

## Management Zone Pathway Regulatory Requirements

Purpose: Summarize the key requirements, deliverables and implementation schedule to comply with the Management Zone Pathway under the Nitrate Control Program for Priority 1 Areas.

### Management Zone Pathway: Schedule of Deliverables and Regulatory Actions

**Figure 1** provides the schedule of deliverables for Priority 1 permitted dischargers once the Notice of Comply (NTC) is received. The first key deliverable, Preliminary Management Zone Proposal (PMZP), must be submitted within 270 days of the NTC. The schedule for subsequent deliverables is provided below, but the actual delivery date will depend on the Central Valley Water Board completing the required regulatory action associated with each deliverable.

**Figure 1. Management Zone Pathway Schedule for Priority 1 Permitted Dischargers**

	Priority 1 Permitted Dischargers		Central Valley Water Board	
	Deliverables/Action	Schedule	Regulatory Actions	Schedule
↓	Submit Preliminary Management Zone Proposal (PMZP) with Early Action Plan	270 days after receiving Notice to Comply with Nitrate Control Program		
	Begin Early Action Plan Implementation	Within 60 days of submittal unless Board objects	Board oversees 30-day public comment period on PMZP submittal	No schedule established
	Submit Final Management Zone Proposal (FMZP)	Within 180 days after receipt of PMZP comments		
			Executive Officer accepts FMZP	No schedule established
	Submit Management Zone Implementation Plan (MZIP)	Within 6 months of FMZP acceptance		
			Board approves MZIP through public hearing Process	No schedule established
	Implement MZIP	Per schedule established in MZIP		
	↓			

### Description of Required Deliverables

The sections below provide a summary of the key elements to be included in each of the Management Zone deliverables. The Basin Plans contain a more detailed discussion of the requirements associated with each of these deliverables:

[https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/board\\_decisions/adopted\\_orders/resolutions/r5-2018-0034\\_res.pdf](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/board_decisions/adopted_orders/resolutions/r5-2018-0034_res.pdf)

**Preliminary Management Zone Proposal**

The PMZP is the first deliverable due to the Central Valley Water Board within 270 days of the Notice to Comply. **Figure 2** summarizes the key elements for inclusion in the PMZP. In general, the PMZP defines the Management Zone area boundary, identifies participating dischargers, characterizes the area, including current nitrate conditions in the groundwater, and contains an Early Action Plan to address drinking water needs for residents that are relying on a drinking water source with nitrate levels that exceed the water quality objective.

**Figure 2. Key Elements of a Preliminary Management Zone Proposal and Early Action Plan Requirements**

<i><b>Preliminary Management Zone Proposal</b></i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proposed preliminary boundaries of the Management Zone area;</li> <li>• Initial Management Zone participants/dischargers and other potential participants;</li> <li>• Initial assessment of groundwater conditions;</li> <li>• Current treatment and control efforts, or management practices of participating dischargers;</li> <li>• Initial identification of public water supplies or domestic wells within the Management Zone area with nitrate concentrations exceeding the water quality objective;</li> <li>• Areas within/adjacent to the Management Zone that overlap with other management areas/activities;</li> <li>• Early Action Plan to address drinking water needs for those relying on wells with nitrate levels exceeding the water quality objective (see below);</li> <li>• Proposed timeline for (a) identifying additional participants; (b) further defining boundary areas; (c) developing proposed governance/funding structure for Management Zone administration; (d) additional evaluation of groundwater conditions across the Management Zone, if necessary; and (e) submittal of Final Management Zone Proposal and a Management Zone Implementation Plan; and</li> <li>• Optional: Other constituents of concern that Management Zone will address.</li> </ul>
<i><b>Early Action Plan</b></i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Process to identify affected residents; outreach to ensure these residents are informed of and given the opportunity to participate in the development of the Early Action Plan;</li> <li>• A process for coordinating with others that are not dischargers to address drinking water issues;</li> <li>• Specific actions and implementation schedule to address the immediate drinking water needs of those initially identified within the Management Zone impacted by groundwater that exceeds nitrate standards; and</li> <li>• A funding mechanism for implementing the Early Action Plan</li> </ul>

**Final Management Zone Proposal**

The Final Management Zone Proposal (FMZP) submittal addresses comments received from the Central Valley Water Board on the PMZP and incorporates additional information required to finalize the proposal to establish a Management Zone. It must be submitted to the Central Valley Water Board within 180 days of the receipt of comments on the PMZP. **Figure 3** summarizes the key elements for inclusion in the FMZP, including the final proposed Management Zone boundary and list of participating permitted dischargers.

### Figure 3. Key Elements of the Final Management Zone Proposal

- Address Central Valley Water Board Comments on PMZP
- Update PMZP to Include:
  - Timeline for development of the Management Zone Implementation Plan;
  - Updated list of Management Zone participants;
  - Governance structure;
  - Additional evaluation of groundwater conditions across Management Zone area (as needed);
  - Proposed approach for regulatory compliance, e.g., request for an exception of allocation of assimilative capacity;
  - How Management Zone intends to interact and/or coordinate with similar efforts, e.g., pursuant to the implementation of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA); and
  - Documentation of actions taken to implement the Early Action Plan.

### ***Management Zone Implementation Plan***

The Management Zone Implementation Plan (MZIP) submittal establishes the nitrate control implementation program that is tailored to the Management Zone and is compliant with the Basin Plan regulations. It must be submitted to the Central Valley Water Board within 6 months after the Executive Officer of the Central Valley Water Board accepts the FMZP. **Figure 4** summarizes the key elements for inclusion in the MZIP, including a schedule of implementation over the short and long term.

### Figure 4. Key Elements of the Management Zone Implementation Plan<sup>1</sup>

- Implementation Plan must address how the following goals will be achieved:
  - Safe drinking water supply is assured;
  - Balanced nitrate loadings will be achieved (to the extent reasonable, feasible and practicable); and
  - Nitrate levels in groundwater will be restored to concentrations at or below water quality objectives (to the extent reasonable, feasible and practicable)
- As part of the goal demonstration, the MZIP should include the following key elements:
  - Funding or cost share agreements or process to establish such agreements to implement Plan;
  - Nitrate management activities (may be prioritized);
  - Water quality characterization to be used as a basis for measuring progress;
  - Short ( $\leq 20$  years) and long-term ( $> 20$  years) projects and/or planning activities to be implemented;
  - Implementation schedule with interim milestones;
  - Triggers for implementation of alternative procedures if interim milestones unmet;
  - Surveillance and monitoring program; and
  - Responsibilities of each discharger, or groups of dischargers to manage nitrate.

<sup>1</sup> Note that the Central Valley Water Board will be making targeted revisions to the Basin Plans that will result in a modification to requirements for development of the MZIP