

# Latest Water Quality Regulatory Changes for Irrigated Agriculture

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# Recent Water Board Actions Impacting Irrigated Lands Programs





### Footnote 92 - East San Joaquin Precedential Order

Irrigation and nitrogen  
management  
requirements are *not*  
precedential for rice  
growers



Sacramento Valley rice growing areas are not in a  
Priority Nitrate Zone



Nitrate assessment for Sacramento Valley rice  
provides evidence that rice practices have a *de  
minimus* impact on nitrate levels in groundwater



Sacramento Valley rice to participate in Phase 1 of  
Salt Study

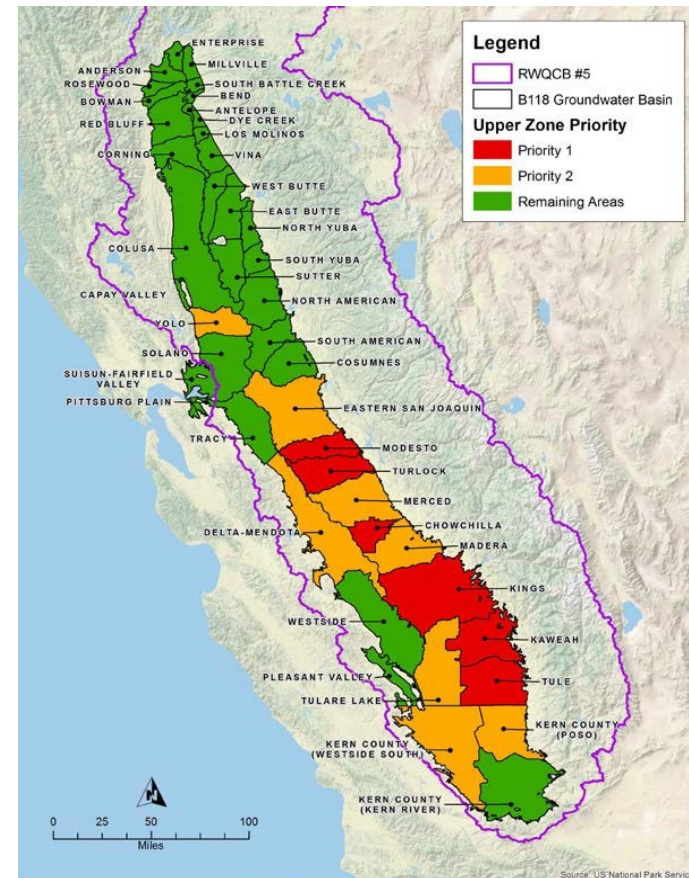
Requirements  
for Sacramento  
Valley Rice  
differs as  
compared to  
other  
Commodities

## WDR Requirements

	<u>Rice</u>	<u>Sac Valley</u>
<u>Surface Water</u>		
Farm Evaluation	2023	2021
Sed & Erosion Control Plan	None	Yes
Irr & Nitrogen Mgmt Plan	NMP Only 2023	Yes
<u>Groundwater</u>		
Drinking Water Supply Well Monitoring	January 2022	January 2022
<u>New (CV-Salts)</u>		
Nitrate Control Assessment	No impact/de minimis	TBD
Salinity	P&O Study	P&O Study
Groundwater Management Zones	None	Yolo Phase 2
Replacement Water	None	Yolo Phase 2

# Nitrate Control Implementation

- Priority 1 Area (**Red**)
  - Notice to Comply May 29, 2020
- Priority 2 Area (**Orange**)
  - Notice to Comply to be issued in late 2022 or early 2023
- Remaining Areas (**Green**)
  - Implementation to be phased in at discretion of Regional Board





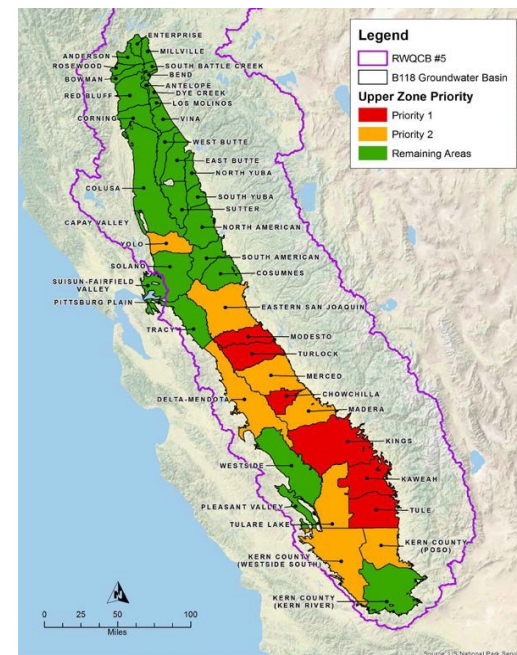
# Pathway B: Management Zones

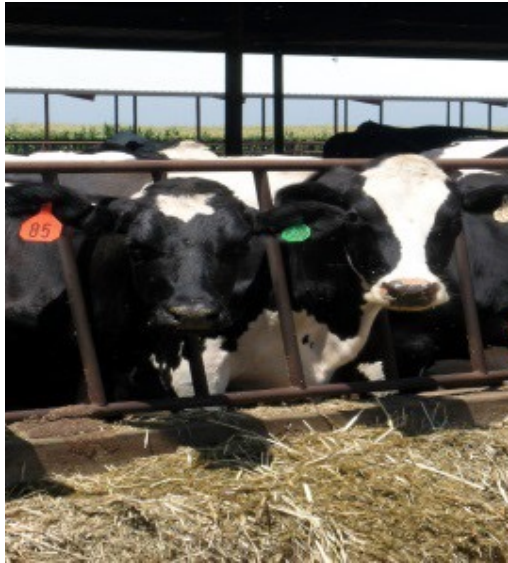
- **Defined area** – for nitrate compliance to groundwater
- **Collective implementation** – for safe drinking water
- **Discharger cooperative** -
  - Near-term: Provide interim drinking water
  - Mid-term: Best practicable treatment or control to achieve balance
  - Long-term: restore groundwater, where feasible



# Management Zones Have Formed For Priority 1 Basins

- They used existing organizations, set up interim arrangements with existing groups, or formed new organizations:
  - Valley Water Collaborative (Modesto/Turlock)
  - Chowchilla
  - Kings Water Alliance
  - Kaweah Water Foundation
  - Tule Basin





## Participating Industries

- Irrigated agriculture through ILRP coalitions
- Dairy through CVDRMP
- Poultry
- Food processing/wineries
- City wastewater treatment
- City landfills/composting facilities
- Small wastewater systems

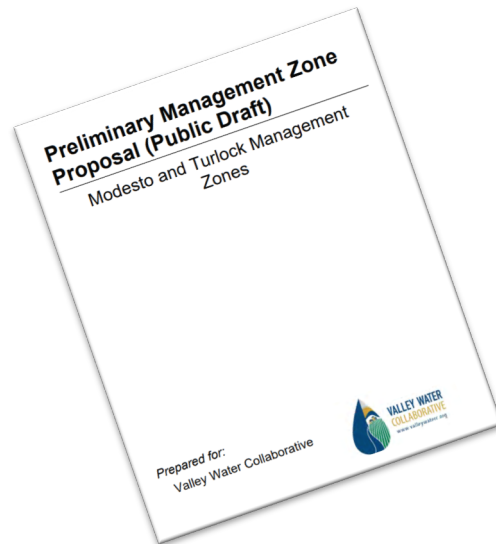


1/18/22



# Priority 1 Basins - Plans Were Filed on March 8<sup>th</sup>

- Each Priority 1 Management Zone Submitted Preliminary Management Zone Proposals, which included Early Action Plans.
- Early Action Plans conditionally approved May, 7, 2021.



# Early Action Plan Components



Process to identify affected residents

Outreach to ensure residents are informed of and have opportunity to participate in Early Action Plan development



Process for coordinating with others that are not dischargers to address drinking water issues

Meaningful consultation with affected residents, affected water systems, environmental justice organizations, and other stakeholders, including Regional Water Board and State Water Board staffs



Specific actions and implementation schedule

Address the immediate drinking water needs of those within the Management Zone impacted by groundwater that exceeds nitrate standards



Funding mechanism for implementing the EAP

# Water Supply Solutions

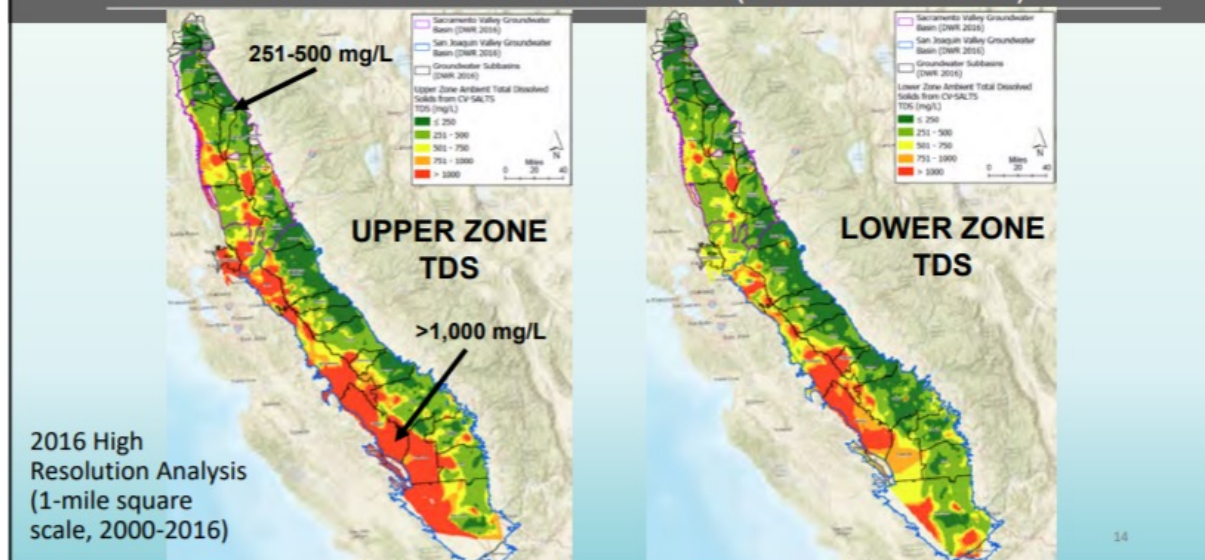
Public Access Water Facilities or  
Alternative Water Supply







## HIGH RESOLUTION TDS MAPPING (CV-SALTS 2016)



Geography	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Define salt sensitive hydrologic regions</li></ul>
Sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identify salinity sources and impacts</li></ul>
Projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identify, assess, and prioritize conceptual projects for long-term salt management</li></ul>
Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identify non-physical projects and implementation plan</li></ul>
Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Develop governance structure and funding plan</li></ul>
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Seek federal and state funds for implementation</li></ul>
Recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• For Phase II of the Salt Control Program</li></ul>

## Phase 1 - Prioritization & Optimization Study: Collaborative 10-year salinity study

# What to Expect for the Next 5 Years

- Priority 1 & 2 Management Zones will continue to implement Early Action Plans
- Environmental Justice advocates will continue to put pressure on State and Regional Board to increase oversight and regulation of agriculture's fertilizer use
- Groundwater Management Zones and Groundwater Sustainability Agencies will find mutual agreement on cooperative efforts

