

ITEM	16
SUBJECT	Rice Pesticide Program, Management Practices for the 2006 Rice Season
BOARD ACTION	<i>Consideration of Approval of 2006 Management Practices</i>
BACKGROUND	<p>A Basin Plan prohibition of discharge is in effect for irrigation tailwater containing specific pesticides until the Water Board approves management practices for 2006. The Water Board may approve the program as proposed by the California Rice Commission (CRC), approve the program subject to new or additional conditions or take no action, which would keep the prohibition in effect. Staff recommendation is to approve the practices as proposed by the CRC.</p> <p>The Basin Plan states that the discharge of irrigation return flows containing carbofuran, malathion, methyl parathion, molinate and thiobencarb is prohibited unless the discharger is following management practices approved by the Water Board, and that implementation of these management practices must be expected to result in compliance with the performance goals. The Basin Plan contains performance goals for the five pesticides and a 1.0 µg/l thiobencarb water quality objective. The water quality objective level, applicable to waters designated as municipal or domestic supply, is also the secondary MCL set to prevent taste complaints in drinking water supplies.</p> <p>Each year the California Rice Commission (CRC), a commodity group representing all of California's rice growers and handlers, submits an annual report to the Water Board summarizing the previous season's monitoring efforts and implementation of management practices. The annual report also recommends management practices for the upcoming rice season.</p> <p>On 18 March 2005, the Water Board approved management practices for 2005, continuing conditions put in place in 2003, including a Storm Event Work Group, increased monitoring of thiobencarb, a prohibition on the use of Bolero[®] 10G in the Sacramento Valley, restrictions on the use of thiobencarb near rivers, and increased education efforts including CRC-hosted preseason mandatory stewardship meetings.</p> <p>Water Board approval of management practices continues to allow rice farmers to discharge to surface water. Without approval of the Program farmers will face prohibition of the discharge of return flows containing the five rice pesticides, as stated in the Basin Plan.</p> <p>In 2005 rice acreage decreased in the Sacramento Valley and use of most rice pesticides decreased. Monitoring of agricultural drains and the Sacramento River detected much lower levels of thiobencarb and</p>

molinate than observed from 1998 to 2002. 2005 also marked the first use of the Storm Event Work Group communications plan, which was implemented in response to a release from the RD1000 closed system.

After consultation with Water Board staff and the Department of Pesticide Registration and soliciting comments from municipal supply stakeholders, the CRC has proposed conditions for the 2006 season. These conditions maintain the 2005 requirements with minor modifications. Additional details are provided in the attached staff report.

ISSUES

Should the Board approve the proposed management practices for the control of pesticide discharges from rice fields?

Mgmt. Review _____
Legal Review _____

16/17 March 2006
Region 5 Board Meeting
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