

**STATE OF CALIFORNIA
REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD
CENTRAL COAST REGION**

SUPPLEMENTAL SHEET FOR REGULAR MEETING OF OCTOBER 23, 2009

Prepared October 21, 2009

ITEM NUMBER: 21 – Executive Officer’s Report

SUBJECT: Public Comments Regarding Agricultural Regulatory Program – Ag Order Renewal Public Process

Water Board staff received several letters (attached) from the agricultural community regarding the Agricultural Regulatory Program – Ag Order Renewal public process (pp 6-9 of EO Report). The letters addressed many topics, including details about current Agricultural Regulatory Program implementation and details about Ag Advisory Panel interactions. The focus of the Agricultural Regulatory Program information in the Executive Officer’s Report is to discuss budget priorities and to update the Board on the status of the Ag Advisory Panel and its role in the broader public process.

The Ag Advisory Panel had eight meetings since January 2009 (three meetings during the summer months were held without Water Board staff participation). In considering how best to move forward with the Ag Advisory Panel and the various public process alternatives available to achieve meaningful public input to the Ag Order Renewal, staff is reflecting on the following questions:

- 1) Was the role and purpose of the Ag Advisory Panel clear to all panel members?
- 2) Did panel members have mutual understanding of the role, purpose, and desired outcome?
- 3) Did all panel members have the opportunity to participate?
- 4) Did the panel make progress toward the purpose and desired outcome?

Water Board staff updated the Board on Agricultural Regulatory Program implementation, and the Ag Order Renewal and Ag Advisory Panel process at the December 2008, June 2009 and July 2009 Board Meetings. As staff continues to implement the Agricultural Regulatory Program toward water quality improvement and healthy watersheds, staff will consider comments received regarding program implementation and the regulation of agricultural discharges. Similarly, we will consider all comments we receive regarding our proposed update of the Ag Order, scheduled for July 2010. We will provide those comments for the Board along with our analysis of the pros and cons of various options, and our recommendations.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Central Coast Agricultural Water Quality Coalition letter dated Oct. 13, 2009
2. Grower Shipper Association letter dated Oct. 14, 2009
3. San Luis Obispo County Farm Bureau letter dated Oct. 15, 2009
4. Salinas Valley Water Coalition letter dated Oct. 23, 2009
5. Central Coast Water Quality Preservation, Inc. letter dated Oct. 20, 2009