



## Ditch Maintenance

2015 has been a busy year for ditch maintenance. Since July 2014 we have undertaken several projects to address some long standing issues in addition to routine maintenance and implementation of the State’s new contracting requirements.

- May 2015 Tamarisk Removal (Tremont 1) - The District worked with UC Davis and Yolo County to complete the Tamarisk removal. Tamarisk is a woody shrub invasive species that over the last decade has continued to encroach on the ditches preventing proper maintenance.
- Oct – Dec 2015 Access Road Maintenance (Tremont 1 & 2)—The District repaired and improved the maintenance access along three miles of Tremont 1 and 2. These improvements will allow for better herbicide applications.
- Oct – Jan 2016 Vegetated Ditch and Hedgerow Installation on Lateral 4a. The District is working with the Gill Family and Solano RCD to create a ½ mile of vegetated ditch in conjunction with their hedgerow project. We have reshaped the District ditch and over the next several months we will plant the native grasses and then the hedgerow. In 2009, the Dixon RCD, Solano RCD and the City of Dixon worked together to plant a vegetated ditch along Casey Road. This project has eliminated the erosion problems that were happening along the City’s waste water ponds. Since 2009, the District has done spot herbicide treatment and the City mows the ditch banks.
- Oct – Nov 2015 Ditch Cleaning & Excavation (Districtwide) After reviewing the condition of many of the ditches and in hopes of an El Nino, we prioritized excavation of 27.25 miles (39%) of the ditches this year.
- Districtwide Ditch Spraying March 2015 and July 2015 (no fall application). We are currently reviewing our spray program. Over the past decade, our only option for weed control was roundup in order to comply with State regulations and permit conditions. Recently a newer product has received approval for applications to drainage ditches. This product will provide some residual control and we hope that by changing some of the products that we are using, we will achieve better control of the weeds.
- During the last year’s storms, we also removed trash and debris from multiple locations.

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.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

There is presently a vacancy on the Board and we are always interested in adding associate directors.

By serving on the Board you can guide the District’s activities and prioritize current and future natural resource conservation efforts in our community.

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 (ext. 105).

## Water Quality

Dixon and Solano RCDs have been busy helping our water quality coalition members through the new Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program. This winter all members will be required to review and update their Farm Evaluations and complete Nitrogen Budget Worksheets. Members who have lands in High Vulnerability areas for groundwater quality will be notified and will be required to have their 2016 Nitrogen Budget Worksheets certified and to complete a Nitrogen Summary Report for 2015.

Please visit our website for a schedule of upcoming trainings and to view the 2015-2016 newsletter ([www.dixonrkd.org](http://www.dixonrkd.org)). You may also contact Kelly Huff (ext. 102) or Martha McKeen (ext. 103)

## Dixon Regional Watershed Joint Powers Authority

The JPA and its partner agencies have stopped work on the Dixon Main Drain / V-drain (DMDVD) Enlargement Project. The JPA and it’s member agencies have determined that the DMDVD and the Eastside Drain are no longer the preferred projects. Recently several new alternatives to the Eastside Drain were reviewed and a new option has been determined to have sufficient viability that warrants further investigation. Over the coming year, staff will be working with interested landowners and agencies to further refine the project. If you would like more information please call John Currey (ext.105).

## Sustainable Groundwater Management Act

The District is actively participating in the ongoing discussion regarding the formation of a Sustainable Groundwater Management Agency (SGMA) for the Solano Sub-basin. The goal of our participation is to represent the groundwater users in the District, which comprise the majority of groundwater dependent landowners in the county. We encourage any landowners and growers 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. The Solano County Water Agency is facilitating the formation process and you can visit their website <http://scwa2.com/sgma> to join a list serve and to get more information. We would like to hear from you regarding your interest or concerns about the status of groundwater supplies.

## Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area

After 14 year of assisting CA Department of Fish & Wildlife (CDFW) to manage the grazing permits and agricultural leases, Dixon RCD has chosen to redirect its priorities and is no longer providing lease management services to CDFW. Since 2002, the District and CDFW staff have been able to successfully manage the agricultural activities in a manner that benefited wildlife, while the department restored over 8,000 acres to habitat. CDFW continues to lease portions of the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area for rice production and grazing. The Yolo County RCD will be assisting CDFW with the lease management and some restoration activities over the next few years.

# DIXON RCD 2014-2015 ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT

2014/2015 Fiscal Year	Governmental Services		Professional Services				Combined District Operations
	Drainage Systems	Other Gov. Activities	Water Quality Coalition	NRCS Engineering Support	Dixon Watershed JPAs	Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area	
<b>Revenues</b>	\$ 81,194	\$ 108,432	\$ 123,698	\$ 15,518	\$ 57,919	\$ 81,644	\$ 468,405
<b>Expenses</b>	\$ 90,151	\$ 111,359	\$ 105,570	\$ 13,284	\$ 49,516	\$ 22,455	\$ 392,335
<b>Net Position</b>	\$ (8,957)	\$ (2,927)	\$ 18,128	\$ 2,234	\$ 8,403	\$ 59,189	\$ 76,070

## Dixon RCD Financial Approach

The District continues to evaluate and monitor expenses and revenues based on two overall categories; Governmental Services and Professional Services.

**Governmental Services** include standard drainage services and assistance to landowners within the District to address natural resource concerns. The "Drainage Systems" revenue is from annual ditch maintenance fees. "Other Governmental Activities" revenue is from County tax base. Dixon RCD's goal is to keep the net position between Drainage System and Other Governmental Activities close to a zero balance.

As shown above, the expenses exceeded revenues for Governmental Services. The District incurred significant legal and engineering costs to address regional drainage planning, ditch fee rate structure analysis, contracting procedures and policy developments, as well as the new office lease.

**Professional Services** include providing staff to other programs and support services that benefit landowners and growers within the District and that further the mission of the District.

NRCS Engineering Support was a new service in 2014-15 and will continue in 2015-16, while NRCS seeks to fill several vacant position in the region.

Significant net revenues for Fiscal Year 2014-15 were derived from the Yolo Bypass Management Project. The higher than anticipated net revenues were a result of the set management fee, while the staffing expenses decreased due to reduced staffing needs and only nine months of services.

**Fiscal Year 2015-16** will see increased ditch maintenance expenses, resulting from a high level of maintenance and new contracting costs. However, the overall Professional Services category continues to have a positive net position, albeit at a reduced level.

This year DRCD Board and Staff are conducting a rate study to consider the cost to perform ditch maintenance and improvements during the next five years.

## Natural Resources Conservation Service

The Dixon and Solano RCDs in partnership with the Solano County NRCS continue to apply for USDA grants to augment the available Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) funds. We have received a Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) grant that has provided funds to assist landowners and growers to implement EQIP conservation practices.

For 2016, there are some special funds available to Solano County growers through USDA's flagship conservation program, the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). These are:

- The Bay-Delta Initiative for Cache Slough Complex watersheds (BDI), which covers the north and east portions of Solano County (lands that drain ultimately to the Sacramento River). This program prioritizes water conservation and water quality improvement projects.
- The Bay Area Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP), which covers the entire county. This program strives to help farmers and ranchers address climate change by implementing practices that conserve carbon and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. These climate-beneficial practices improve soil quality while increasing water retention in soils and improving water quality and habitat values.

"Regular" EQIP is also available county-wide, so please call us to pursue a conservation plan even, if you don't fit into the special funding programs. We can work with producers on any working agricultural land (crop, range, or pasture), irrigated or not, and we are also happy to provide planning services to small-scale farming operations.

You can receive more information about the sign-ups and the eligible practices by contacting the NRCS staff at their new office:

810 Vaca Valley Parkway, Suite 104,  
Vacaville, CA 95688  
(707) 448-0106 ext. 3

For general information about NRCS, visit: [www.ca.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.ca.nrcs.usda.gov).



VISIT US ONLINE AT  
***DIXONRCD.ORG***

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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