



Ditch Maintenance Fee

Increase Passes

The Board of Directors and staff of the Dixon Resource Conservation District are glad to announce that the ditch maintenance fee ballots sent to District property owners in June have been tabulated and the certified results are:

50.08% Votes in favor

49.92% Votes in opposition

The Board chose to conduct the election using a weighted ballot, based on each landowner's financial obligation. There were \$22,354.26 votes in favor of the new ditch maintenance fee rate structure, while \$22,275.24 were against. In order to pass, the vote had to be 50% plus one in favor; weighted ballots showed slightly higher than 50% in favor.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Change continues, after nearly 20 years Rick Martinez has decided not to be reappointed to the Board. Thank you Rick for your contribution to the District's operations and direction.

We are excited to welcome Chope Gill and Spencer Bei to the Board. Both have submitted their application to serve and we are looking forward to their appointments. I know that together the Board will continue its focus on the water related issues that have been a priority of the District, while seeking to address other resource issues of concern to the District constituents.

The Board meets monthly on the 2nd Wednesday at 6pm (March-October) and at 12pm (November-February). If you would like more information, please feel free to join us at a board meeting or contact John Currey at (707) 678-1655 extension 105.

Ditch Maintenance

2016 maintenance activities were reduced in part to balance the cost of extensive work done in 2015 and to await the outcome of the ditch maintenance fee vote. We have completed the following activities in 2016:

- Districtwide Ditch Spraying in Spring 2016 and mid-November 2016: The November application included a pre-emergent / residual herbicide that has received approval for applications to drainage ditches.
- October 2016 Tule / Cattail spot herbicide treatments.
- Ditch Excavation in Summer 2016: Coordinated 1 mile of farmer funded excavation of Lateral 3 to remove excess sediment.
- Ditch Excavation in Fall 2016: 4 to 6 miles of excavation was planned, however due to contractor availability the work is being postponed to Spring 2017.
- Culvert Replacements: The District partnered with a farmer and Reclamation District 2068 to replace 2 culverts in 2016 located in Tremont 2 and Lateral 5b.

Looking forward to 2017, we will finalize a new maintenance contract that improves the District's ability to accomplish the ditch excavation and repairs in a timely fashion. We will also monitor the results of the fall herbicide application to adjust the timing of the spring application. We hope to achieve the most control with just 2 applications per year.

If you observe any trash, plugged culverts or other concerns, please call us at (707) 678-1655 and ask for John Currey at extension 105.

Sustainable Groundwater Management Act

The District is actively participating in the Sustainable Groundwater Agency (SGA) formation. The goal of our participation is to represent the groundwater users within the District, which comprises the majority of groundwater dependent landowners in the county. Furthermore, a District goal is to encourage an approach to the required plans and regulations that are as efficient and cost effective as possible. We encourage any landowners and growers who irrigate with groundwater to familiarize themselves with the process. We would like to hear from you regarding your interest or concerns about the status of groundwater supplies.

Additional information on the upcoming meetings and the formation process is at the Solano County Water Agency website <http://www.scwa2.com/resources-management/ground-water/sgma>.

Public Meeting: **SGMA in the Solano Subbasin**

Join us for a free public update and input meeting on implementation of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) in Solano County.

- Learn about the law and how it affects us locally.
- Hear how public input has been and will continue to be incorporated into SGMA implementation in the Solano Subbasin.
- Share ideas for how this law can benefit local citizens and businesses.



Choose one of the following meetings to attend:

Tuesday, Dec 13, 2016
6:30 - 8:30 pm

Rio Vista High School
410 South 4th Street
Rio Vista, CA 94571

Thursday, Dec 15, 2016
6:30 - 8:30 pm

Ulatis Community Center
1000 Ulatis Drive
Vacaville, CA 95687

Friday, Dec 16, 2016*
12:00 - 1:30 pm

Log in online:
www.uberconference.com/solano-sgma
Or call in at: (707) 605-0732 (no pin)
*Limited to the first 100 participants



For more information, visit www.scwa2.com/sgma or call (707) 451-6090

Dixon/Solano RCD Water Quality Coalition

Dixon and Solano RCDs continue to assist our water quality coalition members with new requirements under the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board's Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program. All members are required to review and update their Farm Evaluations and to complete the Nitrogen Management Plan Worksheets annually. Members who have lands in groundwater quality high vulnerability areas are required to have their 2017 Nitrogen Management Plan Worksheets certified and to submit a Nitrogen Management Plan Summary Report for the crops year 2016 by February 15, 2017. Certified Sediment and Erosion Control Plans will be required on parcels that have been identified as having potential to contribute sediment to off-farm waterbodies. Members with these additional requirements are being notified.

Please visit our website for a schedule of upcoming trainings and to view the 2016-2017 Dixon / Solano RCD Coalition newsletter at <http://www.dixonrcd.org/irrigated-lands-program>. You may also contact Kelly Huff (ext. 102) or Martha McKeen (ext. 103).

DIXON RCD 2015-2016 ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT

2015/2016 Fiscal Year	Governmental Services		Professional Services			Combined District Operations
	Ditch Operations	Other Government Activities	Water Quality Coalition	NRCS Engineering Support	Dixon Watershed JPAs	
Revenues	\$ 82,371	\$ 134,473	\$ 135,342	\$ 46,807	\$ 18,310	\$ 417,303
Expenses	\$ 166,378	\$ 153,593	\$ 118,448	\$ 37,892	\$ 16,635	\$ 492,946
Cap. Improv.	\$ 25,886	\$ 1,411	\$ 1,959	\$ 558	\$ 246	\$ 30,060
Net Position	\$ (109,893)	\$ (20,531)	\$ 14,935	\$ 8,357	\$ 1,429	\$ (105,703)

Vegetated Waterways and Hedgerows in the District

Landowners have been expressing interest in installing perennial vegetation along working waterways and farm margins within the District. In 2015-16, the Dixon RCD worked with Solano RCD staff, a local farm operator and landowner to install nearly 2 miles of these vegetated corridors. The idea of putting native vegetation to work is being tested all over the county throughout various crop types. Whether a landowner's interest stems from stabilizing banks to prevent erosion, filtering sediment or sediment bound fertilizer, or providing critical foraging habitat for bees, beneficial insects, or other wildlife, the reality is that local native plants can be assembled in different combinations to provide these functional and aesthetic values to a working farm landscape.



Dixon RCD Lateral 4a: Site preparation Nov. 2015

The District worked with a landowner and farmer to modify the District's ditch banks in Lateral 4a to have a more gentle side slope that will enable the District and farmer to maintain the site with spot spraying and occasional mowing. The grasses and forbs were seeded in November 2015 and the trees and shrubs were planted in February 2016.

The seed mix used for this project included many flowering forbs that provided a dramatic spring flower show in the first year, as the grasses were getting established. In later years, the number of flowering forbs diminish, although the flowering shrubs continue to fill in to provide a diverse and long season of flowering species.



Dixon RCD Lateral 4a: April 2016

In this location, the surrounding fields are either irrigated with buried drip tape or micro sprinklers so any irrigation induced sedimentation should not be an issue for many years. This allows us to plant the entire ditch profile which now serves as a vegetated filter strip that can trap any materials from the winter runoff.



Dixon RCD Lateral 4a: May 2016

The photos on the back show 3 other hedgerow sites at different ages and at different times of year. We hope that they may help you envision a project on your property.

If you are interested in more information about how these features could help provide a conservation benefit to your property, assistance in planning and installing, just want to see these projects up close, or to learn more about the possibilities, you can contact our office at (707) 678-1655 or NRCS at (707) 448-0106.



Site A: 1st year hedgerow, after mowing looking west, 07/24/2014



Site B: 1st year hedgerow next to sunflowers 05/31/2016



Site A: 2nd year hedgerow looking west, 07/28/2015



Site B: 1st year hedgerow next to sunflowers 05/31/2016



Site A: 3rd year hedgerow looking east, 03/16/2016



Site C: 1st year hedgerow next to tomatoes 06/07/2016

Fiscal Year 2015-16, A Year of Changes and Investments

The District tracks expenses and revenues based on two overall categories; Governmental Services and Professional Services. **Governmental Services** includes standard drainage services and assistance to landowners within the District to address natural resource concerns. **Professional Services** includes providing staff to other programs and to support services that benefit landowners and growers within the District and that further the mission of the District.

During the prior year, the conclusion of the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area Lease Management Services significantly reduced the overall gross revenues, while additional ditch maintenance and completion of the rate study increased annual operational costs. During Fiscal Year 2015-16 (FY 2016) total expenses were \$492,946 which exceeded the revenues of \$417,303, resulting in a operational deficit of \$75,643. This was the District's first deficit in 12 years. The deficit was covered by using District reserves to accomplish several key projects, as discussed below.

The District also invested \$30,060 in ditch and office improvements. The operational deficit and capital improvement expenditures resulted in a negative net position of \$105,703 for the Combined District Operations. The District continues to maintain an operating reserve balance of \$523,006, which has been allocated to future capital improvements and to insure solvent District operations. Additional information can be found in the 2016 Ditch Maintenance Fee Rate Study, or the most recent audits. Both are available at www.dixonred.org.

The **Governmental Services** (Ditch Operation and Other Governmental Activities) cost center shows a total negative net position of \$130,424. The negative net position for the Ditch Operation was \$109,893 The follow expenses were the most significant factors in the negative position.

- The rate study and election costs were \$30,264, for staff time, plus legal and engineering review;
- The annual maintenance expenses were \$23,228 more than the average of the last 5 years. Due in part to high costs for services and a greater amount of work completed;
- Capital improvements to the ditch system were made that total \$25,310.

These three items total \$78,802. Absent these three expenses, the net position would have been a negative \$31,091, which is within the range of the prior 5 years of the ditch operations. The District anticipates that the increasing cost of ditch operations will be addressed by managing the ditch expenses and the new revenues from the landowner approved ditch maintenance fee increase.

The negative net position for Other Governmental Activities was \$20,531. The following expenses were the most significant factors in the negative position.

- Engineering for the regional drainage issues total \$35,994, of which the District received a 50% reimbursement \$17,997 from the Dixon Regional Watershed JPA;
- Legal Services for the regional drainage issues were \$3,364;
- Groundwater Sustainability Agency Formation efforts required a significant amount of staff time, which the direct expense costs were \$6,234. These efforts did reduce the available hours that staff had to support the professional services projects.

The District does not anticipate incurring any significant costs for the regional drainage issues and the net position of the district operations will once again be positive. However, the District has not determined what the participation in the Groundwater Sustainability Agency will cost the District or how the cost could be offset at this time.

The **Professional Services** had a positive net position of \$24,721. This year we saw a significant reduction in Professional Services net revenue due to the conclusion of the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area lease management services. The reduction is \$35,368 below the 5 year net position average.

The District's current **Fiscal Year 2016-17** Budget is balanced. The District expects net revenues from professional services to decline as the number of projects are reduced. In 2017-18 the District anticipates providing professional services only to the Water Quality Coalition and Dixon Regional Watershed JPA. In 2017-18 and in future years the net position should remain positive and be between \$12,500 to \$17,500 per year.

Natural Resources Conservation Service

Often financial incentives available through Farm Bill programs are what bring growers to our door, but the service that Natural Resource Conservation Services (NRCS) exists to provide is technical assistance for resource conservation issues on private lands. Our agency was created out of a dire national interest in protecting agricultural lands in response to the terrible devastation of the Dust Bowl. Our threats today are less visually stunning than enormous dust clouds rising over the plains, but the problems of water quality, adaptation to climate change, and drought resilience are no less important. We at NRCS locally have been working with you and our partners at the Resource Conservation Districts to provide the technical assistance you need to deal with these issues.

NRCS provides individualized conservation planning, a process by which a trained professional works with you to identify natural resource problems and opportunities, and then develop options for treating the problems and making the most of the opportunities. The resulting conservation plan is a private document intended to guide implementation of conservation practices on your farm or ranch. Many conservation practices benefit multiple resources. For example, irrigation water management can save water by calculating crop needs and planning irrigations accordingly; and it can also benefit water quality by reducing runoff and sediment loss and reducing percolation of water carrying nitrates to the groundwater.

The conservation plan can also be used to apply for financial assistance through Farm Bill conservation programs, which brings us back to where this conversation started. Now is the time to begin your conservation plan and apply for funding. Applications are accepted any time, and new projects for 2017 can be selected for funding as early as mid-December 2016.

Contact us to get started: 810 Vaca Valley Parkway, Suite , Vacaville, CA 95688 (707) 448-0106 ext. 3

For general information about NRCS visit: www.ca.nrcs.usda.gov.

The Dixon Regional Drainage Joint Powers Authority (JPA)

The JPA and its partner agencies have determined that at this time pursuing new detention ponds provided the best possible option to address the local and state wide funding priorities to address flood control and other key water resource concerns. We are currently, working to secure the County's cooperation in the new drainage project. If you would like more information, please call John Currey (ext.105).

VISIT US ONLINE AT WWW.DIXONRCD.ORG

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President – Mark Holdener
Director – David Viguie
Director – Sam Beukelman
Director – Spencer Bei*
Director – Chope Gill*
Associate Director – Jim Campbell
Associate Director – Leo Soukeris
*Pending Appointment

STAFF

District Manager - John S. Currey, AFM
john-currey@dixonrcd.org
Project Manager - Kelly Huff
kelly-huff@dixonrcd.org
Office Manager - Janice Beaman
janice-beaman@dixonrcd.org
Membership Coordinator - Martha McKeen
martha-mckeen@dixonrcd.org

DIXON



RESOURCE
CONSERVATION DISTRICT

707.678.1655 | PHONE

1170 N. Lincoln Street, Ste. 110, Dixon, CA 95620