

## **CV-SALTS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE POLICY (TELECONFERENCE) SESSION NOTES – OCTOBER 22, 2020 10 AM-3:30 PM**

**PREPARED FOR:** Kern River Watershed Coalition Authority (KRWCA)

**PREPARED BY:** Stephanie Tillman/Land IQ

**DATE:** October 22, 2020

### **INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this meeting summary is to document the presentation and discussion items from the October 22, 2020 CV-SALTS Executive Committee Policy Session. The main purpose of this meeting was to update the committee on the CV-SALTS basin plan amendments implementation status, Management Zone developments, and public education and outreach committee activities. In addition, a focused session on the Prioritization and Optimization Study and numeric salt targets was held.

### **BACKGROUND**

Central Valley Salinity Alternatives for Long-Term Sustainability (CV-SALTS) is a collaborative stakeholder driven and managed program to develop sustainable salinity and nitrate management planning for the Central Valley. The goals of CV-SALTS are as follows:

- Sustain the Valley's lifestyle
- Support regional economic growth
- Retain a world-class agricultural economy
- Maintain a reliable, high-quality urban water supply
- Protect and enhance the environment

CV-SALTS includes four working groups:

1. Technical
2. Public Education and Outreach
3. Economic Social Cost
4. Other (CEQA, policy development, etc.)

## ACRONYMS

AID – Alta Irrigation District Archetype	NIMS – Nitrate Implementation Measures Study
ACP – Alternative Compliance Program	OAL – Office of Administrative Law
BP – Basin Plan	OPP – Office of Public Participation
BPTC – Best Practicable Treatment and Control	P&O Study – Prioritization and Optimization Study
EAP – Early Action Plan	SGMA – Sustainable Groundwater Management Act
GSA – Groundwater Sustainability Agency	SMCL – Secondary Maximum Contaminant Level
IAZ – Initial Analysis Zone	SNMP – Salt and Nutrient Management Plan
ICM – Initial Conceptual Model	SSALTS – Strategic Salt Accumulation Land and Transport Study
ILRP – Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program	WQO – Water Quality Objective
LSJR – Lower San Joaquin River	
MUN – Municipal beneficial use	
MZ – MZ	

## SUMMARY AND RELEVANCE TO KRWCA

- **Basin Plan Amendments – Update and Implementation (Anne Walters)** – The public comment period on the Staff Report and revised Basin Plan language closed on Monday; four comment letters were received. USEPA approval is still pending and delayed longer than was originally anticipated. Salinity control program notices to comply will likely be sent out in November. BPA will be presented at December Regional Board meeting.
- **Management Zone (MZ) Pilot Study Projects (Daniel Cozad) – Project Update** – Some new organizations have been formed; some MZs are still considering governance structures such as non-profit, etc. Regional and board staff participated in last meeting to help with coordination on contacting difficult to contact dischargers, clarifying what state government services are available to MZs, and how to coordinate about dischargers planning to go Path A and forego the MZ approach.
- **Public Education and Outreach Committee (Nicole Bell)** – Outreach is shifting towards MZs. Salt control program draft brochure is available for the Committee’s review and comments; will likely not go out as soon as expected because salt notices to comply are delayed. Informational webinar will be hosted by Local Government Commission on October 28 to address various water quality regulations. PEOC intends to send out quarterly email shorts/blurbs as updates.
- **Prioritization and Optimization Study – Bobbi Larsen** facilitated a discussion on what information needs are required for selecting archetypes and addressing tasks 3.2 and 3.3 in the workplan. Regional Board EO expressed concern that archetype approach can miss the big picture because not all archetypes can be scaled up to the whole valley. Need to make sure water managers and those with day to day experience are involved so that they ensure the archetypes are useful and applicable to their situations.

# MEETING NOTES

## **BASIN PLAN AMENDMENTS – IMPLEMENTATION UPDATE - ANNE WALTERS AND PATRICK PALUPA (REGIONAL WATER BOARD)**

- 45-day comment period ended on Monday
- Received 4 comment letters
- Working on response to comments
- Preparing for taking item to December Board meeting
- Salinity notices to comply – Region 9 USEPA anticipated having conditional approval within a week at last update, but it had to go back to Washington for more review
- Nitrate control program – trying to coordinate with MZs; reviewing how the review protocols will be done; have already received one application for Path A
- Getting lots of communications about how they will be coordinating with SGMA, ILRP, SAFER, etc. – trying to make MZs aware of programs, but many programs have been in existence for 10-30 years. GSAs are not approaching nitrate the same way. SAFER is still finding its footing. Trying to make sure they have enforcement resources well positioned because they know there will be dischargers who don't comply.

## **MANAGEMENT ZONE – STATUS UPDATE – DANIEL COZAD AND MZ SUPPORT COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

- East San Joaquin and others within collaborative
  - LSCE is working on gather data for some MZs
  - There will be some virtual workshops in November (4 and 5); Oct 21 and Dec 3 public stakeholder meetings
  - Turlock and Fresno are planning to go Path A, so there has been discussion about how to coordinate MZs
  - Parry Klassen requested that the group consider translation of the 4-page nitrate control document into Spanish, and there was support for that so that is underway
  - MZ notes are maintained by Charles (Catalyst)
- Kings Water Alliance – Jared and Vicki – now is a non-profit, board of 7; interim technical committee; meetings planned; gathering public and non-public data
- Chowchilla – Christine reported they had first public meeting on Oct 16 and had GSA and public stakeholder meetings; completed MOA with agencies expected participate; looking at whether to do non-profit or some other governance structure; and working with self-help
- Kaweah Water Foundation formed– have held some meetings; 5-member board and advisory committee and working with self help
- State Board Rep

- On meeting call and discussed coordination with SAFER; there was expectation that there were more resources provided by self-help than actually are available; discussion about a LYRIS list notice for this year's round of USGS round of domestic well testing – gave contact for more info about that
- Regional Board Staff
  - Anne Walters worked with Chowchilla coordinating permitting leads for prisons, etc. and other facilities that are difficult to contact
  - Discussion on how many times you need to contact someone if they are being unresponsive? Three times is adequate.
  - Discussed coordinating with Regional Board Path A notices as they are received.

## **PEOC UPDATE – NICOLE BELL**

- Outreach tracking matrix – shifting to MZ outreach, but is still needed
- Draft salt control program brochure has been provided for review – originally thought to use this imminently, but more info is needed about USEPA approval, etc. If there is a delay until after new year, then we will hold off and use later after notices to comply go out. PEOC committee will take comments on it still.
- Informational Webinar – Daniel and Tess will be presenting – information in blurb in agenda packet is all the info PEOC has at this time. Local government commission has program focused on water; have been working with GSAs, and this is part of their program that expands to add CV-SALTS and EJ folks. Mostly this is about where/how GSAs, ILRP and MZs intersect. Chris (Maven's Notebook) is coordinating it.
- Email shorts (blurb updates) intended to be sent quarterly – will go out early next week. Update since last public webinar to inform people about different things going on; includes live links that takes you to website. Feel free to share with others.

## **PRIORITIZATION AND OPTIMIZATION STUDY**

### **SALINITY MANAGEMENT TARGET SETTING – BOBBI LARSON (SOMMACH, SIMMONS AND DUNN)**

- Notice to comply with salt control program will likely be sent in November; P&O study needs to be submitted 6 months later
- See memo in agenda packet
- Key elements of study are specified in the basin plan; workplan uses tasks in basic plan process and translates them into a path forward for the work that needs to be done to accomplish those.
- Patrick Palupa – If we focus on archetype studies, we don't want to lose sight of big picture. There will be winners and losers. Concern right now is that reliance on archetypes can ignore grand issues. Archetype studies might not be scalable up to whole valley scale. Workplan is amenable to using archetypes suitably.
  - Tim Johnson – Doesn't think it's possible to scale up and figure out the whole solution for the whole valley in 10 years. What is the Board's vision for that?

- Palupa – It's not figuring everything out in 10 years; it's more about figuring out the salt balance (in different types of water years and projected out to the future) in 10 years and what course of action should be used where.
- Karl Longley – Should keep abreast of Lawrence/Berkeley labs and the pertinent work they are doing and possible funding
- Today's focus is on Task 3, the Central Valley Salinity Evaluation, Tasks 3.2 (establishment of appropriate numeric salt management targets) and 3.3 (numerical salt management tool development); these tasks need to proceed concurrently. Will take place in years 1-4.
- Main question for today is: What information do we need in addition to what we already have to select archetypes and accomplish Tasks 3.2 and 3.3? What should consulting teams be considering to select archetypes?
  - What are water sources? How is that water used and cycled? WW treatment plant? Recycled? Farms?
  - Difficult to link up resources of information that is temporally and spatially different.
  - Evaluation of modeling tools and characterization should be concurrent; difficult to come up with target without these. Workplan's intent is that first three subtasks of Task 3 occur together.
  - If we are trying to set targets for a large area, then a top down approach (macro modeling) might be more appropriate.
  - Struggle is how to interact with SGMA. But, because of SGMA, we will have more information on water uses, etc. by January 22 because the GSPs are due. We need to be nimble so that we can incorporate this information when it is released. Archetype approach is more of a bottom-up approach, because Executive Committee originally thought that targets needed to be set first (then modeling is used to figure out how to achieve the targets). If we look at the whole valley, there are many areas where salinity is in good shape, and should not get worse. Where there are salt problems, those areas differentiate themselves; i.e. we don't have to set targets everywhere. The modeling for LSJ was two-fold: one was the Hoffman model (root zone, irrigation, more specific), but now can use SWAT. The other was WARMF (large scale management scenarios), which is more of a watershed model. What we need for the P&O study is a different type of model than either of these.
  - Concerns about exporting water as a way to export salt, but then we don't get to use that water.
  - Need to establish boundaries and boundary conditions.
  - LSJ process was successful because it had the input of water managers with lots of experience of day to day operations. They understood the modeling and knew that it would be applicable to them even though the archetype study wasn't in their back yard. Using archetypes, need to keep entire valley fully engaged so they can make sure that archetypes would apply.

**MEETING SCHEDULE** - Next policy meeting –Nov 19, 9am-3pm