

**Ryan Maughan - Comment Letter - September 13, 2007 Irrigated Lands Workshop**

9/13/07 Workshop  
Irrigated Lands Program  
Deadline: 9/4/07 Noon

**From:** <Secondpest@aol.com>  
**To:** <rmaughan@waterboards.ca.gov>  
**Date:** 8/29/2007 12:46 PM  
**Subject:** Comment Letter - September 13, 2007 Irrigated Lands Program Joint Workshop

August 29, 2007

Ryan Maughan, Division of Water Quality  
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Re: Comment Letter - September 13, 2007 Irrigated Lands Program Joint Workshop."

Dear State and Regional Water Board Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide public comments on the Central Valley's Conditional Waiver program for Irrigated Agriculture. I call on you to act now to protect and restore the quality of our region's water from this major source of pollution.

Irrigation water run-off from fields contain a toxic mix of fertilizers and pesticides, which ultimately flow into our waterways and seep into our aquifers. Currently the Central Valley Regional Water Board continues to allow water with highly concentrated levels of fertilizers and pesticides to contaminate community drinking water sources without ANY regulatory requirements.

While irrigators are given a green light to pollute, small, rural communities have to pay for bottled water and the cost for drilling new wells or treatment technology. As a shareholder in the private water company that serves my home in Ventura County, I understand and sympathize with Central Valley residents who have their water quality compromised by agricultural polluters. Water, like air, belongs to us all and the pollution in both seems to migrate from local jurisdictions. Not only do I sympathize with Central Valley residents but I wonder how that pollution affects my family in Ventura County - and yours in Sacramento. Whether financially or through poor health, we all pay for pollution.

Lack of groundwater protections has gone on too long at the expense of community health. I strongly urge you to act today to stop waiving regulatory requirements and issue permits to irrigated agriculture that are truly protective of our drinking water sources and other beneficial uses.

When my foreign exchange student from Ecuador (considered a "Third World" country) received a degree in Marine Ecology from UC Santa Barbara and returned home to grow roses, I challenged him on polluting the pristine waters that Ecuador boasted about with agricultural pollutants. He told me that agricultural irrigation run-off goes through a special waste treatment process that removes fertilizer and pesticide contaminants before being released. It's embarrassing that the California agricultural industry does not have this technology while a "Third World" agricultural industry understands it's necessity. State and Regional Water Board Members need to reconsider waivers for the selfish, narrowminded and de-evolved behavior of polluting water by an industry commonly known to pollute water. Californians have a reputation for being innovative and forward thinking. Please issue permits to irrigated agriculture that respects our values.

Sincerely,

Deborah Bechtel  
Camarillo, CA

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