



## **Member Updates**

### **Sediment and Erosion Control on Commercially Irrigated Lands**

#### **Background**

In an effort to protect water quality, the Waste Discharge Requirement (Order) of the Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program require Central Valley commercial growers to manage their irrigated lands to not degrade surface or ground water. Soil erosion and sediment discharges can result from runoff of irrigation water and/or stormwater from irrigated lands.

Members should identify erosion sources and potential sediment discharge sites on all parcels. The Natural Resource Conservation Service's (NRCS) Best Management Practices (BMPs) in managing sediment and erosion for irrigation and stormwater were listed in Part D of the Farm Evaluation survey. As you recall, the evaluation required members to select Sediment and Erosion Control practices implemented on their parcel(s). Members are encouraged to revisit Part D and utilize these practices on your irrigated parcel(s). For convenience, the BMPs to reduce irrigation and stormwater discharges off farmland are posted at [www.stwec.org](http://www.stwec.org); see the Member Requirements page, select the Farm Evaluation survey and proceed to Part D.

#### **Certification Requirement Update**

On behalf of STWEC and the 12 fellow watersheds that make up the Sacramento Valley Water Quality Coalition (SVWQC), the SVWQC proposed an addendum to the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Board's (Regional Board) Sediment Discharge and Erosion Assessment Report (SDEAR) in June 2016. The concern that drove the addendum was based on the identification method used by the Regional Board to determine areas that are vulnerable to erosion and sediment discharge. The SVWQC felt that the Regional Board had used an approach to determine which parcels were vulnerable, leading to a surprisingly high number of parcels within the Shasta –Tehama Watershed that would need to complete a professionally certified Sediment and Erosion Control Plan (SECP). The SVWQC proposal establishes a more comprehensive assessment to include management practices and natural barriers for determining the relative probability that an agricultural parcel has a high risk of discharging sediment. A Self-Certified SECP option is also included in the proposed addendum.

Currently, the addendum is under review by the Regional Board and the SVWQC expects a response in September 2016. Affected members should expect to prepare and implement either a professionally certified or self-certified SECP, depending on the Regional Board's response. After the outcome is determined, members with parcels that have been identified in a high vulnerability erosion and sediment discharge area will receive a notification letter of the relevant SECP requirement and how to remain compliant. A self-certification training program is being developed and classes are expected to be offered beginning in November 2016.

## Message from the President

A big thank you is in order to our members and staff! The 2016 member enrollment and Farm Evaluation reporting has been completed. Your active membership (paying the annual membership fee and submitting the 2016 Farm Evaluation) ensures Waste Discharge Requirement (Order) compliance for your enrolled parcels as well as STWEC as an organization. Thanks to all 981 members, our dedicated staff, and the STWEC board of directors for working together to meet the annual reporting requirements.

As you may be aware, commercial irrigators in the East San Joaquin Valley must comply with the Order as well. They are roughly a year ahead of the Sacramento Valley in rolling out the program. The Regional Board has been aggressive in issuing fines to include 10 commercial irrigators. A grower with 69 irrigated acres in Madera failed to submit their 2014, 2015, and 2016 Farm Evaluations and subsequently received a certified Administrative Civil Liability Complaint letter notifying them of a \$70,980 fine for noncompliance.

The Regional Board is active in our area as well. A positive outcome for all of us would be that their presence generates an increase in STWEC membership.

As always, members are welcome to join the bi-monthly board meetings and we would appreciate any comments you may have.



Paul J. Bertagna

President STWEC Board of Directors



Shasta Tehama Watershed Education Coalition

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### **Next Board Meeting:**

Wednesday, September 14, 2016 8 a.m. | USDA Conference Room | 2 Sutter Street | Red Bluff, CA 96080