



CVDRMP

Navigating Water Quality

FEBRUARY 2025 NEWSLETTER

Letter From the Chairman:

You're invited to CVDRMP's Annual Membership Meeting



I would like to personally invite you to the Central Valley Dairy Representative Monitoring Program's annual member meeting, **1:00 p.m. Monday, March 10.** We

compliance. Please contact our staff or your elected board members if you have questions or need help.

This year brings important developments in water quality regulation, some of which pose serious threats to our industry. In October, the State Water Board issued a draft Dairy Order calling for new, onerous requirements for dairies. Some of these involve expensive tests for dairy manure ponds, or even rebuilding such ponds in a short time frame. The draft order also calls for developing stricter limits for applying manure to crops. Fortunately, these proposals aren't final yet and we are working closely with the

hold this meeting by Zoom teleconference so our members can conveniently participate. (*More information on page 2.*)

Our board of directors are all dairy and cattle ranch owners like you, and elected by you, our members. Directors volunteer their time to ensure that this nonprofit monitoring and compliance assistance program is as effective and cost-efficient as possible. That's as important to us as it is to you, because your costs are also our costs. CVDRMP has always been about working together to find solutions that reduce the time and money needed to meet the state's complex water quality rules.

In this newsletter you'll find information about the annual dues you pay CVDRMP, services we provide in exchange, and other helpful facts to keep you in

'This year brings important developments in water quality regulation, some of which pose serious threats to our industry.'

- Justin Gioletti, CVDRMP Chairman

Dairy Cares coalition, which includes many dairy industry groups, on a coordinated response. We hope to persuade the Water Board to replace the most onerous measures with more reasonable steps and timelines for achieving improvement.

Fortunately, we have a great story to tell. Hundreds of dairies have installed improved manure

management systems that have also improved water quality over the past several years and that number continues to grow. And CVDRMP members across the Central Valley, from Bakersfield to Sacramento, now participate in Nitrate Management Zones. Within these zones, farmers, including dairies, and other water

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quality permittees are providing free domestic well testing and free drinking water replacement for rural households with unsafe levels of nitrate. The program has tested nearly 2,700 wells and at least 1,785 homes now receive free, safe drinking water.

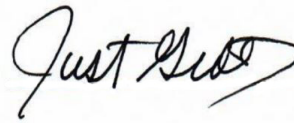
Since 2011, CVDRMP has managed a representative groundwater monitoring program *collectively saving members an estimated \$80 million over the past 14 years*. Due to our continuous push for efficiency, we were able to lower annual groundwater monitoring dues again last year, from \$700 to \$400, for dairy facilities. We expect to achieve similar efficiencies and cost savings for bovine facilities in the near future.

We continue to streamline this: Simply pay your annual CVDRMP invoice, and you remain in

compliance with Central Valley Water Board's groundwater monitoring requirement and its Nitrate and Salt Control Programs.

Experience shows us that working together saves costs and provides effective solutions. Thanks for your support and I hope to see you at the annual meeting!

Sincerely,



Justin Gioletti
CVDRMP Chair

Annual CVDRMP Membership Meeting Agenda

DATE AND TIME: Monday, March 10, 2025, 1:00 to 3:00 p.m.

PLACE: Virtual meeting via Zoom video conference, bit.ly/CVDRMP2025

OR use the QR code OR call: 1 (669) 900-6833

Enter meeting ID: 833 5132 4022

Passcode: 237413

AGENDA

1. Determination of quorum per CVDRMP bylaws
2. Welcome to the members; review CVDRMP mission and goals (Chairman Justin Gioletti)
3. Results and certification of 2024 Board of Director elections (Secretary Greg Hooker)
4. Report to the members on organizational finances (Treasurer Rodney Kamper)
5. 2025 Fee Schedules for Monitoring Program, Nitrate Management Zones, and Salt Control Programs (Administrator James Garner)
6. Nitrate and Salt Control Program updates (Director of Regulatory Relations J.P. Cativiela)
7. State Water Board Draft Dairy Order (Cativiela)
8. Dairy and Bovine monitoring program technical reports (Technical Program Manager Till Angermann)
9. Questions and comments from members
10. Adjourn



NOTE: CVDRMP bylaws require that no action by the members shall take place unless a) it is included on a properly noticed agenda, AND b) a quorum (one-third) of voting members are present. The membership meeting will take place and informational presentations provided without a quorum present; however, no actions will be taken by the members on matters not on the agenda, nor if a quorum is not met.

Key Information & Updates

Expect a membership invoice by May 2025. CVDRMP is coordinating with local Nitrate Management Zones, which are in the process of setting budgets for water quality permit holders, such as dairies, bovine operations, irrigated farmland and other non-agricultural businesses. This is the first step in determining annual fees for compliance with the Nitrate Control Program for our members.

Your total CVDRMP fee this year may be different than last year. Your CVDRMP invoice may include line items for three regulatory programs: Groundwater monitoring, salt control and local nitrate management zones (if applicable). Fees for local Nitrate Management Zones are impacted by budgets set in those local zones and changes in the herd size of your operation reported by you to the Central Valley Water Board.

Your fee “tier” for your Nitrate Management Zone is based on the Annual Report you filed in 2024. CVDRMP determines your herd size and corresponding fee tier based on the most recent Annual Report you submitted to the Central Valley Water Board; it is not based on the herd size at the time you receive your CVDRMP invoice and will not be adjusted to reflect current herd size.

Do not pay fees directly to your local Nitrate Management Zone or the Central Valley Salinity Coalition for the Salt Control Program. If you pay your CVDRMP invoice, you’re in compliance with both of these regulatory programs.

2024 Board of Directors Election Results

CVDRMP has a 12-member Board of Directors, elected by members. There are two directors in each of five Central Valley regions, and two at-large directors. Directors serve staggered two-year terms, so half the Board seats are open for election each fall.

Following the nomination process and election, the following seats were filled:

- District 1 (Tulare County): Cynthia Tiemersma
- District 2 (Merced and Madera counties): Greg Hooker
- District 3 (Fresno, Kings and Kern counties): Rodney Kamper
- District 4 (Stanislaus County): Justin Gioletti
- District 5 (all other Central Valley counties): George A. te Velde
- At-large: Lucy Areias



At the time of publishing, there is currently one vacant seat on the CVDRMP Board of Directors for **Stanislaus County**. Pursuant to CVDRMP bylaws, the Board can consider appointing a director to a vacant seat to fill out its term until the next election. The Board usually meets 6-8 times annually via Zoom teleconference to oversee and direct the work of the coalition. If you are interested in filling the vacancy, please contact CVDRMP staff at cvdrrmp@gmail.com or 916-594-9450.

CVDRMP's current, past work helps dairies prepare for new State Dairy Order

This year brings significant new water quality regulatory challenges for Central Valley dairy owners and operators. Fortunately, CVDRMP has spent the last several years laying the groundwork to help dairies and cattle ranches navigate the changing regulatory landscape ahead.

The most recent major development came in October 2024, when the State Water Resources Control Board issued a new proposed Draft Dairy Order. That order calls for “a new regulatory framework to ensure dairies cease causing or contributing to concentrations of nitrate in groundwater that exceed safe drinking water levels over time and, in the interim, provide replacement drinking water to those reliant on groundwater with unsafe nitrate levels.”

This “new regulatory framework” includes plans to set strict nitrogen discharge limits and corresponding manure application limits. The order also increases requirements for manure retention ponds, calls for investigation of ponds to determine whether they intersect below-ground water tables, requires tests to determine leakage rates, and mandates rebuilding ponds that don't perform up to standards.

The proposed Draft Dairy Order not only poses significant threats to Central Valley dairies, but dairies elsewhere in California. CVDRMP worked in close coordination with other dairy organizations through the Dairy Cares coalition to provide comprehensive, coordinated written comments on the Draft Order. The goal of this effort was to replace the order's most onerous provisions with more reasonable steps and timeframes for improvement.

Work is far from done, and CVDRMP will remain closely engaged as the process continues. A final outcome for the proposed Dairy Order probably won't be known until later this year or early 2026.

Years of preparation paying off

“While we did not know exactly what would be in the Draft Dairy Order until it was released, regulators have been signaling to us that they would be moving toward more stringent rules for dairies,” said CVDRMP Chairman Justin Gioletti. “CVDRMP and other dairy groups have been preparing for this for several years.

We've launched programs to encourage innovative technology and incentives for growers, expanded research, and implemented regional drinking water programs that will buy more reasonable timeframes for dairies to improve performance.”

Dairy groups cooperating with agencies such as the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) have already launched significant initiatives to provide dairy owners and operators with more options. Examples include:

‘CVDRMP worked in close coordination with other dairy organizations through the Dairy Cares coalition to provide comprehensive, coordinated written comments on the Draft Order.’

- The Dairy Plus Program, administered by the California Dairy Research Foundation with oversight and funding from both CDFA and USDA.

The competitive grant program offers dairies funding to install manure management projects that reduce water quality impacts and cut greenhouse gas emissions. Dairy Plus has already provided \$15 million in funding and is expected to deliver more than \$50 million in



additional funds over the next two years, installing projects on up to 60 dairies.

- At the request of dairy industry groups like CVDRMP and Dairy Cares, CDEA launched the Manure Recycling and Innovative Products (MRIP) Task Force in 2021. With broad representation from the dairy industry, academia and multiple government agencies, MRIP studied the issues and released a report calling for increased investment in research and innovation to support improvements in dairy manure management and toward creating a circular economy that values manure as a key component to healthy soils and a sustainable environment.

Nitrate Management Zones lead to longer compliance timelines

A common denominator for success is setting reasonable expectations for progress and achievable timelines that do not put dairies out of business. For this reason, CVDRMP has been heavily engaged in the CV SALTS process, which produced alternatives to inflexible, stringent regulations.

For example, virtually all CVDRMP members (from Bakersfield to Sacramento and everywhere in between) are now compliant with the Water Board's Nitrate Control Program. With their membership in CVDRMP, dairies and feedlots are automatically enrolled in their local Nitrate Management Zone groups. These local groups work together to provide free well testing and free, safe drinking water to residents affected by nitrate contamination.

Dairies enrolled in this "alternative" compliance program get more time to meet nitrate targets in groundwater. That's important for most farmers, including dairies, who use nitrogen fertilizers to grow their crops. Groundwater monitoring on dairies frequently shows levels four to five times higher than the drinking water health standard.

Experts generally agree that for dairies and many farmers, it will take many years to develop cost-effective technologies and practices for reducing nitrate. That's why the Nitrate Control Program allows up to 35 years for dairies, feedlots, farmers, and others to gradually stop contributing to nitrate exceedances. Without this extra time, many operations could face

orders to stop applying fertilizer and manure to land, and to clean up impacted groundwater, which would essentially force many operations to close.

The Nitrate Control Program not only helped water quality permit holders like dairies, but has also helped thousands of rural families. Nearly 2,700 wells have been tested and at least 1,785 homes are already receiving free, safe drinking water. The program is also cost-effective, because costs are shared among the various groups of permit holders, including dairy and cattle operations. The share paid by dairies and feedlots is only a fraction of the overall management zone costs, with other permit holders covering the large majority.



Nitrate Management Zones have installed water filling stations like this one to provide rural residents access to free, clean drinking water.

Also included in your membership: Cost-effective salt compliance

CVDRMP membership also covers the requirement that dairies and cattle operations comply with the Salt Control Program. Like the Nitrate Control Program, this alternative compliance pathway allows permit holders to defer meeting strict standards for salt control in land application of manure and process water. Without this pathway, many operations would be forced to meet strict standards and adopt expensive control measures to reduce salt loading.

As with nitrates, the State has concluded that significant time is needed to determine control

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measures for salt that are feasible (technically and economically) and will allow farming to continue in the San Joaquin Valley. The Central Valley Salinity Coalition (CVSC), a stakeholder group made up of farmers, cattle and dairy, other industries and cities, is funding long-term studies to develop a road map for controlling salt in the future. In the meantime, permit holders who help pay for development of the roadmap are considered in compliance with the Salt Control Program.

The cost for this alternative salt compliance is much smaller than immediate implementation of control

measures. Our members (depending on size and type of water quality permit) pay between \$90 and \$320 per year to comply. Compliance is automatic for CVDRMP members, with no need to hire consultants or execute new agreements and paperwork. Your Salt Program contribution is clearly identified on your annual invoice, and like Nitrate Management Zone fees, it is a “pass through” to the CVSC with no added charges.

Questions?

At CVDRMP, we are literally here to serve you. For questions about your invoice or anything else related to our program, contact the CVDRMP office at cvdrrmp@gmail.com or call (916) 594-9450.

2025 CVDRMP Directors & Officers

Justin Gioletti | Chairman
District 4 (Stanislaus County)

Jeff Troost | Vice Chairman
District 2 (Merced/Madera Counties)

Greg Hooker | Secretary
District 2 (Merced/Madera Counties)

Rodney Kamper | Treasurer
District 3 (Kern/Fresno/Kings Counties)

John Pereira
District 1 (Tulare County)

Cynthia Tiemersma
District 1 (Tulare County)

Perry Tjaarda
District 3 (Kern/Fresno/Kings Counties)

Rien Doornenbal
District 5 (Other Central Valley Counties)

George A. te Velde
District 5 (Other Central Valley Counties)

Lucy Areias
At-large

Scott Wickstrom
At-large

CVDRMP Member Liaisons to local Nitrate Management Zones

The following CVDRMP members have volunteered to serve as liaisons to local Nitrate Management Zones in 2025, making sure CVDRMP members are fully represented in local management decisions and strategic direction. We thank them for their service!

Justin Gioletti & Ray Prock, Jr.
Valley Water Collaborative
(Modesto & Turlock Management Zones)

Scott Wickstrom & Greg Hooker
Chowchilla Management Zone

Rodney Kamper & Lucy Areias
Kings Water Alliance

Gerben Leyendekker & Pete Tiemersma
Kaweah Water Foundation

Tom Barcellos
Tule Management Zone

Perry Tjaarda
Kern Water Collaborative

Jack Hamm
Valley Water Collaborative
(Eastern San Joaquin Management Zone)

Elder Pires
Valley Water Collaborative
(Delta-Mendota Management Zone)

Luciana Jonkman and Tony Louters
Valley Water Collaborative
(Merced Management Zone)



CVDRMP

P.O. Box 227
Sacramento, CA 95812



CVDRMP Membership covers compliance for three Central Valley Water Board Requirements:
Groundwater monitoring, salt control, and local Nitrate Management Zone participation (if applicable).

Please pay your CVDRMP invoice upon receipt to maintain coverage in the coalition. **Failure to pay will result in cancellation of your membership, Notices of Violation and potential fines from the Water Board, and additional fees to reinstate your membership.**

If you have a Dairy or Bovine permit open with the Water Board – **regardless of whether there are any animals on your property** – you must maintain membership in the CVDRMP coalition or install your own monitoring wells.

Want to verify your membership standing in CVDRMP?

Email your facility name & address to CVDRMP@gmail.com or call (916) 594-9450.

Recent change of ownership? Update your membership forms at CVDRMP.org.