

ITEM: 20  
SUBJECT: Developing a Strategy for Regulation of Managed Wetlands

BOARD ACTION: *Resolution*

BACKGROUND: Managed wetlands are currently required to obtain regulatory coverage under the Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program (ILRP). However, the Central Valley Water Board recognizes that managed wetlands operations and their potential water quality impacts differ from irrigated agriculture operations. Therefore, under the ILRP, parcels operated exclusively as managed wetlands are not required to prepare Nitrogen Management Plans or Sediment and Erosion Control Plans. In addition, a wetland-specific evaluation template has been issued to be used in place of the Farm Evaluation Template.

Managed wetlands may contribute to certain water quality issues, but their impacts are of a more limited nature than that of irrigated agriculture. The proposed resolution supports the development of a separate long-term regulatory strategy that protects surface and groundwater quality in relation to managed wetlands discharges while considering the overall goals to increase managed wetlands and their water quality benefits and minimize regulatory costs.

The proposed resolution recognizes that managed wetlands in the Tulare Lake Basin were not previously required to obtain coverage in the ILRP because they do not discharge to surface water. Additionally, they are not subject to any current TMDLs, unlike managed wetlands of the Sacramento River-San Joaquin River Basin.

The proposed resolution directs staff to develop a long-term strategy for managed wetlands regulation and to revise the Tulare Lake Basin Orders to remove managed wetlands that do not discharge to surface water from the Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program. Regulation of Tulare Lake Basin wetlands that do not discharge to surface water will be addressed as part of a long-term regulatory strategy for managed wetlands.

RECOMMENDATION Staff recommends adoption of the proposed Resolution.

Mgmt. Review SYM  
Legal Review ASD  
18/19 August 2016  
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