

SPRING 2022



## Quarterly Newsletter

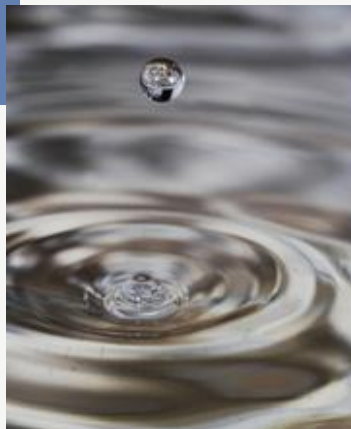


### Membership Overview:

**Enrolled Members - 786**  
**Enrolled Acres - 88,967**

### General Questions

[stwec.org](http://stwec.org)  
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### Irrigated Pasture Update

On August 12 2021, the Regional Board exempted the Goose Lake Area of the Coalition from the Irrigated Lands Regulatory program based on the determinization that irrigated pasture in the area poses a low threat to water quality. Work to document and justify similar exemptions based on a low threat to water quality—no external sources of nitrogen applied, or pesticides applied—are underway in the Upper Feather River, Pit River, Western Shasta and the foothills. Work is being conducted by Dr. Ken Tate (UCCE), Tina Saiton (UCCE) and Pam Giacomini (Hat Creek Rancher). Discussions between Pam Giacomini, Carol Dobbas (Executive Director Upper Feather River Watershed Group) and Regional Board staff on February 15 resulted in a renewed focus on this effort.

## Extreme Caution Needed When Applying Pyrethroids

Pyrethroid insecticides continue to be detected in the Sacramento Valley Water Quality Coalitions surface water quality monitoring. Pyrethroids are extremely toxic to aquatic invertebrates and as a result, have very low trigger limits. The Coalition is required by the Central Valley Water Board to test the water column and sediment for potential toxicity using the bioindicator species, ***Hyaella azteca***. Exceedances have been observed in both water column and sediment samples and, in some cases, management plans have been triggered. IT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO BE EXTRA CAUTIOUS DURING APPLICATION SEASON TO AVOID MORE EXCEEDANCES AND ADDITIONAL MANAGEMENT PLANS. Management plans equate to extra cost and time for members in the form of increased surface water monitoring for a minimum of three years, mandatory meetings and additional reporting by members. Avoiding mandated management plans is a critical component of cost containment, so let's work together to avoid them!

## GOOD NEWS!

### **Elimination of Second Surface Water Assessment Year Approved**

In February, the Regional Water Board approved NCWA's request to change the coalition's current surface water monitoring schedule from a 4-year cycle to a 3-year cycle. The 4-year cycle was assessment-assessment-core-core. Beginning this year (an assessment year) the 3-year cycle is assessment-core-core. This revision is expected to result in at least \$200,000 savings in monitoring and programmatic costs during the 2023 budget year. Advancing a refined Surface Water Quality Monitoring proposal with Regional Board staff based on the 15-year history of improving surface water quality was one of the 2021 coalition goals and priorities, which helps to achieve NCWA's and the coalition's overall goal of cost containment.

### STWEC Drought Response

Please notify STWEC if you will not be receiving irrigation water. Because of unprecedented drought conditions members have until April 30th to request a refund in the form of a credit. STWEC policy is to refund half of the irrigated acre fees paid. The other portion of the fees cover the cost of monitoring, reporting and coalition administrative costs.



## *President's Message*

To our STWEC family,

I hope you are all healthy and well. Again, it is quite difficult to write this letter with a positive tone. It seems that as soon as we come out of one crisis, two more start. I feel for those of you who have elected to just quit farming instead of confronting the many obstacles that challenge our agricultural industry. With a burdensome regulatory program, Covid pandemic, persistent drought and now skyrocketing fuel and commodity prices, and the threat of worldwide crisis, its very hard to keep plugging along and doing what we do best; GROW FOOD!

What I do know is that we, as the producers of our nation's and much of the world's foods, are among the most resilient and tough American citizens. For those who have committed to continuing through these hard times, I commend you and respect your dedication as some of America's most essential workers.

The fact that so many of our members will not be able to irrigate by diversions or won't have groundwater to pump will result in fallowed fields or members totally opting out of the Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program. This could create a significant impact on our coalition's financial situation. Loss of many members would lower the anticipated revenue that covers last year's reporting to the state and will require fiscal increases next year to remain solvent. It would be very helpful if the State Water Resources Control Board would extend an acreage fee "holiday" to farmers during these crises, similar to the proposed "gas tax holiday" (call your State Representatives).

On a positive note, I look forward to our annual Member's Meeting on May 11th and hope to see the turnout we had last year. It was the largest annual meeting participation I have seen since STWEC was formed in 2004. Again this year, we will have two vacancies on the Board of Directors as we bid Larry Solberg farewell and thank him for his six years of serving on our board. I hope we have interested candidates as we had last year who are willing to pick up the torch and participate in the fight to repress further regulation and help us all remain in compliance with the current requirements.

Thank you for all you do in showing the citizens of California that we, as agricultural growers, are not a threat to our environment and do our part to protect it. Your compliance with the ILRP is important and appreciated and I wish you the best in these difficult times. I also give our staff at the Resource Conservation District of Tehama County a big thank you! for all you do to keep the cost of administration to a minimum.

Sincerely

Ron Keown, President of the STWEC Board of Directors.



# STWEC Spring 2022 Newsletter



## Thank You!

A great big THANK YOU to Director Larry Solberg for volunteering to serve on the STWEC Board over the years. We know that for you, it was an “add on” to the many other things that you did, including your farming and ranching, your family, other volunteer opportunities as well as your writing and singing. We appreciate that you were willing to serve and hope you know that your time and your input was always valued.



## Board of Directors Election

At our annual meeting on May 11th in Cottonwood we will have an election to fill two seats on our Board. We encourage you to contact us for more information and hope you will consider volunteering. The work the Board of Directors does impacts the entire membership.



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## **\*IMPORTANT DATE\***

The 2022 Annual Meeting will be held:  
May 11, 2022 // 9 am // Cottonwood Community Center