

**IRRIGATED LANDS REGULATORY PROGRAM UPDATE  
CENTRAL VALLEY WATER BOARD  
September 2010**

This month's Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program (ILRP) monthly report will provide an update on activities of the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (Central Valley Water Board) ILRP, as reported in the Central Valley Water Board's September 22-23, 2010 Executive Officer's report. Current and past ILRP program monthly reports can be found on the [State Water Board's Agriculture Program Website](#).

**General**

On 28 July 2010, staff released a Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) and Economics Report for the long-term program. The Draft PEIR provides programmatic analysis of impacts resulting from the implementation of the five programmatic alternatives developed by the Stakeholder Advisory Workgroup and a staff preferred alternative for regulating waste discharges from irrigated agricultural lands. The public comment period for the Draft PEIR, Economics Report, and recommended ILRP is from 28 July – 27 September 2010.

During the month of August 2010 staff has had informal discussions with several Stakeholder Advisory Workgroup members regarding the Draft PEIR and Economics Report. These meetings included representatives from the agricultural industry, water quality coalitions, and environmental/ environmental justice groups. Staff has also met with Board members Walters and Isham to provide an informational briefing on the preferred alternative and the approaches used in conducting the economic and environmental analysis. Briefings are scheduled with Board members Hart, Longley, Meraz, and Odenweller prior to the Board's September meeting.

In September 2010, four public workshops will be held throughout the Central Valley to discuss the Draft PEIR and Economics Report. Workshop dates and locations are as follows: September 8th – Tulare; September 9th – Modesto; September 10th – Rancho Cordova; September 10th – Chico.

The next major milestones of the project include circulation of a Final EIR and recommended long-term ILRP in early 2011 and a Central Valley Water Board hearing to follow release of the final documents. The 5 April 2010 settlement agreement, endorsed by the Superior Court, requires that staff present and recommend that the Board certify a Final EIR by 31 March 2011. Orders to implement the long-term ILRP are proposed to be developed for Board consideration during the year following Board certification of the PEIR.

## **Outreach**

### **Postcards:**

In July 2010, Central Valley Water Board staff issued 262 outreach postcards to potential owners of irrigated lands in Stanislaus and Butte Counties. The Stanislaus county postcards were mailed to landowners in the East San Joaquin Water Quality Coalition and the Westside San Joaquin River Watershed Coalition; the Butte county postcards were mailed to landowners in the Sacramento Valley Water Quality Coalition area. The postcard recipients were identified using county tax assessor rolls and state and federal agricultural land use databases. The postcards advise qualifying owners of irrigated lands to obtain the proper regulatory coverage.

### **Exemption Claim Inspections:**

In July and August 2010, Central Valley Water Board staff completed 29 inspections to verify landowner exemption claims to the ILRP. Staff verified that lands associated with all 29 inspections were exempt from regulatory coverage under the ILRP. Landowners can respond to ILRP staff's postcards or 13267 Orders by claiming their land is not used for agriculture, not irrigated, or that it has no irrigation tail water or storm water runoff (no waste discharges). These claims create a need for verification inspections, which staff regularly conducts.

## **Enforcement**

### **California Water Code section 13267 Orders & Notices of Violation:**

In July and August 2010, the Executive Officer issued 60 CWC §13267 Orders to potential owners of irrigated lands in Contra Costa, Lake and San Joaquin Counties. These Orders were issued to landowners who first received an outreach postcard and subsequently did not respond. (WO/BLS)

### **Unauthorized Discharges and Complaints:**

On 2 August 2010, Central Valley Water Board staff responded to a complaint of irrigation discharges containing excessive sediment being discharged from Victoria Island, a Delta island near the town of Discovery Bay. Board staff inspected the site along with the agricultural operators and a representative from the San Joaquin County & Delta Water Quality Coalition. No turbid discharges were observed during the inspection, and pollution management practices were generally found to be good. Staff will follow up with additional inspections as needed.

## **Coalition Groups**

### **California Rice Commission (CRC):**

The Regional Water Board review for the CRC Quality Assurance Program Plan (QAPP) submitted under Monitoring and Reporting Program Order No.

R5-2010-0805 has been completed. The CRC will submit a hard copy of the QAPP with the required signatures to finalize the document.

Monitoring results for the Rice Pesticides Program from the CRC, the City of Sacramento, and the City of West Sacramento have been received for the season. The results will be evaluated to determine if modifications are needed for the next season. The Regional Water Board will schedule a meeting with stakeholders in October 2010 to discuss monitoring results and any changes to the implemented management practices.

**East San Joaquin Water Quality Coalition (ESJWQC):**

On 16 August 2010 the Coalition submitted a status report regarding Performance Goal 1, which is to individually contact members on adjacent properties to waterways where dischargers have been identified to fill out surveys for the second set of high priority areas.

A meeting is being schedule with the Coalition for October 2010 to discuss the status of management practices implementation for the first set of high priority areas and status on overall management plan implementation.

**Goose Lake Coalition:**

Staff has commented on a draft Management Plan for *E. coli* on Lassen Creek. Goose Lake RCD is incorporating changes and making revisions and will have a second draft available for Staff review by 15 September 2010.

**Pleasant Valley Coalition:**

The Pleasant Valley Coalition set a 28 August 2010 due date for collection of fees from its irrigating landowners wishing to join Westlands Coalition. Upon collection of the fees, Pleasant Valley will sign a Memorandum of Agreement with Westlands ratifying the agreement to add Pleasant Valley growers to Westlands Coalition. Westlands plans to add the additional acreage to their participant list on 1 January 2011.

**Sacramento Valley Water Quality Coalition (SVWQC):**

On 8 July 2010, regional board staff met with staff from the Yolo County Flood Control and Water Conservation District, Reclamation District 108, and the SVWQC to be introduced to the conditions that influence water quality and water supply in Yolo County. The visit included a tour of some of the irrigation and drainage infrastructure between Woodland and the Yolo Bypass.

On 8 July 2010, regional board staff met with staff and subwatershed coordinators from SVWQC for a quarterly review of the Sacramento Valley Management Plan. Information reviewed included Management Plan activities for the current year, Source Evaluation Reports (SERs) submitted by the Coalition in March 2010, and the status of surveys being conducted in various subwatersheds. Discussions of management plan activities presented in the SERs continued through two phone conferences between SVWQC representatives and regional board staff.

The SVWQC held its Quarterly Coalition Meeting with representatives of each of the nine subwatersheds on 22 July 2010 in Yuba City. Water Board Staff attended the meeting. Regional board staff presented information on the current activities of the Irrigated Lands Program in the Sacramento Valley, and reviewed the progress and planning for the long-term Irrigated Lands program.

**San Joaquin County and Delta Water Quality Coalition (SJCDWQC):**

On 2 July 2010, staff conducted a field inspection in response to a discharge complaint. Tail water from agricultural fields had a turbidity reading of 260 nephelometric units (ntu) compared to the supply water of 11 ntu. The tail water discharges into an underground pipe which appears to connect to a Marsh Creek Road roadside ditch. This water travels east until it enters Kellogg Creek and then into the residential neighborhood in Discovery Bay. Staff has contacted the San Joaquin County and Delta Water Quality Coalition (Coalition) and the landowner to take corrective action measures.

On 23 July 2010, staff conducted a field inspection in response to a discharge complaint. The complaint indicated that tail water from agricultural fields is transporting sediment to Old River from Victoria Island. Although the discharge was not observed during the site visit, staff will contact the San Joaquin County and Delta Water Quality Coalition (Coalition).

On 3 August 2010, staff held the eighth quarterly meeting with the San Joaquin County and Delta Water Quality Coalition (Coalition) to discuss progress of implementing the Coalition's Management Plan.

On 12 August 2010, staff completed the San Joaquin County and Delta Water Quality Coalition (Coalition) April 2010 Management Plan Update Report review. It is under supervisor review.

**Southern San Joaquin Valley Water Quality Coalition (SSJWQC):**

On 9 July 2010, staff issued a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) Completeness Review memo that identified MRP Order requirements missing from the SSJWQC QAPP. On 9 August, staff received a revised QAPP, which is currently under review.

On 26 July 2010, the Executive Officer approved the SSJWQC Monitoring and Reporting Program Plan.

**Westside Coalition:**

On 9 August 2010, regional board staff met with Coalition representative to discuss a draft of the Hospital and Ingram Creek Focus Plan Update report. On 25 August, regional board staff met with Coalition representatives to discuss quarterly updates to the Coalition Management Plan and Focus Plan's for Hospital Creek, Ingram Creek, Del Puerto Creek, Westley Wasteway, and Orestimba Creek watersheds.

## **Individual Enrollment**

### **Order Oakdale Irrigation District (OID):**

Staff completed its review of the annual monitoring report have submitted comments to the Irrigation District.

### **South San Joaquin Irrigation District (SSJID):**

Staff completed its review of the annual monitoring report have submitted comments to the Irrigation District.

### **Merced Irrigation District (Merced ID):**

Staff completed its review of the annual monitoring report have submitted comments to the Irrigation District.

### **Modesto Irrigation District (Merced ID):**

Staff is currently reviewing the annual monitoring report.

## **Fees**

On 24 August 2010, regional board staff attended a fee meeting hosted by the State Water Board. The meeting provided irrigated agricultural representatives an opportunity to hear about proposed fee increases and provide feedback to the State Water Board staff. The Governor's Budget Act for FY 10- 11 includes a requirement to fund the state-wide irrigated lands program solely from fees, which shifts \$1.7 million from the general fund to fees. In order to generate the \$2.6 million in needed revenue, the State Water Board staff will propose a fee increase from the current \$0.12 / acre to \$0.49 / acre.

## **MOU Pilot Program**

The Quarterly Report for the second quarter (April thru June) of 2010 has been posted on the ILRP website. A meeting on 31 August 2010 will discuss the staff recommended alternative for the long- term program and the role and effect it may have on the Agricultural Commissioner. Feedback from other Agricultural Commissioners on the proposed alternative is expected to be conveyed in the meeting.

## **Prop 84 Grant Funding**

A draft grant agreement with a detailed Scope of Work has been submitted to the State Water Board Department of Financial Assistance (DFA) for review. A finalized grant agreement is expected to be completed by the end of October 2010. This grant was

awarded to the Coalition for Urban/Rural Environmental Stewardship (CURES) who will provide program management for the implementation of management practices to address water quality exceedances identified in the Central Valley due to agricultural sources.