

Meeting Notes

CEQA Scoping Meeting and Public Workshop

November 2, 2012

10:00 AM -12:00 PM

Location: Central Valley Water Board, 11020 Sun Center Blvd. Suite 200, Rancho Cordova, CA – Board Room

Attendees:

California Department of Food and Agriculture – Michele Dias

California Rice Commission – Tim Johnson

Central Valley Clean Water Association- Debbie Webster

Central Valley Water Board - Anne Littlejohn, Betty Yee, Calvin Yang, Gene Davis, Jay Simi, Jeanne Chilcott, Jelena Hartman, Martice Vasquez, Melissa Dekar, Sue McConnell, Tessa Fojut,

City of Live Oak – Bill Lewis

Larry Walker Associates – Betsy Elzufon

Metropolitan Water District of Southern California – Lynda Smith

MLJ-LLC – Michael Johnson

Northern California Water Association (Sacramento Valley Water Quality Coalition) – Bruce Houdesheldt

Public Citizen – Kathleen Kimberlin

San Joaquin River Group Authority – Dennis Westcot

South San Joaquin Irrigation District – Jim Atherstone

Starr Consulting (Sacramento River Joint Source Water Protection Program) – Bonny Starr

Western Plant Health Association – Afiquir Khan

Summary of Comments

(Note – Central Valley Water Board staff responses are presented in a separate “Response to Comments” Document)

The following are comments made regarding the proposed project alternatives:

Alternative 2 – Site Specific Objectives (SSOs) Approach

- If the scope of the project is just these four dischargers, why not just implement SSOs and be done with it. Other alternatives may just slow down the process for them.
- Would the site specific objectives be linked to a category?

Alternative 4 – Tributary Rule Approach

- Tributary rule should be used generally, not definitively.
- The tributary rule has been problematic in other applications and is too arbitrary. More clarification is needed in the Basin Plan, especially in terms of how it is or is not applied to constructed Ag drains or Ag supply channels.
- The tributary rule should not apply to constructed or modified facilities.
- There are Ag dominated water bodies that are not constructed and may have the MUN beneficial use designated when it is not appropriate.
-

Proposed New Alternative –

- Start with Alternative 5 and dedesignate the MUN beneficial use in all Ag dominated water bodies. Then use Alternative 3 to designate where MUN use applies and where downstream water bodies need to be protected (e.g. Ag dominated natural water bodies).

The following are comments made regarding the overall project:

- Does a basin plan amendment need to be used to address this issue?
- What's the difference between the Basin Plan and a permit?
- How will Ag dominated water bodies be defined?
- How do we know which stakeholders are involved in this effort?
- If construction records are used, will there be any criteria for what information will be accepted?
- How do we limit overall pollution to the water? We are treating the symptoms but not finding a cure. What about Public Trust benefit?
- A case study in the Sacramento River Basin is not sufficient to reflect the diversity of watersheds found in the San Joaquin and Tulare Lake Basin. Doing checks in other areas of the Central Valley would be better.
- Could The Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program (ILRP) adapt to monitor downstream sources sufficiently?

- What types of costs would be required for additional monitoring?
- In the San Joaquin Valley, more water is needed to supply flows for the river. This leaves less water for farmers, spurring increased efforts to recycle and conserve water. However, water that has been heavily recycled will not meet MUN water quality objectives. It is not feasible to have farmers conserve and recycle their water AND meet MUN water quality objectives.
- How will we address effluent dominated water bodies versus Ag dominated water bodies?
- How far downstream will a discharger need to go to make sure there is no impact?
- Can dilution credits or mixing zone calculations be used to meet water quality objectives downstream of dischargers?
- The California Department of Public Health should weigh in on the use of Ag drainage for MUN beneficial use.
- Very few rivers or streams meet the MUN criteria of meeting Title 22 MCLs (geared toward meeting tap water requirements)
- Is the timeline consistent with CV-SALTS?
- Can the process used to dedesignate the Colusa Basin Drain be used today?
- How many POTWs and other point source dischargers are impacted by Ag drains?
- Will there be a hybrid of options?
- It will be important to show or explain how MUN beneficial uses will be protected at the intersections of non-MUN inputs into properly designated MUN streams.
- Whether through mixing zones or TMDL like allocations, there needs to be some assurance in the implementation plan that downstream uses are appropriately protected.