

**CV-SALTS Executive Committee
Meeting Notes
October 29, 2009
1:30 pm to 3:15 pm**

Attendees: See [Committee Roster](#) for attendance.

Chair Mona Shulman called the meeting called to order at 1:30 followed by introductions of all present in-house and on teleconference.

1. Welcome, Introductions, Agenda Review, Consent Calendar
 - a. Review/approve Executive Committee Meeting Notes: **Motion to approve by Karl Longley, Seconded Jeff Willet; All in favor – no opposed – motion carried**
 - b. Review/approve Annual Leadership Meeting Notes: **Motion to approve by Karl Longley, Seconded by Rob Neenan – All in favor - Motion carried**
 - c. Circulating Membership Roster for sign-in
 - d. Consent Calendar Items – Groundwater Strategy Response Letter
- Technical Issues Committee approved a brief groundwater letter David Cory 2-page letter that the Committee approved, will only be sent out with the Executive Committee chair’s signature as opposed to both the Committee chairs that are on this draft; Answering the questions of the Regional Board on developing their strategy document;
Motion for approval of consent items – Motion by Jeff Willet, seconded by Rob Neenan – all in favor - Motion carried
2. Review and approve final form MOA Document – Deferred, Darrin to update (editor’s note, this will be on the State and Regional Board December Meetings Agendas.)
3. Review and approve Policy Issues List and Program Goals

Daniel Cozad requested interim approval of a document the Technical Committee will work from. It will be modified from time to time. Some updates and changes have been made since the last meeting.

Mona commented that the primary changes to the issues list were primarily reordering issues. None of the previous issues had been opened. Need to look at regions and how management plans can be addressed. Which region is the most logical? Delve into the other policy issues based on the issues in that region.

Request to approve with the realization that this will change

Comments to indicate that the list is prioritized somewhere near the top of the page and to add a date to the document

Mona confirmed that a statement would be added to the top stating that the list was in order of perceived priority and that a date and a version would be added.

A comment also identified a punctuation error.

Comment that final disposal cost as outside the Central Valley should be indicated. Mona responded that issues 4 and 5 capture the broad idea, but agreed that the issue could be addressed further when those issues were reached. A question was raised about the final disposition of some of those? Should be looking for final disposition? Suggestion was made that this be worked into the aggregation and management. There's got to be final disposition somewhere.

Agreement from another member that final disposition or ultimate disposition should be included in the management approach. Suggestion that it be added after issue 4 with an emphasis on finding cost-effective solutions.

Suggestion that the Committee seek cost effective implementable projects be worked into 11.

Motion to accept document with proposed changes by David Cory, seconded by Jeff Willet – all in favor – the motion carried

a. Policy Issue 1 – Spatial Salinity Issues (Presentation by Rudy Schnagl)

Most of the slides and maps in the presentation are from the Department of Water Resources Bulletin 118.

Surface waters:

The State of California is divided into drainage basins. Our project addresses the Central Valley Basin, which stretches from the Oregon border to the Tehachapi Mountains to the south. There are three major basins: the Sacramento River Basin, San Joaquin River Basin, and Tulare Lake Basin. These three basins are addressed in two different water quality control plans; one for the Sacramento and San Joaquin Rivers, and the second for the Tulare Lake area.

A third basin plan applies to this area that covers the delta, which is governed by the State Board. It is a part of the Lower San Joaquin and Lower Sacramento and part of it goes into the San Francisco Bay region. All three basin plans are subject to the effort under CV-SALTS.

Only a few dozen of the thousands of water bodies in the region are listed and only a handful more have numeric water quality objectives (on the handout).

On the back of the handout there is a list of impaired water bodies that are either listed for salinity or electrical conductivity. This is the list adopted by the Central Valley Board this past June. It has not been approved by State Board or USCPA at this stage. These are water bodies up and down the valley and in the delta that have been identified as having salinity-related issues.

A map of the lower San Joaquin Basin – has been split into sub-areas, drainage areas and those are from the basin plan and are part of the implementation program for the compliance with the TMDL standard that was adopted by the board a few years

back. This shows how some areas of the valley are already split up. Each of those sub-areas has a slightly different TMDL limit and that is on the books as it stands, today.

In addition, to having this kind of break down in parts of the valley, many water bodies are segmented. The list is of water bodies with numeric objectives, but different objectives may apply to different segments of the water body.

Ground Water:

The Central Valley has one huge aquifer behind it and this report goes through each of these basins and splits it up into named water basins. This is the Sacramento River Basin region. The numbers on the map provided are designations of basin or sub-basin names. The list of names that go along with the number references have been provided. The San Joaquin River Basin has a number of sub-basins and two major basins. Then there is the Tulare Lake Basin and the basin names.

There are a lot of surface waters and a lot of ground water basins and they can be split, subdivided and numbered in different ways as necessary.

The difference between basins and sub-basins is basically institutional boundaries that define the sub-basins and the DWR was very clear in that as more study is done in different areas, the sub-basin boundaries may be modified as people learn more about the situation, as areas are adjudicated or some other additional information is added to the equation.

A question was raised was asked about what defines a water body.

Rudy responded that the definition is any place where you've got an alluvial aquifer or a series of alluvial aquifers that has recently well-defined boundaries with a lateral direction and that goes in a definable bottom.

After the presentation, the individual parts of the policy questions were discussed. First was the question: Should the Committee seek regionally based programs?

Discussion

Comment about certain instances where assessments of various practices, of various management measures need to be made. Certain things are going to be universal across, including beneficial use definitions, quality objectives criteria. The objectives may be different in certain regions. Suggestion that there be a mix of the two; some regional and some subregional as the work requires.

Rudy responded to confirm that the tools used for the Central Valley should pretty much be the same--water quality objectives and implementation may vary with areas.

Comment that some implementation tools may work better in some places than others.

Comment about how big of a box we are to draw. One participant commented that the size of the box depends on where the water is going to and coming from, and the box has to encompass most of that and may not be geographic or defined by the ground water basin.

Others commented that regionally based programs across the entire region that benefit on water quality criteria and a managerial tool box are probably things that need to be the same. Not necessarily implementation but they need to be available across all of that.

Daniel indicated that for sub-regions, the objectives may be different, the beneficial uses for some sub-basins may be different, water quality objectives may be different. We have some items that are regional and some that are sub-regional maybe the basins, the boundaries that you use. If you compile information as sub-regional basins you need to be careful that you can get them back into the regional program.

As an example: our pilot study; We have three basins in our pilot. We need a process in the end game to get those all back into a system and address the issue of upstream users' impact on downstream users. We're going to have some programs that are sub-regional. Does anyone disagree with that?

Comment about the role of the Executive Committee and the Technical Committee and the other Committees to ensure integration between the regional plans.

Comment to make more use of the criteria and objectives, and the data in each one of the sub-areas. Some might be better than others. Move forward quicker on some of those versus having to generate the data in others.

Comment that the maturity of that water management unit may be different in some areas. But, that even if maturity keeps an organization out of the process, one would want a reasonable decision based on world class data and that has to mature quickly.

Vice Chair Dorn asked, Why not just use the sub-basins that are in the Integrated Regional Water Management Program, and use that same structure to hold them back up into larger regions.

Comment that since the California Water Plan is based on integrate regional plans, CV-SALTS needs to think about whether or not to use the same approach or the same structure, or at least being able to integrate into that structure.

Another comment was that the Integrated Regional Water Management boundaries have not yet been determined. The only place in the state that has undetermined boundaries is the Central Valley. The only place that doesn't have all their water quality management groups accepted is here. So one of the reasons to do this is to help them define that CV-SALTS has a hand in it. One reason not to use that is

because it's not in bulletin 118. The DWR basins that are in bulletin 118 have been around for a long time anyway.

A question was raised about the difference in the boundaries.

Response that most of them combine a number of sub-basins, but they don't cover the entire basin. The three major basins don't cover the entirety of the three basins. The Sac River has four maybe five groups. There are lots in the San Joaquin and a fair number in the Tulare Basin. Some overlap, but they are the way the locals that want to manage themselves or at least a close approximation they're fully delineated.

Linda asked about choosing regionally based programs then adjusting as the process moved forward.

Comment stating that the regions have already said what they want their boundaries to be.

A question was raised about other basins or boundaries that CV-SALTS should consider?

Comment that pilots should be reviewed to see if they line up with an IRWM area or a set of basins. Some of the sub-basins boundaries are blurred. We have one in each basin, but a majority of any one of the basins, so that would be a good test case for do they match up with any of the IRWM area or any other management structure.

Question was raised about having to pick a border or asking the areas to tell us. DWR for the IRWM program asked the regions to tell them how they wanted to go about it. Linda asked how long that process took. Response: A while and they had money to offer.

Comment that perhaps the structure could be modified to CV-SALTS' purposes than creating a new map. Comment that groups are forming and some have plans, many are still developing plans and so they're part of the mosaic of organization out there that could work on salt. How does CV-SALTS work with these local groups? At the very minimum we should optimize everyone's efforts.

Comment that those areas should conform to the various, regional management units that are already out there.

Chair Shulman suggested that maybe the Executive Committee should determine whether or not it should be based on regions and sub-regions. Is the Technical Committee a more appropriate body to define what those regions or sub-regions are? The Executive Committee could adopt the regional management plans as the regions, subject to modification as we move forward.

Comment that even if Executive Committee had the authority and the ability to decide the boundaries, CV-SALTS probably wouldn't be successful in doing it and that's why Committee should work with what has already been defined.

Suggestion that the IRWM boundaries be investigated and ask those who want to be in IRWM group about what they believe are the right boundaries or jurisdiction for planning for salinity. And ask if there are others that are in long-standing partnerships that are already in existence that manage salinity that may not be in the IRWM groups. CV-SALTS doesn't want to force-fit something where others might come forward and volunteer. From the same perspective, the further north you get the more people need convincing as to why they should worry about salinity.

A questions was raised about what to do with people who have a limited amount of salt that they contribute. They need to be part of this because they contribute salt. But there needs to be a little different approach because they don't see themselves as being part of the problem of the San Joaquin discharge, the delta or the Tulare Lake salt build up or those sorts of issues.

Comment that those areas like the idea of asking for money if they're the right boundary to the IRWM groups and then open that to anybody else to say, we'd like to be the jurisdiction that deals with salinity for our area.

Dennis Westcot suggested that perhaps a mix of both would work. Study it, assess what impacts that basin and the ground water and ground water basins. The groundwater basins are found in bulletin 118. If an Integrated Water Management group overlaps some of those areas, that information may have to go through due process. But if they overlap several of them it's going to be very difficult for us to assess the impact of activities on that particular ground water basin. So I really see the baby steps here. One is to really define the study areas, and then get into the larger management.

A questions was raised about how to get those areas together and suggestion that they should automatically come to the table, and not just be out to protect themselves.

Suggestion that CV-SALTS use the groundwater basins as the data collection aggregation unit and use the Integrated Regional Water Management Plan as the implementation unit. Solution alternatives should be done within that Integrated Regional Water Management Planning area. Aggregation of data, no matter where the IRWMs fell you'd try to characterize that data as belonging to a groundwater basin.

Comment that CV-SALTS needs quite a bit of money to finish up the study and that once CV-SALTS starts bringing that in more people are going to come to the table. Response that it has been discussed, but there is no solid plan, yet. Comment asserting that it should be done soon.

Response: We do have a plan to have a plan. We have been talking about that and we agree. We see the need to look at that.

Answer to Question 1: Some will be regional and some will be sub-regional. CV-SALTS use the groundwater basins as the primary data collection and aggregation unit and use the

Integrated Regional Water Management Plan Regions as implementation units. These will be modified as needed working with the regional groups.

Additionally, how should we approach the basin planning process? Does everybody like the basin plan boundaries that we have now?

A question was raised about why the Sacramento and San Joaquin basins were combined into one basin plan.

Response was that there were originally three basins in the central valley. The Tulare Lake Basin really didn't have the discharge into the delta, and didn't really impact the delta except during storm periods. And that was not a water quality problem. That was a water management problem. Therefore the basins were broken up because of that. The policies regarding what inputs on the delta affected the Sacramento and San Joaquin, and the Tulare were separated.

There is a big delta plan but it only deals with salinity and flow. The basin planning is done by the Regional Board. Any discharge in the delta has to meet the policies of the regional plan.

A question was raised about modifying the big delta plans as the work proceeds into the San Joaquin River basin.

Response that if something comes up that warrants recommendation to the State Board, that process will move far ahead of this one since they are in the process at least on the San Joaquin side offsetting flow and salinity issues, but if we see something in the future....

Comment that confirmation should be verified by a State Board person. Any discharge, groundwater quality that kind of thing is all dealt with under the regional plan. The big delta plan deals with water rights and the Regional Board with salinity standards.

Conclusion: We will begin with the assumption that we will look at Sacramento/San Joaquin, and Tulare Lake Basin plans as they exist and consider changes if required.

Comment that those definitions were satisfactory. Mona commented that it's not the planning it's the implementation that seems to be more focused on watershed and water bodies.

Linda asked whether or not CV-SALTS was going to do a localized salinity and nutrient plan, or wait for the regional one.

Comment that the Santa Ana is kind of at one end of the spectrum where they did that plan for all the of the Santa Ana watershed with groups working virtually on data and management. Other areas – San Diego, parts of the Bay area – were talking about doing salinity and nutrient management plans for sub-sections of those

regions and so, when the Regional Board steers them to us, what do we do with them when we get them?

Rosa suggested that they join CV-SALTS and tell them to put their money in.

Linda commented that some of those cases may be in earlier stages of completion than CV-SALTS' work. And the State Board will not give extensions unless things are working along pretty well.

Comment that if somebody were to come forward and say we'd like to aggregate data on our area and we'd like to manage that area for salinity and nutrients, do we have a way to say, no, you can't do that? Or to say, gosh you've got to be part of this bigger group. It almost seems opportunistically we'd better say, we'd be happy to have you.

A question was raised about what NPDES permits are required for a salinity management plan and have they been done and turned in? What do they look like? How many are there? What has the Regional Board staff done with the review of them?

The response from Rudy was that some NPDES permits have been submitted with that in it. The thing is they're very agency centric if they're going alone at this because they're comparing to what their particular limits are and because there's nothing telling them otherwise.

Comment from Joe DiGiorgio, back to the previous question about, can we tell these guys you can or cannot do things regionally, our Regional Board has said, no, when we bring up regional ways to do it because they say they don't have the authority to issue that kind of trading type thing. So the agency does the best they can with what water they have control of. Where's it coming from and where it's going and what can we do to manage this stuff. And we're looking specifically at a point of compliance relative to that. To get us beyond that, that's where we get into the questions we were asking earlier. Do we integrate things regionally? To meet the requirements as they stand now, they're just doing it more with blinders saying, here's all we're responsible for, here's our report. You either like it or you don't.

Rudy responded that the dischargers are being asked to prepare salt minimization and management plans, and what staff has been doing, the reports that have come in have now been funneled to Jim Martin who is going to review them all and develop a consistency of response. We will be working with CV-SALTS once we have an overview of it so it all starts to get into a uniformity and consistency that reflects an effort with this group. We aren't there, yet, and the dischargers have been working one-on-one with other groups in the office, but we are now reviewing the plans basically through the salt staff.

A question was raised (on the phone): Are we talking about a hierarchy situation?

Response that CV-SALTS will put together a salt management, salinity and nitrate management plan that is more of an integration policy and then the various sub-basins and then the individual dischargers would then have a mechanism with which to plug into that overarching policy, so as each of the individual salinity plans are developed they'd know what kinds of things they need to be plugging into so that they can fit together with other plans that are being developed throughout the basin.

The CV-SALTS is a basin-planning effort. In other agencies' regulations it will be able to spell out what classes of dischargers have to do in response to salt, it can set regional limits of certain types (of receiving water limits), and implementation program with time schedules and everything else. But it's more of a global picture and it will apply to all the cities in the San Joaquin Basin probably fairly uniformly and it may differ in the Sacramento valley for cities. At that point, it's something that's when adopted is placed into effect through discharge requirements.

Comment that all this Committee does ends up as part of the basin plan, and parts of it in the implementation plan. Then it becomes necessary for individuals with discharge permits to adhere to those objectives and other criteria that are set forth in the basin plan.

A question was raised about whether or not there is some kind of specific work task that should define relative to this particular item.

Question, if the plans are prepared by permittees who reviews them?

Commented that CV-SALTS has one requirement in the permit, so it will be submitted to Rudy's group for review, but then how does Rudy's group review that. CV-SALTS needs to say that we've developed this basin-wide mechanism to integrate all these various individual projects from the sub-basins or individual discharge or whatever and so do they have a better way to evaluate whether or not these individual plans comply with the bigger picture?

That should already available so people know that they should do these things. My question was do we need to have a work plan to produce that so that your staff knows where we're headed on this.

Comment that the Regional Board will be reviewing all the individual plans so that a compilation of those may provide a framework for a bigger document. There are other people doing the same thing and eventually that may come together as the framework or basis for a regional document of some kind or sub-regional document.

Rudy commented that by staff going through several of these things they could get a list of the good and the bad and work off the experience and then start bringing that to the Executive Committee to give you our perspective and see what you think about it.

Joe commented that there was water academy training for board staff on this very issue about five years ago. All that information is in the handbook produced for them. What you need to look at to evaluate salts. It's a discharger-specific type framework because that's what was being given at the time. That could be a start because that's already been vetted state-wide. Some of that has already been started.

From a policy perspective Daniel commented that if somebody shows up and wants to do a Salt and Nutrient Management Plan: We say you must be aligned with CV-SALTS; You must have the work plan of what you intend to do reviewed by CV-SALTS; You have to have the draft report reviewed and approved.

Rosa commented that it would be nice if CV-SALTS could offer the guidelines before the agencies fill out their plan of what they need to do?

Daniel commented that there needs to be an implementation blueprint of what they're going to go do and are these the right things to do and will they get the right result and is that the reduction we want. We're not going to have any of those answers until we hear back from some of the folks. And if they say it's probably possible then they will probably implement it. At least if they can afford.

Conclusion: So I think we hope Joe can make a presentation on what they did 5 years ago in the Academy. By December or January we'll carry on with Rudy's staffs review of what's in the existing plans the two of those would really prepare us well for saying, what's missing, what's here...let's get on to the next problem. That makes sense.

The overarching effort that we have is the responsibility to figure out how all those efforts fit into the rest of our processes and keep it all relatively self-contained. If there is an optimization of working as regional groups, people can do that. And if we get a regional group who would like to do their salinity and nutrient management plan under the recycled water guideline from the state and they all get directed back to this group, that's what we would want to because we won't be able to have guidelines for them just yet.

If they want to move ahead, we should slow them down. We should just have them identify the area they're working on, what their work plan is and that we can integrate that work into the total and at the end make sure that that does not impact the upstream folks from the downstream folks. Does it lead to a sustainable process. It seems to me that this basin plan amendment is the place where those changes for each of those salt and nutrient management plans come forward. That would be the hook for them coming through this group to do that.

Comment that all water use impacts quality, it's a matter of what sort of impacts and whether the impact is at an acceptable level.

A question was raised about what message can be used to ensure upstream and how to engage upstream users outside the designated region. Both of those almost seem like they would be a separate discussion. They are related to this, but how to approach.

Original speaker commented that since we said yes to number one – should we have regional or sub-regional issues – maybe the response above question 1A that would be “how do we integrate those issues and an get the regions back together.

Conclusion, Start a second discussion to lay out what are some of the ways others have integrated those sorts of programs and how we might go about it. Plan that for December/January.

Mona commented that it’s important to have a State Board person, because really you’re talking outside the Central Valley too.

Response to confirm that the issue is policy integration not so much all the data integration. Does that sound right?

Conclusion: So we’ve decided that we should seek regionally based programs based on existing DWR groundwater basins and then implement it through the Integrated Regional Water Management Plan areas. We will develop guidelines for the Regional Board to give people who approach them for salinity and nutrient management plans after we get educated from Joe and Rudy.

In November we’ll bring back the discussion we had today and any residual questions to confirm. Also we will try to pick up the anti-degradation paper preparation in December for a January Discussion.

4. Goals and Progress

Any issues that you believe should be added to the work plan for the 2010 year, please provide them to Daniel.

5. Reports

- a. Rosa – draft marketing plan, the Committee developed a master PowerPoint presentation to tailor to different audiences. Feedback that presentation was too long. But feedback was good.

We’re going to be working on a couple of different projects like that. A one-page fact sheet for the CV Salinity Coalition Membership.

I received a factsheet for IRWM Groups from the Water Board; we’re going to be looking at that one, this afternoon. It is a fact sheet for IRWM groups who are working on that as to how what can be deltas and why should they care.

Rudy: We have a staff person working with the IRWM groups in the Sacramento basin and she prepared a one-page fact sheet for this program and a number of

other programs for comment. So that's what this started out as and with this Committee we would like to see your comments before we respond.

A question was raised about whether or not it is possible to do something like that geared more to ag-water quality coalition...the interest is really coming from the ag-water quality coalition versus the IRWM effort. Rosa: We have several efforts that are the purpose of this master PowerPoint to find the audience and meet the needs of that audience.

- b. David Cory: We're going to have a meeting on December 7th on the draft report presentation. They are making progress.

Comment: One of the things that they had spent a lot of time on, is on quantifying the salt level in those areas and animal confinement facilities, because you remember when we did the (?) report, that was one of the criticisms of the report that we really didn't characterize some of the salt loads and I think they have been working to ensure that what they put in there is really factual.

- c. The Technical Committee is also going to be doing a goal sheet for next year.
- 6. Nothing additional presented for Agenda Item 6.
 - 7. Next meeting is November 19th. ACWA downtown. We're open for December.
 - 8. Adjourned