

COALITION NEWS: UPDATE

Winter 2016-17

Westside San Joaquin River Watershed Coalition

*A Coalition of Westside Water Districts and the San Joaquin Valley Drainage Authority
Providing Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program Coverage for Farmers and Landowners*

Long Term Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program

On January 9, 2014, the Regional Board adopted General Order R5-2014-0002 that affects Growers in the Western San Joaquin River watershed. Key components of the Order are regulation of discharges to groundwater as well as the continuation of the current surface water program. Groundwater requirements include nitrogen management plans and farm evaluations for each farm and subsequent implementation of practices that will minimize discharge of nitrates and salt to the groundwater. A copy of the Order can be downloaded from the Coalition's website at www.westsidesjr.org.

Coalition Grower Meetings Planned for 2016-17

Annual meetings are planned as follows:

- December 15, 2016-Los Banos-County Fairgrounds O'Banion Building
- January 5, 2017-Newman Memorial Building
- January 24, 2017 Westley Firehouse

The meetings will be held from 10:00 to 12:00. Any one of the meetings will satisfy the requirement to attend one meeting per year. The central focus of the meetings will be the reporting requirements for the Farm Evaluation Plan, Nitrogen Management Plan, Nitrogen Summary Report and the Sediment Management Plan.

Regional Board Assessing Penalties for Non-Compliance

The Regional Board recently assessed penalties to farmers in Madera, Merced and Tulare counties for not complying with the Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program. Penalties have been issued for failure to join a coalition but also for failure to send in the required forms. Penalties have ranged from \$6,000 to \$70,000. The Westside Coalition was formed to allow compliance with the regulation, but it is critical when requests are made by the Coalition to complete and return forms that they be returned in a timely fashion.

More Forms are Coming Your Way Soon

Farm Evaluation Plans for 2016 will be requested from farms classified as high vulnerable this winter with a due date to return to the Coalition of March 1, 2017. Nitrogen Management Plans for 2017 will be sent to all farms with a deadline to complete and keep on farm of April 15, 2017. Nitrogen Management Plan Summary

Reports for 2016 will be sent out this winter to farms in high vulnerable areas that are greater than 60 acres, also with a deadline to return to the Coalition by March 1, 2017. If you would like more specific information, you can contact your Water District or the Coalition at 559-592-9237.

Nitrogen Management Plan (NMP) Self-certification Training Classes

Growers area able to certify their own Nitrogen Management Plan by attending and passing a test for self-certification. Many have already completed this course. Classes are being scheduled within the Westside Coalition. You may also attend these certification classes in other coalition areas. If interested please call Orvil McKinnis at 559-582-9237 or omckinnis@summerseng.com. Nitrogen Management Plans can also be certified by a Certified Crop Advisor (CCA).

Sediment and Erosion Control Plan (SECP)

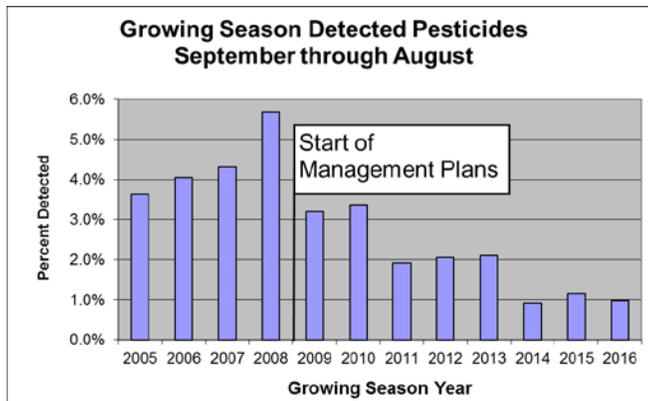
One of the new requirements of the General Order is for an SECP to be completed for farms classified as high vulnerability for discharge of sediment. Many Coalition members have already received and completed this form which stays on farm. The Coalition is further analyzing parcels and additional requests to complete the plan will be sent out in the near future. The SECP must be certified. There is a program being developed for self-certification of the SECP. More information will be provided when this self-certification is available.

Coalition Field Representatives

Dave Woolley is working with the Coalition to review and document activities in the Coalition's service area. He is available to help farmers understand their responsibilities under the General Order and to follow up on water quality issues. If you would like to receive information or a one-on-one visit, Dave can be contacted at 559-930-3907.

Improvements Observed in Pesticide Detections

There has been improvements over time of detected pesticides in the stations monitored by the Coalition. It is the goal to have no detections of pesticides in water or sediment moving off fields. It should be noted that not all detections exceeded water quality objectives, but the detections can be used as an indicator of overall progress of the implementation of on-farm pesticide management practices. The chart below shows the reductions that have occurred since monitoring began in 2005. This noticeable reduction coincides with the efforts of Growers to implement better on-farm pesticide management practices.



It is incumbent upon Growers to continue their efforts with pesticide management practices and those efforts will be rewarded with continued reductions of pesticide detections. A requirement of the Irrigated Lands Program is that exceedances of water quality objective be achieved in a period of time “as short as practicable” but no longer than 10 years. Some of our locations are approaching 10 years. Specific outreach will be targeted to these areas as this deadline looms.

Coalition Member Districts

Your local Water Districts were instrumental in forming the Westside Coalition. They are committed to assisting landowners and farmers with complying with the regulation.

- * Del Puerto Water District
- * Patterson Irrigation District
- * San Joaquin River Exchange Contractors Water Authority (including Central California Irrigation District, San Luis Canal Company and Columbia Canal Company)
- * Tranquillity Irrigation District
- * Fresno Slough Water District
- * Twin Oaks Irrigation District
- * West Stanislaus Irrigation District
- * Oak Flat Water District
- * White Lake Mutual Water Company
- * Lone Tree Mutual Water Company
- * San Luis Water District
- * Grassland Water District and RCD

Watershed Coordinator

For questions you may contact:
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Summers Engineering
559-582-9237

Website:

<http://www.westsidesjr.org/>

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