

PNSSNS Board of Directors

Ed Sills, President, South Sutter County

Mr. Sills represents South Sutter County and grows rice, popcorn, wheat, oats, beans, and almonds organically on approximately 2400 acres in Pleasant Grove, California. Mr. Sills has served as Vice President and Board Member of the California Certified Organic Farmers (CCOF) organization and was a member of the University of California Sustainable Agriculture Public Advisory Committee. He was named California Conservation Farmer of the Year by the National Endowment for Soil and Water Conservation in 1989. Mr. Sills has testified before several congressional hearings on the topic of Sustainable Agriculture. He has been a cooperator on several University of California research projects on his farm, including rice straw incorporation, green manures, weed ecology, and beneficial insects. In 2009 Mr. Sills became a board member to add the voice of organic farming in the Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program development.

Alan Lauppe, Vice President, North Sacramento County

Born in Sacramento and raised in Sutter County, Mr. Lauppe is owner and operator of El Rio Farms for over 30 years. He is a diversified farmer growing rice and row crops. Mr. Lauppe is a founding member of PNSSNS and became involved to represent Sacramento County with large parcels that have disappeared to development over the past years.

Carol Scheiber, Secretary, Placer County

Born in Fairfield with most of her life spent in Placer County, Carol is long time cattle rancher (47 years) in Lincoln. Now in the 5th generation of Scheiber's running the ranch, Carol has served on a number of boards including the Placer County Farm Bureau, Lincoln High School Farm Foundation, Election Board, Lincoln Relay for Life, and Granite Springs Church in Lincoln. In 2013, Carol volunteered to become a PNSSNS board member to be a voice for farmers and ranchers to keep water in our area at an affordable price.

Ellen Fickewirth, Treasurer, Placer County

Ellen helps to manage her family's walnuts, rice, and a small cattle operation in Placer and Sutter Counties. She earned an engineering degree and then worked in the bay area for a number of years. She currently lives in Lincoln and is also on the board of the Lincoln Community Foundation. She joined the PNSSNS board to learn more about water quality issues as well as to allow founding member Bonnie Ferreira to retire from the board.

Tom Aguilar, Director, Placer County

Tom was born and raised on the same farm he operates currently, Mandarin Hill Orchards in Penryn, Placer County. The orchard was named "Small Business of the Year, 2019" by the California State Assembly. Tom made a career for over twenty years working for a global corporation but decided farming was a better way of life for him and his family. Tom's family has been supplying fresh produce country wide for over 100 years and was recognized for their efforts by Congressional Proclamation in 2016. Recently, the fifth generation has become involved on the property planting wine grapes. Tom is also a past president of PNSSNS.

Laura Barhydt, Director, Nevada County

Laura Barhydt and family raise beef cattle and pumpkins in Nevada County. Laura was appointed to the Nevada County Ag Advisory in 2015 where she represents the beef cattle industry. She also serves as treasurer for Placer Nevada Cattlewomen and serves on several committees for the Nevada County Farm Bureau.

Mat Conant, Director, South Sutter County

Born and raised in Marysville, California, Mat Conant farms walnuts on both sides of Yankee Slough (the dividing line between Butte-Yuba-Sutter Water Quality Coalition and PNSSNS). He serves as a Sutter County Supervisor, on the South Sutter Water District board, California State Farm Bureau board and is a past president of the Yuba Sutter Farm Bureau board. Mr. Conant also represents Sutter County on the Butte-Yuba-Sutter Water Quality Coalition board. In 2010, Mr. Conant became involved with PNSSNS to represent large orchard farming.

Lesa Osterholm, Executive Director



Pictured from left to right (in July 2019): Alan Lauppe, Ellen Fickewirth, Laura Barhydt, Carol Scheiber, Ed Sills, Lesa Osterholm, and Tom Aguilar. Not pictured: Mat Conant