

MEETING SUMMARY

CV-SALTS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE POLICY MEETING NOTES AND RELEVANCE TO KRWCA – FEBRUARY 2, 2017

PREPARED FOR: Kern River Watershed Coalition Authority (KRWCA)

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DATE: February 7, 2017

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this meeting summary is to document the presentation and discussion items from the February 2, 2017 CV-SALTS Executive Committee Meeting. Currently, CV-SALTS is finalizing language in the Salt and Nutrient Management Plan (SNMP) and the prioritization methodology for the Nitrate Permitting Strategy.

BACKGROUND

Central Valley Salinity Alternatives for Long-Term Sustainability (CV-SALTS) is a collaborative stakeholder driven and managed program to develop sustainable salinity and nitrate management planning for the Central Valley. The goals of CV-SALTS are as follows:

- Sustain the Valley's lifestyle
- Support regional economic growth
- Retain a world-class agricultural economy
- Maintain a reliable, high-quality urban water supply
- Protect and enhance the environment

CV-SALTS includes four working groups:

1. Technical
2. Public Education and Outreach
3. Economic Social Cost
4. Other (future efforts)

Currently the specific main goals of CV-SALTS are to develop a Salt and Nutrient Management Plan (SNMP) which is a requirement of the Recycled Water Policy. The SNMP will inform amendments to the current Basin Plans in California's Central Valley.

ACRONYMS

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| AID – Alta Irrigation District Archetype | NIMS – Nitrate Implementation Measures Study |
| ACP – Alternative Compliance Program | P&O Study – Prioritization and Optimization Study |
| BP – Basin Plan | SGMA – Sustainable Groundwater Management Act |
| BPTC – Best Practicable Treatment and Control | SNMP – Salt and Nutrient Management Plan |
| GSA – Groundwater Sustainability Agency | SSALTS – Strategic Salt Accumulation Land and Transport Study |
| IAZ – Initial Analysis Zone | WQO – Water Quality Objective |
| ICM – Initial Conceptual Model | |
| ILRP – Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program | |
| LSJR – Lower San Joaquin River | |

SUMMARY AND RELEVANCE TO KRWCA

Review of final draft SNMP key revisions – Richard Meyerhoff/CDM Smith presented the key changes to the final draft of the SNMP that has been posted for Regional Board and public review on January 19, 2017. The main change was to the Nitrate Permitting Strategy in Section 4, which now describes a two-step prioritization process. The first step prioritizes six DWR basins (not the recently updated ones) as Priority 1 and another eight basins as Priority 2 using ambient water quality data. This prioritization will go the Regional Board as part of the SNMP and ultimately the Basin Plan. Step 2 is an opportunity for stakeholders or the Regional Board to change that prioritization by collecting data, information and other evidence that the prioritization should be changed. Step 2 would need to be completed by the end of 2017. If stakeholders in a basin believe that part of their basin should not be prioritized as high, another approach would be to keep the prioritization from Step 1 and put focus their N management and implementation plan accordingly (on the parts of the basin that need N management/attention) the most.

March 9, 2017 Regional Board Workshop – The Committee discussed the agenda briefly and generally discussed who would present different parts of the workshop. Presenters have not been finalized. The committee decided to add an additional item to the agenda where stakeholders that contributed to the Alternative Opinions (Attachment D-3 of the SNMP) can describe their rationale for these alternative opinions.

Outreach and Education strategy and materials – Initial outreach and education materials were presented by the Outreach and Education Committee. These materials included a Fact Sheet, an overview, a press release, and an example email to send to colleagues and business contacts. The committee also presented the outreach and education strategy, including media sources and different target audiences. The Executive Committee agreed that the materials should be shortened as much as possible to increase the potential of them being read and understood.

AGENDA ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

REVIEW OF FINAL DRAFT SNMP REVISIONS – RICHARD MEYERHOFF/CDM SMITH

- CVsalinity.org – docs posted – public hearing notice went out on Jan 19
- Updated prioritization for N permitting strategy – p. 4-31 in SNMP
- Step 1 – technical, simplified to one factor (ambient water quality) – Priority 1 are top 6, Priority 2 are next 8; Table 4-4 - notice to comply within 1 year of BPA adoption; the rest of the basins are not prioritized, even though they ultimately will be
- Step 2 – another opportunity to re-evaluate data and information, which didn't change much from original draft; stakeholders can recommend alternative prioritization during comment period of SNMP by the end of 2017;
 - stakeholders can do this for a whole basin or part of a basin; so for example you can request to lower the priority ranking of a certain area of a basin;
 - Regional Board can also provide evidence to raise priority, then Board uses their discretion
- Not specifically defined what would be considered adequate evidence to have prioritization changed
 - There are no specific instructions on how small of an area can be pulled out in SNMP – doesn't say no bigger than, or no smaller than; kind of takes care of itself because it will only be worth going through the effort for a big enough area, and it would be too difficult for an area that is too large
 - Where we lack data it's not a pass or a reason to request a lower priority
 - Another approach would be to keep all the basin in the original priority ranking instead of scrambling this year, and then identify areas that don't need focus in the individual SNMP for that basin
- Section 5 – describes template for SAMP; Table 5-1; but also opportunity to use existing monitoring programs to meet requirements of SAMP
- Section 6 – new section that summarizes three docs – environmental review, economic analysis, and anti-degradation analysis; latter section is more of a summary of process than a summary of findings because findings were difficult to summarize
- Attachment A – policies; not that many changes
- Attachment B – summary of technical documents and links to them
- Attachment C – very short, includes links to Section 6 docs
- Attachment D – glossary of terms; stakeholder process section; alternative opinions section (D-3); D-4 is more info about process to develop N prioritization
- Executive Summary was updated
- SNMP is 400 pages not including attachments; with attachments it's about 3,000-4,000.
- Laurel Firestone – how will goals of restoration be met with this process?

- In the plans that MZs have to develop when they are prioritized, they have to identify how they will address all the goals of the SNMP, including restoration, recognizing that the technical documents have indicated that restoration will be very difficult, take a really long time, or might not be possible. So, the plan might prioritize certain areas of the basin for restoration over others.
- A1-9 of MZ policy – there are deadlines for proposing a preliminary plan that must include a schedule (270 days) and then 180 days after that a final is due. The proposed schedule, once it is approved by the Regional Board, becomes enforceable because it will be incorporated into the WDR for that basin.

MARCH 9 WORKSHOP

- See overview of 94-slide presentation in agenda package
- There will be two new board members on the Regional Board, so need to try to provide enough detail but not bog down and keep it high level enough
- Laurel – stated that none of EJ’s substantive changes have been incorporated; only included as alternatives – RB and Tess disagree, having gone through all comments
- Discussion re who is going to present what, who is going to be on stakeholder panel
- Decision to add stakeholder item on Alternative Opinions, so EJ has the opportunity to present their cause

COMMUNICATIONS PLAN – CHARLES GARDINER

- Some of the committee members asked what the magnitude of the cost was.
 - Is this a good thing to communicate or not and at what level?
 - Needs to be some strategy/conversation about costs, not just what the program entails.
 - There is the cost and there is also value – if we can show there is value to the program, which offsets the cost, people will understand and accept it better. Therefore we need to communicate value if we are going to communicate cost
 - One perspective is: what is the alternative? The alternative to paying for CV-SALTS is not paying nothing – it will be to pay in another way through lost business opportunity, difficulty in getting permits, if at all, etc. This should be communicated too.
- Communication materials
 - Committee agreed they should be shortened
 - Outreach and Education committee invited comments
 - Fact Sheet is on Regional Board letterhead – should it be? Maybe should be changed to CV-SALTS letterhead; originally thought that RB letterhead would carry some weight but shouldn’t come across as an RB only program
 - Fact Sheet needs to be revised quickly to have ready by Feb 10
 - Some comments were given on specific wording to clarify that salt and nitrate problems are not prevalent throughout the valley in all parts but in some parts of the valley

- Text only was presented – graphics will be added to materials