

**STATE OF CALIFORNIA
REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD
CENTRAL COAST REGION**

STAFF REPORT FOR REGULAR MEETING OF JULY 10, 2009

Prepared on May 22, 2009

ITEM NUMBER: 11

SUBJECT: Limited Term Renewal of the Conditional Waiver of Waste Discharge Requirements for Discharges from Irrigated Lands (Order No. R3-2004-0117)

DISCUSSION

The Central Coast Water Board adopted the Conditional Waiver of Waste Discharge Requirements for Discharges from Irrigated Lands (Irrigated Ag Order) on July 9, 2004, to ensure that farming operations are protecting and restoring water quality through implementation of appropriate management measures. By law, all waivers must be reviewed, and renewed, revised, or replaced at least every five years. The Central Coast Water Board adopted the Irrigated Ag Order on July 9, 2004, and as such, this order is due for review in July 2009.

However, staff was not able to prepare a new draft Irrigated Ag Order for the July 2009 Water Board meeting due to the complexity of the water quality, aquatic habitat, cultural, and economic issues we are addressing as part of renewal, including compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act. Staff needs more time to address the relevant issues and develop a comprehensive draft Order for Board consideration. Since the existing Order expires in July 2009, staff is proposing that the Water Board re-issue the existing Order "as is" for up to one year, until July 2010. During in the interim, staff will continue to work on the relevant issues and will bring a comprehensive draft Order to the Board for consideration as soon as possible (before July 2010 if possible).

The only issue before the Water Board relative to this item is staff's proposal to renew the existing Irrigated Ag Order, with no changes except for the expiration date, for one year. This staff report does not discuss the various issues related to the more comprehensive, new Irrigated Ag Order that staff will present to the Water Board on or before July 2010. Background information is included in Attachment 2; however, staff will not discuss the background information because of the pending permit action item.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Central Coast Water Board re-issue the existing Conditional Waiver for Waste Discharge Requirements for Discharges from Irrigated Lands for one year, through July 10, 2010. Staff proposes no changes to the Order, except for the expiration date, as part of this action. Staff will continue to work on the relevant issues and

will bring a new, comprehensive draft Irrigated Ag Order to the Board for consideration as soon as possible, on or before July 2010.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Conditional Waiver of Waste Discharge Requirements for Discharges from Irrigated Lands, Order No. R3-2009-0050
2. Background information related to renewal of the Irrigated Ag Order

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