

MEETING SUMMARY

CV-SALTS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE POLICY (TELECONFERENCE) SESSION NOTES – NOVEMBER 18, 2021, 9:00AM PST

PREPARED FOR: Kern River Watershed Coalition Authority (KRWCA)

PREPARED BY: Stephanie Tillman/Land IQ

DATE: November 22, 2021

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this meeting summary is to document the presentation and discussion items from the **November 18, 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 kickoff, 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 (Anne Walters)** – Regional Board staff is working on reviewing MZ plans and a summary of permit status for all dischargers (yet to be completed). Staff is also working on a moderate enforcement tool; currently the fines are very large even for small operations. P&O participant fees that have come in have met the \$1.5M budget for the P&O study. A “nudge” letter to those dischargers who have not yet submitted a NOI for the salt control program was sent November 15. The groundwater component of the basin amendment was approved by the Office of Administrative Law on November 10; the surface water portion is with EPA pending approval.
- **Management Zone (MZ) Updates (Daniel Cozad and MZ leads)** – Matrix of MZ well stats posted on cvsalinity.org website was updated on November 1. SAFER application template for funding co-contaminants has been through legal review and is in processed of being finalized. Chowchilla, Kings and Valley Water Collaborative provided brief status updates on outreach.
- **Prioritization and Optimization Study Kickoff (Richard Meyerhoff and Tom Grovhoug)** – The consultant teams (GEI and LWA) provided a schedule of meeting topics, decisions to be made by the Executive Committee, and data collection activities for 2022. The draft Phase 1 Governance and Funding Plans will be prepared by the consultant team by January 2022. A P&O study brief for newer participants, member organizations and the public will be developed by Catalyst early in the new year.
- **Public Education and Outreach Committee (Nicole Bell)** – Participants were reminded to update the outreach matrix. The interactive MZ map on the website is finished. The website refresh was overviewed by Charles Gardiner (Catalyst).

MEETING NOTES

BASIN PLAN AMENDMENTS IMPLEMENTATION UPDATE – ANNE WALTERS & PATRICK PALUPA (REGIONAL WATER BOARD)

- Regional Board staff is working on list of dischargers' permits and their status but it isn't complete yet.
- Working with management zone permitting and reviewing preliminary plans.
- Salt Control Program
 - Sent out “nudge” letter on November 15, which resulted in many calls from permittees.
 - Daniel - 142 new submissions between end of October and November 15. Only some of those have paid. So far P&O study has about \$1.5M, which was the original budget.
 - There is a significant penalty (around 70%) for back fees to incentivize dischargers to pay before Board must contact them.
- Continuing discussions with enforcement unit about how to enforce these two programs – currently, only enforcement tools Board has are severe and there are no small penalties, so they are working on some moderate tool that would be more than a nudge but less severe than a “sledge hammer”. Currently, fine is \$1,000/day each day past a deadline regardless of size of operation.
- Some dischargers still do not understand all the new regulatory tools/mechanisms with which to comply.
- Groundwater component of Basin Plan Amendment was approved by Office of Administrative Law on November 10. Now surface component is at EPA for approval.

MANAGEMENT ZONE UPDATE – DANIEL COZAD

- Agenda package has a matrix of Priority 1 MZs' well stats updated as of November 1, 2021. This matrix is now updated by first day of each month and posted on the website (cvsalinity.org on Nitrate Program page).
 - About 1,200 testing applications have been submitted; 945 household equivalents are being served with water.
 - SAFER funding application template for co-contaminant impacts – responses to questions being developed by Valley Water Collaborative; resolving technical issues with legal; once that is done, agreement will be finalized. No anticipated date yet.
- Update on outreach activities by MZ – see PDFs of slides in agenda packet
 - Chowchilla (Kristi Robinson)
 - 2 public meetings
 - Used schools – sent flyers home with students, delivered hand flyers to homes within 4-5 mile radius, used social media – but both meetings were poorly attended
 - Outreach continues in English and Spanish
 - Very rural area where population is not dense
 - Kings Water Alliance (Debra Dunn)
 - Focus has been on in-person events during last two months

- Food banks, community events
- Total attendance of over 700 at those events
- Partner outreach with school districts, distributed additional flyers to community organizers
- Social media, Google ads, more hits on website
- Valley Water Collaborative (Parry Klassen)
 - Sent postcard mailing, which resulted in several more contacts
 - Press and postcards has been most successful

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

KICKOFF MEETING

- Schedule of meeting topics by month are in agenda packet, including decision points
- Table 5 on agenda packet page 8 shows schedule of meeting topics for 2022
- Table 1 on agenda packet page 9 shows a more detailed process of data collection and analytical process to get to decision
 - First decision will be in June to select data management system (DMS) approach, but will begin discussing in March
 - Second big decision will be in September to select tools and models, but will begin discussing in February
 - Third decision will be in October to select archetype study areas but will begin discussing in May. This will include the results of a literature review of sensitive beneficial use thresholds.
- First quarter of 2022 schedule is shown in Table 2 in agenda packet.
- Table 3 on agenda packet page 11 shows the data compilation summary
- January - technical team will request a small group/forum to be formed to assist with data compilation sources
- February – analytical modeling needs
- March – DMS options and modeling tool options
- Questions and comments
 - Will ILRP data be used?
 - Data already available, especially through technical team, will be used but the goal is to collect data that is useful and not just all data
 - How will management practices captured through ILRP be considered?
 - Will be addressed in later task, especially relevant to salt thresholds
 - Suggestion that analysis done by coalitions should be sought and not just raw data

PHASE 1 GOVERNANCE AND FUNDING PLANS – DANIEL COZAD

- Phase 1 Governance Plan for P&O Study

- When Basin Plan was written, this hadn't been completely decided
- CVSC governance structure
- Administrative procedures to support P&O study
- Procedures to revise the Governance Plan, if needed during the P&O study
- Phase 1 Funding Plan
 - Fee structure, how to collect fees, late fees, plans to secure funding other than member fees, recommendations for long-term funding.
- First draft of both will be ready in January; will then be delivered to Board for review.
- Mainly what has already been happening, but needs to be documented
- Later in the program, another governance and funding document will be developed for Phases 2 and 3.
- Salinity coalition is a 501-C6, which is a member benefit non-profit rather than a charity

P&O STUDY BRIEF FOR NEWER PARTICIPANTS AND THE PUBLIC – BOBBI LARSEN AND CHARLES GARDINER

- For new participants
- Also useful for members to provide to member organizations
- Draft in early part of 2022

PEOC UPDATE – DANIEL COZAD

- Outreach matrix reminder
- PEOC working on MZ section of website so that it will be interactive – Priority 1 MZs currently active
- Overall website refresh – (overview by Charles Gardiner) organized differently than old site based on anticipated users

MEETING SCHEDULE

- Next policy meeting – **January 13, 9 am-3 pm (tentative end time) PDT – virtual**
- Calendar for 2022 was approved as follows:
 - January 13
 - February 10
 - March 17
 - April 7
 - May 19
 - June 23
 - August 25
 - September 15
 - October 20
 - November 17

Adjourned at 10:38 am