

Dixon / Solano RCD Water Quality Coalition UPDATE

Volume 7 Issue 1

September 2012



Dixon/Solano RCD Water Quality Coalition

1170 N. Lincoln St, Ste 110
Dixon, CA 95620
(707) 678-1655

RCD BOARDS OF DIRECTORS

SOLANO RCD

- Joe Martinez
- Paul Lum
- Kurt Balasek
- Darrell Hill
- John Knowles
- Randi Thompson

DIXON RCD

- Mark Holdener
- Rick Martinez
- Dave Viguie
- Tom Bors
- Sam Beukelman

COALITION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- Bruce Brazelton
- Joe Martinez
- Cork McIsaac
- Paul Lum
- Guy Garcia
- Rick Martinez
- Spencer Bei
- Dave Viguie
- Roy Gill
- Rachael Long, UCCE
- Jim Allan, Ag Comm.

STAFF CONTACTS

DIXON RCD

John Currey, *District Manager*

Kelly Huff, *Project Manager*

Janice Beaman, *Administrative*

SOLANO RCD

Chris Rose, *Executive Director*

Andrea Mummert, *Project Mgr.*

DIXON/SOLANO COALITION MANAGEMENT PLANS* & MONITORING RESULTS

HIGH PRIORITY PESTICIDE MANAGEMENT PLANS

• Sediment Toxicity & PYRETHROIDS at Z-Drain Site

Dates of Exceedances: Each spring & summer sampling event from 2005-2012

Products: Lambda-Cy, Lambdastar, Warrior, Karate, Ammo, Mustang, Silencer, Asana XL, Pounce, Baythroid, Province, Bifenture, Athena, Fanfare, Brigade

- We have conducted intensive outreach to ensure that all users of pyrethroid products in this area are aware of the issue & recommended practices.
- We are exploring alternative pest control practices & products. Growers that are still using pyrethroids are educating their applicators, using extreme caution during applications to avoid drift into any ditches, modifying and/or changing irrigation systems to reduce and/or slow tail water runoff.

• **Progress:** We continue to see sediment toxicity & pyrethroids here.

• Algal Toxicity & DIURON at Ulatis Creek Site

Dates of Exceedances: February 2006, February 2007, December 2007, January & April 2008, February 2009, January 2010, **January 2012**

Products: Diuron, Direx, Karmex

- In 2010 we conducted intensive outreach to Diuron users and most opted to use alternative herbicide products.
- **Progress:** No exceedances in 2011, however in January 2012 we had another toxicity exceedance that was higher than we have seen. A second round of outreach will be conducted soon.

• CHLORPYRIFOS at Ulatis Creek Site NEW MANAGEMENT PLAN IN 2012!

Dates of Exceedances: May 2010, May 2011, September 2011, **March 2012**

Products: Lorsban, Dursban, Cobalt

- We conducted outreach to alfalfa growers in the spring to discuss weevil control options and recommended practices.
- We are working with UC Cooperative Extension to explore alternative products for weevil control and identifying Chlorpyrifos users for additional outreach.

Other Pesticides detected below exceedance levels April 2011 to December 2011

Herbicide = Metolachlor **Products:** Brawl, Paralell, Stalwart

COMPLETED MANAGEMENT PLANS

• NITRATE at Ulatis Creek Site

- We were able to show that the nitrate exceedances were not caused by agriculture and the Regional Board deemed this Management Plan Complete.

• MALATHION at Ulatis Creek Site

- We have not had an exceedance since 2007. We have requested that the Regional Board deem this Management Plan complete as well.

LOWER PRIORITY MANAGEMENT PLANS

• Dissolved Oxygen (DO), Electrical Conductivity (EC), pH, E.Coli at all sites

- Regional Board has postponed requirements on these until the new Order is adopted. In addition, these are widespread issues throughout the Central Valley. It is difficult to determine agriculture's relative contribution to the problems.

NOTE TO MEMBERS ~ In the past our recommendations to members have focused on specific issues identified in monitoring results at our local representative sites. However, given recent enforcement activities by Regional Board (see article on next page) we want to emphasize that regardless of membership in a Coalition, individual "dischargers" are also responsible for ensuring that they are not contributing to observable water quality issues such as oil sheens, sediment discharges, odors, foam, etc.

*A management plan is required when we have more than one of the same exceedance at the same site in a three year period.

SPECIAL NOTE TO LANDOWNERS

In many cases tenants are installing practices or implementing changes to protect water quality that have significant costs. Landowner support, awareness and encouragement will go a long way to help this program be successful and reduce liability for landowners & tenants. We would ask that you discuss the program and what your tenant is doing to address water quality issues and structure leases in a way that encourages water quality protection practices.

**Dixon/Solano Coalition
July 2011 - June 2012 Finances**

Total Income 07/11—06/12	\$ 241,578
Participating acres fees	\$ 240,724
Interest	\$ 855
Total Expenses 07/11—06/12	\$ 198,597
RCD Staff	\$ 65,092
Direct Costs	\$ 7,632
Monitoring Costs (CORE)	\$ 44,726
Fees to SVWQC	\$ 16,267
Fees to Regional Board	\$ 64,880
Fund Balance 07/12	\$ 77,543*

**Dixon/Solano Coalition
Projected July 2012 - June 2013 Finances**

Budgeted Income 07/12—06/13	\$ 228,506
Participating acres fees	\$ 227,656
Interest	\$ 850
Budgeted Expenses 07/12—06/13	\$ 237,103
RCD Staff	\$ 81,310
Direct Costs	\$ 7,550
Monitoring Costs (CORE)	\$ 61,500
Fees to SVWQC	\$ 23,000
Fees to Regional Board	\$ 63,743
06/13 Fund Balance (projected)	\$ 68,946*

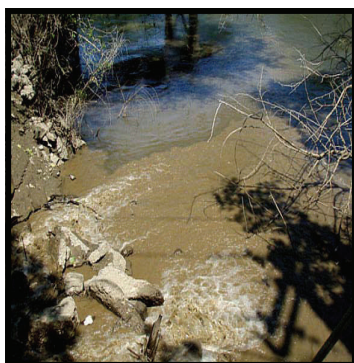
*The Coalition policy is to maintain a minimum fund balance of \$50,000 to cover any additional required monitoring as well as to maintain a positive cash flow throughout the membership year. Our objective remains to keep program costs as low as possible, while still providing members the tools necessary to maintain compliance with water quality regulations. Fees will likely increase when the new Order takes effect. See discussion below.

Central Valley Regional Board Increases Enforcement for Sediment Leaving Farms

To date our program has focused on addressing specific issues identified through our monitoring results and sediment has not been identified as a priority issue. However, recently the Regional Board has stepped up enforcement against individual operators and property owners for sediment discharges in neighboring areas. This is prompting us to take a proactive look at sediment leaving farms in our area. Dixon/Solano Coalition staff and members will be assessing, through visual observations, whether there are potential areas that would raise red flags to a regulator & contacting landowners and operators if we see something of concern. We have chosen this approach to help members be proactive and to try to minimize exposure to enforcement actions in our area.

SO, WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP ???

1. Assess properties you own/operate and look for areas where tail water from your property or operation causes an obvious change to water quality off the property, especially where there is discharge to a publicly used waterway, and take steps to remedy it. REMEMBER, there are cost-share programs through USDA NRCS designed to help with erosion control-practices. Visit our office for more information.
2. As a landowner anything you can do to encourage installation of best management practices by your tenants will help. For example, reducing rent for land taken out of production to install a practice.
3. **If you are ever contacted directly by the Regional Board, for any reason (in writing or any other way), respond promptly & please notify us. So far, it appears that each of the cases where fines were levied, the Regional Board staff felt that a landowner and/or operator was unresponsive and/or did not do enough to rectify a problem after they were notified of the issue.**



Regional Board Photos used in enforcement

NEW Requirements (“Order”) scheduled to begin in June 2013

The new Waste Discharge Requirements for Sacramento Valley (“Order”) is due to be adopted in June 2013. This Order will dictate requirements for our Coalition group as well as for individual members within our group to maintain compliance with water quality regulations. Below is a partial list of the most noticeable changes that are likely to be part of the new Order.

- Written confirmation from each landowner member that they understand their responsibilities under the program and that they have informed their tenants or vice versa
- Groundwater monitoring will be added to the program, which to date has been a surface-water only program.
- Nitrogen budgets & nitrogen application records will be required and may require certification by professionals.
- Individual Farm Evaluations will be required and aggregated information on practices sent to the Regional Board.
- Erosion & Sediment Control Plans may be required, dependent on locations.

The Regional Board has included the statements below in DRAFT Orders. They highlight that membership in a coalition is not enough to ensure compliance where there are obvious issues related to an individual property and/or where there is a repeated issue that is not improving through our collective management plan efforts:

“As stated in California Water Code section 13263(g), the discharge of waste into waters of the state is a privilege, not a right, and regulatory coverage under this Order does not create a vested right to continue the discharge of waste. Failure to prevent conditions that create or threaten to create pollution or nuisance will be sufficient reason to modify, revoke, or enforce this Order, as well as prohibit further discharge.”

“Any instance of noncompliance with this Order constitutes a violation of the California Water Code and its regulations. Such noncompliance is grounds for enforcement action, and/or termination of coverage for waste discharges under this Order, subjecting the discharger to enforcement under the Water Code for further discharges of waste to surface or groundwater.”