

CV-SALTS Public Education & Outreach Committee Meeting

When: **Tuesday, November 13, 2018 from 3:00 PM to 4:00 PM**

Location: Teleconference Only

Conference #: (641) 715-3580 Code: 279295#



Agenda

1. **Welcome and Introductions**
2. **Approval of [October 16, 2018 Meeting Notes](#)**
3. **Outreach Matrix Update – Mary and Charles**
 - Review Documented Activities and Feedback
 - [Outreach Tracking](#)
 - Press and broader outreach
4. **Discussion of Action Items for Workshops being Planned – Mary/Charles**
 - Update on Save the Date and Pre-Registration Process
 - Keep thinking of folks to invite.
 - Who are we not reaching?
 - Update on registration numbers.
 - Update on Panels
 - Discussion of [input from CWC](#) and possibility of adding EJ rep
 - Panel for Tulare
 - Eric Osterling, Greater Kaweah GSA, eosterling@greaterkaweahgsa.org
 - Steve Worthley, Tulare County Supervisor and IRWMP Director, sworthley@co.tulare.ca.us
 - Charlotte Gallock, Kings River Conservation District, cgallock@krcd.org
 - Panel for Modesto
 - Parry Klassen, East San Joaquin Water Quality Coalition
 - Mikal Cooke, City of Turlock
 - Set conference calls with panelists
 - Discussion questions for panelists to be developed and provided to moderators
 - Video Interviews (Budgeted for 4 interviews)
 - Producer to contact Daniel/Tess/Tim prior to filming
 - Identify 4th person for video interview
 - Outreach Materials for Workshops
 - Outreach brochure – 500 copies at the printer now
 - Fact Sheets:
 1. [Nitrate Control Program Draft](#) – comments needed by COB 11/13
 2. [Salt Control Program](#) (P&O Study Overview) – already approved
 - Workshop Budget Update (included in current Catalyst budget)
 - A/V set up and technician will run about \$600 per workshop
 - Do we want to have coffee and a variety of pastries via caterer will run about \$7.00 per person? If 75 then \$525 and on up to \$1400 if we hit 200 participants. Trying to negotiate down to \$ 6.00 per person
 - Water – provided at Tulare by facility. Need to provide in Modesto.
5. **Recap Next Steps and [Set Next Meeting](#)**

One or more Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board members may attend.

CV-SALTS Public Education and Outreach Committee Meeting ACTION NOTES



Convened: October 16, 2018 from 3:00 PM to 4:00 PM

Participants: Glenn Meeks, Cristel Tufenkjian, Charles Gardiner, Daniel Cozad, J.P. Cativiela, Nicole Bell, Mary Currie, Walt Plachta, Christine Zimmerman, Parry Klassen, Patrick Pulupa

Agenda

Item 1: Welcome & Introductions

- Participants are as indicated above.

Item 2: Approval of Minutes of the September 18, 2018 Meeting

- Cristel Tufenkjian moved, and Glenn Meeks seconded, and by general acclamation the September 18, 2018 Meeting Action Notes were approved with one revision.
 - Remove second occurrence of Charles Gardiner's name from list of participants.

Item 3: Outreach Matrix

- Mary Currie provided an update on the outreach activities being captured in the matrix.

Item 4: Discussion of Action Items for Workshops Being Planned

- The committee discussed the workshop planning elements. Some of the feedback provided by the committee:
 - Save the Date & Pre-Registration Process:
 - Current registration totals: 10 Tulare, 20 Modesto
 - Committee requested Mary forward a list of registrants, so members could compare to those invited.
 - Glenn Meeks secured approval from State Board for translation services. Need the total number of Spanish-speaking attendees no later than December 1st.
 - Scott Seyfried from State Water Board should be added to the workshop distribution list. Either Adam Laputz or Anne Littlejohn will attend from the Regional Board.
 - Update on Overall Program:
 - The third panel participant is being held open for a representative from one of the pilot programs/grant recipients. Daniel Cozad advised that four Letters of Intent had been received, and the Selection Committee recommended awarding grants to East San Joaquin and Kings.
 - The program will be a moderated discussion rather than a presentation. Discussion questions for each panelist need to be defined.
 - Panelists for the Modesto workshop should be secured by the end of October. 2 of the panelists for Tulare have been identified, 3rd will be a representative from the pilot program.
 - Video Goal/Purpose:
 - The committee agreed the entire workshop should be captured. Mary advised there may be an additional cost for editing the 2 hours of footage.
 - The scripted videos of 4 experts (Tim, Tess, Daniel, David) will be used to produce the 2-minute introductory video.
 - Outreach Materials for Workshop:
 - Two new fact sheets (Nitrate and Salinity) are in development. Mary will provide drafts to the committee by November 1st.
 - Glenn Meeks advised that the 11 X 17 Outreach Brochure will need to be reprinted with the updated timeline. Mary will secure a bid for the reprint.

Item 5: Discuss Material/Product Needed

- Committee members were asked to review the video clips at the following link and email any comments/concerns to Nicole:
https://www.dropbox.com/sh/e82p41ap3pdn71w/AADpeHr_icl6l99m4uQogroha?dl=0
- Mary will check in with the workshop locations 2 weeks prior to confirm printing needs for meeting materials based on projected attendance.

Item 6: Recap Next Steps and Set Next Meeting

- The next PEOC meeting was set for Tuesday, November 13, 2018 @ 3:00.

Item 7: Adjourn

Summary of Points Made by David Okita, Community Water Center

When reaching out to David Okita to see about participation by Community Water Center in the December workshops, he offered some observations about engaging with the EJ leaders and community. The following summarizes the points that he expressed.

Current Outreach Approach

CV-SALTS included EJ non-profits as participants in the PEOC since the beginning, and that participation was important. It makes sense now that the regulated community is the priority for outreach. **The EJ communities do not have the capacity for representative participation in CV-SALTS at the same level as the regulated community.** The EJ community is frustrated with the end results of the CV-SALTS program on some points (e.g., Management Zones), but understands that it will be implemented as it now stands—maybe with some minor tweaking.

Concern about Management Zones and Linking them with GSAs

The concern from the EJ community about Management Zones is based on their experience with GSAs. **Small communities are not getting an opportunity for much input** and have limited authority on GSA boards to represent their interests. **The EJ community's fear is that the same thing will happen with Management Zones.** EJ advocates understand that litigation is an option, a last resort, but that is not a preferred approach for addressing and resolving drinking water needs. Most communities will accept reasonable solutions to address the problem.

It makes sense that GSAs be linked to Management Zones, but GSAs are generally unaware of CV-SALTS at this time. They are focused on completing their GSPs and not ready to think about CV-SALTS as it is not yet approved. **The time to approach GSA's to link them to CV-SALTS is when they consider the 5-year revision to their GSPs**—by then there will have to be a better linkage to groundwater quality in some GSAs.

Funding Assistance for EJ Participation is Recommended

To achieve the CV-SALTS goal of ensuring safe drinking water supplies, the EJ communities should be involved as early as possible. The regulated entities won't be able to do this on their own. It will be important to provide funding assistance to EJ groups to represent their interests. This approach works in other regulatory processes. The State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) provides funds to non-profits through Technical Assistance grants to help communities study their needs and apply for funding for drinking water projects. The Department of Water Resources (DWR) and SWRCB fund non-profits to do SGMA outreach and advocacy. Without outside funding, nonprofits can't do much, and the communities are left out and resentful. Fortunately, with EJ groups, their costs are relatively low—compared to technical and legal consultants. **It is better to engage EJ communities now than pay the price of resentment later.**

The timing of the December Workshops

With the timing of the approval by the SWRCB not certain and discussions about Management Zones still occurring, we believe **it may be better to save outreach efforts until there is more certainty to CV-SALTS timing.**

New Nitrate Control Program to Offer Choices for Compliance

The Nitrate Challenge in the Central Valley

Over the last 150 years, increased agricultural, industrial, and municipal activities, coupled with population growth, have resulted in dramatic increases in nitrates in groundwater, soils, and surface waters in the Central Valley (Valley). The Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) regulates the nitrate discharges from these activities. Improved management practices have been implemented to reduce nitrate discharges, but compliance with current regulations is difficult and, in some areas of the Valley, even impossible. New, updated regulations have been developed through the CV-SALTS initiative (see below) that better address natural diversities (e.g., climatic, hydrologic, and geologic conditions) while protecting water quality and maintaining a strong economy. In areas of the Valley where drinking water supplies have been impacted, the new regulatory options focus on managing nitrates locally while providing safe drinking water supplies.

CV-SALTS Initiative and Nitrate Control Plan

The [Central Valley Salinity Alternatives for Long-Term Sustainability](#) (CV-SALTS) was formed more than a decade ago as a collaborative stakeholder group tasked with developing a sustainable salt and nitrate management program for the Central Valley. To help fund the scientific and technical studies necessary to support the development of alternative regulatory approaches for nitrates, the Central Valley Salinity Coalition (CVSC) was established in 2008. Working directly with the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board), the CV-SALTS initiative released a technical plan – *Salt and Nitrate Management Plan* (SNMP) – in January 2017. The SNMP recommended modifications to regulations for nitrates and the establishment of a **Nitrate Control Program**. In March 2017, the Regional Water Board accepted the SNMP recommendations. On May 31, 2018, the Regional Water Board approved amendments to the Central Valley’s Water Quality Control Plans (i.e., Basin Plans) based on the SNMP, which included a **Nitrate Control Program** as well as a Salt Control Program (described in a separate fact sheet).

Nitrate Control Program included in Basin Plan Amendments

The new **Nitrate Control Program** supported in the Basin Plan Amendments has three goals: (1) address drinking water issues first, (2) provide the Regional Water Board with flexibility in how it regulates nitrate discharges, and (3) address nitrate in groundwater over the long-term. The Nitrate Control Program is a prioritized program in that the Regional Water Board evaluated Central Valley water quality and established immediate priority areas for implementation but will consider other areas in the future.

Priority Areas for Nitrate Control	Groundwater Basin/Subbasin	Notice to Comply Timeline
Priority 1 Areas	Kaweah, Turlock, Chowchilla, Tule, Modesto, Kings	Notice to Comply <i>within one year</i> of Basin Plan Amendments becoming effective
Priority 2 Areas	Yolo, Merced, Kern County (west side south), Tulare Lake, Kern County (Peso), Delta-Mendota, Eastern San Joaquin, Madera	Notice to Comply <i>within 2-4 years</i> of Basin Plan Amendments becoming effective
Non-Priority Areas		Implementation to be phased in at a later date

Once approved by the State Water Board (anticipated March 2019), the **Nitrate Control Program** will provide the Regional Water Board with revised, more flexible authorities for nitrate regulation, including (1) Exceptions for dischargers in meeting the nitrate water quality objective, (2) Establishment of management zones to foster collaborative nitrate solutions, and (3) Offset Projects for groundwater that are an alternative means of achieving compliance with a Waste Discharge Requirement (WDR).

Two Nitrate Compliance Pathways for Dischargers to Choose

Following approval by the State Water Board (anticipated March 2019), regulated dischargers in priority areas will receive a notice to comply with the new Nitrate Control Program. They will be able to choose one of two pathways to compliance.

Pathway A: Maintain Traditional Permitting Approach

A discharger may opt to comply under the traditional permit requirements established in the Nitrate Control Plan either as an individual facility (e.g., a food processing plant) or as a third party (e.g., growers and farmers represented an irrigated lands coalition). This defines requirements to protect shallow groundwater, establishes five discharge categories and associated compliance requirements, and establishes trigger levels for consideration.

Pathway B: Management Permitting Approach

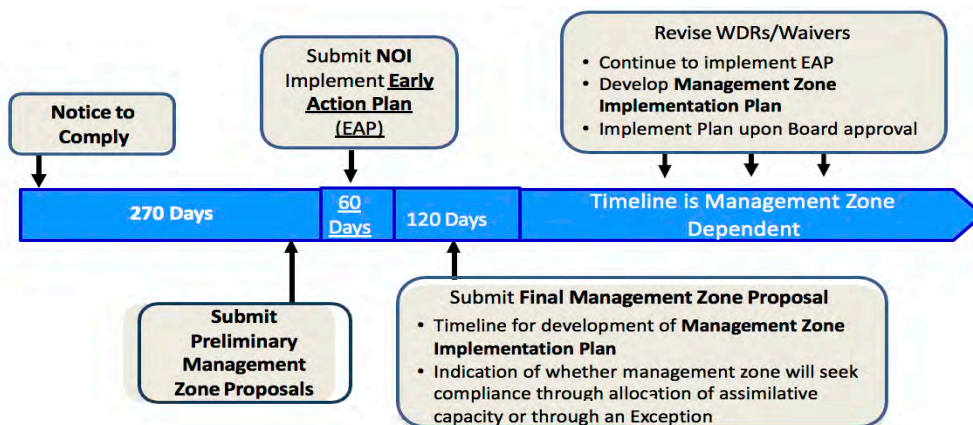
When selecting this pathway, dischargers opt to work collectively with other dischargers through a management zone. The management zone is a defined area, e.g., a portion of a larger groundwater basin/subbasin. A management zone serves as a discrete regulatory compliance unit for nitrate compliance. Dischargers would provide safe drinking water within the zone while continuing to implement best practices and nitrogen management plans. In turn, dischargers may be allowed greater flexibility and more time to achieve nitrogen balance and restore nitrate affected water bodies.

Joining a management zone offers **several key benefits** for dischargers choosing to work together to achieve compliance. Benefits include:

- Promotes coordinated water resource management among various dischargers.
- Promotes prioritization of resource allocation, which translates to more efficient use of funds.
- Assures much needed safe drinking water for adversely affected residents.

Timeline for Forming Management Zones in Priority 1 Areas

While some priority areas are already working to develop management zones proposals to get ahead of the deadlines, the Basin Plans once approved by the State Board has the following timeline for developing management zones. The full approval of the Basin Plan is expected in summer 2019. The Regional Water Board would issue notices to comply shortly after its approval.



Early Action Plans

Regardless of whether a discharger chooses Path A or B, all dischargers must assess nitrate levels to ensure safe, reliable drinking water by monitoring groundwater used for municipal supplies that may be affected by nitrate discharge(s). If affected, and where the discharger is causing or contributing to an exceedance of nitrate in the groundwater, then the discharger will submit an Early Action Plan (EAP) that includes specific actions and an implementation schedule to address the immediate needs of those drinking groundwater that exceeds the nitrate drinking water standard.

New Salt Control Program to Offer Choices for Compliance

Central Valley Salinity Coalition, October 2018

The Salinity Challenge in the Central Valley

High levels of salt exist in waters throughout the Central Valley. Increasing levels of salts can reduce crop production, impair water quality, and reduce water supply and ecological functions. Salt concentrations in the groundwater are naturally high in some areas and increasing in many others. The high levels come from: (1) the geology (2) the arid climate, and (3) intensive water use. All water use, including agricultural, industrial, and municipal increases salinity. Even using water more effectively or recycling water increases salinity. Increased salinity occurs because salt is either added or concentrated through the processes employed to use water or treat wastewater. In the San Joaquin Valley alone, six million tons of salt accumulate every year. The recent drought increased the use of groundwater, which can have higher concentrations of salt.

To learn more: [*Salt and Salinity Management, a Resource Management Strategy of the California Water Plan, DWR, June 2016*](#)

CV-SALTS Salinity Management Strategy

The [*Central Valley Salinity Alternatives for Long-Term Sustainability*](#) (CV-SALTS) was formed more than a decade ago as a collaborative stakeholder group tasked with developing a sustainable salt and nitrate management program for the Central Valley. Working directly with the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Board), the CV-SALTS initiative released a technical plan – *Salt and Nitrate Management Plan* (SNMP) – in January 2017. The SNMP recommended modifications to regulations for nitrates and the establishment of a **Salt Control Program** with short- and long-term strategies for salinity management. On May 31, 2018, the Regional Board approved amendments to the Central Valley’s Water Quality Control Plans (i.e., Basin Plans) based on the SNMP, which included a **Salt Control Program**.

The goals of the **Salt Control Program** are to: (1) Control the rate of degradation through a “managed degradation” program; (2) Implement salinity management activities to achieve long-term sustainability and prevent continued impacts to salt sensitive areas; (3) Protect beneficial uses by maintaining water quality that meets applicable water quality objectives and pursuing long-term managed restoration where reasonable, feasible and practicable; and (4) Protect beneficial uses by applying appropriate antidegradation requirements for high quality water. The **Salt Control Program** recommends implementing a phased process to develop a long-term salinity management plan, while at the same time establishing an Interim Permitting Approach for salinity discharges.

Salt Control Program for the Central Valley

Short-Term Salinity Management

During the development of the long-term plan for salt management, an **Interim Permitting Approach** will be used. This approach may include actions such as: (1) continued implementation of existing pollution prevention, watershed, and salt reduction plans; (2) continued maintenance of current salinity discharge levels; (3) enforced compliance with Interim Permit Limits; (4) implementation of new salinity management practices and source control activities; (5) monitoring of salinity discharge activities, where required; and (6) requiring either participation in the Prioritization and Optimization Study (P&O Study) or compliance with stringent water quality limitations.

Long-Term Salinity Management Planning

A *Strategic Salt Accumulation Land and Transportation Study* (SSALTS) was undertaken previously to identify and evaluate salt management strategies. Using the SSALTS findings as a foundation, the **Prioritization and**

New Salt Control Program to Offer Choices for Compliance

Central Valley Salinity Coalition, October 2018

Optimization Study (P&O Study) will expand prior studies, conduct a wide-ranging analysis of existing conditions, policies, and engineering alternatives to identify salt management projects and actions to achieve salt sustainability in the Central Valley.

Once the State Water Resources Control Board and Office of Administrative Law (and US EPA for surface waters under federal jurisdiction) approve the **Salt Control Program**, anticipated to occur in 2019, and Notices to Comply are issued by the Regional Board, all permitted dischargers must comply by selecting one of two compliance pathways: Conservative Pathway 1, or Alternative Pathway 2.

Dischargers selecting the Conservative Pathway 1 must demonstrate that they meet stringent permitting requirements established in the **Salt Control Program**. Dischargers selecting Alternative Pathway 2 must participate in the regionwide P&O Study with fellow permittees. P&O study participants under Pathway 2 will be allowed to defer more stringent and costly permitting requirements associated with Pathway 1 until such requirements are reevaluated after completion of the P&O Study. Participating in Pathway 2 will likely be less costly than the conservative approach in Pathway 1. Further, the P&O study is more likely to achieve the regional goals of long-term sustainability rather than individual efforts through Pathway 1.

The first step to providing a coherent and workable long-term management strategy for salinity is undertaking and completing the P&O Study. The P&O Study will likely begin in 2019 or 2020, take about 10 years to complete, and cost from \$10 to \$15 million. If a discharger chooses Pathway 2, compliance includes (but is not limited to) paying a minor annual fee to support the P&O Study. The Central Valley Salinity Coalition (CVSC) will administer the P&O Study as the lead entity with oversight from the Regional Board and CV-SALTS stakeholders.

Long-Term Salinity Management Phasing

The value to everyone in the Central Valley and beyond will be a long-term, integrated **Salt Control Program** that stabilizes and cost-effectively restores water supplies while keeping agriculture, businesses and communities operating in the interim. The long-term salinity management strategy will be undertaken in three phases:

Phase 1:

- ◇ **Conduct expanded evaluations of existing conditions** by hydrologic region, sources of salinity, and the impact of state and federal policies that affect the management of salt in both surface and groundwaters.
- ◇ **Identify the types of and locations for physical projects.** Physical projects could include regulated brine line(s), salt sinks, regional and/or subregional de-salters, recharge areas, deep well injection, and others. Conceptual designs for preferred physical projects will be developed.
- ◇ **Identify non-physical projects** and begin implementation. These may include changes in water supply, use, and management, as well as changes in salt management policies, practices, or regulations.
- ◇ **Identify governance structure(s) and seek state and federal funding** for preferred physical projects.
- ◇ **Determine if Basin Plan amendments are necessary** to support the implementation of Phases 2 and 3.

Phase 2: The engineering design and environmental permitting required to implement the preferred physical projects identified in Phase 1 will be completed. Non-physical projects will continue to be implemented as needed.

Phase 3: Construction of physical projects will be completed during this final phase of the Salt Control Program.

For More Information: Visit www.salinity.com; read the [SNMP](#); read the [Regional Board staff report](#) for the Basin Plan amendments approved on May 31, 2018.

CV-SALTS Meeting Calendar

2018

1 January

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
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2 February

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3 March

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5 May

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6 June

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7 July

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8 August

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9 September

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10 October

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11 November

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12 December

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30	31					

Notes/Key

Light Red conflicts

Third Thursdays Where possible

Executive Committee Meetings

Policy or Admin Calls 1:00 or 1:30pm

Yellow Salty 5

Regional Board Workshops/Hearings

TAC Meeting

PEOC Committee