

SAC-VALLEY NEWS

SVWQC actions, accomplishments, and updates

1.1+ MILLION IRRIGATED ACRES

7300+ PARTICIPANTS

11 SUBWATERSHEDS

2024 PARTICIPANT LIST SUBMITTED TO THE REGIONAL BOARD ON JULY 31, 2024

The Sacramento Valley Water Quality Coalition submitted the 2024 Participant List on July 31, 2024. The Participant List is an annual requirement of all agricultural Coalition's Waste Discharge Requirements (WDRs) (except the California Rice Commission) and is an accounting of all active members, irrigated acres, and dropped members for the entire Coalition (11 Subwatersheds). Generating a Coalition-wide participant list is a major undertaking each year, requiring coordination between staff of each of the 11 Subwatersheds and the NCWA consultant team led by Chelsie Bryden. The irrigated acreage reported in the Participant List is used to generate the Coalition's bill for the State Oversight fee, which is paid directly to the State Water Board at a per acre fee. The List is also used to inform enforcement actions by the Water Boards to dropped members, late reporters, and unenrolled landowners.

According to the 2024 Participant List, the Coalition comprises of **7,988 participants**, encompassing **21,080 APNs** and **1,139,438 irrigated acres**. Acreage reported in the 2024 Participant List was down slightly (about 1,900 acres) from 2023.

As with past years, the 2024 Participant List demonstrated high overall reporting rates for the Irrigation Nitrogen Management Plan Summary Report (INMPSR) and Management Practice Implementation Reports (MPIRS) and continued engagement by members in all Subwatersheds. Please be sure to thank your Subwatershed staff for their thorough work, which helps builds an effective relationship with the Regional Board, allowing us to advance streamlining and other regulatory proposals to reduce Regional Board oversight.



The latest in this issue:

2024 PARTICIPANT LIST

THE "TED LASSO" OF NON-POINT SOURCE REGULATION

DRINKING WATER WELL MONITORING PROGRAM

MEMBER INFORMATION

INMP SELF-CERTIFICATION

REGIONAL BOARD OUTREACH AND ENFORCEMENT

The “Ted Lasso” of Non-Point Source Regulation Retires

It is not often one person can influence an organization or an entire region. But that is how many describe the work of Sue McConnell for the past 36 years. A strong, thoughtful, positive and collaborative approach are just a few of the words Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board and State Water Board staff used in describing Sue McConnell, who retired on August 31st, after a career dedicated to protecting water quality at the Regional Board. Her influence and guidance on the non-point source program, stormwater, and water quality certification, TMDL, drinking water and for the last decade the Irrigation Lands Program leaves a lasting legacy.

State Water Board member Nichole Morgan described Sue as “impactful”.

From her first day on July 25, 1988 in the Fresno office of the Regional Board and throughout her various assignments, colleagues described Sue as “industrious”, “knowledgeable”, “conscientious”, “genuine”, “compassionate”, and “welcoming” which led one Regional Board member to call her the Ted Lasso of Regional Board staff, a reference to the character played by Jason Sudeikis in the Apple TV series about a coach who inspires his team to “Believe” through determination and positivity..

The Sacramento Valley Water Quality Coalition enjoyed a constructive working relationship that lead to many “Success Stories”, and revisions to the Waste Discharge Requirements in the Sacramento Valley, such as reduced surface water quality monitoring, exemptions of upper watershed from the program, and staff that was solution oriented in their approach.

Sue earned her Bachelor’s in Chemical Engineering for the University of California at Berkeley, and Masters in Environmental Engineering from Stanford.

Working with people is a talent and skill that comes naturally to some but not all. It came easy to Sue.

Year 3 of the On-Farm Drinking Water Well Program

At the end of 2024, The Sacramento Valley will complete its third year of on-farm drinking water well sampling. As of August 15, 2024, 2,983 samples have been taken from 2,091 wells. 220 new wells have been sampled in 2024 alone. The Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board, who is responsible for implementing the program, report 95.75% compliance with sample notifications (with follow-up ongoing) and 76% overall parcel compliance.

Reminder to sample postcards have been mailed to owners who have previously sampled and need to sample again. Notifications to sample have been sent to owners who have never sampled. 2024 sampling must be delivered to an ELAP certified lab by January 1, 2025.

To view the details of this program, including sampling requirements and how to report results, please visit https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/water_issues/irrigated_lands/drinking_water/

Sac Valley DWW Stats		
	Overall	2024
Wells sampled	2091	629
Total samples	2983	641
% wells exceeded	17.98	10.17



Coalition Member Information Hub



ATTENTION! YOUR INMP SELF-CERTIFICATION ELIGIBILITY MAY BE EXPIRING

Growers who took and passed the exam for the INMP Grower Self-Certification Training must obtain **3 hours of approved continuing education units (CEUs) within 3 years of their certification date** to remain eligible to self-certify their INMP Worksheets. The specific deadline will be listed in your letter of eligibility or can be found in the table below. Although reminders may be sent when the deadline approaches, it is your responsibility as the self-certified grower to be aware of the expiration date and complete your CEUs. **Please take a moment to check your letter of eligibility and make plans to complete your CEUs before the expiration date if you wish to continue to self-certify your INMP Worksheet for the upcoming 2024CY reporting cycle.**

Training and Exam Date	Eligibility Expiration Date/ Deadline for INMP Credits
July 1, 2021 - December 31, 2021	December 31, 2024
January 1, 2022 - June 30, 2022	July 1, 2025
July 1, 2022 - December 31, 2022	December 31, 2025
January 1, 2023 - June 30, 2023	July 1, 2026
July 1, 2023 - December 31, 2023	December 31, 2026

Options for Continuing Education Units. A list of approved continuing education courses can be found at <https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/is/ffldrs/frep/continuing_education.html>. There are live meetings, webinars, and self-study options. The self-study option does require a post-test to ensure you viewed the materials. After you complete a continuing education course, you will receive a record of course completion by email with the number of hours you completed. **PLEASE PRINT YOUR RECORD OF COURSE COMPLETION AND KEEP IT WITH YOUR COALITION MEMBERSHIP RECORDS.**

What if I don't get the 3 hours of continuing education by the expiration date? If you do not obtain 3 hours by the date listed in your letter of eligibility, your eligibility to self-certify will expire. This will require you to take the self-certification training and pass the exam again in order to continue self-certifying your INMP Worksheets. No extensions will be granted.

More questions? If you have questions regarding the program or your status, please email Nicole Nunes at Nicole.Nunes@cdfa.ca.gov.

The INMP Self-Certification Training is 100% online and can be found at <<https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/is/ffldrs/frep/training.html#grower>>



Coalition Member Information Hub



ILRP COMPLIANCE EFFORTS BY THE CENTRAL VALLEY REGIONAL BOARD

Respond **IMMEDIATELY** to any letters from the Water Board to avoid future enforcement and potential fines.

In order to remain in compliance, growers must not only enroll, but they also must keep their APNs updated with correct irrigated acreage and cropping, complete their annual outreach requirement, complete all required annual reporting, and pay their dues on-time. The Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board performs compliance outreach and enforcement to growers who fail to meet these requirements. Below is an update on ILRP compliance efforts taken from the August Executive Officers Report.

Keep in mind, avoiding enforcement from the Regional Board is simple! Pay your dues and complete your reporting ON TIME.

OUTREACH PACKAGES FOR ENROLLMENT. Water Board staff sent outreach packages to owners of potential commercial irrigated lands to provide them with information on the ILRP and steps for enrolling in the program. Staff then follow up with Directives as needed.

REMINDER LETTERS FOR MEMBER REPORTS. Water Board staff sent reminder letters to members who have failed to submit their member report(s) by the Board-approved due dates. Staff will follow up with Notice of Violations as needed.

ON-FARM INSPECTIONS FOR GENERAL ORDER COMPLIANCE. The purpose of on-farm inspections is for Board staff to visit Coalition-enrolled farms and discuss water quality-related issues with growers. These inspections include staff review of the Farm Evaluations, Irrigation and Nitrogen Management Plans and Sediment and Erosion Control Plans. Board staff inspects the site conditions, including potential discharge points to surface waters, pollution management practices, chemical storage and handling areas, and wellhead protection practices.

NOTICES OF VIOLATION (NOVs) FOR FAILURE TO RESPOND TO SECTION 13260 DIRECTIVES. NOVs were sent to those who did not respond to a Directive letter. Failure to respond to the NOV subjects the discharger to further enforcement actions which may include an administrative civil liability order.

ILRP Compliance Efforts for the Period May 1-June 30, 2024

Outreach Packages sent	208
Reminder Letters sent	93
On-Farm Inspection	1
Notice of Violations	30

General Questions

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