

ITEM: 8

SUBJECT: Revisions to the WDRs for Growers within the Tulare Lake Basin Area that are Members of a Third-party Group

BOARD ACTION: Consider Order revising Waste Discharge Requirements

BACKGROUND: On 19 September 2013, the Board prescribed waste discharge requirements for discharges from irrigated lands for growers that are members of third-party groups within the Tulare Lake Basin Area (the "General Order"). Some requirements of the General Order, such as the Farm Evaluation and Nitrogen Management Plans, are due for large farming operations within high vulnerability areas beginning 1 March 2015. However, delays in approving third-party groups in turn delayed other key documents, leaving growers with insufficient time to meet these deadlines. Additionally, the third-party groups have requested additional time for the submittal of some grower requirements, citing that the additional time is needed due to impacts from the drought. To address these concerns, the proposed tentative Order would amend the schedule for the preparation and submittal of the Farm Evaluations, Nitrogen Management Plans, Certification of the Nitrogen Management Plans and Nitrogen Management Plan Summary Reports for large farming operations in high vulnerability areas.

Additionally, the proposed tentative Order would revise the General Order to extend the open enrollment period for owners and operators of managed wetlands to allow for the consideration of alternative regulatory options for discharges from managed wetlands. Staff has hosted multiple managed wetlands workgroup meetings to discuss the range of options for regulatory coverage including, but not limited to, development of managed wetlands-specific WDRs. Staff will continue to work with stakeholders to develop an appropriate solution to regulate discharges from managed wetlands.

RECOMMENDATION: Adopt the tentative Order as proposed.

Mgmt. Review _____
Legal Review _PEP_

4/5 December 2014
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