

Updated June 10, 2018

**Status Report on Communication Strategies and Activities
CV-SALTS Project**

Phase 1: Communication Plan and Written Materials Developed

In late 2016, with the pending release of the CV-SALTS *Salt and Nitrate Management Plan* (SNMP), it was clear to the CV-SALTS Executive Committee (EC) and the CV-SALTS Public Education and Outreach Committee (PEOC) that additional education and outreach was necessary to inform stakeholders about the SNMP and the associated regulatory modifications and improvements.

The Catalyst team was brought on board to support the ramp-up of education and outreach for the CV-SALTS initiative. The Catalyst team began by developing a comprehensive **Communication Plan** to support general outreach and education for the January 2017 SNMP release, 2018 Basin Plan Amendment process, and the 2018 start of implementation of the SNMP. Working with the PEOC members collectively and individually, the Communication Plan was developed to include goals, key audiences, prioritization of key audiences, key messaging, and suggested engagement tactics. The Communication Plan was developed to be flexible and allow for the appropriate level of education and outreach for SNMP-related milestones. A core principle of the Communications Plan was that CV-SALTS leaders and Central Valley Salinity Coalition members would be leaders and spokespeople for the program. The PEOC and the Catalyst team would develop supporting materials and provide coordination support for outreach and education activities.

Following the completion of the Communication Plan and the January 2017 release of the SNMP, the Executive Committee and PEOC agreed that the communications **priority** was to focus on the development of **written communication materials** that would best support the education and outreach efforts to key opinion leaders in all affected industries. A family of written materials was developed to serve as the foundational outreach and education tactics (see page 3). The written communication materials can now be used with the wide range of audiences prioritized in the Communication Plan to convey the purpose and regulatory recommendations of the SNMP.

Phase 2: Establish and Execute a Communication Strategy for January 2018 through December 2019

The Communication Plan established the following goals:

- Inform, educate, and raise awareness regarding the overarching salt and nitrate pollution challenge in the Central Valley.
- Inform, educate, and raise awareness regarding the SNMP, its associated policy recommendations, and suggested implementation timeline.
- Build support for adopting and implementing the SNMP and its associated policies.
- Change attitudes regarding regulations being “all bad” and communicate that the SNMP adds needed flexibility.
- Influence audiences that may have apprehension or concerns regarding the SNMP.
- Explain and promote the benefits of the SNMP.
- Ensure that stakeholders are adequately informed prior to each SNMP project milestone.

The key CV-SALTS activities in 2018 and 2019 are:

- (1) The Basin Plan Amendment process before the Regional and State Boards

(2) The subsequent SNMP implementation planning and education.

The overarching communication strategy is to broaden the outreach and education effort when and where possible, and within resources available.

The following are the proposed priorities for 2018 and 2019:

- Continue to inform, educate, and raise awareness regarding the overarching salt and nitrate pollution challenge in the Central Valley.
- Brief key reporters and editorial boards about CV-SALTS and the Basin Plan Amendment process leading up to Central Valley Board and State Water Board actions.
- Inform, educate, and raise awareness regarding the Basin Plan Amendments among key representatives of the regulated community and other influencers.
- Build support for adopting and implementing the Basin Plan Amendments by both the Regional and State Boards.
- Develop educational workshops for communities and regulated entities in high priority areas.

Following conversations with PEOC members representing specific industry sectors in December 2018, the following recommendations were made for continuing, and expanding where possible, the outreach and education efforts.

One of the key considerations for the PEOC and the Executive Committee (EC) is the effort and involvement of CV-SALTS participants and Coalition members in the 2018 outreach and education activities. As outreach activities expand across the Central Valley, additional spokespeople are needed. The PEOC members do not have the bandwidth to expand their outreach and education efforts further. Other leaders are needed to increase involvement in education and outreach by undertaking activities such as making presentations and sharing the CV-SALTS Outreach Brochure with their constituents and others.

The following are actions authorized by the PEOC and taken from January 2018 through May 2018, leading up to the May 31 Public Hearing by the Regional Board where the Basin Plan Amendments would be considered.

- **January 2018:** After reviewing the Priority 1 and 2 audiences outlined in the Communication Plan, the audiences that have not yet been “touched” with information about CV-SALTS were identified. A report was made to the PEOC at their January 2018 meeting.
- **March and May 2018:** Editorial Boards at the Sacramento Bee, Fresno Bee, and Bakersfield Californian were contacted in March and in May 2018. There was no traction gained as the Editorial Boards were focused on the June 6 California Primary Election.
- **May 2018:** In late May, reporters at the Sacramento Bee, Fresno Bee, and Bakersfield Californian were contacted. There was some interest shown but no traction gained to date.

Now that the Regional Board approved the Basin Plan Amendments on May 31, 2018, and the State Board is targeted to consider approval of the Basin Plan Amendments in June 2018 the following communication strategies should be considered. The following are actions for the EC and PEOC to consider as the communication strategies for the remainder of 2018 into 2019.

1. **Hold workshops in High Priority Areas** - Introduce Management Zone concept, incentives to form a Management Zone, How to Get Organized (land use and water use driven). These initial workshops will serve to develop the structure, format, and content for workshops in other areas of the Central Valley. The invitations would be the responsibility of all members of the Central Valley Salinity

Coalition and the Regional Board. Content from these workshops could also be used to develop a Webinar that stakeholders could be informed about and view on their own time.

2. **Coordinate** with GSAs to introduce CV-SALTS
3. **Editorial Board** outreach – Spring 2019
4. **General Reporter** outreach – timing needs to be tied to an action, possibly around the workshop(s)
5. **Additional Collateral Materials** – Develop any additional outreach and educational materials to explain, in more detail, the steps that dischargers will have to follow in the high priority areas. The approach could be a combination of written materials and/or a targeted Webinar.
6. **Identify outreach tactics** for the not yet “touched” audiences.
7. **Work with** Executive Director CVSC Daniel Cozad to reach out to key leaders at the Farm Bureau, the Agricultural Council of California, and the Western Growers Association to assess their knowledge and position on CV-SALTS, with the intention of enlisting their support in educating their memberships.
8. **Identify specific groups**, organizations, associations, individuals, etc. that do not or may not support the Basin Plan Amendments. Schedule a briefing with these key influencers prior to the scheduled approval by the State Board now targeted for June 2019.
9. **Continue monitoring** events, conferences, workshops where CV-SALTS should be present and on the agenda. Once identified, schedule an appropriate presenter or panel.
10. **Review existing PowerPoint presentations** developed to date on CV-SALTS and the SNMP with the intention of creating one PowerPoint presentation for use by EC/PEOC/Coalition members to aid in making simple presentations. Industry specific slides would be made available for inclusion.
11. **Work with the EC/PEOC to identify stakeholders**, by industry sector, that will attend and express support at the Basin Plan Amendment hearing before the State Water Board now targeted for June 2019.

Summary of Communication Materials Available for Outreach and Education as of June 2018

Written Materials

The first outreach tactic was to develop a family of written communication pieces that could be easily distributed and readily used to support the Communication Plan goals. The following is a list of the written materials developed from December 2016 to June 2018.

1. **Communication Plan**
2. **CV-SALTS Fact Sheet**, 2 pages
3. **Overview of the SNMP**, 3 pages
4. **Overview of CV-SALTS and SNMP**, 4 pages
5. **Press Release** – not issued
6. **Seven Policy Summaries**, 2 pages were reviewed and edited by Catalyst in February 2017
7. **CV-SALTS Outreach Brochure** – 11 by 17 printed
8. **Spanish Versions** of the 2-page Fact Sheet and the CV-SALTS Outreach Brochure
9. **Five topic-specific inserts** (Dairy, Sacramento Valley Ag, San Joaquin/Delta Ag, Publicly Owned Treatment Works, Oil and Gas) for distribution with the Outreach Brochure. The Safe Drinking Water insert is still in process, and will not be ready for approval until the February EC/PEOC meetings.
10. **Status Updates for 2016 and 2017** were developed for the CV-SALTS website.
11. **Press Releases** for pre- and post-Regional Board Public Hearing on May 31.

Outreach Tracking Tool

A Google Drive Outreach Tracking spreadsheet for PEOC members to easily enter outreach endeavors and future events is now online. The link to the spread sheet is:

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1UJjueg72j7p1C8qz5xcckV3I_OpxqZ5QDFg4b8Hala/edit#gid=1913590428

PowerPoint Presentations

Concurrently, Daniel Cozad CV-SALTS Executive Director, Central Valley Water Board staff, and PEOC members have developed PowerPoint presentations to use when discussing CV-SALTS, the SNMP, and the Basin Plan Amendments.