

SOUTHERN SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY WATER QUALITY COALITION

CENTRAL VALLEY REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD AUGUST 21, 2012 MEETING SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA EDISON, ENERGY EDUCATION CENTER

The Regional Board is currently developing a long-term Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program that will include huge changes in how irrigators are regulated. The Program will now include regulation of discharges to groundwater.

Key issues include the following:

- **An Assumption that every irrigator is a potential discharger** and therefore falls under the Irrigated Lands Program.
- **Significant Cost:** The Regional Board staff estimates the cost of compliance to Tulare Lake Basin growers at approximately \$100 million dollars per year (\$120 per acre per year). Approximately \$115 of the estimated \$120 per acre annual cost is associated with implementation of water quality management practices. This includes significant increases in State fees and Coalition costs.
- **Requirements to hire a Civil Engineer** for the design or modification of settling ponds, basins, and tailwater recovery facilities.
- Irrigators must use certified nutrient management plan specialists to prepare **Nutrient Budgets** in high vulnerability areas, as well as tracking and reporting, with attendant costs for consultants, laboratory analyses, and recordkeeping;
- Significant **paperwork** associated with preparation of various plans and reporting of farm management practices and other compliance information.
- **Access to your farm** for inspection, duplication of records, sampling, and photography by RWQCB staff. Access must also be provided for installation of groundwater monitoring wells, if asked.
- An undefined **groundwater monitoring program** that has the potential of becoming expansive and expensive, and potentially forcing changes to the ways that you farm in order to be more protective of water quality.
- **Mandatory participation** in third-party outreach events if in a high vulnerability area, or area governed by a surface or groundwater quality management plan.
- **Requirement to maintain a copy of the Order** at your place of business, and be familiar with its contents.
- **Every owner or operator must take action** to join or confirm membership in the Coalition once the Order has been adopted.
- **Farmland potentially removed from production.** The Environmental Impact Report states that up to 23,000 acres of important farmland within the Tulare Lake Basin would be removed from production due to the increased costs of the regulations to growers.