

SAC-VALLEY NEWS

SVWQC actions, accomplishments, and updates

1.1+ MILLION IRRIGATED ACRES

7300+ PARTICIPANTS

11 SUBWATERSHEDS

PIT RIVER FULLY EXEMPTED FROM THE ILRP

On August 22, 2025 the Central Valley Regional Water Control Board unanimously finalized the exemption of the Pit River Subwatershed from the Irrigated Lands Regulator Program. At over 70,000 acres it is the largest exemption to date in the Sacramento Valley. The Upper Feather River exemption involved 33,000+ acres, and Goose Lake 8000+ acres.

The journey to the decision today began in 2016 with a "virtual" tour of the Upper Watersheds at the Regional Board's October meeting in Redding. Countless conversations, field tours and documentation of practices protective of water quality followed. This involved a partnership with UC Cooperative Extension, Ag Commissioners, landowners, and local elected officials working together to document that the risk to surface and groundwater did not warrant the level of regulation. In the end, the research showed based on available monitoring and management practices data, Pit River irrigated agriculture is at low risk for generating pollutants and the use of pesticides and fertilizers is low. As the Executive Officer of the Regional Board said in his comments, "We demanded a lot for this to occur." Part of that was the Regional Board working with Tribal interests to address their concerns about water quality.

Regrettably, Pam Giacomini, Dr. Ken Tate, and Susan Fregien did not live to see this moment. They were instrumental in this day occurring.

The work will continue to demonstrate how the Sacramento Valley prioritizes ensuring safe drinking water and where it is appropriate to streamline the Irrigated Lands Program in the Sacramento Valley.



The latest in this issue:

PIT RIVER FULLY EXEMPT

*NEW ILRP PROGRAM
MANAGER AT THE
REGIONAL BOARD*

2025 PARTICIPANT LIST

2ND EXPERT AG PANEL

*2025-2026 SURFACE
WATER MONITORING*

**MEMBER
INFORMATION**

**SURFACE WATER
TOXICITIES**

Meet Eric Warren, New ILRP Program Manager at the Central Valley Water Board

Eric serves as the new Supervising Water Resource Control Engineer and Program Manager for the Central Valley Water Board's Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program. He holds a B.S. in Civil Engineering from Fresno State and is a licensed Civil Engineer in the State of California.

Raised on a small family farm in Kingsburg, CA, Eric developed a firsthand appreciation for the essential role agriculture plays in California's economy—along with the challenges faced by growers and neighboring communities. His childhood was spent producing sun-dried raisins and working in a local stone fruit packing house, experiences that continue to shape his perspective on water resource management and agricultural sustainability. After earning his degree, he began his professional career as a Tomato Production Supervisor with Del Monte Foods in Hanford, CA, before transitioning to public service in 2013.

Since joining the Central Valley Water Board, Eric has been instrumental in developing and refining the Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program. He has led efforts to navigate complex changes in state water policy, advancing the program through practical, science-based strategies that support agricultural sustainability while protecting groundwater and public health. His work also extends to regional planning initiatives such as CV-SALTS (Central Valley Salinity Alternatives for Long-Term Sustainability), which focus on collaborative solutions to persistent salinity and nitrate challenges across the Central Valley.

Outside of work, Eric enjoys spending time outdoors—often backpacking, snowboarding, and water skiing in the Sierra Nevada and along the Kings River. He and his wife, married for 11 years, are proud parents of three children.

2025 Participant List Submitted on July 31, 2025

The Sacramento Valley Water Quality Coalition submitted the 2025 Participant List on July 31, 2025. A revised Participant List was submitted following the Pit River's exemption on August 22, 2025. 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. 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 2025 Participant List, the Coalition comprises of 7,854 participants, encompassing **20,879 APNs** and **1,042,305 irrigated acres**. Acreage reported in the 2025 Participant List was down about **22,000 acres** from 2024. Much of the lost acreage is due to sold parcels, parcels no longer being irrigated or commercial, and members who failed to pay their membership dues and were subsequently dropped.

As with past years, the 2025 Participant List demonstrated high overall reporting rates and continued engagement by members in all Subwatersheds. Please be sure to thank your Subwatershed staff for their thorough work, which helps build an effective relationship with the Regional Board, allowing us to advance streamlining and other regulatory proposals to reduce Regional Board oversight.

PUBLIC LISTENING SESSION FOR THE SECOND STATEWIDE AGRICULTURAL EXPERT PANEL ON OCTOBER 1

The State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) will hold a public listening session of the Second Statewide Agricultural Expert Panel on **Wednesday, October 1, 2025 from 2:00 pm to 6:00 pm** to gather input from the public and all interested parties that will be shared with the Panel members for their consideration of the [Panel charge questions](#), which ask the Panel to consider the approaches adopted by the State Water Board to address nitrates leaching to groundwater. The Expert Panel held it's first meetings in August where they focused on gaining an understanding of the Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program and listened to presentations from the State Board, Regional Water Boards, Agricultural Coalitions, and Environmental Justice Organizations.

For more information, including meeting topics and how to participate, please refer to the attached Notice. If you have additional questions, please email DWQ-ILRP@Waterboards.ca.gov.

Yolo County Farm Bureau Welcomes New ILRP Coordinator



Katey Taylor is the new ILRP Coordinator for the Yolo County Farm Bureau. She has returned to Yolo County after 26 years growing wine grapes in Napa/Sonoma. Katey holds a B.S. in Crop Science and Management from UC Davis, has been a Pest Control Advisor and Qualified Applicator for the last 25 years, and recently became a Certified Crop Adviser with a Nitrogen Management Specialty certificate. She and her husband Tim will live in Marysville on their small, diversified hobby fruit orchard in Browns Valley. The Coalition is excited for the expertise and fresh perspective Katey brings and Katey expresses great excitement to work with growers enrolled in the ILRP to advocate for preserving and protecting agriculture.

Overview of the 2025-2026 Surface Water Monitoring Year

A major component of the Coalition's Waste Discharge Requirements (WDR) is surface water monitoring. The Coalition conducts surface water monitoring at representative sites on a 3-year cycle of Assessment-Core-Core. During Assessment Years, a broader suite of analytes are sampled for while during Core Years only sampling needed for Management Plan implementation and single exceedance follow-up takes place.

For a majority of the Coalition, the upcoming 2025-2026 Monitoring Year, which will begin on October 1, is a Core Year. Typically, Core Year monitoring is less expensive than Assessment year monitoring. However, previous exceedances and Management Plans can reduce the cost savings.

Assessment monitoring will take place in the Subwatersheds with the Reduced Monitoring Option (El Dorado, Lake, and Napa/Putah Creek). Assessment monitoring is required in those Subwatersheds every 5 years.

Surface water monitoring is coordinated by Larry Walker Associates (LWA). Each August they prepare a Monitoring Plan for the upcoming Monitoring Year for approval by the Regional Board. The Monitoring Plan outlines which analytes will be sampled at which sites during which months. *If you would like more information on the Monitoring Plan and what will be sampled for in your Subwatershed, contact Bruce Houdesheldt at bruceh@norcalwater.org.*



Coalition Member Information Hub



SURFACE WATER TOXICITIES OBSERVED DURING SUMMER MONITORING

During the 2025 Summer monitoring events there have been toxicity exceedances of both *Ceriodaphnia* (water flea) and *Selenastrum* (algae) observed at monitoring sites in the Butte-Yuba-Sutter, Colusa Glenn, Sacramento-Amador, and Shasta Tehama Subwatersheds. Unfortunately, the June and August exceedances in the Shasta Tehama Subwatershed have triggered a **Management Plan at Anderson Creek**. Similarly, the June and July exceedances in the Colusa Glenn Subwatershed triggered a **Management Plan at Freshwater Creek**.

Ceriodaphnia is typically more sensitive to insecticides and fungicides than herbicides whereas *Selenastrum* is more sensitive to herbicides and fungicides rather than insecticides. The observance of toxicity to these two test organisms when exposed to Sac Valley water samples is quite rare. Because of this and because toxicity can be caused by a large number of pesticides, the Coalition is currently limited in the ability to point to a specific pesticide. At this time, the cause of the observed toxicity is classified as "unknown." Nonetheless, the Coalition's surface water consultant, Larry Walker Associates (LWA), has been able to generate a Watch List of products that *could have* contributed to the observed toxicity based on an evaluation of Pesticide Use Reporting data. Each Subwatershed will circulate their Watch List soon, if they haven't already. The Coalition asks that each Member reviews the list and accompanying information on how to avoid future exceedances and Management Plans.

The Coalition is also working to determine what role (if any) sources other than irrigated agriculture, such as urban and non-agricultural pesticide applications or the analysis method used to determine toxicity, could have played in the exceedances. For now, please remember that it is **critically important** that all growers and applicators exercise extreme caution when applying all products.

Additional information can be provided by contacting Bruce Houdesheldt at bruceh@norcalwater.org or 916-442-8333.

Toxicity to *Ceriodaphnia*

Subwatershed	Monitoring Site	Month
Shasta Tehama	Anderson Creek at Ash Road	June 2025
Shasta Tehama	Anderson Creek at Ash Road	August 2025
Colusa Glenn	Freshwater Creek at Gibson Road	June 2025
Colusa Glenn	Freshwater Creek at Gibson Road	July 2025
Butte-Yuba-Sutter	Lower Honcut Creek at Hwy 70	July 2025

Toxicity to *Selenastrum*

Subwatershed	Monitoring Site	Month
Sac-Amador	Consumnes River at Twin Cities Road	July 2025
Butte-Yuba-Sutter	Lower Snake River at Nuestro Road	July 2025
Butte-Yuba-Sutter	Pine Creek at Hwy 32	April 2025

Reminder: a Management Plan is triggered when there are two exceedances of the same constituent at the same site within a 3-year period. So, consider the monitoring sites in BYS and Sac-Amador on notice to avoid a second exceedance.

General

Questions

sacvalleyinfo@gmail.com
www.svwqc.org

DIRECTORY

Bruce Houdesheldt,
 Director of Water Quality
 Email: bruceh@norcalwater.org
 Phone: 916-442-8333

Chelsie Bryden,
 Program Coordinator
 Email: 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/