

CV-SALTS 2011 Leadership Group Workshop Notes

February 24 2011 1:30 PM to 3:30 PM

CAL EPA Building, 1001 I Street, Sacramento, CA
Coastal Hearing Room

Attendees are listed in the attachment

OVERVIEW

An executive review of the CV-SALTS project was presented to the Leadership Group. Past accomplishments, current project status, and future focus were covered. Feedback and recommendations were solicited from the Leadership Group to clarify strategic direction for the project for 2011-2012, as well as long-term goals.

AGENDA

1) Welcome and Introductions, Opening Comments – *Tam Doduc , Kate Hart*

Tam Doduc emphasized that the State Water Board has demonstrated their commitment by investing heavily in the stakeholder process, and will continue to insist that additional funding be contingent upon results. Kate Hart echoed the same sense of urgency from the Regional Water Board indicating that they were already seeing salinity related issues with permits coming before them.

2) CVSLG and CV-SALTS Initiative Progress Determination Finding and 2011-12 Goals - *Pamela Creedon*

Pamela Creedon reviewed the major changes to the CV-SALTS initiative since 2009, and Advances and Progress made to date; while also reiterating the concern that the initiative has fallen behind schedule. It was concluded that with the progress that has been made, and with the following 2011 Milestones in place, the recommendation would be made to the Central Valley Water Board, “that we continue with the stakeholder process in developing this salt and nitrate management plan”:

- Complete both framework & salt and nitrate source study, plus a screening tool to id effective and economical management practices
- Ensure technical management team in place; project on time & on budget
- Update initiative strategy to include overall policy and framework
- Work plan to include 5-year CRITICAL PATH ensuring Recycled Water Policy requirements are met
- Identify unfunded work, with estimated costs to improve final product and a continuous funding mechanism & proposed integrated monitoring system
- Have contracts awarded or pending for critical work plan tasks
- Provide semi-annual progress reports towards completing work plan tasks

3) Future CV-SALTS Moving Forward – Basin Plan Policy and Regional Framework – *Mona Shulman*

Mona Shulman reviewed the current status and accomplishments of the Executive Committee and covered in detail the four major areas of emphasis established by the committee:

- Balancing Water Supply & Quality
- Beneficial Uses
- Water Quality Objectives
- Program for Implementation

In response to discussion regarding the required feedback mechanism for input into these four key areas, it was suggested that the Needs & Issues document be considered simply as an outline of WHAT needs to be done; all stakeholders are encouraged to offer continual feedback regarding HOW to move forward in these areas to ensure that all suggestions are considered, and if agreed upon, incorporated into the work plan.

In response to a question to the group regarding priorities in the four areas, discussion centered around the fact that although there may be some inherent order in the logic in which the four areas are approached, it was agreed that all four areas are of equal importance to the initiative.

4) Existing Stakeholder Support & Proposed Funding Plan – *Jeff Willett*

Jeff Willett reviewed both the overall current economic costs of salt and nitrate to the Central Valley, and California as a whole, and the current and future costs to administer the CV-SALTS project. The point was made that given the current \$544 million annual impact, and potential future impact without a management program, the dollar investment in CV-SALTS is only “pennies on the dollar.”

Future funding options, and concerns, were the largest area of discussion. The inquiry was made regarding what private sector grants or sources had been considered. To pursue private foundation funding a succinct plan with time frame and goals is needed to apply for such funding. There was further discussion regarding the return on increased engagement with the Multi State Salinity Coalition, and outreach to political leadership, in furtherance of the effort to gain a level of federal funding comparable to areas outside of California.

5) CV-SALTS Visions of the Future Implementation – *David Cory*

David Cory reviewed the universal impact and long-term focus of the success, or failure, of a salt and nitrate management plan. Two key approaches for the Leadership Group were cited as key to the success of the CV-SALTS initiative moving forward:

- Broader stakeholder and public education and engagement
- Expand the primary vision of the initiative beyond 2015

Discussion centered on how to promote proactive participation vs. reacting to salt and nitrate “disasters.” It was pointed out that we already have communities in the Central Valley facing disasters; communities without drinking water, growers who can no longer cultivate their land.

6) Salinity Leadership Group Actions – *Parry Klassen*

Parry Klassen summarized the panel presentations and concerns and issues raised by stakeholders in response. Based on the discussion points summarized, recommendations from the group for moving forward will taken up by the Executive Committee.

7) Closing Message – *Tim Moore*

Tim Moore advised that, based on the past performance of other salt management plans, CV-SALTS has about a 33% chance of success. To that end, the recommendation is to focus short-term efforts on building a replicable mechanism for fixing salt and nitrate related issues that can be transferred to other efforts in the future.