

| Dixon/Solano Coalition | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------|
| July 2014 - June 2015 Finances | |
| Total Income 07/14—06/15 | \$ 415,871 |
| Membership Fees (\$2.50/acre) | \$ 326,783 |
| New Parcel Initiation Fees | \$ 88,163 |
| Interest + CD charges | \$ 925 |
| Total Expenses 07/14—06/15 | \$ 381,257 |
| RCD Staff | \$ 153,622 |
| RCD Direct Costs | \$ 6,949 |
| Surface Water Monitoring | \$ 95,118 |
| Groundwater Requirements | \$ 11,689 |
| SVWQC Fees | \$ 22,895 |
| State Board Fees (75 cents/acre) | \$ 90,984 |
| Fund Balance 07/15 | \$ 78,574.* |

| Dixon/Solano Coalition | |
|---|-------------------|
| Projected July 2015 - June 2016 Finances | |
| Budgeted Income 07/15—06/16 | \$ 417,139 |
| Membership Fees (\$3.00/acre) | \$ 384,789 |
| New Parcel Initiation Fees | \$ 31,500 |
| Interest | \$ 850 |
| Budgeted Expenses 07/15—06/16 | \$ 427,119 |
| RCD Staff | \$ 169,547 |
| RCD Direct Costs | \$ 13,950 |
| Surface Water Monitoring | \$ 57,956 |
| Groundwater Requirements | \$ 57,718 |
| SVWQC Fees | \$ 29,501 |
| State Board Fees (75 cents/acre) | \$ 98,447 |
| 06/16 Fund Balance (projected) | \$ 68,594* |

*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. In order to maintain this balance annually, some years we will have a higher ending balance because under the new order some significant costs (including surface water monitoring) will vary considerably depending on the 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. In 2014-2015 fees remained at \$2.50/acre, despite the significant increase in program costs of new requirements that began in March 2014. This was achieved with initiation fees from new parcels that were enrolled over the last year and a half. In 2015-2016 we are unlikely to have significant new acreage enrolling. In 2016 many of the new requirements to address groundwater quality will take effect (Page 2 for descriptions). Wherever possible, we will continue to offset the per acre costs for our members by joining with other Coalitions to share costs and exploring options for alternative funding. In 2014-2015 USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) provided \$12,152 in funding assistance for the Coalition staff time to put on the farm reporting workshops. The Regional Board is also continuing to follow up with approximately 8,000 acres in Solano County that are not enrolled in a coalition and that they believe require coverage. If the landowners are unresponsive, this will ultimately lead to civil penalties if the parcels are determined to be out of compliance. Fines from the Regional Board for failure to obtain coverage have ranged from \$2,000 to \$10,000.

As always if you have questions please give us a call.

**Dixon/Solano Resource Conservation District
Agricultural Water Quality Coalition**

1170 N. Lincoln Street, Suite 110, Dixon, CA 95620
Phone (707) 678-1655 Kelly Huff, Project Manager X 102, Martha McKeen, Membership Coordinator X 103

Martha McKeen is our new Membership Coordinator. She will be keeping track of all of our membership data and farm reporting requirements. Please contact her with any questions and updates related to your membership. Remember to let us know if you have a new tenant or would like to change who the reporting party is for your membership. John Currey, Janice Beaman, Chris Rose, Andrea Mummert and Liz Colby will continue to help out as well. Our staff is part-time and spends time in the field, so please call ahead before coming to the office for assistance.

Visit Our Websites www.dixonrcd.org & www.solanorcd.org

Dixon / Solano RCD Water Quality Coalition UPDATE

Volume 10 Issue 1

October 2015



RCD BOARDS OF DIRECTORS

DIXON RCD

- Mark Holdener
- Rick Martinez
- Dave Viguie
- Sam Beukelman
- Vacant
- Jim Campbell, *Associate*

SOLANO RCD

- Joe Martinez
- Paul Lum
- Kurt Balasek
- Darrell Hill
- John Knowles
- Randi Thompson
- Glenda Riddle
- Terry Riddle, *Associate*
- Kathi Stutz, *Associate*

COALITION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- Bruce Brazelton
- Joe Martinez
- Cork McIsaac
- Paul Lum
- Guy Garcia
- Rick Martinez
- Spencer Bei
- Dave Viguie
- Roy Gill

~STAY TUNED~

Dixon/Solano Coalition

**WORKSHOPS FOR 2015-2016
HAVE NOT BEEN SCHEDULED
YET. WE WILL SEND
INFORMATION WITH FARM
REPORTING FORMS**

98% of Dixon/Solano Memberships in "Good Standing"!

Thank You, for your patience during the first year of farm level reporting. Please remember that the sooner you submit fully completed reports, the less expensive the program is for everyone.

2015-2016 MEMBER REQUIREMENTS

2015-2016 REQUIREMENTS for COALITION MEMBERS

| | |
|---|---------------|
| ALL MEMBERS Provide Confirmation that MEMBER or designee has attended an outreach event in 2014-2015. | March 1, 2016 |
| ALL MEMBERS Complete & Return 2015 Crop Year Farm Evaluations | March 1, 2016 |
| ALL MEMBERS Complete & Keep Onsite 2016 Nitrogen Plan | March 1, 2016 |
| MEMBERS in HIGH VULNERABILITY AREAS Complete and Keep Onsite Sediment / Erosion Control Plans | February 2016 |
| MEMBERS in HIGH VULNERABILITY AREAS Complete and Return Nitrogen Summary Reports for 2015 Crop Season and Keep Onsite Certified Nitrogen Plans for 2016 Crop Season | March 1, 2016 |

ALL DIXON/SOLANO MEMBERS:

- **Payment of Membership Fees** - Unpaid membership fees will result in cancellation of membership with penalty fees to reinstate (see insert with Membership Policy Summary).
- **Education Requirement** - All of our members or their designees are required to participate in at least one outreach event annually. Information on the eligible outreach activities from 2015 and how to confirm participation will be included with Farm Evaluations.
- **Farm Reporting** - Farm Evaluations for the 2015 Crop Year will be pre-populated with the 2014 responses to the designated reporting party by December 2015. Please update and return with any changes by **March 1, 2016**. Nitrogen Management Plan Worksheets for the 2016 Crop Year will be distributed at the same time to be completed by March 1st and **kept onsite**. **Please DO NOT send Nitrogen Plans Worksheets to the Coalition.**

MEMBERS WITH HIGH VULNERABILITY PARCELS: NEW IN 2016

We will notify you if any of your parcels are in high vulnerability areas and will provide information on qualified professionals & self-certification options for certification of plans.

- **Nitrogen Reporting: Complete 2015 Crop Year Summary Report and Certify 2016 Crop Year Management Plan**- Nitrogen Summary Reports will report the actual applied nitrogen in 2015 Crop Season. 2016 Nitrogen Management Worksheets will need to be **certified** (either by Certified Crop Advisors with special training or a grower who has been through a self-certification training).
- **Certified Sediment & Erosion Control Plans** will be required for parcels designated as High Vulnerability in the Sediment Discharge and Erosion Assessment Report created for the entire Sacramento Valley Coalition Area, which was submitted to the Regional Board in June 2015. The Regional Board has conditionally approved the vulnerability assessment, with the requirement that we add a factor for proximity to surface water. This will likely identify additional parcels as high vulnerability. The plans will need to be **certified** (either by professionals in erosion control or a grower who has been through a self-certification training) and **kept onsite**.

2014-2015 MONITORING RESULTS

We continued to see improved monitoring results with very few exceptions. There has not been an algae toxicity exceedance in Ulatis Creek or related Diuron exceedance for the last three storm seasons. After two years of no springtime chlorpyrifos exceedance at Ulatis Creek site, there was an exceedance in May 2015. There were no pyrethroids or related sediment toxicity exceedances at Z-Drain in 2015! We continued to observe regular exceedances at the Ulatis Creek and Shag Slough sites for electrical conductivity (salts) and E.coli (pathogens), which are widespread issues throughout the Sacramento Valley with unclear relationships to agriculture.

RECOMMENDED PRACTICES FOR SURFACE WATER PROTECTION

- SLOW/REDUCE/ELIMINATE or DELAY RELEASE of tailwater runoff, especially near cultivation & pesticide applications
- Install vegetative filter areas that allow tailwater to slow down and drop sediment.
- Carefully follow label DRIFT PRECAUTIONS and pesticide application practices that reduce the chance for products to move into non-target areas, especially ditches.
- Apply polyacrylamide (PAM) soil flocculants in furrow irrigated crops to reduce offsite movement of sediment.
- Utilize integrated pest management strategies to reduce the need for pesticide applications.

RECOMMENDED PRACTICES FOR GROUNDWATER PROTECTION

- Test irrigation water and soils for nitrates and adjust fertilizer applications accordingly. For a list of local labs, visit Dixon RCD website at www.dixonrkd.org.
- Protect areas around well heads and drain tailwater away from them.
- Install backflow prevention on wells.
- Become familiar with the nitrogen needs of your specific crops and the optimal source, rate, time and place for fertilizer applications. Visit <http://apps.cdffa.ca.gov/frep/docs/Guidelines.html> for a guidelines on many crops.
- Increase irrigation efficiency to reduce volume of water percolating past root zone to groundwater.

GROUNDWATER

GROUNDWATER QUALITY

The Sacramento Valley Groundwater Assessment Report (GAR), that identifies high and low groundwater quality vulnerability areas, was submitted to the Regional Board in July 2014. To date, we do not have an official approval or response from the Regional Board that would finalize our high vulnerability areas; informally Regional Board staff have indicated we will need to incorporate additional considerations. The additions will likely increase the number of parcels considered high vulnerability in our area. Parcels in high vulnerability areas have additional reporting requirements (see Page 1). In addition to development of the GAR, Coalitions are required to develop a Comprehensive Groundwater Quality Management Plan, a Groundwater Trend Monitoring Workplan, as well as a Management Practices Evaluation Program (MPEP). The MPEP is designed to determine the effects, if any, that irrigated agricultural practices have on groundwater under different conditions (irrigation & nutrient management practices, crops, soil types, etc.). Our regional coalition, the Sacramento Valley Water Quality Coalition (SVWQC) has joined efforts with four other Central Valley Coalitions to fulfill the MPEP requirement in order to reduce duplication of efforts and the costs of this undertaking.

RELATED INFORMATION FOR OUR MEMBERS WITH IRRIGATION WELLS

GROUNDWATER SUPPLY - If you use groundwater for irrigation, this process will affect you

Although it is a separate process from the Irrigated Lands Program, we are following the formation of the local Sustainable Groundwater Management Agency (SGMA) and encourage any of our members who irrigate with groundwater to familiarize themselves with the process. Once the SGMA is formed, the agency will develop and implement a Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) according to state requirements to achieve sustainability within the next 20 years. We have included a flyer that describes the process which includes a website where individuals can subscribe to receive emails, meeting invitations and general updates. John Currey, District Manager is participating on behalf of Dixon Resource Conservation District members to keep informed and share information to avoid duplication of efforts.

RESOURCES TO HELP ~ SEE NEXT PAGE

We are fortunate in Solano County to have highly qualified technical assistance available FREE through several local agencies. These individuals are familiar with the requirements of our program and have a lot of expertise to offer in helping our members through aspects of these new requirements and implementing practices that members decide to install in response.

CONSERVATION PLANNING & FUNDING OF PRACTICES

With all the new requirements that have come out of the water quality order, you have spent a considerable amount of time inventorying your farm from the perspective of water quality protection. As you go through the exercise of cataloguing your best management practices or identifying problem areas, please keep in mind that personalized technical assistance is available from USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). They use a process by which a trained professional works with you to identify natural resource problems and opportunities and develop options for treating those problems, making the most of the opportunities. The resulting conservation plan is a private document for you to use as a guide to improve the natural resources on your farm or ranch. The conservation plan can also be used to apply for financial assistance through Farm Bill conservation programs. Practices for water quality improvement that can be funded include irrigation system upgrades, irrigation water management, nutrient management, sediment basins, and well decommissioning. A conservation plan can address resource concerns beyond water quality as well, and many conservation practices benefit multiple resources. For example, irrigation water management can save water by calculating crop needs and planning irrigations accordingly; but it can also benefit water quality by reducing runoff and sediment loss and reducing percolation of water carrying nitrates to the groundwater. If the process of completing your farm evaluation or nitrogen management plan has brought up questions about water quality or other natural resources on your farm, give us a call. The technical help is free of charge and confidential. The conservation plan you develop belongs to you—the intent is to create a plan you can use to improve resources on your farm or ranch, whether or not you take advantage of the financial incentives offered. NRCS worked closely with the Coalition to provide technical help to Coalition members through workshops on nitrogen management and irrigation water management last winter, and will be collaborating on the workshops again this year. NRCS can also work with you one-on-one to develop a site-specific Conservation Plan that addresses water quality and other resources on your farm or ranch. Please give NRCS a call to schedule a field visit. Contact Wendy Rash at 707-448-0106 Wendy.Rash@ca.usda.gov

IRRIGATION EVALUATIONS

Free of Charge to any Solano Grower! An Irrigation Evaluation helps growers determine the uniformity of their water applications and the performance of their irrigation system. Any crop irrigation practice can be evaluated including drip, micro-sprinkler, impact sprinkler, furrow, and border strip systems. The purpose of the Evaluation is to measure Distribution Uniformity (DU), or the uniformity of water application across the field. Understanding DU enables growers to apply the proper amount of water to all areas of the field, and improve the efficiency of their irrigation applications. The benefits can be many: greater yields and crop quality, lower water and pumping costs, less water loss to deep percolation, decreased fertilizer leaching, and improved water quality in the drainage system. An evaluation involves trained staff spending a half-day in your field during an irrigation. For furrow and border strip irrigations, water advance rates and recession rates are timed, and the flow at the turnout is measured. Runoff is estimated. For pressurized systems, numerous flow and pressure readings are taken throughout the field, and the irrigation pump and filtration system is inspected. An evaluation report is prepared with recommendations for improving uniformity. The results for the flow and pressure measurements are included, and recommendations for irrigation scheduling are provided. To obtain a free Irrigation Evaluation, contact Paul Lum, the Irrigation Specialist for the Solano Agricultural Water Conservation Committee, at (707) 455-4024, or email LumP@sidwater.org.

VEGETATIVE PRACTICES

Research confirms that vegetation can be an effective means of addressing many of the water quality issues that we are working through locally (especially sediment & soil adhered pesticides in surface waters and nitrates moving below the root zone). Vegetation can act as a filter for surface drainage (vegetated filters areas & ditches), can assist with reducing reliance on organophosphates and pyrethroids (hedgerows as part of an integrated pest management system) and a means of managing nitrogen in the soil to reduce impacts to groundwater quality (cover crops etc.). Solano Resource Conservation District has a number of staff that are experienced in the most critical aspects of successful vegetative practices (the planning, funding, installation and maintenance). They have helped several local landowners and agencies install practices in the last 5 years, so there are local examples now. Again their services and expertise are available to our members for FREE. If you are interested call Chris Rose, Katherine Holmes or Miles DePrato at (707) 678-1655.