

IRRIGATED LANDS REGULATORY PROGRAM UPDATE November 2018

This month's Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program update provides a summary of significant activities of State Water Resources Control Board staff from October 15, 2018 to November 15, 2018, and the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board from September 15, 2018 to November 15, 2018. Next month's report will present activities of the North Coast, San Francisco Bay, Central Coast, Los Angeles, Lahontan, Colorado River Basin, Santa Ana, and San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Boards and cover the period between October 15, 2018 and December 15, 2018.

STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program staff (staff) conducted the quarterly program roundtable meeting on October 25, 2018. This meeting was a conference call meeting with the regional water board program managers to provide updates and to discuss programmatic issues.

On October 30, 2018, staff participated in a meeting with the California Rice Commission to discuss program fees and alternatives to the fee structure.

On November 1, 2018, staff participated in a stakeholder meeting in San Luis Obispo led by staff from the Fee Branch or the Water Board. Items discussed included the current fee structure, possible alternatives to the fee structure for the agricultural program, the process for adopting fees and the fee structure, and the various ways stakeholders can be involved in the fee process.

On November 15-16, 2018, staff attended the California Bioresources Alliance annual symposium. The theme of the symposium was "Implementing Organics Recycling in Your Community." This year's 13th annual symposium looked at how local communities in Southern, Central, and Northern California are implementing organic waste reduction projects to meet the goals required by state regulations. There was a mix of presentations by local community representatives, flash presentations on new bioresources projects and technologies, and open discussion on implementing projects and achieving California's waste diversion, healthy soils, and renewable fuels goals.

REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARDS

Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board staff held a quarterly stakeholder meeting on October 18, 2018 to provide an open forum for communication between staff, agricultural coalitions, environmental justice groups, and other interested parties in the Central Valley Region. The stakeholder meeting was held at the Stanislaus County Farm Bureau, with a focused discussion on new requirements from the precedential East San Joaquin Petition Order, including use of a new Irrigation Nitrogen Management Plan template, development of an on-farm drinking water well monitoring program, updates of the ILRP General Orders, approval of the Drinking Water Notification Template, and development of an external public review process for the East San Joaquin Coalition's surface water monitoring framework. These items will also be discussed during the Central Valley Water Board's Board Meeting scheduled for December 6-7, 2018.

On November 6, 2018, the Central Valley Water Board released proposed revisions to seven General Orders for Growers within the Central Valley that are Members of a Third-Party Group.

The Board will consider adoption of the revisions at the Board Meeting scheduled for February 7-8, 2019. Written comments are due by 5:00 pm on December 21, 2018. Orders with proposed revisions include: Sacramento River Watershed, Sacramento Valley Rice Growers, San Joaquin County and Delta, Western San Joaquin River Watershed, Grasslands Drainage Area, Western Tulare Lake Basin, and Tulare Lake Basin.

Staff continues to concentrate on compliance, outreach, and enforcement efforts in the following areas: agricultural parcel inspections; Water Code section 13260 Directives; Notices of Violation for failure to respond to a Water Code section 13260 Directive and failure to comply with Orders; and Administrative Civil Liability Complaints. From September to early November 2018, Central Valley Water Board staff conducted 133 parcel inspections to assess the need for ILRP enrollment and 4 on-farm inspection to evaluate General Order compliance, and issued 231 directives and 856 Notices of Violation. In October, the Board also reached a settlement agreement for a civil liability complaint with a grower for failing to obtain regulatory coverage.

Additional information can be found at the following link:

http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/water_issues/irrigated_lands/index.shtml