

# San Joaquin County & Delta Water Quality Coalition

## Watershed News

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### *Water Quality Management Objectives*

- Identify sources of constituents at monitoring sites
- Inform landowners of results of monitoring
- Gather information on management practices
- Provide landowners with additional management practices to improve water quality
- Evaluate Management Practices
- Provide information on water quality issues & solutions for improving water quality

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## **Not a Member? Could Cost you fines & Big \$'s for own Monitoring**

Over the past several years various laws and regulations have been passed that require farmers and rancher who irrigate land to either belong to a watershed coalition or implement their own monitoring and reporting program.

The San Joaquin County & Delta Water Quality Coalitions (SJCDWQC) has implemented a water quality monitoring plan that meets the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) requirements for monitoring irrigated land runoff, both in the winter and during summer irrigation season. If you are a member, your dues goes to pay for this program's implementation and monitoring.

If you are not a member of the SJCDWQC, you must implement your own monitoring program for the irrigated lands on your property. This can be quite expensive since the requirements for monitoring can cost between \$15,000 to \$30,000 per farm.

The Regional Water Quality Control Board is responsible for implementing the Irrigated Lands Program (ILP) and enforcing the laws. They are currently in the field looking for individuals who have not filed an individual monitoring plan with the RWQCB and who are not members of a watershed coalition. Those who fall into this category can be facing

violation notices and new requirements to implement a water quality monitoring program. And with today's technology they will be able to find those not in compliance.

Even though the deadline to sign up for a coalition has passed, there is a process to petition the RWQCB to try and become a member of a local coalition. You can contact the staff of the Regional Board at (916) 464-4611 or visit their website at [www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley).

If you would like more information on our coalitions please contact the coalition office at (209) 472-7127 ext. 125 or visit our website at [www.SJDeltaWatershed.org](http://www.SJDeltaWatershed.org).

## **Management Plans to Improve Water Quality**

During the 2006 monitoring season, water quality standards were exceeded at all of the 15 monitoring sites within the Coalitions Watershed. These exceedances triggered the requirement by the Regional Board that if a site has more than one exceedance in a three year

period, the coalition must prepare Management Plans for that subwatershed.

The Regional Board requires that the Management Plans include a survey of each member's management practices. The completion of the survey is

the first step for the Coalition and its members to solve water the quality problems. Completing the survey will provide baseline information on irrigated farmlands that border or are in close proximity to waterways in the Coalition area. Informa-

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# Management Plans

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tion from the survey can help guide recommendations and adoption of Management Practices to protect surface waters quality.

The Coalition will be contacting you with information about Best Management Practice (BMPs) that are designed to protect water quality for various crops that are grown. Many of the BMPs are those developed by the UC Extension Service, the Natural Resource Conservation Service, and crop specific groups or associations. Much of the information is not new. Some of the practices may not have been considered before because of economic reasons. Those past economic reasons may now become a necessity for your ability to continue to farm and protect water quality.

The Management Plan package and survey will include a map of your sub-watershed and show the sampling site. Drainage from the shaded farm properties are those that potentially "could" have drain water reach the monitored waterway. Owner/operators of those shaded properties are encouraged to attend Coalition workshops.

Grower and landowner participation at workshops, the completing surveys, and the adopting BMPs are the key for the Coalition to comply with the Irrigated Lands Program (ILP). The information gathered must be shared with the Regional Board so they will know you are doing what you can to keep the waters of the State in good condition. Terry Prichard and personnel from Mike Johnson's firm will be assisting the Coalition gather the sur-

vey information.

Failure to solve water problems through watershed wide Management Plan efforts may eventually lead to individual permits for each farm operation and field by the Regional Board.

While sampling has become more involved and more expensive, the outreach/education aspect of the Coalition's mission is going to be far more time consuming, far more expensive, and far more difficult to do. We have to demonstrate that there are operators who are changing their MPs substantially to improve the water quality of their irrigation and storm water runoff. These changes can include putting in tail water ponds, changing to drip, eliminating aerial applications, and other practices.

## Coalition Membership & Budget

The Coalition has 493,642 landowner member parcel acres – 461,3887 in San Joaquin County, 31,615 in Contra Costa & Alameda Counties, and 640 in Calaveras County.

The Coalition can no longer automatically accept new membership because of the Regional Board's imposed cutoff date of December 31, 2006. From that date forward, to join a Coalition a landowner must contact the Regional Board staff to complete their required application process.

The 2007 annual membership dues are **\$1.75 per parcel acre** for irrigated parcels. The minimum dues for 10 acres or less is \$20. Membership **dues paid after August 1, 2007**, will have to pay a late fee of 25 cents per parcel acre or \$5 for parcels of 10 acres or less making their total dues \$2.00 per parcel acre with a minimum of

\$25 for parcels of 10 acres or less.

The RCD Board is considering not renewing membership of the landowners/growers who have not brought their dues current since 2004. All landowners/growers who joined the Coalition prior to the December 31, 2006 cutoff are members and did not have to sign up again. **HOWEVER**, some members

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**The RCD Board is not renewing membership of the landowners/growers who have not brought their dues current.**

## Dairy Discharge Program, How will it affect you

The Regional Water Quality Control Board is currently developing new regulations with regards to existing dairy facilities. There are extensive changes in the proposed regulation that effect not only dairy owners but farmers and ranchers who receive dairy manure.

In the proposal, dairies will be re-

quired to develop a monitoring and reporting program for their dairy and all the land owned by the dairy that is within a five mile radius of the dairy facility. Dairies will also be required to report the name and parcel numbers of the people that receive manure from the dairy.

The Coalition is reviewing the cur-

rent proposal and determining the effect it will have on all those dairies that currently belong to the Coalition. We have a concern that removing the dairies from the Coalition will diminish our ability to manage the watershed in an affective manner. For more information visit the Regional Board's website at [www.waterboards.ca.gov](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov).

# Coalition strives to meet Management Goal

Water Quality Management Goal:

*To continue to monitor and analyze the water quality of SJCDWQC subwatersheds and to facilitate the implementation of best management plans (BMPs) by providing outreach and support to growers that will address the water quality exceedances that are apparent at the subwatershed sites in order to effectively enhance the water quality of these water bodies.*

To obtain its Goal through the objectives listed on the front page, the Coalition's monitoring program (the program) continues to sample surface waters during the summer irrigation

and the storm water runoff seasons and has expanded the number of sites sampled and constituents tested. In May of 2006, the Coalition sampled 15 sites for numerous water quality variables and constituents, including 39 pesticides, *E. coli*, physical parameters (total dissolved solids, color and turbidity), 8 metals, total organic carbon, nutrients, field parameters (temperature, dissolved oxygen, pH, electrical conductivity), water toxicity to three test species (*Ceriodaphnia dubia*, *Pimephales promelas* and *Sele-nastrum capricornutum*) and sediment toxicity to *Hyalella azteca*.

This information is used to determine if an exceedance occurred, where it occurred and the extent of the prob-

lem. When an exceedance occurs, the Coalition must report it to the Regional Board. If there is an exceedance more than once over a 3 year period at a sampling site, the Coalition must develop a management plan.

The management plans are tools the coalition uses to meet water quality standards. They involve developing best management practices, informing growers of practices to prevent water quality exceedances and continued monitoring of the watershed to determine the effectiveness of the management plans. In order to meet these goals, the coalition relies on the cooperation and involvement of its members.

## Coalition Success Depends on its Members

The individual members of the Coalition are primarily responsible for the success of the Coalition by participating in the Coalition's efforts to correct water quality problems, complete the Management Plan surveys, and paying their fair share of all costs to carry out the Regional Board's Irrigated Lands Program. The primary long-term goals of the Coalition are to achieve water quality standards through the implementation of rea-

sonable, cost-effective management practices. The Coalition was formed under the auspicious of the ILP to coordinate the monitoring, sample testing, reporting to the Regional Board, and to develop the area's management practices.

Landowners/Growers need to be proactive with their management practices. Those practices include but are not limited to:

- Minimizing pesticide/herbicide use,
- Mix and load your sprayers properly and away from drain ways
- Calibrate your equipment properly
- Use buffer zones around sensitive areas
- Use vegetation filter strips and drainage waterways if possible

## Membership (continued from page 2)

have not brought their unpaid dues current. Those who did not pay their 2005 and 2006 dues need to review their records and the 2007 statement when it is received. **Past Due Fees Are DUE BY JUNE 15, 2007. The 2007 statement will be including those past due fees.** Fees for 2005 were \$1/parcel acre and a minimum of \$20 for parcels 20 acres or less. The fees for 2006 paid after October 15, 2006, were \$1.75/parcel acre and a minimum of \$25 for parcel of 10 acres

or less.

The Coalition's 2006 operating budget was \$848,581 and spent \$606,901. We had a carry forward amount of \$469,415, which is being utilized until the 2007 fees are collected. We estimate that the first six months of operation will cost \$400,000 so the carry forward is important to have every year.

The budget includes the costs of:

State Water Board fees, water sampling, field work, and laboratory analysis, follow up sampling and analysis, reports required by the Regional Board, administration of the Coalition, membership mailings and data base management, management practice meetings and outreach, grower/landowner crop management practice surveys, and management plan preparation. For more information regarding the financial information please contact the Coalition.

**SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY & DELTA WATER QUALITY COALITION**

P.O. Box 2357  
Lodi, CA 95247-2357

Phone: (209) 472-7127 ext. 125  
E-mail: info@sjdeltawatershed.org  
www.sjdeltawatershed.org

**Coalition Activities over the past year**

- The volunteer steering committee meets monthly and make recommendations to the San Joaquin County Resource Conservation District's (SJCRCDD) Board of Directors, who are also volunteers, regarding the operation of the Coalition. The SJCRCDD has the final approval of all recommendations proposed by the steering committee.
- Hosted meetings in the area to inform landowners and operators of Ag Waiver & ILP regulations.
- Presented monitoring exceedance information to those that attended the County Agricultural Commissioner's meetings in 2006/07
- Completed and submitted the Coalition's monitoring plan.
- Continues to monitor major stem streams and rivers in the Area during the irrigation season.
- Monitored storm events in February and March 2007.
- Prepared and delivered the required Semi Annual Reports to the Regional Board.
- Attended Regional Board meetings and spoke on behalf of the Coalition's membership.
- Spread costs equitably among landowners/operators of irrigated farmland who are Coalition members.
- Communicate to landowners where water monitoring indicates problems and work to solve those problems.
- Develop and implement reasonable and cost effective Management Practices (MPs) to address any toxicity from irrigated farmland.

**Who Manages the Coalition?**

The San Joaquin County Resource Conservation District meets monthly to oversee the daily operations of the Coalition. John B. Meek, Jr. is the Executive Director of the Coalition and carries out the operational directions from the SJCRCDD. Dr. Michael Johnson is the Program Manager who coordinates the collection and testing of water samples, reports test results to the Regional Board, conducts area mapping, develops management plans & data collection, and submits annual reports to the Regional Board. Mike Wackman serves as our public policy advocate and director of communications. Ruth Mulrooney is in charge of the membership fee invoicing and fee collection.

**2004-2006 Monitoring efforts**

You can see from the list of exceedance types shown in Table 1 that the Irrigated Lands Program (ILP) is more than testing for herbicides and pesticides, for the ILP states that: "Waste specifically regulated by the Conditional Waiver (ILP) includes earthen materials, such as soil, silt, sand, clay, and rock; inorganic materials, such as metals, salts, boron, selenium, potassium, and nitrogen; and organic materials, such as organic pesticides, that enter or have the potential to enter into waters of the State."

If an exceedance is determined to be a pesticide or herbicide, the Coalition contacts the County Agriculture Commissioner's offices to determine who may have been using the suspected materials. The collection of that information is on going and meetings and workshops will be held with landowners and operators during the year to review the exceedances and an operator's MPs.

The following is a list of the chemicals we are required to test for and many, but not all, of the more common commercial prod-

Type of Exceedance	Total Samples	Total Exceedances	% of Total Samples
E. coli (fecal bacteria)	193	98	50.7
Physical parameters*	253	268	100.0
* Dissolved Oxygen	253	118	46.6
* pH	253	20	7.9
*Electrical Conductivity	253	77	30.4
*TDS (salts)	198	55	21.6
Water Chemistry**	198	19	10
Diazinon	198	1	.5
Chlorpyrifos	198	25	13

Table 1 - Partial list of tests conducted by SJC&DWQC and exceedances of water quality standards. \*\*All metals and pesticides excluding Diazinon & Chlorpyrifos

uct names to help you know what we are testing for:

- Diazinon: Basudin, Dazzel, Gardentox, Kayazol, Knox Out, Nucidol, and Spectracide
- Chlorpyrifos: Brodan, DetmolUA, Dowco 179, Dursban, Empire, Exadex, Lorsban, Paqeant, Piridane, Scout, and Sentinal
- Cyhalothrin, Lambda: Excaliber, Grenade, Hallmark, Icon, Karate, Matador, OMS0321, Saber, Samarai, and Sentinal
- Permethrin: Ambush, BW21Z, Cel-lutec, Exmin, FMC33297, Kafil, Kestrel, NRDC143, Pounce, Pramex, Torpedo
- Cypermethrin: Ammo, Arrivo, Barricade, Cymbush, Cymperator, Cynoff, NRDC149, Polytrin, PP383, Ripcord and Stockade