

# SAC-VALLEY NEWS

SVWQC actions, accomplishments, and updates

1.1+ MILLION IRRIGATED ACRES

7300+ PARTICIPANTS

12 SUBWATERSHEDS



# Happy Holidays

After a year full of challenges that even the most seasoned farming family had not seen in a while, may the Holiday season bring you a welcome respite and cherished moments with family and friends.



## *The latest in this issue:*

A LOOK BACK AND FORWARD

ENSURING SAFE DRINKING WATER BY BRUCE HOUESHELDT

SECP TRAINING OPEN DURING FEBRUARY, 2023

## **MEMBER INFORMATION**

DEC 31 DEADLINES

- INMP SELF-CERTIFICATION
- DRINKING WATER WELL SAMPLING

NURSERY GROWERS AND THE INMP WORKSHEET



## *A Look Back and Forward: The ILRP in the Sacramento Valley*

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2023 will mark the 20th year since the Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program (ILRP) was adopted by the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board). The prominence of water quality in the public policy arena has risen significantly since the passage of Senate Bill 390 (1999), which eliminated the blanket waiver for agricultural waste discharges and required the Water Boards to develop a program to regulate agricultural lands under the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act. Driven and shaped by environmental justice activism in the San Joaquin Valley, the investigation into surface water quality began in earnest in 2003.

Shortly after, the Legislature expanded the focus to include groundwater quality with the passage of Senate Bill X2 1 (Perata) and Assembly Bill 2222 (Cabellero). Senate Bill X2 1 required the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) prepare a Report to the Legislature to "improve understanding of the causes of [nitrate] groundwater contamination, identify potential remediation solutions and funding sources to recover costs expended by the State... to clean up or treat groundwater, and ensure the provision of safe drinking water." Assembly Bill 2222 required the State Water Board to submit to the Legislature a report that identifies:

1. Communities that rely on contaminated groundwater as a primary source of drinking water
2. Groundwater sources for the communities identified in (1), identify the principal contaminants in that groundwater and identify contamination levels.
3. Potential solutions and funding sources to clean up or treat groundwater or to provide alternative water supplies to ensure the provision of safe drinking water to communities identified in (1).

In 2006, the Central Valley Salinity Alternatives for Long-Term Sustainability initiative (CV-SALTS) was initiated as a collaborative effort to find solutions to the salt problem, including nitrates, in the Central Valley. In 2014, the Regional Water Board adopted the first Waste Discharge Requirements (WDRs) for the Sacramento Valley. The WDR expanded the ILRP from surface water quality monitoring and reporting requirements to include groundwater quality elements.

The current requirements of the ILRP have been shaped in large part by the initiatives of past decades on groundwater quality and safe drinking water. Coupled with the implementation of the Salt and Nitrate Basin Plans and Groundwater Sustainability Management Plans in 2022, the ILRP is at an inflection point.

Coalition leadership recognizes the significant opportunity to capitalize on the modeling, monitoring, measurement, and management of surface and groundwater quality of the past decade. **Building on the successes of 2022** of advancing reduced monitoring requirements or exemptions for the upper watersheds with a focus on low-threat crops like irrigated pasture, NCWA and Coalition leadership will continue to advocate for reasonable implementation by the Regional Water Board of the WDR. *To learn more about the Coalition's Two-Year Workplan, please email Bruce Houdesheldt at [bruceh@norcalwater.org](mailto:bruceh@norcalwater.org).*

## A Decade of the Human Right to Water: Advancing Safe Drinking Water for All Californians

By Bruce Houdesheldt, Director of Water Quality, NCWA



The State Water Board recently commemorated the human right to water, with California Environmental Protection Agency Secretary Yana Garcia, State Water Board members, and community representatives taking a moment to reflect on the signature legislation and a decade of progress. We laud the State Water Board in its leadership and efforts and we also congratulate the leaders in Northern California who have been working hard every day for the past decade to ensure the human right to water in every part of the Sacramento River Basin.

The human right to water was signed into law on September 25, 2012 by Governor Jerry Brown, now in the Water Code as Section 106.3. The state statutorily recognizes that “every human being has the right to safe, clean, affordable and accessible water adequate for human consumption, cooking, and sanitary purposes.” The human right to water extends to all

Californians, including disadvantaged individuals and groups and communities from the urban disadvantaged community of Maywood in Southern California, which completed a new water treatment project that removes manganese and iron, to fire-ravaged rural Lake County’s Cobb Area water district, which completed the consolidation of seven small water service districts in the Cobb Mountain area in 2019.

Similarly, during the past decade NCWA, through its Board of Directors representing local water agencies, counties and rural communities, has committed to continued work within the Sacramento River Basin on [Ensuring Access to Safe Drinking Water for All California Communities](#) (1). NCWA’s North State Drinking Water Solutions Network (Network) serves as a forum for all interested parties to share information and we coordinate efforts to ensure that all communities in the Sacramento River Basin have access to safe drinking water. This includes the many [Disadvantaged Communities in Northern California](#) (2). Successful implementation of sustainable drinking water solutions for communities requires utilization of both the policy tools and financial resources available from state and federal agencies as well as the knowledge and expertise of local communities and water managers. By emphasizing partnerships with local agencies and administrators, the state will be best positioned to identify and help implement sustainable, locally-appropriate solutions.

### LINKS:

(1) <https://norcalwater.org/wp-content/uploads/Safe-Drinking-Water-2022.pdf>

(2) <https://norcalwater.org/wp-content/uploads/Disadvantaged-Communities-in-Nor-Cal.pdf>

## *Continued...A Decade of the Human Right to Water*

The Network has a sustained focus on entities that are in violation of one or more primary drinking water standards. The number of water systems listed by the State Water Board as out of compliance in the Sacramento River Basin has been significantly reduced in the past decade, with more work ahead. The efforts to return water systems to compliance through local actions under new and existing state programs will continue with a goal to have no communities on the list within the next several years.

This year, with the lack of surface water available throughout the Basin (particularly on the west-side), there has been a focus on dry wells and making sure that people and their communities have access to water. Community leaders have stepped up in amazing ways this year and have been coordinating throughout the region, by helping local communities through this challenging year. Here, we appreciate and thank the state and federal leaders who are providing assistance to local communities, as well as non-profit organizations such as Rural Community Assistance Foundation (RCAC) and North Valley Community Foundation, who are playing a key role in both developing and then implementing local solutions for safe drinking water. See [Resources Available to Assist Local Communities with Water Shortages](#) (3).

There is also a parallel effort through our water quality coalitions to protect all beneficial uses of water, including drinking water. See [Ensuring High Quality Water in the Sacramento River Basin for Communities, Ecosystems, and Farms](#) (4). The Sacramento Valley is sourcing our sustainable future through responsible management of the essential resource that millions of birds, hundreds of thousands of fish, thousands of farms and millions of people all rely on—water. See [The Sacramento River Basin: Improving Water Quality](#) (5).

We value the human right to water and the leaders in Northern California are committed to help ensure access to safe drinking water — both now and into the future. Through all of our efforts to manage water from [ridgetop to river mouth](#) (6) for multiple [beneficial uses](#) (7) — including water for cities and rural communities, farms, fish, birds, hydropower and recreation — NCWA has found that locally-developed collaborative solutions provide the best path to addressing water management challenges.

### LINKS:

- (3) <https://norcalwater.org/wp-content/uploads/Safe-Drinking-Water-Resources-Available.pdf>
- (4) <https://norcalwater.org/wp-content/uploads/The-State-of-Water-Quality.pdf>
- (5) <https://vimeo.com/585544581>
- (6) <https://norcalwater.org/wp-content/uploads/Ridgetop-to-Rivermouthweb.pdf>
- (7) <https://norcalwater.org/wp-content/uploads/Multiplebenefits.July2018.pdf>

## **ATTENTION! NURSERY OPERATORS**

The Regional Water Board has acknowledged for several years now that the Irrigation and Nitrogen Management Plan Worksheet and Summary Report are not good fits for nursery operations. In the coming year, they will be working towards providing clearer guidance on the template for nursery operations. To begin the process, they would like to solicit input from nursery operators. If you own a nursery operation and would like to provide input, please email Bruce Houdesheldt at [bruceh@norcalwater.org](mailto:bruceh@norcalwater.org)





## Coalition Member Information Hub



# DECEMBER 31, 2022 DEADLINES

### 1) RENEWAL OF INMP SELF-CERTIFICATION STATUS

Growers who completed the INMP Grower Self-Certification Training **between January 2020 and December 2020** have a **deadline of December 31, 2022**, to complete the required three continuing education units (CEUs) to renew their eligibility status. Growers who fail to obtain the three CEUs will have their eligibility expire and must retake the original training and exam (which is now available online). *Reminder: To renew eligibility, all growers must complete three hours of CEUs prior to the expiration date listed in their letter of eligibility. While CDFA attempts to track CEUs, it is the responsibility of the grower to maintain CEU certificates with Coalition membership records.*

For questions regarding your CEU status, please email [FREP@cdfa.ca.gov](mailto:FREP@cdfa.ca.gov). Approved CEU courses can be found at [https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/is/ffldrs/frep/continuing\\_education.html](https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/is/ffldrs/frep/continuing_education.html)

### 2) 1ST SAMPLING OF ON-FARM DRINKING WATER WELL

**The deadline to complete the first sampling event for the On-Farm Drinking Water Well Program is December 31, 2022.** This sampling requirement applies to well on **ENROLLED** parcels that are **ACTIVELY** used for drinking or cooking. If you believe you are exempt or have questions, contact Phil Carter with the Regional Board (916-464-4487; [Phil.Carter@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:Phil.Carter@waterboards.ca.gov)). You may also visit [https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/water\\_issue\\_s/irrigated\\_lands/drinking\\_water/](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/water_issue_s/irrigated_lands/drinking_water/).

### **Online SECP Self-Certification Training Available in February 2023**

The online Sediment and Erosion Control (SECP) Self-Certification Training will be open during the month of February in 2023. The training is designed for members who are required to prepare an SECP as part of their ILRP reporting requirements. Your Subwatershed will let you know if you require an SECP. The Training can be found at [https://irrigated-lands-regulatory-program.thinkific.com/courses/online-secp-self-certification-training\\_](https://irrigated-lands-regulatory-program.thinkific.com/courses/online-secp-self-certification-training_)

### General Questions

[sacvalleyinfo@gmail.com](mailto:sacvalleyinfo@gmail.com)  
[www.svwqc.org](http://www.svwqc.org)

### DIRECTORY

Bruce Houdesheldt,  
Director of Water Quality  
Email: [bruceh@norcalwater.org](mailto:bruceh@norcalwater.org)  
Phone: 916-442-8333

Chelsie Bryden,  
Program Coordinator  
Email: [svwqccordinator@gmail.com](mailto:svwqccordinator@gmail.com)  
Phone: 916-778-0993

Central Valley Regional  
Quality Control Board,  
ILRP Division  
Phone: 916-464-4611  
[https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/water\\_issues/irrigated\\_lands/](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/water_issues/irrigated_lands/)