

Tentative Eastern San Joaquin River Watershed Waste Discharge Requirements (WDRs)



Presentation Overview

- Background
- Summary of revisions (July – November versions)
- Next Steps

Program Background

- Long-term ILRP & EIR initiated by the board (2003 & 2006 conditional waivers)
- Stakeholder Advisory Workgroup
- Draft/Final Program EIR (2010/2011)
 - Certified by the board in April 2011

General Order for Eastern San Joaquin River Watershed

- Scope of coverage:
 - All irrigated agricultural operations within the Eastern San Joaquin River Watershed – including managed wetlands and nurseries

Eastern San Joaquin River Watershed:

- approx. 1 million acres of irrigated lands

- top crops: almonds, hay, corn, grapes, tomatoes, pasture, wheat, cotton, walnuts





Revisions: Limitations

- “Receiving water limitations”
- Previously – “discharge limitations”
- Clarification that the limitations are not edge-of-field effluent limitations

Revisions: Small Farming Operations

- Small farming operations < 60 acres in total
- Provides more time
 - Farm evaluations
 - Nitrogen management plans
 - Sediment and erosion control plans

Revisions: Sediment and Erosion Control Plans

- Member plans:
 - Targeted to Members that may cause a sediment/erosion problem
 - Previously all Members discharging to surface water
 - Increased options for plan certification
- Sediment/erosion assessment report
 - New third-party report to determine which members must develop a plan

Revisions: Nitrogen Management

- Nitrogen management plans
 - Required only in high vulnerability areas
 - Increased options for plan certification
- Previously “nitrogen budgets”
 - Previously required for all Members
- **Potential staff revision –require for all Members to minimize potential for degradation**

Revisions: Engineering for Ponds/Basins

- Requirement removed:
 - Registered civil engineer design of settling ponds, basins, and tailwater return systems
 - Executive Officer has authority that can be applied on a case by case basis
- Maintain performance standard:
 - Operated/maintained to prevent groundwater degradation, erosion, slope failure; and minimize the discharge of sediment

Revisions: Templates

- New option for third-party development in coordination w/other third-parties, commodities
 - Farm evaluation
 - Sediment and erosion control plan
 - Nitrogen management plan
- Executive Officer to approve
- Want to ensure consistency in how information is collected

Revisions: Groundwater monitoring/evaluation

- Revised to improve clarity
 1. Groundwater assessment report
 2. Management practice evaluation program, previously “representative groundwater monitoring program”
 3. Trend monitoring program

Revisions: Management Practices Evaluation Program

- Goals of Representative Monitoring and Management Practices Evaluation Program the same...
- Evaluate how practices on the land surface are affecting groundwater quality

Revisions: Member Reporting

- New provision allowing reduction in Member reporting by the Executive officer where minimal changes year to year occur
 - Farm evaluations
 - Nitrogen management summary reports

Revisions: Third-Party Reporting

- Third-party reporting of Member information associated to “township” (36 sq mi) vs. “section” (1 sq mi)
- Concerns regarding management of data

Revisions: Third-Party Reporting

- Third-party monitoring report frequency changed to “annual”
- Previously, “biennial”
- Higher frequency will help track changes in practices / target compliance efforts

Next Steps

- Continuation of hearing on Eastern San Joaquin River WDRs on December 7, Rancho Cordova
- WDRs in progress
 - Tulare Lake Basin
 - Individual WDRs
 - WDRs for Rice Growers in the Sacramento Valley

Questions ?

