

## **CV-SALTS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE POLICY SESSION NOTES – APRIL 25, 2019**

**PREPARED FOR:** Kern River Watershed Coalition Authority (KRWCA)

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### **INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this meeting summary is to document the presentation and discussion items from the March 28, 2019 CV-SALTS Executive Committee Policy Session. The main purpose of this meeting was to update the Committee on the status of the following ongoing items: State Board approval process of BPA; program implementation planning; management zone pilots and public education and outreach committee activities.

### **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 (CEQA, policy development, etc.)

## ACRONYMS

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	SMCL – Secondary Maximum Contaminant Level
GSA – Groundwater Sustainability Agency	SNMP – Salt and Nutrient Management Plan
IAZ – Initial Analysis Zone	SSALTS – Strategic Salt Accumulation Land and Transport Study
ICM – Initial Conceptual Model	WQO – Water Quality Objective
ILRP – Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program	
LSJR – Lower San Joaquin River	
MUN – Municipal beneficial use	

## SUMMARY AND RELEVANCE TO KRWCA

- **State Board Schedule for Basin Plan Amendments** – Tentative workshop planned for May 21.
- **Management Zone Pilot Study Projects** – Last round of steering committee meetings were held at the beginning of March for both MZs. Boundaries were finalized. Regulatory staff attended steering committee meetings to ensure correct interpretation of regulations. Focus on outreach to all potential participants.
- **Program Implementation Planning** – Update from Sue McConnell (ILRP Program Manager) Regional Board including notices to comply, general order updates, and program expectations.
- **P&O Study Workplan** – Brief update; consultants still working on draft.
- **Public Education and Outreach Committee** – Final video is available on CVSC website. There is an online interactive outreach matrix (works best with Chrome). There will be a CV-SALTS panel at the ACWA spring meeting. Next month will have update on 2019 outreach plan – website update, single url for CV-SALTS, etc.
- **CV-GMC and SAMP Planning** – Update by Richard Meyerhoff and David Cory. Purpose of SAMP is to ensure that CV-SALTS programs are working. By summer of 2021, SAMP document is due. Challenge is pulling together data that already exists; monitoring programs that already collect data – which is what SAMP workplan will consist of. Also will include data management. Next step – broader SAMP technical meeting, in which GMC presents approach – find out what monitoring networks already exist and what data is being gathered.

## MEETING NOTES

- Patrick Palupa (Regional Water Board) provided an update on the BPA State Board adoption process
  - The BPA won't be on the agenda for the May State Board meeting, but there is a briefing scheduled with the State Board in early May.

- State board developed confidential briefing memo for state board members. Patrick has seen it, and thinks there is a very good chance it will be adopted. He reports the memo is even-handed, and looks as good as it can be in terms of presenting it to state board.
- After wetlands policy is done, BPA will be put on front burner at state board.
- Tone has changed since about 5 or 6 months ago for the better.
- Update from Eric Gilman – First round of briefings is scheduled for next week, and hope to have second round done by mid-May. After briefings, the State Board will have a better sense of when it will be ready for adoption and brought before the board. They are not anticipating a workshop (hearing only), but that is still to be determined.
- The State Board hasn't seen a BPA like this in a long time, in terms of scope. June for adoption is a possibility, but have to consider 30-day notice requirements.
- Tim asked Patrick what he thinks controversial issues will be. Patrick thinks they will be similar to the ones that came up with the Regional Board – timelines, MZ boundaries, expectations for early action plan, secondary MCLs.
- State board doesn't have the ability to change line items; it's all "up or down" meaning they accept it or not. They will likely not remand it for a minor tweak, in which case it could be in place by a year. If they remand it, would take another three years.
- Richard Meyerhoff (GEI consultant) provided an update on management zones
  - The last round of steering committee meetings was during the last two weeks in Turlock and Dinuba. There was good attendance.
  - Meetings were structured around issues associated with early action plans and initial groundwater assessment, which are both requirements.
  - Vicki Kretsinger (Luhdorff and Scalmanini) briefly summarized information that had been developed (groundwater data) in addition to information previously collected for CV-SALTS analysis. Upper zone nitrate data has been updated, but they recently received some new information that will also be added, so the update is not complete yet. Fresno Co. has data but their office was flooded, so the information isn't available yet.
  - Early action plan – GEI reached out to NGOs, including Self Help, Community Water Center, Clean Water Action, and gave them the opportunity to share what they know.
  - Needs assessment reports – Phase 1 parts of those are starting to get done, which includes summarizing water quality issues in DACs. The draft preliminary Phase 1 report for Tulare Co., which is about 2/3 of the MZ, is out. The purpose of these reports is to provide baseline information.
  - Upcoming steering committee meetings are in June for both MZ.
  - Early Action Plans are developed to provide a temporary solution to poor drinking water access. What does temporary mean? So far, options for EAPs have been focused in two key areas, and one of these, centralized water kiosks, was discussed:
    - What to do about people who can't get to kiosks? Information about programs that have already been implemented, such as in Porterville, is starting to be available – success, challenges, etc. Discussion about challenges of installing kiosks. Design has been submitted to DDW and they are waiting, in one area for

example, so it requires permitting etc. It is a long and complex process, and requires some thought. There are issues with using schools as kiosk locations – community members don't want people congregating there. There are also problems with 5-gallon jugs, because some people can't carry them. Kiosks could be located at grocery stores so carts could be used, but grocers view that as competition. Could use tokens, but there are some issues with that too – you have to give them out. Refunds could be used, but that could be cumbersome.

- Next meeting will have strawman of Early Action Plan. GEI is trying to pull information about costs – some was done in previous CV-SALTS work, but needs to be updated. People have also stockpiled water in their homes, so the program can't be open ended for cost reasons.
- GEI is also summarizing treatment and control practices for each category of discharger – dairy, growers, etc.
- There has been good Board participation at MZ meetings. No meeting in May, so some time can be spent writing draft reports.
- Offline feedback from meetings have been that they need to be focused; people don't have patience for endless discussions about policy. People don't get paid to go to the steering committee meetings and they don't have the tolerance of CV-SALTS participants and process. They want to know: what is going to happen and what will it cost. But at the same time, people have to be educated about background information. They also have to have an idea to start with; even if people don't like it, a starting point that can be modified is better than meandering meetings.
- There is no official group or process to determine leaders, so nobody knows who is in charge. People don't know who is in charge – consultants are taking on that role or are perceived as such, but community needs to have leadership.
- 270 days after notice to comply to get first part done (early action plan, etc.) now seems like a very short amount of time, because you can spend 6 months figuring out who is driving the bus and hiring a consultant.
- Update from Scott Hannon from Regional Board – WDR planning program
  - 1400 active facilities in non-15 WDR program in Region 5, etc. see packet notes
  - Tess asked - how are they accounting for regional control programs? They will incorporate regional TMDLs as an appendix. Because BPA hasn't been approved yet, there is no concrete language for this process. If CV-SALTS gets adopted first, language from that can be used and incorporated into WDRs.
  - Debbie Webster asked – is there enough time in the schedule to accomplish permitting without causing an implosion – board staff, etc. Because the numbers of permits here are large (on non-15 permits). There are only a few senior permit writers in Rancho and Fresno offices (under 10), where priority 1 and 2 permits are – Redding has mostly priority 3 and non-basin.
  - Tess suggested having a targeted briefing for consultants to bring them up to speed. They will probably get called by the permittees, and this would be helpful to permittees if consultants already know what's going on. Some consultants have been in and out of the BPA/permitting process.

- Short-term implementation activities for CV-SALTS – notices to comply; Individual and general order updates
- Anticipated challenges
- There are also a number of permits where CV-SALTS won't apply, so they will be culled out
- Richard Meyerhoff (GEI consultant) provided an update on the P&O Study Work plan
  - Outline and drafts of first two sections are in agenda packet. These sections provide base for Section 4, which will have much more detail.
  - Requests comments by next Friday.
  - Tried to use language from Basin Plan and not change it too much, but avoid having the document too long.
  - BPA is pretty general for some things – eg. Recycled water – this document serves as a transition, which will become the new guideline when it is approved.
  - Writing to Board as well as public in this document, so it includes background.
  - Section 2 – Work plan Approach – wants this reviewed in particular
  - Conversation about antidegradation, which will still apply in the same way it has for the last 15 years. The conservative approach discourages granting assimilative capacity, especially for good quality water. The value of the P&O study is to evaluate what the effect is of degrading (adding salt) at a certain point in the system, and how to best manage it as a whole Central Valley Regional. See package page 20.
  - Section 3 is the work plan summary. It will also include a cost table.
  - Section 4 is the work plan task detail. It will include deliverables and cost.
  - The P&O Study Phase 1 governance plan is due within 1 year of BPA adoption.
  - Phases 2 and 3 governance plans are due by Year 9.
- Nicole Bell provided an update on PEOC
  - Committee is considering how to assist the MZ pilot process with outreach – committee is developing a plan for that.
  - Outreach tracking link (see link in agenda packet)
  - Video (see link in agenda packet)
  - Finalizing PowerPoint presentation to use as a consistent tool in meetings, etc.
    - Will be used at the ACWA meeting on May 8 and the Almond Board conference (Navigating the Waters) on May 14.
  - Working on P&O Study fact sheet that will demonstrate value of participating in the study.