

From: Melissa Turner <mturner@mlj-llc.com>
To: 'Jelena Hartman' <JHartman@waterboards.ca.gov>, 'Rachel West' <rwest@mlj-llc.com>, 'Susan Fregien' <sfregien@waterboards.ca.gov>
CC: 'MichaelJohnson' <mjohnson@mlj-llc.com>, 'Parry Klassen' <pklassen@unwiredbb.com>, 'Chris Jimmerson' <CJimmerson@waterboards.ca.gov>
Date: 4/23/2012 10:25 PM
Subject: RE: ESJWQC-Duck Slough @ Hwy 99 Removal Request

Hi Jelena,

We have not investigated the exact parcels that are drained by the irrigation drainage input upstream of the Hwy 99 location – there has not been a need to specifically identify those parcels.

In our March 2009 SAMR we described the Duck Slough subwatershed from the most downstream monitoring location at Gurr Rd up through the watershed including the management plan locations that were selected to try and help with sourcing of water quality exceedances; since 2008 we have updated our maps to be more specific in their boundaries so the subwatershed is slightly different than most recent reports for the Hwy 99 and Gurr Rd sites. Below is an excerpt from the subwatershed descriptions – Duck Slough @ Hwy 50, North Slough @ Hwy 59 and Duck Slough @ Whealan were all sites added in to help with source identification for chlorpyrifos. What we concluded was that dividing the subwatershed did not help with sourcing since some sites were dry upstream, others had exceedances upstream but not downstream or vice versa. Focusing on targeted growers within the Gurr Rd subwatershed (which incorporates all the parcels upstream) has been an effective outreach approach and has resulted in improved water quality.

Duck Slough @ Gurr Road (28,636 irrigated acres) – This site subwatershed is a monitoring location downstream from Duck Slough @ Hwy 99. Located to the south and west of Merced, this site drains field crops immediately upstream and deciduous nuts further upstream as well as some irrigated pasture. The city of Merced delivers treated water to Duck Slough a few miles upstream of the Gurr Road site. Duck Slough flows west eventually becoming Deadman Creek in the western portion of the Coalition region. The slough eventually flows into the San Joaquin River via Deadman Creek and Deep Slough.

Duck Slough @ Hwy 59 (14,036 irrigated acres) – This site is upstream of Duck Slough @ Gurr Rd halfway between Gurr Rd and Hwy 99. The area drained is approximately 59% of the irrigated agriculture in the subwatershed. Like Duck Slough @ Gurr Rd this site drains field crops immediately upstream and deciduous nuts further upstream as well as some irrigated pasture. At the bridge where the water crosses Hwy 59 a sign identifies the water body as Mariposa Creek, but its location between McNamara Rd and Owens Creek as well as aerial photographs of the region indicate otherwise.

North Slough @ Hwy 59 (16,762 irrigated acres) – This site is upstream of Duck Slough @ Gurr Rd. North Slough is fed by water from Lingard Lateral and it drains into Duck Slough 2 miles west of Hwy 59, but its flow is intermittent. It did not flow during the irrigation season of 2008 and it is unclear under what circumstances water would drain into Duck Slough. This site collects runoff from approximately 59% of the irrigated agriculture in the subwatershed, including field crops immediately upstream and deciduous nuts further upstream as well as some irrigated pasture.

Duck Slough @ Hwy 99 (15,622 irrigated acres) – This site subwatershed is located upstream of the Duck Slough @ Gurr Road site and was selected to determine relative contribution of water quality impairments in the upstream portion of the Duck Slough subwatershed. Duck Slough originates in the Sierra foothills and flows west eventually joining with Deadman Creek in the western portion of the coalition region. The monitoring site is located just east of Highway 99 south of Planada and Merced. Irrigated agriculture in this site subwatershed is primarily deciduous nuts, with truck crops and irrigated pasture the next most common land uses.

Duck Slough @ Whealan Rd (7,417 irrigated acres) – This site is upstream of Duck Slough @ Hwy 99. The drained area is approximately 47% of the subwatershed above Hwy 99 and includes deciduous nuts, truck crops and irrigated pasture.

I'm not sure that I answered your question and have supplied information that was already produced from previous reports. If you need more detail please let me know – it might be best to have a quick phone call to make sure that I am providing you with the information that you need.

Thanks,
Melissa

From: Jelena Hartman [mailto:JHartman@waterboards.ca.gov]
Sent: Friday, April 20, 2012 7:56 AM
To: Melissa Turner; 'Rachel West'; Susan Fregien
Cc: 'MichaelJohnson'; 'Parry Klassen'; Chris Jimmerson
Subject: RE: ESJWQC-Duck Slough @ Hwy 99 Removal Request

Hi Melissa,

Thank you for the responses to the questions regarding the request to remove Duck Slough @ Hwy 99 from the MRP Plan. The information you provided really helps.

Regarding the main irrigation drainage that spills into Duck Slough 200-300 yards upstream of where the Coalition currently sample, is it known what the subwatershed area is with and without that irrigation drain? Can the land area and land use that would be represented if sampling was conducted at Whelan Rd or Arboleta Rd be quantified based on the data that you have?

Thanks,

Jelena

>>> Melissa Turner <mturner@mlj-llc.com> 4/19/2012 8:37 PM >>>

Hi Jelena,

We've responded to your questions below in bold.

Please let me know if you have any additional questions or if you would like additional information.

Thanks,

Melissa

From: Jelena Hartman [mailto:JHartman@waterboards.ca.gov]
Sent: Friday, April 13, 2012 3:47 PM
To: Rachel West; Susan Fregien
Cc: MichaelJohnson; Melissa Turner; Parry Klassen; Chris Jimmerson
Subject: Re: ESJWQC-Duck Slough @ Hwy 99 Removal Request

Hi Rachel,

After the preliminary review of the request to remove the Duck Slough @ Hwy 99 sample site from the MRP Plan, there are a couple of questions:

1. Are there any sites upstream from the construction at Hwy 99 that might be feasible sampling locations representative of the upper reach of the Duck Slough?

We could sample at one of two upstream locations 'Whelan Rd' or 'Arboleta Rd', but the main irrigation drainage we want to capture spills into Duck Slough at about 200-300 yds upstream of where we currently sample. In addition, the amount of agriculture upstream of Whelan Rd and Arboleta Rd is minimal. We feel that Duck Slough @ Gurr Rd is representative of all the agriculture drainage upstream. Any water quality issues that occur at Duck Slough @ Gurr Rd will be communicated to all growers within the site subwatershed, including growers upstream of Hwy 99 that were part of the Duck Slough @ Hwy 99 site subwatershed.

2. With the construction upstream, how will potential construction discharge and runoff affect the Duck Slough @ Gurr Road site?

As far as we know the highway construction crews are responsible for implementing measures to prevent the discharge of sediment and any other waste to surface water. We do not anticipate seeing any impacts to water quality in Duck Slough due to construction activities. However, if we

do detect an increase in constituents such as TSS we will bring this to your attention and discuss potential actions such moving the monitoring location.

Thanks,

Jelena

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>>> Rachel West <rwest@mlj-llc.com> 4/12/2012 10:48 AM >>>
Dear Susan,

Attached is a letter addressed to Pamela Creedon requesting the approval to remove the Duck Slough @ Hwy 99 sample site from the ESJWQC monitoring program. Since the Coalition will no longer be able to access the Duck Slough @ Hwy 99 monitoring location starting in May 2012, a quick response from the Regional Board is necessary to allow the Coalition to make all necessary changes to its monitoring schedules before the May monitoring event. Parry will be mailing the letter with a wet signature to you this week.

Please let me know if you have any questions. Additional documentation can be supplied as needed.

Thanks,

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Rachel C. West  
Environmental Scientist

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