

Water Code Section 83002.5 was added by SBX2 1 Chaptered September 30, 2008

[Introduced by Senators Perata, Machado, and Steinberg. Principal coauthor: Assembly Member Bass. Coauthors: Assembly Members Arambula, Eng, Feuer, Huffman, Jones, Krekorian, Laird, Salas, and Wolk]:

Section 83002.5. To improve understanding of the causes of groundwater contamination, identify potential remediation solutions and funding sources to recover costs expended by the state for the purposes of this section to clean up or treat groundwater, and ensure the provision of safe drinking water to all communities, the State Water Resources Control Board, in consultation with other agencies as specified in this section, shall develop pilot projects in the Tulare Lake Basin and the Salinas Valley that focus on nitrate contamination and do all of the following:

(a) (1) In collaboration with relevant agencies and utilizing existing data, including groundwater ambient monitoring and assessment results along with the collection of new information as needed, do all of the following:

(A) Identify sources, by category of discharger, of groundwater contamination due to nitrates in the pilot project basins.

(B) Estimate proportionate contributions to groundwater contamination by source and category of discharger.

(C) Identify and analyze options within the board's current authority to reduce current nitrate levels and prevent continuing nitrate contamination of these basins and estimate the costs associated with exercising existing authority.

(2) In collaboration with the State Department of Public Health, do all of the following:

(A) Identify methods and costs associated with the treatment of nitrate contaminated groundwater for use as drinking water.

(B) Identify methods and costs to provide an alternative water supply to groundwater reliant communities in each pilot project basin.

(3) Identify all potential funding sources to provide resources for the cleanup of nitrates, groundwater treatment for nitrates, and the provision of alternative drinking water supply, including, but not limited to, state bond funding, federal funds, water rates, and fees or fines on polluters.

(4) Develop recommendations for developing a groundwater cleanup program for the Central Valley Water Quality Control Region and the Central Coast Water Quality Control Region based upon pilot project results.

(b) Create an interagency task force, as needed, to oversee the pilot projects and develop recommendations for the Legislature. The interagency task force may include the board, the State Department of Public Health, the Department of Toxic Substances Control, the California Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Water Resources, local public health officials, the Department of Food and Agriculture, and the Department of Pesticide Regulation.

(c) Submit a report to the Legislature on the scope and findings of the pilot projects, including recommendations, within two years of receiving funding.

(d) Implement recommendations in the Central Coast Water Quality Control Region and the Central Valley Water Quality Control Region pursuant to paragraph (4) of subdivision (a) within two years of submitting the report described in subdivision (c) to the Legislature.

(e) For the Salinas Valley Pilot Project, the State Water Resources Control Board shall consult with the Monterey County Water Resources Agency.