

## NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY AND OPPORTUNITY TO COMMENT

### REVISED DRAFT WASTE DISCHARGE REQUIREMENTS FOR AGRICULTURAL WASTE DISCHARGES FROM IRRIGATED LANDS WITHIN THE CENTRAL COAST REGION

California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Central Coast Region (Central Coast Water Board), has prepared “Revised Draft General Waste Discharge Requirements For Discharges From Irrigated Lands” (Revised Draft Ag Order 4.0) as part of the development of a new permit, Agricultural Order 4.0, to regulate the discharge of agricultural waste from irrigated lands within the central coast region. The Revised Draft Ag Order 4.0 is available for public review and comment.

Below is a list of some of the revisions incorporated into the Revised Draft Ag Order 4.0:

- Addition of discount factor for organic fertilizers
- Addition of nitrogen scavenging credit for cover crops and high carbon amendments
- Addition of third-party cooperative alternative compliance pathway for groundwater protection and trend monitoring
- Addition of third-party program priority areas and follow-up implementation work plan due dates for surface water protection
- Streamlined total nitrogen applied (TNA) and irrigation and nutrient management plan (INMP) summary reporting section
- Streamlined surface water protection requirements section
- Removal of slope and certified sediment and erosion control plan requirements for impermeable surfaces
- Removal of riparian area management requirements (i.e., riparian area management plan, and operational and riparian setbacks), but with continued and modified requirements to document and maintain existing riparian areas.

The public review period for the Revised Draft Agricultural Order 4.0 is from **January 26, 2021 through February 25, 2021**.

Agricultural Order 4.0 will be the issuance of a permit regulating waste discharges from irrigated lands throughout the central coastal region. The purpose of Agricultural Order 4.0 will be to protect and restore beneficial uses and achieve water quality objectives specified in the Basin Plan for commercial irrigated agricultural areas in the central coast region. Agricultural Order 4.0, when adopted, will replace the existing permit regulating agricultural waste discharges (Agricultural Order 3.0).

#### Document Availability

Electronic copies of the Revised Draft Agricultural Order 4.0 can be obtained from the Central Coast Water Board’s Agricultural Order Renewal website at:

[https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/water\\_issues/programs/ag\\_waivers/ag\\_orde\\_r4\\_renewal.html](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/water_issues/programs/ag_waivers/ag_orde_r4_renewal.html). Hardcopies of the Revised Draft Ag Order 4.0 are available at the

Central Coast Water Board, 895 Aerovista Place, Suite 101, San Luis Obispo, CA 93401.

### Submission of Written Comments

The Central Coast Water Board will accept written comments on the changes made between the February 21, 2020, Draft Agricultural Order 4.0 and this Revised Draft Agricultural Order 4.0.

**Written comments must be received by 11:59pm on February 25, 2021** and may be submitted via email to [AgNOI@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:AgNOI@waterboards.ca.gov) with “Comments on Revised Draft Ag Order 4.0” in the subject line. While email submittal is preferred, we will accept written comments at: Irrigated Lands Program (ILP), Central Coast Water Board, 895 Aerovista Place, Suite 101, San Luis Obispo, CA 93401. Comment letters received after the deadline will not be accepted unless the Central Coast Water Board determines otherwise.

### **EX PARTE COMMUNICATIONS DISCLOSURE REQUIREMENTS FOR PENDING GENERAL ORDERS**

Ex Parte communications are allowed in this matter subject to the disclosure requirements of Water Code section 13287, as explained in [http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/laws\\_regulations/docs/exparte.pdf](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/laws_regulations/docs/exparte.pdf). Any communications between interested persons and board members (other than at a noticed board meeting where proposed Agricultural Order 4.0 is on the agenda or submitted as a comment letter in compliance with this or another public notice) must be disclosed by the interested person within seven working days of the communication. Disclosure forms are available at: [https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/publications\\_forms/forms/docs/central\\_coast\\_disclosure.pdf](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/publications_forms/forms/docs/central_coast_disclosure.pdf).

Pursuant to the Central Coast Water Board’s direction on January 31, 2020, ex Parte communications are prohibited for a period beginning 14 days before the Board meeting at which the proposed Agricultural Order 4.0 is scheduled for Board action. If the Central Coast Water Board does not take action during the scheduled meeting date, the ex Parte communications prohibition will be lifted. The prohibition on ex Parte communications will be reinstated for 14 days before the day of the Board meeting to which the decision is continued. The Board meeting at which the proposed Agricultural Order 4.0 will be considered is scheduled for April 14 – 16, 2021.

### **FUTURE NOTICES**

Changes to this notice, if any, will be noticed on the automated email list for the Irrigated Lands Program and posted on the Central Coast Water Board’s website. To subscribe to the automated email list, please visit the Central Coast Water Board’s website at [https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/resources/email\\_subscriptions/reg3\\_subscribe.html](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/resources/email_subscriptions/reg3_subscribe.html) and choose “Agricultural Discharges.”

### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

For additional information, visit the Central Coast Regional Board’s Agricultural Order Renewal website:

[https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/water\\_issues/programs/ag\\_waivers/ag\\_order4\\_renewal.html](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/water_issues/programs/ag_waivers/ag_order4_renewal.html) or contact the Irrigated Lands Program (ILP) at (805) 549-3148 or at [AgNOI@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:AgNOI@waterboards.ca.gov).