

Assessment of Salt Sources, Transport and Fate within the Westside Region of the San Joaquin River Valley

In September 2009, Reclamation awarded a contract to develop an assessment of salt sources, transport and fate within the Westside region of the San Joaquin River Valley. The “Westside region” is defined as the Northwest and Grassland subareas by the Salinity and Boron total maximum daily load (TMDL) for the Lower San Joaquin River, but the study area will include all lands contributing runoff or irrigation drainage to the lower San Joaquin River.

The selected consultant, MWH, will complete tasks to develop a water and salt budget for the Westside region of the San Joaquin watershed, to document recent manipulations to this budget by the Grassland Bypass Project, and to determine the fate and transport of salt loading from Central Valley Project operations to the San Joaquin River. Through these tasks critical data and information gaps will be identified and prioritized.

Purpose

The purpose of the assessment is two-fold: one purpose is to complement the salt source pilot studies being developed by Larry Walker Associates under the Central Valley Salinity Coalition (CVSC); the second purpose is to develop an integrated understanding of the salt loading in the Westside region from the Delta-Mendota Canal (DMC) as well as the transport and ultimate fate of the salts. Through this work, Reclamation hopes to improve its implementation of its Management Agency Agreement with the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board and reevaluate its strategy under the Program to Meet Standards.

Scope of Work

Five tasks and two optional tasks comprise the Scope of Work. These tasks include the development of regional representative water, salt, and nitrate budgets, including identification of sources and significant processes; identification of data gaps; affirmation of DMC salt load quantification methodology; and recommendations to the developing Real-Time Salinity Management Program. MWH will periodically present developments and findings through the CV-SALTS process, and the CVSC will have an opportunity to review the final report. The two optional tasks allow Reclamation to fund additional data gathering or model refinement based on the findings of the assessment.

Schedule

The contract duration is three years. The five tasks currently funded are expected to take 12 months to complete, but the schedule may be adapted to ensure the quality of the work.

Project Management

This project is funded through the Program to Meet Standards and is managed by Lisa Holm, P.E. Ms. Holm can be reached at lholtm@usbr.gov or (916) 978-5078. Project information will be posted to the Program to Meet Standards Web site and to the CVSC Web site.

