IRRIGATED LANDS REGULATORY PROGRAM

RESOURCES FOR GROWERS
FARM/RANCH INSPECTIONS
December 13, 2013

As part of the Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program, Water Board staff conducts field inspections of farms/ranches that are enrolled in Order No. R3-2012-0011 (Agricultural Order). This document provides a general overview of the purpose of the inspection, summary of inspection activities, and a description of the roles of the individuals participating in the inspection.

What is the purpose of the inspection?

The purpose of the farm/ranch inspections is for Water Board staff to visit the enrolled farm/ranch and engage in dialogue with the grower and/or landowner to do the following:

- Discuss and evaluate compliance with the Agricultural Order;
- Verify accuracy of information reported to the Water Board (e.g. eNOI, Annual Compliance Form);
- Identify, observe, and document areas where the grower and/or landowner is successfully implementing management practices;
- Identify, observe, and document areas of concern and improvement needed;
- Assess how the grower is using an iterative process to implement management practices to protect and improve water quality (e.g. How is the grower implementing practices? How is the grower evaluating practices? What plans does the grower have for improvement, if practices are not successful in controlling discharge?)
- Provide an opportunity for the grower and/or landowner to take follow-up actions using an iterative, adaptive management approach to implement improved management practices to protect and improve water quality;
- Require additional information or actions, as appropriate;

Summary of inspection areas

The following is a list of areas and documents Water Board staff may inspect[1]. Areas for inspection are prioritized based on individual farm characteristics and water quality impairments in the local watershed. During the inspection, Water Board staff will observe farm/ranch operations, and may take notes, photographs, and utilize GPS devices to document locations. In addition, Water Board staff may request additional information from grower, property owner, or their authorized representative about the farm characteristics or practices implemented (e.g.

[1] The list of inspections areas is only a summary, Water Board staff may inspect other areas or activities associated with the farm that present a risk to water quality.

nutrient management). Water quality grab samples and soil samples may be collected, and nitrate quick tests may be performed for screening purposes. If necessary, the Water Board may require the grower and/or landowner to conduct more formal, follow-up water quality monitoring and assessment. Staff will follow-up with the grower and/or landowner regarding the outcome of the inspection and any follow-up actions necessary[2].

- Farm Water Quality Management Plan
- Associated permits (e.g. pesticide use, streambed alteration, etc.)
- Groundwater wells and backflow prevention devices
- Fertilizer and pesticide storage and handling areas
- Farm perimeter, including areas adjacent to creeks and riparian areas (streambank conditions and presence of riparian vegetation)
- Areas vulnerable to erosion (presence of bare soil)
- Actual or potential discharge locations (e.g. outfalls, ponds, irrigation runoff)
- Management Practices (e.g. irrigation management, erosion control)

Who are the participants in an inspection?

For efficiency, individuals at the inspection should be limited. The primary participants in the inspection are Water Board staff and the grower, landowner, and their authorized representative(s) authorized by grower and/or landowner to act of their behalf. Any authorized representative(s) who participates in the inspection must be knowledgeable about the specific farm characteristics (e.g. cropping systems, irrigation methods used, groundwater wells) and status of management practices implemented, completed, in-progress, and planned at the farm/ranch.

The Water Board's Executive Officer has instructed staff to terminate the inspection if participant(s) delay, interfere, or otherwise obstruct the inspection or productive discussions between Water Board staff and the grower or landowner. In these cases, the grower and/or landowner will be required to conduct follow-up actions and provide information to the Water Board at their own expense.

Stay Informed

Stay informed about the general status of the Agricultural Order, by subscribing to the Agricultural Discharges electronic mailing list at:
http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/resources/email_subscriptions/reg3_subscribe.shtml.

For more information about the Agricultural Regulatory Program, including additional resources and guidance for landowners and operators, please visit the Water Board's Internet site at:
http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/water_issues/programs/ag_waivers/index.shtml

[2] If the grower or landowner asserts that observations made or information gathered by staff during an inspection is subject to an exemption from public disclosure (e.g., trade secrets or secret processes), the grower or landowner must identify such information and provide a brief explanation to staff. Staff will identify and document this information and explanation in the inspection report. The grower and/or landowner making the assertion must follow-up with a written explanation of how the information is exempt from public disclosure. Water Board staff will determine whether any such information qualifies for an exemption from public disclosure. If the Water Board staff disagrees with the asserted exemption from public disclosure, the Water Board staff will notify the grower or landowner prior to making the inspection report or portions of such report available for public inspection.

CENTRAL COAST REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD
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Inspection Checklist	
Operation Name:	**AW#**
Farm/Ranch Name:	**Global ID#**
Address:	**Tier:**
Contact Name:	**Date:**
Phone:	**Start Time:**
Email:	**End Time:**
Inspector(s):	
Attendees(s):	

KEY: **Y = Yes; N = No; N/A = Not Applicable; N/I = Not Inspected; MI = Management Practice(s) Implemented; ME = Management Practice(s) Evaluated; IMP = Improvement Needed; A = Area Of Concern;**

Farm Water Quality Management Plan Documents		Y/N	MI	ME	IMP	A
44	Is current Farm Plan available for this farm/ranch?					
44f	Does the Farm Plan include a description and time schedule for management practices, treatment and control measures implemented to prevent and control discharges, and protect water quality?					
44g	Does the Farm Plan include a description of methods used to evaluate success of management practice implementation?					
69	Are photo monitoring records maintained in the Farm Plan?					
70	Are fertilizer application records maintained in the Farm Plan?					
MRP	Are irrigation water application records maintained in the Farm Plan?					
	Other:					

Chemical Storage and Handling		Y/N	MI	ME	IMP	A
34	Are chemicals (pesticides or fertilizers) stored on farm?					
34	If yes, are chemicals protected from exposure to wind and rain?					
34	If yes, is containment in place to protect from accidental discharge?					
34	Is there evidence of spills or leaks?					
	Other:					

Groundwater Protection		Y/N	MI	ME	IMP	A
	Are there any groundwater wells on the farm property?					
	If yes, are there wells used for domestic drinking water purposes?					
	Is the well head(s) in good condition?					
34	Are there any chemicals stored near the well head(s)?					
12	Are there management practices implemented to avoid the transport of pollutants toward the groundwater well?					
32	Are there any abandoned wells on the farm property?					
31	Are pesticides or fertilizers applied through the irrigation system?					
31	If yes, are proper backflow prevention devices installed and maintained?					
33	Are there any containment structures on the farm property?					
33	If yes, is the containment structure managed, constructed, or maintained to avoid percolation of waste to groundwater and to minimize surface water overflows that have the potential to impair water quality?					
	Other:					

Irrigation Management		Y/N	MI	ME	IMP	A
44f	Are management practices implemented to increase irrigation efficiency and management to prevent and control discharges to surface water and groundwater?					
44c	Does irrigation runoff leave the farm?					
44c	Is there evidence of discharge of irrigation runoff to surface water body?					
44c	Are there any ditches, constructed swales, tile drains, or other discrete structures or features that transport irrigation runoff and/or drained water to a surface water body?					
44c	Is there any direct discharge (e.g. outfalls, pipes or culverts) to a surface water body?					
	Other:					

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Nutrient Management		Y/N	MI	ME	IMP	A
44f	Are management practices implemented to avoid the excessive application of fertilizers and increase nutrient management to prevent and control discharges to surface water and groundwater?					
	Other:					

Pesticide Management		Y/N	MI	ME	IMP	A
44f	Are management practices implemented to increase pesticide management to prevent and control discharges of pesticides and toxicity to surface water and groundwater?					
28	Are chemicals used to control wildlife (such as bait traps or poison) placed in locations where they will not be discharged to surface waters?					
	Other:					

Sediment Management / Erosion Control		Y/N	MI	ME	IMP	A
36	Are management practices implemented to increase erosion control and sediment management to prevent and control discharges to surface water and groundwater?					
37	Are management practices implemented in non-cropped areas to protect against soil erosion (e.g. unpaved roads)?					
37	Is there bare soil vulnerable to erosion?					
36	Is there evidence of soil erosion?					
36	Is there evidence of discharge of soil to surface water body?					
	Other:					

Stormwater Management		Y/N	MI	ME	IMP	A
36	Are management practices implemented to increase stormwater management to prevent and control discharges to surface water and groundwater?					
44c	Does stormwater runoff leave the farm?					
44c	Is farm adjacent to a surface water body?					
36	Is there evidence of discharge of stormwater runoff to surface water?					
	Other:					

Trash		Y/N	MI	ME	IMP	A
29	Are management practices implemented to prevent and control discharges of trash to surface water?					
29	Is agricultural rubbish, refuse, irrigation tubing or tape, or other solid wastes placed in an area where they may contact or may eventually be discharged to surface waters?					
29	Is there evidence of the discharge of agricultural rubbish, refuse, irrigation tubing or tape, or other solid wastes into surface waters?					
	Other:					

Aquatic Habitat Protection		Y/N	MI	ME	IMP	A
40	Are management practices implemented to protect aquatic habitat, riparian and wetland areas?					
80	Is there crop production within 30 feet of a surface water body?					
39	Is the existing, naturally occurring, riparian vegetative cover (such as trees, shrubs, and grasses) in aquatic habitat areas in tact (e.g. not disturbed or removed)?					
41	Is there any work conducted within the bed, bank or channel of a lake or stream, including riparian areas, that has the potential to result in erosion and discharges of waste? If yes, permit?					
30	Are there wetland areas near the ranch? If so, is there any work that has the potential to discharge "fill" such as sediment, to wetlands?					
	Other:					

COMMENTS / FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS (use additional page, if needed)**:**

Inspector Signature:
<DRAFT as of XX/XX/XX>

Date:

Form Updated December 17, 2013