

Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board

16 October 2023

David Guy, President
Northern California Water Association
Sacramento Valley Water Quality Coalition
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Sacramento, CA 95814-4496

SACRAMENTO VALLEY WATER QUALITY COALITION – APPROVAL OF THE 2024 MONITORING PLAN UPDATE

Thank you for submitting the 2024 Monitoring Plan Update for the Sacramento Valley Water Quality Coalition, which was last revised and submitted on 3 October 2023. This schedule provides detailed plans for monitoring water quality constituents at Representative and Integration monitoring sites as required by the *Waste Discharge Requirements General Order for Growers in the Sacramento River Watershed that are Members of a Third-Party Group, Order R5-2014-0030-11* (Order). This plan also presents the monitoring schedule for Special Project sites, and all monitoring required for Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) and Management Plans in the Coalition area.

Central Valley Water Board staff has reviewed the 2024 Monitoring Plan Update and supporting documentation, including the Pesticide Evaluation Protocol. The 2024 Monitoring Plan Update is consistent with the Surface Water Quality Monitoring Requirements (Section III) of the MRP Order. For these reasons, I approve the 2024 Monitoring Plan Update.

Any additional revisions or updates to the 2024 Monitoring Plan will require my approval prior to implementation of any such changes. If you have any questions or comments, you may contact Victor Bautista at (530) 226-3458, or by email at Victor.Bautista@waterboards.ca.gov.

Adam Laputz
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Water Boards

Patrick Pulupa
Executive Officer

Enclosure: Staff Review of Monitoring Plan Update for 2024 Water Year

cc: Bruce Houdesheldt, NCWA

Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board

TO: Petra Lee
Senior Environmental Scientist
IRRIGATED LANDS REGULATORY PROGRAM

FROM: Victor Bautista
Environmental Scientist
IRRIGATED LANDS REGULATORY PROGRAM

DATE: 5 October 2023

SUBJECT: MONITORING PLAN UPDATE FOR 2024 WATER YEAR –
SACRAMENTO VALLEY WATER QUALITY COALITION

The Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (Central Valley Water Board) received the 2024 Monitoring Plan Update from the Sacramento Valley Water Quality Coalition (Coalition) on 1 August 2023, as required by the *Waste Discharge Requirements General Order for Growers in the Sacramento River Watershed that are Members of a Third-Party Group, Order R5-2014-0030-11* (Order). Two revisions were submitted, with the latest revision submitted on 3 October 2023. The 2024 Monitoring Plan Update provides the proposed surface water monitoring schedule for the period 1 October 2023 through 30 September 2024 (2024 water year).

Recommendation

Staff recommends approval of the 2024 Monitoring Plan Update. Staff determined that the plan is consistent with the Surface Water Quality Monitoring Requirements (Section III) of the MRP Order. An overview of the main elements of the 2024 Monitoring Plan Update is presented below.

Monitoring Requirements and Schedule

The Monitoring Plan Update for the 2024 water year includes the required representative monitoring sites, integration sites, and special project sites. The Monitoring Plan Update consists of an Excel workbook, including a series of worksheets providing site-specific monitoring details, a monitoring summary table, and a monitoring schedule. All sites are identified in the 2024 Monitoring Year (MY) Summary Table, as well as in the Site-Specific Monitoring Table.

Representative Sites (REP): Non-assessment monitoring is scheduled at 14 (of 15) representative sites for water year 2024, the second year of the two-year non-assessment period. Non-assessment representative site monitoring consists of 1) monitoring required by surface water quality management plans, and 2) follow-up monitoring for water quality objective exceedances that occurred during the last assessment monitoring period. Representative monitoring sites are selected to be representative of all types of irrigated agriculture within the designated represented watersheds. The representative site Big Lake, located in the Pit River subwatershed, is enrolled in the Reduced Monitoring/Management Practices Verification Option, and monitoring during water year 2024 is not required.

Integration Sites (INT): Three integration sites are included in the 2024 Monitoring Plan Update and are used to identify cumulative effects and long-term trends of drainages in the Sacramento River Watershed. Monitoring is scheduled twice during irrigation season (May and August) and twice during the storm season (November and February). Integration site storm events may be moved within a month of the planned event to obtain significant storm runoff samples.

Special Project Sites (SP): Special project (non-representative) sites are additional sites selected to evaluate management practice-specific effects on identified water quality problems, to identify the source of a problem, and to monitor the status of an identified water quality problem. The 2024 Monitoring Plan Update includes the required monitoring for one special project site on McGaugh Slough for the Clear Lake Nutrient TMDL.

Representative and Integration Site Monitoring

Pesticides: The Coalition utilized the Pesticide Evaluation Protocol (PEP) to identify pesticides proposed in the Monitoring Plan Update, including pyrethroid pesticides. The pesticides proposed for monitoring at each site depend on pesticide use and prioritization of monitoring (ranking of pesticides) based on aquatic life and human health toxicity reference values. In addition, environmental fate factors, available monitoring data, availability of analytical methods, and site-specific considerations (monthly use, management plan status, etc.) were evaluated when selecting the pesticides proposed for the 2024 Monitoring Plan. Staff conducted a thorough review of the implementation of the PEP steps. Staff concurs with the proposed pesticide monitoring.

Metals: The Coalition utilized the PEP to determine the monitoring frequency of applied metals (boron, copper, zinc). For the remaining metals (arsenic, cadmium, lead, molybdenum, nickel, and selenium), the Coalition based monitoring decisions on regionally elevated metals concentrations and historical monitoring data. Staff concurs with this approach and with the proposed metals monitoring.

Aquatic and Sediment Toxicity: Water column toxicity monitoring for *Ceriodaphnia dubia* and *Selenastrum capricornutum* is scheduled to coincide with the application of pesticides and metals (identified through the PEP process) to which the test species are

sensitive. Water column toxicity monitoring for *Hyalella azteca* is scheduled to coincide with pyrethroid monitoring per the Pyrethroid Control Program. Sediment toxicity monitoring for *Hyalella azteca* is scheduled at each site twice a year per the MRP. Staff concurs with the proposed toxicity monitoring.

Special Project Site, Management Plan, and TMDL Monitoring

Special project monitoring includes, but is not limited to, specific targeted monitoring for implementation of Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) requirements or implementation of management plans due to exceedances. Monitoring is designed to evaluate the effectiveness of changes in management practices on water quality for the constituents of concern.

Management plan monitoring is generally conducted to support source identification or to assess the effects of management practice changes and may include surveys of agricultural practices as well as water column or sediment sampling. The 2024 Monitoring Plan Update includes the recommended monitoring schedule for locations where management plans for high priority constituents are currently required and TMDLs are in place (i.e., pyrethroids at Lower Honcut Creek).

Management plan monitoring is not scheduled for *E. coli*, specific conductivity, dissolved oxygen, and pH management plans at special project sites during this non-assessment year. Instead, monitoring for these will take place at representative locations. Management at the special project locations will abide by the management actions determined for representative sites. An exception is that monitoring for field parameters (dissolved oxygen, salinity, and pH) will continue at special project sites where concurrent management plan monitoring for higher priority constituents is scheduled. Staff concurs with the proposed special project monitoring.

Delta Regional Monitoring Program

In March 2018, the Executive Officer approved the Coalition's participation in the Delta Regional Monitoring Program (Delta RMP). Participation allows the Coalition to revise surface water monitoring and reporting efforts in exchange for funding provided to the Delta RMP for conducting in-depth monitoring and studies related to pesticides, toxicity, nutrients, mercury, and other constituents. Delta RMP exchanges contained in the 2024 Monitoring Plan Update include:

1. Continuation of biennial reporting for the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Diazinon and Chlorpyrifos TMDL and the Sacramento and Feather Rivers Diazinon and Chlorpyrifos TMDL in the Annual Monitoring Report. The next chlorpyrifos and diazinon TMDL report will be submitted in May 2025.
2. Continuation of the reduced QA/QC reporting section from the Annual Monitoring Report.

3. Eliminating all Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta and Sacramento and Feather River Diazinon and Chlorpyrifos TMDL compliance monitoring for non-Representative sites without ongoing Management Plans.
4. Eliminating all Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta and Sacramento and Feather River Diazinon and Chlorpyrifos TMDL compliance monitoring for Representative sites without ongoing Management Plans or Single Exceedance Follow-ups.
5. Eliminating all Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta and Sacramento and Feather River Diazinon and Chlorpyrifos TMDL compliance monitoring for Integration sites without ongoing Management Plans or Single Exceedance Follow-ups.