liability (ACL) letters to five growers who did not respond to 13260 Directives or subsequent Notices of Violation. An additional pre-ACL letter was mailed in February. None of

these landowners has responded to date. Staff therefore plans to issue ACL Complaints in these cases.

Data Management:

Data from 2009 through 2012 for all Coalitions are available to the public on CEDEN. The latest transfer occurred in March 2014 and added data though late-2013 for most coalitions. The next transfer is planned for July 2014 and will add data through early-2014 for some coalitions. New data will continue to be transferred to CEDEN on a quarterly basis.

Data reports received in acceptable condition through March 1, 2014 are currently being processed and loaded into the California Environmental Data Exchange Network (CEDEN) comparable database provided by the Central Valley Regional Data Center (CV RDC). Data collected prior to 2009 will continue to be available on the ILRP surface water quality data webpage until those sets have been processed and transferred to CEDEN as resources permit.

Regional Water Board staff is currently processing the Westside Coalition data collected between 2004 and 2008. Once complete, these sets will complement the existing data on CEDEN providing all the data submitted by the Coalition since program inception. The current goal is to complete the Westside Coalition data by mid-2014. The next priority historical dataset will include data collected by the Sacramento Valley Water Quality Coalition between 2004 and 2008.

In August of 2013, CEDEN released the most updated and consolidated version of their electronic data templates. Over the course of 2014, the ILRP will be transitioning to the use of these new CEDEN templates for Excel based data submissions from Coalitions. This transition will assist all parties in better maintaining comparability and efficient use of resources.

On January 22, 2014, stakeholders were notified via email of the ILRP's intent to transition to new templates. A brief history and explanation of the transition was provided in an attached memo, as well as a schedule for future communications and updates to available resources and tools. A second communication was issued mid-March 2014 informing stakeholders of an update to the ILRP Data Submission Resource web page. This update provided links to the new templates as well as new resources and tools for assisting the transition.

Rice Pesticides Program:

The draft 2013 Rice Pesticides Program report was reviewed by stakeholders and no comments required clarification/modification of the report. A final report with the required field sheets, chain of custody forms, and lab data sheets was received January 24, 2014.

Nitrogen Management Plan Certification Training:

In response to the Regional Water Board's and Central Coast Water Board's new

irrigated lands requirements to address nitrates in groundwater, the California Department of Food and Agriculture, the California Certified Crop Advisor Program and UC Agriculture and Natural Resources (UC ANR) developed a Nitrogen Management Training Program. The Program is a joint effort to develop and implement a voluntary nitrogen management curriculum specifically targeted for California Certified Crop Advisors (CCAs). The goal of the program is to facilitate CCAs' understanding of sound nitrogen management practices and increase their ability to make informed recommendations to growers, thereby improving environmental performance relative to nitrogen management for crop production.

Regional Water Board staff have had input into the development of the curriculum and are serving as instructors for the portion of the training that addresses Water Board regulatory requirements.

On January 14, 2014, Regional Water Board staff presented at a nitrogen management training event CCA's held in Modesto. The presentation covered the ILRP and potential new grower requirements. The meeting was attended by approximately 160 CCA's.

On February 18, 2014, Regional Water Board staff presented at a nitrogen management training event in Woodland. The presentation covered the same topics as the Modesto meeting, but was tailored to growers in the Sacramento River Watershed. The meeting was held in Woodland and attended by over 150 CCA's.

Information Management System Development:

The new Orders being adopted by the board have resulted in the need to collect and manage more information. Regional Water Board staff is involved in several efforts to meet these new information management needs.

For growers who did not directly enroll with a Coalition during the allowed direct enrollment timeframe, an electronic Notice of Intent (eNOI) tool is available on [online](#).

The eNOI is supported through the GeoTracker system. As the deadlines for growers to directly enroll with third-party groups pass, Regional Water Board staff intends to work with the State Board to have an eNOI for each third-party Order.

Regional Water Board staff is working with the State Water Board's Office of Information Management and Analysis (OIMA) and Division of Information Technology (DIT) to develop a pilot information management system to handle the tracking of thousands of parcels that are currently not enrolled in the ILRP.

Regional Water Board staff is also participating in a state-wide effort with other regional water boards and the State Water Board to develop a comprehensive information management solution for the ILRP. OIMA staff is leading the effort in

developing a Feasibility Study Report and water board program staff is identifying priority business needs.