

## MEETING SUMMARY

---

# CV-SALTS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE POLICY (TELECONFERENCE) SESSION NOTES – AUGUST 19, 2021, 9:00AM PDT

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

**PREPARED BY:** Stephanie Tillman/Land IQ

**DATE:** August 23, 2021

## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this meeting summary is to document the presentation and discussion items from the **August 19, 2021**, CV-SALTS Executive Committee Policy Session. The main purpose of this meeting was to update the committee on the CV-SALTS basin plan amendment implementation, Management Zone implementation status, the P&O study integrated scope of services, CIPA's plan for de-designating a portion of the Tulare Lake basin from AGR and MUN use, 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	OAL – Office of Administrative Law
BP – Basin Plan	OPP – Office of Public Participation
BPTC – Best Practicable Treatment and Control	POTW – Publicly Operated Treatment Works
CIPA – California Independent Petroleum Association	P&O Study – Prioritization and Optimization Study
EAP – Early Action Plan	SAFER – Safe and Affordable Funding for Equity and Resilience
GSA – Groundwater Sustainability Agency	SGMA – Sustainable Groundwater Management Act
IAZ – Initial Analysis Zone	SMCL – Secondary Maximum Contaminant Level
ICM – Initial Conceptual Model	SNMP – Salt and Nutrient Management Plan
ILRP – Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program	SSALTS – Strategic Salt Accumulation Land and Transport Study
ISOS – Integrated Scope of Services	WQO – Water Quality Objective
LSJR – Lower San Joaquin River	
MUN – Municipal beneficial use	
MZ – MZ	

## SUMMARY AND RELEVANCE TO KRWCA

- **Basin Plan Amendments Implementation (Patrick Palupa)** – Regional Board staff is occupied with analyzing information for dischargers who have applied for individual nitrate compliance (there are about 20 so far). Some dischargers have not responded with a notice of intent. Many dischargers, especially small towns/cities with POTWs, have said that the MZ dues are too high, but it may cost more to try to comply without a MZ.
- **Management Zone (MZ) Updates (Daniel Cozad, Parry Klassen, Sarah Rutherford)** – A summary of coordination efforts to standardize partnership cooperation and reporting is included in the agenda package. Valley Water Collaborative reported numerous efforts to continue outreach including schools, farmers markets and city councils. Kaweah reported there is some suspicion about free water because of previous experience of domestic well users being marketed by water softener companies. In-person outreach may be delayed again because of COVID19.
- **Prioritization and Optimization Study Integrated Scope of Services (ISOS) (Richard Meyerhoff and Tom Grovhoug)** – The consultant teams (GEI and LWA) presented highlights, schedule, and proposed budget for the ISOS, which includes 6 tasks. Each task has at least one key decision that the Executive Committee must make so the work can proceed. The consultant team is seeking written comments by September 7 and final approval by October 21 so that work can begin on November 1, 2021.
- **Prioritization and Optimization Study Participation (Daniel Cozad)** – A summary of paid participant fees is included in the agenda package. The percentage of dischargers who have paid, by industry shows the following participation to date: ILRP 93%; Wine 51%; Oil and gas 62%; Food processing 50%; Dairy 100%. 89% of budgeted participant fees have been paid.

- **CIPA De-designation Basin Plan Amendment Workplan Outline (Catalyst Environmental Solutions and Geosyntec)** – California Independent Petroleum Association (CIPA) represents numerous oil and gas companies who plan to collectively apply for a portion of the Tulare Lake basin to be dedesignated from AGR and MUN beneficial uses by 2023. The workplan includes addressing criteria for designation such as whether there are wells used for public water supply, presence of ag operations, and TDS concentrations. The main feedback was from P. Palupa, who advised that it would be very difficult to achieve the timeline presented because the CEQA documentation will be complicated.
- **Public Education and Outreach Committee (Nicole Bell)** – The outreach matrix that documents outreach activities will be updated to include upcoming activities. The interactive map of MZs is in progress. Other parts of the website will also be updated. A timeline of PEOC activities, including compliance reminders and program updates is included in the agenda package.

## MEETING NOTES

Parry Klassen stepped down as Chair. Committee agreed to Debbie Webster as new chair and Mike Wakeman and Vice-chair.

### **BASIN PLAN AMENDMENTS – IMPLEMENTATION UPDATE – PATRICK PALUPA (REGIONAL WATER BOARD)**

- Doing analysis of individual nitrate permits for those who decided not to participate in a MZ - consuming a lot of time and energy of Board staff
- Coordinating CV-SALTS, NPDES and WDR permitting committees
- Received about 20 applications for Path A compliance among Priority 1 areas
- Tule MZ compliance documents were approved by Board with additional info submitted by coalition.
- P. Klassen - What is required to apply for Path A compliance? Many are asking this question because it is unclear and unprecedented. Priority 2 areas should be able to benefit from Priority 1 lessons learned.
- S. Rutherford – COVID cases are rising, and in-person outreach plans may need to be modified.
- P. Palupa – Fresno POTWs – largest discharger that applied for Path A. They have submitted a large amount of supporting data because they have already initiated treatment and containment activities. As such, they have set bar high.
- Some dischargers have not submitted an NOI; Board working on enforcement
- Some dischargers have complained to Board that MZ dues are too high, but Board doesn't have control over that. Compared to refitting a WWTP, dues are likely a lower expense. However, for a small WWTP, in a small community, it is a large expense. Many communities have a lower tax base because of COVID shutting down businesses, etc.
- P. Klassen – If cities go Path A (such as Turlock) we still need their water system for fill stations.
- S. Safi – Before notices to comply go out for Priority 2 areas, would be good to have information about cost comparisons between Path A and B.

### **MANAGEMENT ZONE UPDATE – DANIEL COZAD**

- Agenda package page 8 has summary of efforts in progress – SAFER coordination and services; size of management zone; reporting for MZ; gathering stats regarding who has inquired by not applied,

ineligible, etc.; wells test status; fill station stats; working with MZs to standardize information and stats for Board; making reporting efficient

- Outreach – postcards are being used with other methods; information for students to take home now that schools are back in session
- Valley Water Collaborative – P. Klassen: Modesto and Turlock basins – businesses have been papered with posters (Spanish and English); farmers markets; give away small bottles of water; presentations to city councils and advisory councils of unincorporated areas; mistake in article represented that city water was unsafe; initiated contest in high schools for point-of-sale display
- Kaweah – S. Rutherford: considering school contact as well, such as school carnivals, football games, etc.; held off on SWAP meet because of heat; providing Spanish translation and interpreters; also considering targeting a community rep for small communities, such as Lemon Cove – leveraging personal relationships to do this. Attempted a house meeting, but door to door messaging in rural areas was not affected, mostly because people were suspicious. Domestic well owners have been heavily marketed by water softeners with a free well test, so they don't trust that the water is free.
- P. Klassen – In Salinas Valley, most successful method was door to door, but that's off the table now because of COVID.
- C. Beckstead - Working with COVID taskforce.
- N. Atume (Clean Water Action) - Requested an update on coordination agreement on co-contaminant testing
  - D. Cozad – working on agreement with MZ and State Board to apply for grant funding. One application is in process with one MZ. Another three or four will follow. First application will likely be done by end of September; applications that follow will be less work. MZs that are non-profits will be able to apply directly. Others will be able to apply through their county or similar.
- D. Cozad – Info in packet will get updated monthly. Once co-contaminant testing starts, monthly updates for those will be included.

## **PRIORITIZATION AND OPTIMIZATION STUDY INTEGRATED SCOPE OF SERVICES (ISOS) – RICHARD MEYERHOFF & TOM GROVHOUG**

- Illustrates 65 key workflow pathways
  - Focuses on first 2-3 years, not all 10 years of P&O study
  - Includes description of work and deliverables
  - Includes schedule and cost estimate
  - Tasks 1-6 – in each task, there are specific junctures in workflow where the Executive Committee needs to make key decisions
  - Figure 1 Workflow Pathways is color-coded as a reference to illustrated which tasks are associated with each workflow pathway
- Task 1 – Data Development & Management
  - 1.1 Data Compilation
  - 1.2 Data Management System
  - 1.3 and 1.4 Establish P&O Study Data Management System (DMS)

- **Executive Committee Key Decision: Approval of DMS**
- Task 2 – Baseline and Future Characterization of Salt Conditions in the Central Valley
  - 2.1 Baseline Conditions
  - 2.2 Salt Planning Options
  - 2.3 Initial Numeric Analyses, Characterize SMRs/Determine Salt Sustainability Gap
  - 2.4 Initial Alternatives Assessment to Close the Sustainability Gap
  - **Executive Committee Key Decision: Approval of SMRs**
- Task 3 – Establishment of Appropriate Numeric Salt Management Targets
  - 3.1 Protection of Sensitive Beneficial Uses
  - 3.2 Establish Archetype Areas
  - 3.3 Archetype Analyses
  - 3.4 Numeric Target Development
    - 3.4.1 Archetype Areas
    - 3.4.2 Central Valley
  - **Executive Committee Key Decisions: Approval of:**
    - **Archetype Areas**
    - **Archetype Targets**
    - **Central Valley Targets**
- Task 4 – Numeric Tool Development
  - 4.1 Tool and/or Model Identification – includes a list of model needs in ISOS
  - 4.2 Selection of Tool and/or Model
  - 4.3 Calibrate Selected Tool and/or Model
  - **Executive Committee Key Decision: Approval of Tool and/or Model**
- Task 5 – Additional Technical and Regulatory Tasks
  - 5.1 Regulatory Review
  - Salt Minimization Practices
  - 5.3 Groundwater Recharge Analysis
  - 5.4 Treatment Technologies Evaluation
  - 5.5 Develop Salt Management Areas
- Task 6 – Administrative Support Tasks
  - Progress Reports
  - Phase 1 Funding and Governance Plan
- Implementation of ISOS – 3-year schedule – includes key ET decision points
- Budget Development – Phased Cost Estimates – table included in ISOS
- Next steps
  - September 7 – written comments due
  - September 16 – Executive Committee meeting
  - October 14 – Final ISOS

- October 21 – Executive Committee meeting – approve final ISOS
- November 1 – Consultant team initiates work
- November 18 – Executive Committee meeting P&O Study Kickoff

**DEVELOPMENT AND VISUAL WORKPLAN AND ROADMAP FOR SEPTEMBER EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING – CHARLES GARDINER**

- Short verbal update

**PARTICIPATION UPDATE – DANIEL COZAD**

- 89% of budgeted participation fees have been paid
- Agenda package includes summary – ILRP, wine, oil and gas, food processing, dairy, community (POTWs/WWTPs primarily), other (mining, biosolids, composting, poultry, etc.)
- Relatively good participation from all industries
  - ILRP 93%
  - Wine 51%
  - Oil and gas 62%
  - Food processing 50%
  - Dairy 100%

**CIPA DEDESIGNATION BASIN PLAN AMENDMENT WORK PLAN OUTLINE – MEGAN SCHWARTZ (CATALYST ENVIRONMENTAL SOLUTIONS)/CAROLYN GORNY (GEOSYNTEC)**

- Presentation included in agenda package
- CIPA = trade organization representing independent oil and gas producers
- Meeting objectives
  - Summarize
  - Obtain early concurrence on workplan approach
  - Review schedule and next steps
- Review draft work plan
  - Southwestern part of Tulare Lake basin, 60x25 miles
  - MUN and AGR assigned to 5 detailed analysis units (DAUs) in study area
  - Criteria – TDS >3,000 mg/L, no public water supply; GW cannot be reasonably treated; aquifer exemptions
  - Workplan addresses presence of ag operations, public water supply and domestic wells, depth of first encountered GW, and whether it is hydrocarbon bearing, and TDS concentrations
- Proposed project schedule and next steps
  - April 2022 CV-SATLS review and prepare recommendation letter
  - June 2022 submit workplan to water board for review and approval for anticipated dedesignation in 2023
- Comments

- P. Palupa – schedule will be very difficult to achieve mostly because the CEQA documentation will be difficult; also, if AGR and MUN are de-designated, what water quality regulatory standard will applicant be held to in absence of AGR and MUN standards – major concern of State board.

### **PEOC UPDATE – NICOLE BELL**

- Outreach matrix reminder
- Working on interactive map tool for MZs – drafted, revisions in process
- Other parts of website will also be updated
- Reminder letter will be sent in mid-September to dischargers who have not responded to salt notice to comply and declared compliance pathway.
- Timeline included in agenda package for general outreach, salt control program, and nitrate control program, including quarterly program updates

### **MEETING SCHEDULE**

- Next policy meeting – **September 16, 9 am-3 pm (tentative end time) PDT - virtual**

**Meeting adjourned at 11:59 pm PDT.**