

**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. The Chair noted that a Membership Roster for sign-in is circulating.
  - d. Consent Calendar Items – Groundwater Strategy Response Letter  
David Cory reported that the Technical Issues Committee approved a brief groundwater letter, which will only be sent out with the Executive Committee chair’s signature.  
**Motion for approval of consent items – Motion by Jeff Willet, seconded by Rob Neenan – all in favor - Motion carried**
2. Item 2, Review and approve final form MOA Document was deferred, in the absence of a State Water Board Representative.
3. Review and approve Policy Issues List and Program Goals

Daniel Cozad requested interim approval of a document the Technical Committee will work from, which 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. The first issue of priority is the need to look at regions and how management plans can be addressed. Which region is the most logical? The Committee will delve into the other policy issues based on the issues in that region.

Discussion ensued about whether final disposal of salinity as outside the Central Valley should be indicated in the Issue Statement No. 1. It was discussed that issues 4 and 5 capture the broad idea, but that the issue could be addressed further.

Another suggestion was made that the Committee’s goal to seek cost effective implementable projects be worked into Item11.

**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.

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

Discussion ensued regarding the idea that certain things are going to be universal across, including beneficial use definitions, quality objectives criteria, which apply state wide, however 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. It was noted that some implementation tools may work better in some places than others.

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. 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.

Comment about the role of the Executive Committee and the Technical Committee and the other Committees to ensure integration between the regional plans, and subregional objectives. Data in each one of the sub-areas, may be better than others, and the effort can move forward more quickly on some of those versus having to generate the data in others.

The maturity of that water management unit may be different in some areas, also. 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.

Discussion ensued about using the sub-basins defined in the Integrated Regional Water Management Program 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. However, the Integrated Regional Water Management boundaries have not yet been determined. The Central Valley is where they are mostly undetermined, which would slow progress. One of the reasons to use the IRWMs is to help them define the regions, and that CV-SALTS would have a hand in it. Conversely, the DWR basins that are in bulletin 118 have been around for a long time anyway, and time would be saved by utilizing them.

Perhaps the structure could be modified to CV-SALTS' purposes rather than creating a new map. 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. It may help CV-SALTS effort to be successful if we utilize existing boundaries.

Discussion ensued 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.

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.

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 exist we would 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: The Committee decided that the currently existing Basins as defined by Basin Plans will be the Broad regions. This may be enough definition in some cases, and in others, some will be sub-regional. CV-SALTS use the DWR groundwater basins as the primary data collection and aggregation unit using Integrated Regional Water Management Plan Regions as implementation units. These may be modified working with the regional groups.**

**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.**

Discussion ensued regarding data collection and how to get participation by subregional groups, both in implementation, management and costs.

Question 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?

Response from Rudy 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.

Discussion ensued that 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 at the Regional Board who is going to review them all and develop a consistency of response. The Regional Board will work with CV-SALTS so it all starts to get into a uniformity and consistency that reflects an effort with this group. Currently, the dischargers have been working one-on-one with other groups in the office, but the Board Staff are now reviewing the plans basically through the salt staff.

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.

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?

**Conclusion: Joe should make a presentation on what they did 5 years ago in the Academy. By December or January we'll carry on with Board's staff's review of what's in the existing plans the two of those would really prepare us well for 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.**

Question 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.

**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.

Rosa received a factsheet for IRWM Groups from the Water Board; and the Committee is 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.

Question 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 7<sup>th</sup> 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 19<sup>th</sup>. ACWA downtown. We're open for December.

8. Adjourned