

ITEM: 10

SUBJECT: Consideration of a Resolution Approving a Short-Term Renewal of the Coalition Group Conditional Waiver of Waste Discharge Requirements for Discharges from Irrigated Lands, Order R5-2006-0053. The proposed resolution relies on the ILRP Program EIR (Resolution R5-2011-0017) for CEQA compliance.

BOARD ACTION: Twenty-four month Renewal of Current Coalition Group Conditional Waiver of Waste Discharge Requirements for Discharges from Irrigated Lands

BACKGROUND: On 22 June 2006, the Central Valley Water Board adopted a Coalition Group Conditional Waiver of Waste Discharge Requirements for Discharges from Irrigated Lands (Conditional Waiver) (Attachment A). This Order became effective on 1 July 2006 and expires on 30 June 2011 unless renewed. The Board intended the 2006 conditional waiver to serve as an interim regulatory program until a long-term program was developed. When the Board approved the 2006 conditional waiver, it directed staff to begin developing a long-term irrigated lands regulatory program (ILRP) to protect water quality in accordance with state law. The Board also directed staff, in developing the ILRP, to continue preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) that would evaluate alternatives for the ILRP.

At its April 2011 meeting, the Board directed staff to begin developing Orders to address discharges from irrigated lands to groundwater and surface water. Staff intends to bring 8-10 geographically-based and commodity-based general Orders for Board consideration, as well as a general WDR that would apply to individual dischargers. Completing this process will take up to two years. To ensure continued regulatory coverage of discharges to surface water, the existing Coalition Group Conditional Waiver must be renewed

The Board certified a Final Program EIR for the Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program at the April 2011 meeting. One of the alternatives evaluated in the Program EIR was the long-term continuation of the current conditional waiver. Although staff are proposing a short-term renewal, the potential adverse environmental impacts associated with continuing the current program are identified in the Program EIR. Given those potential impacts, CEQA requires the Board to include mitigation measures and a mitigation monitoring and reporting program as part of its action. The proposed renewal of the Coalition Group waiver, therefore, includes additional conditions requiring mitigation of potential adverse environmental impacts and reporting of those mitigation efforts to the Board.

Staff recommends that the Board adopt the twenty-four month renewal of Order No. R5-2006-0053.

Mgmt. Review _____
Legal Review _____ APM _____

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