

**STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD
BOARD MEETING SESSION – DIVISION OF WATER QUALITY
MARCH 4, 2014**

ITEM 9

SUBJECT

INFORMATION ITEM ON DRAFT MAPS OF AREAS OF CONCERN FOR NITRATE IN GROUNDWATER AS RECOMMENDED IN THE SBX2 1 NITRATE REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE

DISCUSSION

Nitrate is a contaminant found in California's groundwater sources often at concentrations above health standards. Common sources of nitrate in water are associated with wastewater and fertilizer production and application. There is no simple way to remove nitrate from groundwater since it dissolves rapidly and can remain there for decades.

A large number of communities in California are faced with elevated nitrate levels in groundwater. Many of these communities are small, rural, economically disadvantaged, and are unable to afford available treatment technologies or alternative water supplies. The State Water Resources Control Board's (State Water Board's) Report to the Legislature for SBX2 1: "Recommendations Addressing Nitrate in Groundwater" recommended that nitrate high-risk areas "define and identify nitrate high-risk areas in order to prioritize regulatory oversight and assistance efforts in these areas."

Staff will present draft maps of areas of concern for nitrate in groundwater. These initial draft maps focus on defining and identifying nitrate areas to prioritize assistance efforts in these areas where existing groundwater data indicates nitrate in groundwater sources. Areas of regulatory oversight will be further defined by high-risk maps created at the regional and local level. Every five years and as new groundwater quality data are available, the State Water Board will re-evaluate these nitrate areas to coincide with the publication of Department of Water Resources' California Water Plan.

POLICY ISSUE

None (Information Item only).

FISCAL IMPACT

None (Information Item only).

REGIONAL BOARD IMPACT

None (Information Item only).

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

None (Information Item only).

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| Shared information related to this item will assist the Water Boards in reaching Goals 2 and 3 of the Strategic Plan Update: 2008-2012. Goal 2 is to improve and protect groundwater quality in high-use basins by 2030. Goal 3 is to promote sustainable local water supplies. |
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