

May 15, 2012

CV-SALTS UPDATE ON DEVELOPMENT OF MASTER SALT AND NITRATE  
MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR THE CENTRAL VALLEY OF CALIFORNIA

Dear CV-SALTS Stakeholder:

You are receiving this letter because you have had some interest and/or association with the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board's (Water Board) CV-SALTS initiative; a stakeholder effort to develop a Salt and Nitrate Management Plan for the entire Central Valley. We have made good and steady progress since this effort was initiated in 2006. Importantly, as summarized below, we are now moving into discussing and developing the real "nuts and bolts" of the future policy and regulatory program to be considered by the Water Board in 2014. The decisions being made now and over the next few months will likely affect your agency or industry. Now is the time to engage or re-engage in the CV-SALTS stakeholder process. Please read the following summary and take the time to investigate the documents associated with this effort. We encourage you to contact Daniel Cozad at [dcozad@cvsalinity.org](mailto:dcozad@cvsalinity.org) or attend our next executive meeting to find out how you can become an active participant in this effort.

**Status Summary:**

The stakeholder driven Central Valley Salinity Alternatives for Long-Term Sustainability (CV-SALTS) initiative has approved an updated strategy, framework and workplan for developing a Central Valley-wide salt and nitrate management plan in surface and ground water. The workplan includes development of efforts shown in three areas below:

**Policy recommendations for consideration as potential Basin Plan Amendments which may impact future regulatory actions**

- Appropriate surface and groundwater compliance points;
- Reasonable protection for agricultural supply and municipal/domestic beneficial uses;
- Implementation alternatives that provide immediate relief and long-term water quality improvements

**Completion of area specific studies to serve as templates in other regions of the Central Valley**

- Evaluation of appropriate MUN beneficial use designation and level of protection in agricultural drains (Sacramento Valley subarea);
- Evaluation of appropriate MUN beneficial use designation and level of protection in groundwater (Tulare Lake Bed subarea);
- Beneficial use and salinity water quality objective refinement with long-term implementation strategy (Lower San Joaquin River);
- Short-term implementation strategy to assist small disadvantaged communities with elevated nitrate in groundwater drinking water ;

### **Technical Studies**

- GIS mapping of water bodies, related beneficial uses and water quality objectives, surface intakes and outfalls and active wells;
- Central Valley-wide salt and nitrate source/fate model including additional focused detail on Merced and Kings River watersheds;
- Salinity water quality objectives to protect agricultural supply beneficial use based on appropriate agricultural zoning in the Central Valley;
- Evaluation of implementation alternatives to move toward sustainable salt management.

The strategy, framework and workplan are available at: [www.cvsalinity.org](http://www.cvsalinity.org).

A schedule of the policy discussions is attached. If you are not already receiving agendas for the discussions which occur during the CV-SALTS Executive Committee meetings, and wish to attend, please contact Daphne Orzalli at [dorzalli@cvsalinity.org](mailto:dorzalli@cvsalinity.org).

### **Workshop Invitation**

We invite you to the **Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board** (Central Valley Water Board) **CV-SALTS workshop in Fresno on Tuesday June 12, 2012 at 1 p.m.**, to discuss activities addressing salt and nitrate in the context of the stakeholder driven CV-SALTS initiative including the current workplan and upcoming milestones. The workshop will provide the opportunity to solicit feedback from Central Valley Water Board members and the public on the current approach. The notice for the workshop is also attached.

Thank you for your continued interest in the CV-SALTS initiative.



Pamela Creedon, Executive Officer  
Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board



Parry Klassen  
Chair, CV-SALTS Executive Committee

## Draft Schedule of Policy Discussions for the CV-Salts Executive Committee in 2012

#	Date	Focus Area	Related Technical Support Tasks
1	3/26/12 (4/5/12)	Define "Point of Use" and "Point of Compliance." Describe Pros & Cons of alternative regulatory approaches. <i>Strawman Position Paper #1a</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Identify MUN surface intakes as a GIS map layer</li> <li>2) Identify MUN wells as a GIS map layer</li> <li>3) Identify other active wells as a GIS layer (from DWR)</li> <li>4) Identify POTW outfalls as a GIS layer</li> <li>5) Create GIS layer to identify prior category B &amp; C segments</li> </ol>
2	4/19/12	Define "Existing Water Quality" taking into consideration spatial and temporal variability. Define "assimilative capacity" and what it means to "lower water quality" in order to implement the state antidegradation policy. <i>Strawman Position Paper #1b</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Survey and describe existing water quality databases</li> <li>2) Survey and describe existing surface water management zones</li> <li>3) Survey and describe existing groundwater management. zones</li> <li>4) Preliminary water quality analysis of pilot locations</li> </ol>
3	5/24/12	Identify candidates for Implementation Planning Prototypes among economically-disadvantaged communities with severe nitrate contamination of local drinking water supplies. <i>Strawman Position Paper #2</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Identify and summarize similar efforts already under way</li> <li>2) Identify "zones of common interest" for potential offsets</li> <li>3) Determine readiness-to-proceed &amp; perform needs analysis</li> </ol>
4	6/12/12	<b>Regional Board Workshop</b>	
5*	7/19/12	Define what constitutes "Reasonable Protection of Existing and Probable Future <u>MUN</u> uses" with respect to electrical conductivity and some specific individual ions. Determine the whether and when to use secondary MCLs as water quality objectives. <i>Strawman Position Paper #3a</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Summarize current state of knowledge regarding the effects of elevated EC (salinity or TDS) and hardness concentrations on drinking water supply and other domestic purposes</li> <li>2) Identify and summarize unique concerns related to specific ions (e.g. sodium, chloride, boron, etc.)</li> </ol>
6*	8/23/12	Define what constitutes "Reasonable Protection of Existing and Probable Future <u>AGR</u> uses" with respect to electrical conductivity and some specific individual ions. <i>Strawman Position Paper #3b.</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Summarize current state of knowledge regarding the effects of elevated EC (TDS) concentrations on crop yields with specific attention to seasonal tolerances</li> <li>2) Create GIS layers need to support the Ag Zoning Map</li> </ol>
7*	9/20/12	Describe appropriate water quality monitoring requirements to determine which surface and groundwaters "are exceeding or are likely to exceed" water quality objectives for EC and nitrates. <i>Strawman Position Paper #4.</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Survey and summarize existing water quality monitoring and reporting programs</li> <li>2) Identify exemplars used to implement similar regulatory purposes in other regions/states</li> </ol>
8*	10/18/12	<u>Tentative</u> : Define what constitutes "Maximum Benefit to the People of California" as needed to implement the state antidegradation policy (68-16). Establish default demonstration requirements.	<p>TBD</p> <p>Consideration of these tentative policy topics is dependent on achieving satisfactory resolution of the prerequisite issues scheduled for discussion in the preceding months. It may be necessary to continue discussing some of the higher priority issues into the fall of 2012 in order to meet the statutory deadlines imposed by the Recycled Water Policy.</p>
9*	11/8/12	<u>Tentative</u> : Determine when and how Pollution Trading Programs and/or Offset Projects (incl. Mitigation Banks) may be used as an alternative compliance strategy within the SNMP.	
10*	12/13/12	<u>Tentative</u> : Define the conditions and criteria for authorizing the use of Temporary Conditional Variances and/or Long-Term Compliance Schedules where needed to facilitate attainment of water quality standards.	

*\*Topics 5 & 6 cannot occur until topics 2 & 3 are resolved. Topics 7, 8, 9 & 10 cannot occur until topics 5 and/or 6 are concluded.*



## Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board

### NOTICE OF PUBLIC WORKSHOP

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The Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board will hold a  
**Workshop to Discuss Activities Related to the  
Pacific Forest and Watershed Stewardship Council  
and the  
Central Valley Salinity Alternatives for Long-Term Sustainability  
(CV-SALTS) Initiative**

The **Public Workshop** will be held during a  
Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board meeting  
on  
**Tuesday June 12, 2012  
at 1:00 p.m.**

at the  
Central Valley Water Board  
1685 E Street  
Fresno, CA

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#### BACKGROUND

**Stewardship Council:** The Pacific Forest and Watershed Lands Stewardship Council was established in 2004 as part of a PG&E settlement agreement with the California Public Utilities Commission. The agreement establishes that 140,000 acres of PG&E's watershed lands will be conserved for its public and environmental resources. Membership on the Council governing board was established in the settlement agreement, and includes a representative from the Central Valley Water Board.

**CV-SALTS:** In 2006, a joint State and Central Valley Water Board workshop documented the need for a comprehensive management plan to address salt and nitrate control, degradation and pollution in surface and ground waters throughout the Central Valley and initiated a stakeholder-lead effort. In March of 2010, a [Memorandum of Agreement](#) was signed between the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board, the Central Valley Salinity Coalition (stakeholder organization) and the State Water Resources Control Board, supporting a stakeholder lead process (CV-SALTS) to coordinate salt and nitrate controls and management, regulatory and planning efforts in and affecting the Central Valley Region. In January 2012, an updated strategy, approach and workplan were approved for the CV-SALTS initiative, which can be viewed at: [http://cvsalinity.org/index.php/agendas/doc\\_download/918-cv-salts-program-work-plan-v-8-approved-3912](http://cvsalinity.org/index.php/agendas/doc_download/918-cv-salts-program-work-plan-v-8-approved-3912)

**Tuesday June 12, 2012  
1:00 p.m.**

1. Introductions and Pledge of Allegiance
2. Public Forum: Any member of the public may address the Board on any matter within the Board's jurisdiction, as long as it is not a matter pending before the Board. (3 minute time limit per subject)
3. Pacific Forest and Watershed Lands Stewardship Council Update: The Board will be provided with an update on recent activities conducted by the Stewardship Council. This is an information item only; no board action will be taken.
4. CV-SALTS Information Item: The Board will host a discussion regarding activities addressing salt and nitrate in the context of the stakeholder-driven CV-SALTS initiative. Although the Board members may provide feedback, this is an information item only, and no Board action will be taken.

A more detailed agenda will be available prior to the meeting date.

### **PROCEDURAL MATTERS**

At the workshop there will be no sworn testimony or cross-examination of participants, but the Central Valley Water Board may ask clarifying questions. Opportunity will be provided for oral presentations by interested parties. To ensure a productive and efficient workshop, oral presentations from any interested persons may be limited to 3-minutes at the discretion of the Board Chair.

### **INFORMATION REGARDING WORKSHOP**

If you have any questions, please contact Pam Buford at (559) 445-5576 or by e-mail at: [pbuford@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:pbuford@waterboards.ca.gov).

### **PARKING AND ACCESSIBILITY AND SECURITY**

There is parking at the Central Valley Water Board office and parking spaces are in the vicinity of the building along E Street. ([location map](#)). The Central Valley Water Board office is accessible to people with disabilities. Individuals who require special accommodations are requested to contact Kiran Lanfranchi-Rizzardi, Assistant to the Board, at (916) 464-4839.

2 May 2012

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Date

Original Signed by

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Pamela C. Creedon  
Executive Officer