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Our mission is to support our agricultural growers and producers, assisting them with compliance in the Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program through information, education and resources for technical assistance to ensure good water quality throughout the area.

The PNSSNS Subwatershed Group is one of thirteen subwatersheds in the Sacramento Valley Water Quality Coalition authorized to provide a discharge waiver as required by the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board. Our diverse membership represents both large and small farmers, organic farmers, rural property owners, nature and hunting preserves, animal rescue groups, water districts and some who simply support self-monitoring to keep our waters clean.

Letter from the President

By Ed Sills

As your newly installed PNSSNS Board President, I want to thank Tom Aguilar for his work as president for the past 5 years guiding us through the evolving Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program (ILRP). In March the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Board) adopted new Waste Discharge Requirements (WDR) and Monitoring Reporting Program (MRP) within the new ILRP. This new ILRP covers discharges to surface water as before, but adds groundwater (see page 2). We remain committed to do all we can to keep costs low and to keep farmer record keeping requirements sensible.

Due to new requirements which will be phased in over the next two years, reducing future costs will demand more administrative work and more outreach to our member growers and landowners. Following is a list of changes:

- **New Water Monitoring schedule:** Requires 2013-14 and 2014-15 assessment testing. 2015-16 and 2016-17 will be NO testing.
- **Farm Evaluation Plan (4 pages):** This is a questionnaire asking about our farm practices and must be filled out by 100% of our members.
- **Notice of Confirmation:** A document confirming that we understand and accept what is required of us. It must be signed by 100% of our members.
- **Reduced Monitoring Alternative:** PNSSNS is eligible to apply for a once every 5 year monitoring option, but there are no guarantees we will be accepted.
- **Groundwater Monitoring:** It is uncertain whether PNSSNS will be required to conduct groundwater monitoring.

With the increase in workload that is described above, Linda Watanabe can no longer 'do it all' on a part-time basis. So Chelsie Nakasone has been hired as a part-time, administrative assistant to help with the office work. Additionally, we contracted with Elisa Noble, Placer County Resource Conservation District to oversee projects such as submittal of the application for Reduced Monitoring Alternative. Lastly, as you may know, Chris White of Balance Hydrologics, who was doing our water sampling, passed away unexpectedly last December. As a result, with assistance from the Placer Co. RCD, we contracted with Walter Clevenger to continue Coon Creek water sampling.

Thank you to all who have voluntarily joined PNSSNS, supporting us in the fight to keep this program reasonable. The Regional Board is sending "Amnesty" letters to landowners identified as potential non-compliers (see page 3). Future Regional Board penalty fees for non-compliance are expected to be onerous. Please tell your non-complying family and friends, **NOW IS THE TIME** to join. Our annual renewal packets scheduled to go out late October will contain more information as we evolve into the new ILRP requirements. ~

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Important Notice: Requirements of Membership Under the New Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program

On March 12, 2014 the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Board) adopted the new Waste Discharge Requirements (WDR) and Monitoring Reporting Program (MRP). The WDR and MRP are known as the General Orders of the Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program (ILRP). The ILRP, existing since 2003, has required owners and operators of irrigated lands to implement management practices necessary to protect and improve water quality. The new ILRP covers discharges to both surface water and groundwater. The groundwater coverage is new under the recently adopted ILRP and will address waste (i.e. salt, nitrates, pesticides) percolating past the root zone into groundwater. The ILRP does not address the pumping of groundwater.

Below are requirements of your membership with the PNSSNS Subwatershed Group (PNSSNS) and Sacramento Valley Water Quality Coalition (SVWQC) as defined under the new ILRP.

1. The new program applies to owners and operators of irrigated lands* (excluding rice). See next page for details on who must comply. Either the owner or operator of the irrigated lands may enroll the parcels under the new ILRP. The owner or operator who enrolls the parcels will be considered the member (Member) of PNSSNS and the SVWQC.

*Irrigated lands are defined as land irrigated to produce crops or pasture used for commercial purposes including land that is planted to commercial crops that are not yet marketable (e.g. vineyards and tree crops). Irrigated lands also include nurseries, and privately and publicly managed wetlands (excluding the non-irrigated upland habitat associated with managed wetlands).

2. Both the owner and operator are ultimately responsible for complying with the terms and conditions of the ILRP. It is the responsibility of the Member to notify the non-Member owner or operator that the parcels have been enrolled in the ILRP.

3. Members are required to maintain a hard or electronic copy of the ILRP General Orders at the farm headquarters, be familiar with its contents, and comply with all parts of the General Orders. The General Orders can be found at:
http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/centralvalley/board_decisions/adopted_orders/general_orders/r5-2014-0030.pdf

4. The General Orders require Members to permit representatives of the Regional Board, at reasonable hours, to enter premises to inspect, copy, or photograph any records or facilities. Members must provide the name and phone number to PNSSNS of the individual with the authority to provide consent to access facilities.

5. As an existing Member in good standing, you will be required to confirm your intent to remain covered under the new ILRP. The confirmation will be part of your annual invoice, sent October 2014.

6. Members must report the practices they are implementing to protect water quality. The ILRP does not require Members to implement specific water quality management practices. Management practices will be selected by Members based on their individual irrigated lands and water quality concerns.

7. Members in a designated "high vulnerability" area or area under a Surface Water and/or Groundwater Quality Management Plan must attend a PNSSNS outreach event annually and provide confirmation of attendance. However, at this writing PNSSNS has no designated "high vulnerability" areas.

8. Members will be required to submit a Farm Evaluation Plan (template scheduled to be available October 2014) specifying measures being taken to protect water quality. In low vulnerability areas, these plans will be kept at the farming headquarters and must be provided to the Regional Board upon request. The compiled regional information will not include Member identifying information.

Requirements of Membership continued...

9. Members within high vulnerability areas for nitrate contamination of groundwater must prepare and implement a Nitrogen Management Plan (template not yet under development) summarizing the amount of nitrogen applied to the land and the amount used by the crop. Plans must be reviewed and signed by a Certified Crop Advisor or certified by the California Department of Food and Agriculture. Members in low vulnerability areas must prepare a Plan and keep it at the farming headquarters. The Plan template will be prepared by the SVWQC and approved by the Regional Board.

10. Members with the potential to discharge sediment to surface waters during irrigation or storm events must prepare and implement a Sediment and Erosion Control Plan (template not yet under development).

11. Wastes discharged from a Member's irrigated lands shall not contribute to an exceedance of a water quality objective or a trend of degradation that may threaten applicable Basin Plan beneficial uses, unreasonably affect applicable beneficial uses, or cause or contribute to pollution or nuisance.

12. If a Member's compliance with any of these requirements creates significant environmental impacts (as defined in Attachment D of the General Orders), the Member is required to avoid the impacts where feasible or implement identified mitigation measures.

13. While PNSSNS and SVWQC will assist Members in complying with the new ILRP, it is ultimately the responsibility of the Member to comply with all components of the General Orders. The Regional Board will increase enforcement actions against Members who do not comply with the provisions of the General Order.

14. Any landowner or operator choosing not to be covered by the Coalition Program will be required to have individual coverage directly with the Regional Board. The Regional Board will increase enforcement actions against landowners and operators who do not obtain any regulatory coverage. ≈

ATTENTION: The Regional Board is sending notices to farmers and ranchers who may not be in compliance with the ILRP. A farmer with 20 irrigated acres, who has been in compliance since 2004, has paid \$1,554 into the ILRP. A non-complying farmer with 20 irrigated acres, if he joins before Oct 2nd, would pay \$535 in penalties and 3 years back dues. This is approximately 1/3 of actual costs paid by a member in good standing since the beginning of this program. Tell your friends, neighbors and relatives who **irrigate** and sell any kind of agricultural product that **now is the time** to join PNSSNS, with no Regional Board penalties. This "amnesty" period ends Oct. 2, 2014. You are required to comply with state water quality regulations under the ILRP, if you **irrigate** your land and do any of the following:

- ✓ conduct an agricultural related business on your property
- ✓ sell a crop or product to a 3rd party
- ✓ hold a permit for pesticide use
- ✓ file the 1040F form (claiming ranch or farm deductions) on a federal tax return
- ✓ lease irrigated pasture for horses, or board horses that eat/utilize the irrigated pasture

Check PNSSNS website for sign-up forms and more info:
www.cleanwaters.info ≈

"Amnesty" Fee Schedule Due before Oct. 2, 2014

Annual Dues.....	\$100.00
PNSSNS Penalty Fee	\$100.00
3 Year Back Dues.....	\$255.00
3 Year Irrigated Acre Fee @ \$4.00 per irrigated acre	
Annual Dues + Penalty Fee + 3 Year Back Dues + 3 Year Irrigated Acre Fee = Total Membership Dues	

**PNSSNS
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Drought Management - Making Every Drop Count

If you irrigate any part of your farm or ranch, you want to ensure that your irrigation system is as efficient as possible, especially in a drought year like this. The best way to do this is to develop an Irrigation Water Management Plan (IRWP), which is based on the specific characteristics of your soil, crops, and climate. Then, you want to create an irrigation schedule, so that you are applying the right amount of water at the right time.

Other irrigation efficiency tips include checking your system for uniform water distribution, patching any leaks, utilizing appropriate size and pressure of pipes and equipment, and even utilizing newer technologies such as smart meters, which can adjust your irrigation schedule based on the current weather. If you receive more water than you need at a given point in time, we strongly recommend you invest in ponds or storage tanks so that this water can be used later.

The Placer Resource Conservation District (RCD) can help you with this kind of irrigation technical assistance. We have an Irrigation Specialist on staff with over 30 years of experience. If upgrading your system will also conserve water, you may also be eligible for financial assistance from the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS). Contact Placer RCD at 530-885-3046 x119. ~