

CV SALTS

July 29, 2020

10:00am

Via teleconference

NOTES

In attendance:

Sarah Woolf – Water Wise

Christina Beckstead – Madera County Farm Bureau

Kristi Robinson – Water Wise

Bill Mattos – California Poultry Federation

Darcy Vlot – Cross Creek Farms (Dairy)

Mindy Sandhu

Allison Macias – Fagundes Dairy

Diana Robinson – Foster Farms

Stephanie Sherrell – Touchstone Pistachio

Brandon Tomlinson – Chowchilla Water District

Steve Massaro – Massaro Farms

JP Cativiela – Dairy Cares

Jessica Johnson

Ben Pitman – Pitman Farms (Poultry)

Angela Isla – Self Help Enterprises

Tess Denham – East San Joaquin Water Quality Coalition

Amy – Synagro

Samantha Lopes – John Hancock (Agriculture)

Jeannie Habben – Madera County

Paul Souza – Western United Dairies

Zach Solow – Condor Earth

Tami McVay – Self Help Enterprises

Ashley Young

Scott Menefee

Jason Rogers – City of Chowchilla

Doug Welch – Chowchilla Water District

Greg Kester – CASA (California Association of Sanitation Agencies)

Eddie Ocampo – Self Help Enterprises

Eric Moller - IHI Power Services Inc.

Brent Wickstrom

Greg Hooker – Diamond H Dairy

Wickstrom Bros (Hilmar) – Dairy

Nathan Ray – De Jager Farms, Inc. (Dairy)

Debra Gross

Scott William Player - Attorney

Lacey McBride – County of Merced

Geoff Vandenhuevel - Dairy

Bree Ramos – Madera County Farm Bureau

Nitrate Control Program Background:

A new Nitrate Control Program is now in place in the Central Valley to address historical nitrate problems and find a way to provide a safe source of drinking water for households in affected areas. The program includes two imperatives for the Valley: Provide safe drinking water as quick as possible and manage nitrate discharges to reduce or eliminate impacts to ground water.

The program is administered by the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Board (Regional Board). Priority 1 groundwater basins have been identified and Notices to Comply were sent to dischargers at the end of May-early June. Dischargers will have a limited time to choose between two compliance pathways:

Pathway A: Proceed under an individual permit.

Pathway B: Join Management Zone.

This group is convening all dischargers interested in Pathway B, and forming a Management Zone.

We have 270 days to implement an Early Action Plan while also developing Management Zone Implementation Plan for Regional Board Approval.

Here's where we are and what was discussed at the meeting:

GOVERNANCE:

Dairies Cares, East San Joaquin Coalition and City of Chowchilla have provided seed money for the development of the Management Zone. Governance structure and funding will be discussed and formed in subsequent meetings. Richard Meyerhoff with GEI has been hired to help with the governance structure, a non-profit, JPA, or other type of organization.

ENGINEERING REPORT:

Luhdorff and Scalmanini has been hired with the seed money. Sarah Woolf and Christina Beckstead have met with Luhdorff and Scalmanini twice. The sub basin boundaries of the dischargers include parts of Madera and Merced Counties (El Nido), generally line up with the SGMA Chowchilla Subbasin with the exception of the El Nido area. The group has identified all dischargers that received notification of compliance. A new map of the boundaries and dischargers is being developed.

OUTREACH:

Sarah and Christina have been working with Self-Help Enterprises for community outreach, as they have relationships with many of the communities impacted by lack of safe drinking water supply. Self-Help has implemented innovative ways to communicate with these communities in the face of the current environment. Additionally, Self Help is administering a grant with Madera County to gather domestic well data.

Madera County has agreed to host the CV-Salts website:

<https://www.maderacountywater.com/cv-salts/>

INDUSTRY/DISCHARGER INTEREST:

Poultry

Poultry has indicated that while they would like to be involved in Pathway B and the Management Zone, they do not have interest in being involved in the governance of the Management Zone. There are not a lot of poultry farms in the Chowchilla area. Pitman Farms only has 1 ranch, and Foster Farms has 1 leased ranch that is farmed only 2 months of the year.

Composting

Synagro has indicated they have interest in Pathway B.

Pistachios

Touchstone Pistachios has indicated they have interest in Pathway B.

NEXT STEPS:

Distribute list of dischargers – Name only.

Engineering to complete new Management Zone Map.

Continue discussions on governance and funding.

Continue outreach and collaboration with Self-Help.

Next Meeting: To be scheduled – Week of August 10 or 17.

