

ITEM: 24

SUBJECT: Workshop on Waste Discharge Requirements for Growers in the Grassland Drainage Area

BOARD ACTION: *Hearing to Receive Public Comments on Draft Waste Discharge Requirements; No Board Action Will be Taken*

BACKGROUND: On 31 October 2014, Central Valley Water Board staff made draft waste discharge requirements for Growers in the Grassland Drainage Area (the Draft Order) available for public comment. Board staff plan on revising the Draft Order based on the comments received, and will recirculate a revised version of the Draft Order in the near future. The version of the Draft Order that was circulated for public comment is included in this agenda package, along with its attachments and comments received regarding the Draft Order.

The Draft Order would regulate the discharge to groundwater from irrigated agricultural lands from the Grassland Drainage Area, located in Fresno County. This draft Order is complementary to the draft Order for the Grassland Bypass Project, which regulates subsurface drainage from the Grassland Drainage Area, thru the Grassland Bypass channel to the San Luis Drain, to Mud Slough (north) and the subsequent discharge to the San Joaquin River. The Draft Order will cover discharges to groundwater that may originate from the leaching of irrigation water, subsurface drain water, and/or stormwater from agricultural lands that are not captured by subsurface drainage systems in the Grassland Drainage Area.

The Draft Order is issued to the Grassland Area Farmers within the Grassland Drainage Area. The Grassland Basin Drainage (GBD) Steering Committee has been recognized as a third-party entity representing the Grassland Area Farmers. The GBD Steering Committee is under the umbrella of the San Luis & Delta-Mendota Water Authority, which is a joint powers authority organized pursuant to California Government Code section 6500 *et seq.*

The Draft Order includes requirements that are found in other Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program Orders (e.g., requirements to develop management plans in response to exceedances, submittal of Groundwater Quality Assessment Report for the drainage area, required reporting of farm evaluations and monitoring).

Comments received include requests for: combining surface water and groundwater discharges into one general order; adding more parameters to groundwater monitoring; removal of dissolved oxygen from required monitoring parameters; and adding areas that should be covered by the Draft Order.

RECOMMENDATION There is no staff recommendation for this workshop item. The board may provide direction to staff based on the staff presentation and comments received from the public.