

Natural Resources Conservation Service

What's going on at NRCS?

The 2018 Farm Bill, which was passed about a year ago, included a lot of changes for NRCS policies and programs. We are still waiting out the rulemaking process for our flagship program, the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). The good news is that we are available to help you with technical assistance at any time, so that your conservation plan is ready when the agency can deliver the financial assistance! We are asking everyone to turn in an application form by December 7, 2019 to be considered in the first round of funding for 2020.

We are happy to announce the addition of Dag Osorio, soil conservationist, to our staff which still includes Petros Maskal, soil conservationist; Liz Colby, field office engineer; Luke Petersen, partner biologist; and myself. As a team we have a wide variety of knowledge and skills available to you for conservation work on your farm or ranch, including irrigation water conservation and management, soil health improvements, rangeland and grazing management, carbon farm planning, habitat restoration, and air quality improvement via tractor replacement! Give us a call if you're thinking of doing any of these types of projects, or if you have other conservation goals for your farm.

Save the date for "Farming in the New Normal: A workshop for growers on climate and agriculture", January 7, 2020 at the Ulatis Center in Vacaville. There is a great lineup of experts, ag industry professionals and farmers on the agenda to explore how your operation can adapt and thrive in a new climate reality. Our goals for the workshop are to:

- Help growers understand how climate change will affect their farming operations
- Provide practical strategies for agriculture to thrive in a new climate reality
- Explore opportunities and resources for implementing climate strategies on farms

You can register now at <https://farminginthenewnormal.bpt.me> for the early-bird price of \$30 until December 7. If you'd like to be a sponsor for the workshop, please contact Wendy Rash at 707-448-0106 ext. 111.

All the best, Wendy Rash, District Conservationist

Board of Directors

The Board meets monthly at noon on the 2nd Wednesday. Please check our website for the agendas and meeting schedule. The Board is interested in your conservation priorities. One way that you may assist the District is by being an associate director. If you would like more information, please feel free to join us at a board meeting or contact us at (707) 678-1655.

VISIT US ONLINE AT WWW.DIXONRCD.ORG

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DIXON



RESOURCE
CONSERVATION DISTRICT

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

Annual Report

December 1, 2019



DIXON RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Dixon RCD News

Dixon RCD Mission

To provide leadership and make available technical, financial and educational resources to local land users for drainage, water quality, and habitat management through competent, cost effective services and partnerships.

Ditch Maintenance Fee

Increase for 2020

Using the financial goals and objectives established in the 2016 rate study, the Board and Staff have reviewed the completed maintenance activities in fiscal year 2018/19, along with the ongoing and anticipated maintenance activities for fiscal year 2019/20 and determined that the voter approved rate of \$3.75 per acre scheduled for December 1, 2019 will be implemented.

The Board and Staff are committed to annual reviews of the District's ongoing financial position and the needed ditch maintenance activities to only impose ditch maintenance fees that are sufficient to cover the ditch operations and maintain sufficient reserves as presented in the 2016 rate study.

Solano and Dixon RCD Partnerships

The Districts worked together to ~~provide technical assistance and~~ conservation planning to individual property owners and growers in Solano County. Together, staff members from both Districts (Amy, Andrea, Kelly and Martha) conducted extensive outreach throughout the county and assisted 40+ people who expressed interest in applying to the California Department of Food and Agriculture's Healthy Soils Program (HSP) and State Water Efficiency and Enhancement Program (SWEET) programs, which resulted in 15 submitted applications. While both Districts chose not to provide assistance for the current round of CDFA grant applications, there is potential for one or both to offer it in the future. Currently four other local organizations are providing assistance in Solano County. For more information about CDFA grant programs visit:

<https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/oefi/>

Ditch Maintenance

Activities

A dry spring and fall has allowed an extended maintenance period. We have completed the following activities in 2019 (Dec. 2018-Nov. 2019).

- **Ditch Spraying:** The dry fall was ideal for the early December pre-emergent application which was followed by a setting rain. Good weed control was achieved through early spring. The spring application was made in early May and the summer application was made in early September. We continue to focus on tules and cattails throughout much of the District.
- **Ditch Excavation:** In 2019 5.5 miles of ditches were cleaned. In the spring 1.25 miles of excavation in Lateral 1 and the Silvey-joy laterals. While in the fall 2019 4.25 miles of Tremont 1, Tremont 2, Lateral 2, and Lateral 4a.
- **Access Maintenance:** After the ditch cleaning about .75 miles of spoils were disked to improve access for District spraying.
- **Debris Removal:** Numerous ditch inspections and nine days of debris and trash removal were performed throughout 2019.
- **Culvert Replacements:** The Board replaced 1 culvert in the North Cross Channel and installed 2 new culverts in Tremont 1.

Need Dirt we have it! The District wants to coordinate with landowners to reduce the amount of spoils we have accumulated over the years.

In 2020, we will focus on the spray program with a pre-emergent winter spray followed by a mid-spring application. If you observe any trash, plugged culverts or other concerns, please call us.

Sustainable Groundwater Management Act

The Solano Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Authority (SSGSA) is working in cooperation with the other GSAs within the Solano Subbasin (Vacaville, Solano Irrigation District, North Delta, and County of Sacramento). The GSAs are meeting on a monthly basis to begin the process of developing a Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP). SSGSA did receive a grant from Department of Water Resources to assist us in preparing the GSP. Over the next two years the GSA will be working to prepare the GSP. The SSGSA has created a new website <http://www.solanogsp.com/> where materials related to the GSP will be available as the draft chapters are completed. You may also sign up on the website to receive an email notice when there are upcoming meetings or materials are posted. Please continue to monitor the SSGSA website as the GSP must be completed by January 31, 2022.

Solano and Dixon RCD Partnerships (Continued)



This year I want to highlight the strong partnership that Dixon and Solano RCDs have continued to foster through our current projects. Dixon RCD has been able to utilize Solano RCD restoration staff to conduct field work for ditch maintenance. Kevin, Jerah and Niall surveyed three miles of ditches to determine where and how much maintenance was needed and Jeff removed 500 feet of trees and shrubs that were impeding ditch maintenance. We continue to explore ways to improve our ditch maintenance through shared equipment and staff.



The Districts are also working jointly, through a partnership with the City of Dixon, to create wildlife habitat and native plant restoration at the Pond C Drainage Facility South of Dixon High School. This habitat and water quality project that enhances and completes the features envisioned in the original pond design. As we continue to offer complimentary resource conservation services in Solano County, Dixon and Solano RCDs will look for additional opportunities to combine efforts and utilize each other’s strengths to the benefit of everyone in Solano County.

Congratulation to Trinity Roach of Dixon! Trinity represented Solano County at the California Association of Resource Conservation Districts annual Speakoff Contest after winning the Regional Bay-Delta and the local Solano County RCDs contests. The topic of this years contest was “Why do we need to act to save the monarch butterfly? What can RCDs do to help?” If you know any high school students who would like to compete in the future please let us know. The contest topic is announced in July and announcements are shared with high school agricultural departments, 4-H clubs and Grange.

DIXON RCD 2018-2019 ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT

	Governmental Services		Professional Service		
2017/2018 Fiscal Year	Ditch Operations	Other Govern-ment Activities	Water Quality Coalition	Dixon Regional Watershed JPA	Combined District Operations
Total Revenues	\$ 145,084	\$ 184,810	\$ 142,040	\$ 7,914	\$ 479,848
Staff Expenses	\$ 16,478	\$ 130,090	\$ 93,244	\$ 6,541	\$ 246,353
Ditch Maintenance Exp.	\$ 92,518	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 92,518
Overhead & Direct Exp.	\$ 30,476	\$ 22,005	\$ 25,606	\$ 976	\$ 79,063
Capital Improvements	\$ 6,338	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 6,338
Total Expenses	\$ 145,810	\$ 152,094	\$ 118,850	\$ 7,517	\$ 424,272
Net Position	\$ (726)	\$ 32,716	\$ 23,190	\$ 397	\$ 55,576

The District tracks expenses and revenues based on two overall categories: Governmental Services and Professional Services. **Governmental Services** include standard drainage services and landowner assistance within the District to address natural resource concerns. These services are paid for with the ditch maintenance fees, property taxes, and the occasional grant. **Professional Services** include 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. These services are paid for by a fee for service agreement between the District and other organizations.

During the Fiscal Year 2018-19 (FY 2019) total revenues were \$479,848, which exceeded the total expenses of \$424,272, resulting in a positive net position of \$55,576. This positive net position was a result of additional grant revenues to improve District operations, participate in the groundwater sustainability projects and to provide technical service to individuals applying for the CDFA Healthy Soil Program. The District’s operating reserve balance as of June 30, 2019 was \$557,329.

The District established a target reserve balance of \$520,000 for June 30, 2021 in the 2016 Ditch Maintenance Fee Rate Study, which can be accessed on the District's website, www.dixonrcd.org.

The **Governmental Services** (Ditch Operation and Other Governmental Activities) cost center shows a total positive net position of \$31,990. The negative net position for the Ditch Operation was \$726. The near breakeven position for the Ditch Operations is primarily due to the increased ditch fees aligning with ditch operational expenses. The Board’s objective is to use the ditch maintenance fees paid by you to maintain and improve the drainage system.

The positive net position for Other Governmental Activities was \$32,716. The District received \$48,564 in grant funds for the GSA, cover crop project, District operation improvements and California Food and Agricultural Technical Assistance Program (TAP). These grant funds covered the staff and overhead cost to provide new services and to improve operations, which improved the District’s bottom line.

The District’s overall objective for the Governmental Services is to use the ditch maintenance fees and property taxes to fund the District’s core services.

The **Professional Services** had a positive net position of \$23,587.

Fiscal Year 2019-20 The Board has allocated \$27,500 of the 2018-19 net positon towards additional ditch maintenance projects. While this allocation will result in a projected deficit of \$24,938 for Fiscal Year 2019-20. The combined fund balance is projected to be \$532,394. The District expects net revenues from Professional Services to be near \$10,000 in future years and the Governmental Services to have a positive position in future years.

Overall, the District’s financial position is sound. The Board continues to monitor revenues and expenses to ensure the overall plans and objectives set forward in the 2016 Ditch Maintenance Fee Rate Study are achieved. The Board expects that during the five (5) year planning period, expenditures will at times exceed revenues. However, the Board has dedicated reserves sufficient to cover the anticipated fluctuations and necessary capital investments through the planning period.