

ESTABLISHMENT OF NUMERIC SALT MANAGEMENT TARGETS

CV-SALTS Executive Committee
August 20, 2020

Regulatory Foundation

- Basin Plans
 - Beneficial Uses
 - Water Quality Objectives
 - Narrative
 - Numeric
- Historic Interpretations: Conservative
 - AGR Use protection = protect most sensitive crop that could be grown valley-wide (700 μ mhos EC)
 - MUN Use protection = apply low end of the secondary MCL (900 μ mhos EC)

New Approach Needed

Regulatory and Permitting Processes Not Addressing the Real Problem

- Salt Accumulation – acres taken out of production, billions of dollars in adverse economic impact
- Compliance with numeric limits difficult or impossible for many
- Current actions address about 15% of salt load

Need for a flexible long-term strategy that addresses the diversity of the valley, protects drinking water, sustains agriculture, and is economically viable

Where We Have Been

- A variety of technical studies/white papers over many years, e.g.:
 - 2013 – SSALTS Phase 1 – salt accumulation areas
 - 2013 – Crop Sensitivity Analysis
 - 2012-2016 – Tiered approach to AGR uses/objectives
 - 2014 – SSALTS Phase 2 – salinity management strategies
 - 2016 – Effects of elevated salinity on crops
 - 2016 – Archetypes “proof of concept” (Alta Irrigation District)
 - 2019 – SSALTS Phase 3 – salts disposal treatment alternatives

Significant Milestones

- Salt and Nutrient Management Plan (2017)
 - Manage degradation
 - Achieve long-term sustainability (salt balance) where feasible, practicable and reasonable
 - Address antidegradation concerns
 - Included both the tiered AGR uses (for groundwater) and the P&O Study
- Lower San Joaquin River Objectives (2017-2018)
 - Match existing and reasonable probable future crop patterns with water quality
 - Numeric surface water objectives and performance goals
- Salt & Nitrate Basin Plan Amendments (effective for groundwater 2020)

Where We Are Going

- Development of appropriate salt management targets for the Central Valley
 - Protect most sensitive beneficial use (AGR, MUN, others)
 - Groundwater and surface water
 - Balance salt-sensitive crop protection with water supply needs and compliance issues
- Three-year timeframe proposed in P&O Study Workplan

Issues and Challenges

- Selection of surface and groundwater models for the salt management tool
- Identification of the appropriate data set
- Compliance point for groundwater targets
- How to match water quality with use
- Extrapolation of results to entire Central Valley (and refinement locally and regionally as desired)
- How targets can encourage recycled water use and conservation

Next Steps

- September: Review of Lower San Joaquin River process
- October: Discuss key issues and challenges
- November: Confirm areas of agreement and issues for further development and any P&O Work Plan implications

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