

**Alta Management Zone Steering Committee Meeting  
February 13, 2019 Meeting Notes**

A meeting of the Alta Irrigation District Area Management Zone Steering Committee Meeting was held the Alta Irrigation District Boardroom at 10:00 am. In attendance at the meeting were:

Charlotte Gallock, KRCD	Geoff Vanden Heuvel, Milk Producers Council
Eric Athorp, KRCD	Joey Giordano, The Wine Group
Jarrett Winther, KRCD	Paul Boyer, Self-Help Enterprises
Soua Lee, KRCD	Liesbet Olaerts, Self-Help Enterprises
Chad Wegley, Alta Irrigation District	Mike Tietze, Formation Environmental
Walter Plachta, Central Valley Water Board	Richard Meyerhoff, GEI Consultants
Vicki Kretsinger, Luhdorff & Scalmanini	

1) Introductions/Agenda Review: Overview of meeting purpose and goals.

2) Management Zone Pilot Study Overview:

- The meeting began with Richard Meyerhoff and Vicki Kretsinger presenting the background work for the Alta Archetype as performed under the CV SALTS program.
- Hearing at State Board as early as April 2019 for a Salt/Nitrate Control Program.
- Kings Basin is a Priority 1 area under the Basin Plan Amendment (BPA) process, as determined under CV SALTS. Timelines within BPA become active once State Board acts.
- Two paths for compliance—Path A (conventional discharge requirements) and Path B (management zone development).
- Presented potential timeline for deliverables assuming a starting date of July 1, 2019 (see handouts).
- No existing template as to how to create the management zone. State Board has granted funds for development of management zones in two regions (Alta in the south, Turlock in the north). What is accomplished between these two regions will determine how future zones are created/managed. Sizing is critical, as larger zones will be complex to develop/implement, too small would be ineffective and likely rejected by Regional Board.
- Management zone must be hydraulically contiguous and encourages the participation of all dischargers (participation is optional, those who do not are subject to Path A requirements).
- Early Action Plan (EAP) is an interim requirement of the process, targeting those who rely on pumped groundwater as a drinking water source. Must be included with first set of deliverables.
- Initial Proposal must include: Preliminary Boundary (can be modified), Proposed Participants, Existing Conditions Assessment, Governance Structure, How Compliance will be Achieved, Interaction with Other Programs, and the Early Action Plan.
- Comment: Nitrate should not be the sole focus of initial water quality characterization, as other constituents may be present that would be missed if not tested for.
- Comment: Interaction with GSAs/Other programs to avoid duplication of effort or efforts that work against the interests of other programs. Try not to create yet another government entity for this effort.
- Comment: Grant only covers this initial effort. Insufficient to develop the whole plan.

- Early Action Plan (Handout 4) discussion. EAP is short term action, not long term solution. Settlement Agreement signed by State Board and Kings, Kaweah, and Tule Coalitions may serve as EAP, if accepted by Regional Board.

### 3) Previous CV-Salts Technical Work in Study Area:

- CV SALTS and Alta Irrigation District Archetype (modeling effort and analysis) as part of the development of the Salt and Nitrogen Management Plan (SAMP).
- Looked at safeguarding drinking water, management of nitrate, and eventual restoration of the groundwater basin, as much as practical.
- Limited time to complete studies, so “extreme situations” were modeled. Total implementation of high efficiency irrigation and total removal of agricultural activities.
- Combined results of Soil and Water Assessment Tool (SWAT), ModFlow model, and Groundwater Transport model.
- Models show that conditions may not improve even after 100 years due to existing loading in soils in either “bookend” scenario. Attributed to lack of artificial recharge created by irrigated agriculture.
- Comment: Brief discussion on direction of groundwater flow. Models show East to West, but Chad Wegley indicated a more Northwest-Southeast direction. Groundwater may actually do both (per Vicki).
- Models show that “Pump and Treat” and “On-farm Winter Recharge” can improve underlying water quality.
- How much time would be allowed for restoration? Some wanted short timelines, others recognized that this is a legacy issue that will require long timeframes to correct.

### 4) Steering Committee Formation:

- Define Boundary for consultant action
- Need good representation of dischargers
- Need representation that can make decisions, not those who must report to others for action approval
- GSA and cities represented
- Zone needs to be relatively large to ensure full capture of inputs
- Stakeholders with drinking water concerns (public water systems, DACs)
- Comment: Poor quality control on Well Completion Report data
- Analysis of depths of domestic wells, with goal to stay within the “upper zone” (above 200 ft below ground surface) and density of wells.

### 5) Initial Project Tasks:

- Steering committee agreed that the current boundary of the Kings River East GSA and the sliver of Alta Irrigation District that is outside of the GSA boundary was the preferred boundary of the Management Zone. This is due to its inclusion of the lands between Alta ID and the basin boundary to the east, and the hydrologic barrier (Kings River to the west). Boundary includes areas that are currently not impacted by nitrates, and priorities within the Management Zone can be set. Also, actions taken to address the high priority areas can be protective of the remaining non-impacted regions. It remains that dischargers within the boundary do not have to participate with the Management Zone activities (they would proceed under Path A, rather than Path B).
- Other Management Zones within the Kings Basin may follow a similar format, in that they follow the GSA boundaries.
- Early Action Plan

- Submit with Preliminary Management Zone Proposal
- Implementation within 60 days
- Replacement water actions (kiosks, bottled water) may qualify as EAP

6) Next Meeting:

- The meeting concluded at 12:30 pm
- The next meeting is proposed for the afternoon of March 7, 2019.