



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.

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www.dixonrcd.org

Ditch Maintenance

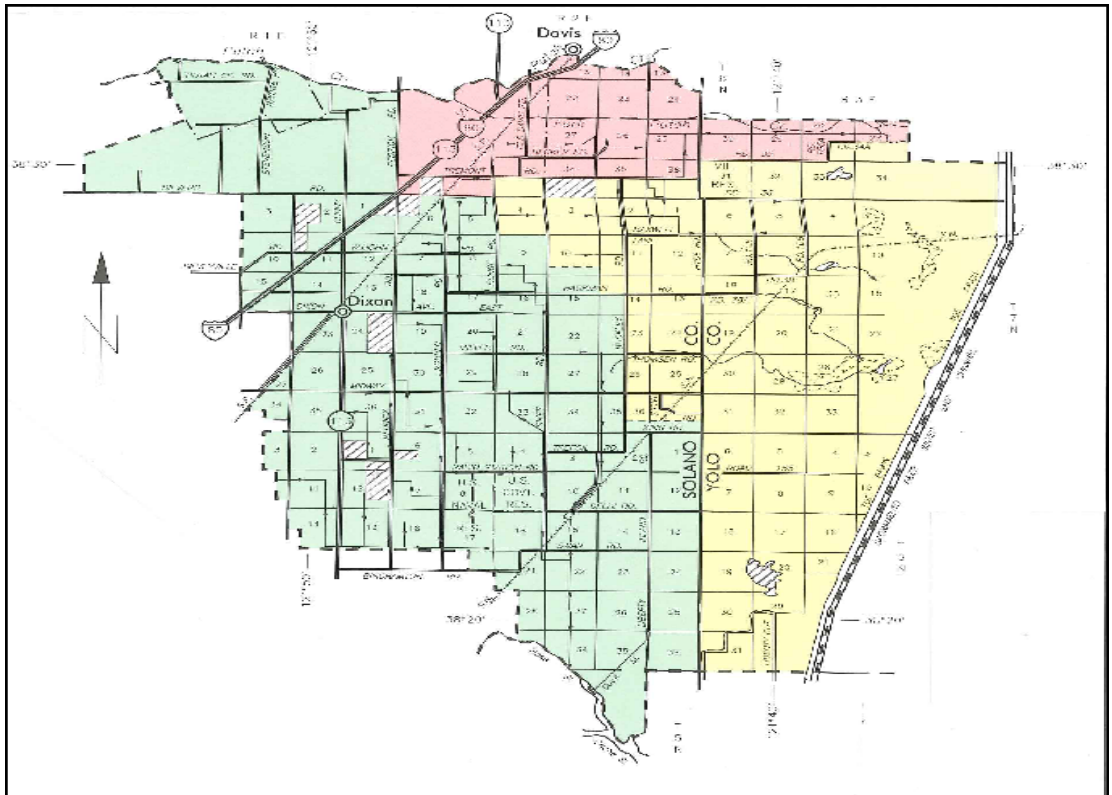
In 2010 seventeen miles, or 25%, of the Dixon RCD system was cleaned. Some areas had extensive excavation and others had light spot cleaning, all performed by S&S Farming. There were three complete herbicide applications; one each in winter, spring and summer. Washburn Spray Services performed all weed control activities. In addition to normal ditch maintenance, Dixon RCD monitors and repairs, as needed, District owned facilities based on observations of problem areas. In Spring 2010 a culvert was replaced in the Silvey/Joy Lateral.

You can assist the District by reporting any potential culvert plugging trash or debris to the District's office. If you have questions regarding the exact location of Dixon RCD ditches in your area, or want additional information regarding the proper use of Dixon RCD ditches, please contact the Dixon RCD District Manager John Currey at (707) 678-1655 extension 105.

Message From the Board

No changes to report, which in a year like the last one is notable! We are pleased to inform our members that Dixon RCD is staying the course and ditch fees will remain at \$2/acre.....

Dixon Resource Conservation District Boundary



How Does the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area Benefit the Dixon RCD & Our Members?

The financial benefits of Dixon RCD's Master Lease Agreement on the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area are easy to measure. In exchange for property management services, Dixon RCD earns 15% of the rental income from the agricultural leases on the property. This income, along with service fees charged to the Dixon/Solano RCD Water Quality Coalition, has improved short-term cash flow issues when ditch maintenance costs exceed the ditch maintenance fees in any one year. The property management income has also enabled the District to set aside reserves to provide for long-term Dixon RCD activities.

Some of the less obvious benefits of our involvement at the Wildlife Area include:

- * Supporting the Yolo Basin Foundation's (YBF) 12 year old "Discover the Flyway" environmental education program that serves approximately 4,000 elementary school students annually. This program highlights the importance of agriculture on the Wildlife Area and the mutually beneficial aspects of farming/ranching and wildlife habitat. Students visit the Wildlife Area after their teachers have been trained by YBF volunteers and staff. The students learn about the history and importance of wetlands, where our food comes from, wildlife that benefit from the land uses like those at the Wildlife Area and much more. There is an exceptional rapport between YBF staff, volunteers and the agricultural tenants which is represented in the education program. In fact there have been several instances where the agricultural tenants have stopped to talk to the classes and/or members of the public while they are touring the property. For more information on the Yolo Basin Foundation's Programs visit www.yolobasin.org
- * Providing a model of cooperation between production agriculture, a regulatory agency and an environmental education organization.
- * Keeping Dixon RCD staff well informed on activities that have the potential to affect our drainage system in the South Yolo Bypass Watershed.

Dixon/Solano RCD Water Quality Coalition

A new Long-Range Irrigated Lands Program (LRP) must be adopted by the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Board) no later than Spring 2011. There has been a significant amount of discussion and negotiation on behalf of our members over what the program should and will be. There will be a final public comment period (at least 30 days) on the proposed program most likely starting in January or February 2011. Dixon/Solano Coalition will hold a local membership meeting during the comment period to go over the differences from our current program (i.e. the addition of groundwater monitoring) and to revisit our local program's structure and commitments. Regional Board staff recommendations for the LRP include:

- *Add groundwater to the current surface water only program
- *Designate Low Priority & High Priority Subwatersheds based on monitoring results, with varying levels of requirements and Regional Board oversight. Dixon/Solano Subwatershed would be considered high priority for surface runoff based on past monitoring results.
- *Require individual farm water quality plans where regional management plans have not successfully addressed a recurring exceedance.

EXISTING PROGRAM'S CURRENT ACTIVITIES:

The last year has been focused on addressing the few pesticides that our local water quality monitoring has identified as issues (diuron, pyrethroids and malathion). Our initial strategy has been to contact individual users of these specific products to explain the issue and recommendations from technical experts. We have asked individuals to choose the most appropriate way for their operation to contribute to improvements. We will be working on Ecoli, Dissolved Oxygen, pH and electrical conductivity issues next.

The Dixon Regional Drainage Joint Powers Authority

The Dixon Main Drain / V-Drain Project is in it's final planning and permitting stages and is proceeding with easement negotiation and acquisition (as it was last year) with a new target of 2011 construction. Over the past year, we have worked to address shifting United States Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) concerns; originally with potential impacts to giant garter snake and subsequently regarding potential impacts to vernal pool habitats. Currently, USFWS is completing their biological opinion of the project. Once the biological opinion is issued, the remaining agencies will issue their permits in accordance with USFWS opinion. Our hope is that the permits from the remaining agencies will be quick to follow the USFWS opinion and that we can break ground in Summer 2011. The JPA and its member agencies (Dixon RCD, City of Dixon, Reclamation District 2068, Maine Prairie Water District and Solano County Water Agency) continue to maintain the two completed drainage projects (Pond A / Lateral 1 and Pond C). For more information on JPA activities please contact John S. Currey 707-678-1655 ext. 105.

2010 Cooperator of the Year

Each year the Dixon RCD Board of Directors and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) review many of the cooperators which have participated in NRCS programs to choose the District's Cooperator of the Year. The Board is pleased to announce that Roland and Denise Higby have been selected to receive the 2010 Cooperator of the Year Award. As part of their recent store remodel, the Higbys built a detention pond to manage any increase in runoff. In 2008 they worked with Solano RCD to plant native vegetation for erosion control and wildlife habitat in and around the pond. In 2009-2010, with NRCS assistance through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), the Higbys planted a wildlife habitat hedgerow bordering their goat pastures and installed fencing and water sources to increase the number of grazing areas. Their hedgerow includes several varieties of California native shrubs, small trees, grasses and wildflowers. They also installed interior and exterior fences surrounding the hedgerow, which will allow grazing to be used in managing the hedgerow vegetation. Students from Dixon Schools have assisted with installation of drip irrigation and wildlife water sources, mulching, etc., through the CA Department of Education's WorkAbility Program, which provides work experience for local youth. According to Roland, after the initial challenges of weed and pest control in establishing the vegetation, the projects have been rewarding and he and Denise are enjoying the results. Dixon RCD encourages projects like the Higby's, within our District, that provide detention and/or treatment of runoff that ultimately benefit the collective drainage service area. In addition, Dixon RCD recognizes the value to our larger membership of individuals like the Higbys who are willing to install innovative practices that we can all learn from.



Victor and Dana, employees at Higby, planting native grass plugs on pond banks

Dixon RCD Annual Financial Report

It has been over six years since Dixon RCD first embarked on several projects to enhance the services provided within the District. Prior to 2004 the Dixon RCD was focused primarily on District drainage needs while working in partnership with the USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service office to promote greater conservation efforts in the county. Since then Directors and staff have made deliberate decisions to look for ways to further serve landowners and farmers.

As a result several needs were identified 1) Management of the Irrigated Lands Program for the local water quality coalition members, 2) Management Services for the Dixon Regional Watershed Joint Powers Authority and finally 3) Lease Management Services for the CA Department of Fish and Game's Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area. By providing these professional services to other government agencies the District has been able to strengthen its financial position, resolve long term problems, and plan for District and regional drainage improvements.

The District has structured the financial information into two categories Governmental Services (activities we are responsible for as a drainage district and government agency), and Professional Services to other agencies and programs.

2009/2010 Fiscal Year	Governmental Services		Professional Services			Combined District Operations
	Drainage Systems	Other Gov. Activities	Water Quality Coalition	Dixon Regional Watershed Authority	Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area	
Revenues	\$ 76,343	\$ 89,929	\$ 53,146	\$ 19,540	\$ 79,168	\$ 318,126
Expenses	\$ 96,022	\$ 75,547	\$ 48,598	\$ 18,456	\$ 36,186	\$ 274,809
Net Position	\$ (19,679)	\$ 14,382	\$ 4,548	\$ 1,084	\$ 42,982	\$ 43,317
<i>* Note: the 2010 figures have not been audited</i>						

The above representation of revenues and expenses includes only the funds to provide direct services to the Dixon RCD drainage system, Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area (YBWA) agricultural lease management, Dixon/Solano Water Quality Coalition management and the Dixon Regional Watershed Authority (JPA) management. The overall picture of funds, in the District biennial audits and Annual Financial Transaction Reports, includes all financial transactions for the three financial funds (Dixon RCD Fund, YBWA Fund and Dixon/Solano RCD Water Quality Coalition Fund). Detailed financial information, including copies of the transaction reports and audits, will be posted on our new website www.dixonrcd.org

DRCD financial position continues to be good. The services provided to DRCD landowners, farmers, partners and other agencies has allowed the District to maintain a fiscally sound position. The Board and staff continue to monitor the individual project revenues versus expenses to address any recurring deficits by program. For example in Fiscal Year 2009-2010, the drainage system had an operating deficit of \$19,679 due to increasing maintenance & operation costs and regulatory compliance, however over the past six years the average overall cost of operating the drainage system has matched ditch revenues. In addition, revenues under District Operations (Governmental Services) have declined over the past few years due to reduced tax base. The Board has adjusted expenses and staff levels to accommodate these changes.