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Message from the President

By Ed Sills, Sutter County.

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 watershed.

The PNSSNS Subwatershed Group is one of twelve subwatersheds in the northern Sacramento Valley Water Quality Coalition under the Waste Discharge Order as required by the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board. Our diverse membership represents both large and small acreage farmers and ranchers including organic growers. The crops represented include pastures/ livestock, orchards, row crops, vines, etc. Our members continue to work diligently to protect our clean waters and keep our lands healthy and productive.

Toward the end of the summer of 2022, in the dust and the heat, I was hopeful that the coming winter would bring abundant rainfall. I was wishful of having harvest all completed, and thinking of myself relaxing by the wood stove in the evening, and hearing the rain outside. Little did I realize what was to come. On New Year's Eve we experienced wind gusts of 60+ mph, bringing heavy rain which hammered the windows. I was glad to be warm and inside, but a relaxing evening it was not. Flooding and electrical outages were common, although we had fewer problems than some of our neighbors. The storms kept on coming through the middle of the month. I'll take the good with the bad. Oroville is above average for the date and Shasta is nearly so. Snow is 200% of normal for the date and some places have nearly 100% of the annual average snowfall. So we should be well set up for irrigation water this year.

Our Executive Director, Lesa Osterholm, is retiring at the end of February after nearly 7 years of work on behalf of PNSSNS. We wish her well and hope that she will enjoy her time away from the challenges associated with helping our members comply with the complicated regulations.

We have entered into an agreement with Yuba Sutter Farm Bureau to take over most of the workings of PNSSNS. PNSSNS will remain a subwatershed with its Board of Directors, but the day to day operations will be handled by YSFB, starting February 1st. Please come to our Annual Meeting on February 22, 10 am to noon, at the PCWA offices in Auburn. Among other topics, such as Nitrogen reporting, you will be able to meet the staff of YSFB, and find out what's ahead on the regulatory front for the members of PNSSNS.

Looking forward to an abundant growing season.
Ed Sills

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www.cleanwaters.info

Saying Goodbye

By Lesa Osterholm

It has been twenty years since 2003 when this regulatory program was proposed by the Central Valley Regional Waterboard. I attended meetings and provided comments from the beginning and invited waterboard staff on tours to help represent the diversity of agriculture in our region. I also wanted to demonstrate the incredible work agriculture is doing especially when it comes to safety, protecting healthy soils and water quality while providing nutritious food for people. I quickly found how difficult it was to convey information and sentiments about something most people aren't involved with and don't understand-Agriculture. I started on a new mission to help create awareness of all the incredible things agriculture was doing, and how a one size fits all regulatory program was without merit. And as most of you know, I never gave up.

Several of us worked hard to present the criteria for a low vulnerability recognition with decreased reporting and reduced costs, which was later adopted by the waterboard and outlined in the 2014 Waste Discharge Order. We worked hard to present the reasons irrigated pasture should be exempted, and while we have good scientific information and economic analysis now, the waterboard has yet to support this across all the subwatersheds in our region. This program is twenty years old, and the direction it continues to go is increased costs, increased waterboard enforcement staffing, more reporting with no end in sight. It is my opinion that it's time for a major overhaul of this Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program. I hope the waterboards will finally start recognizing the major amount of best management practices farming and ranching use to protect not only the landscape but also the benefit to migratory birds, fish, wildlife and important habitat as part of your operations. Please don't give up, keep telling your story and request recognition for all you have reported and the good test results you are achieving.

The positive I found is my opportunity to speak, meet and work with so many of you! I feel privileged to work with so many caring and talented people, hardworking, risk taking for sure, and mainly just really good people. I've enjoyed our many conversations and learned so much about farming and ranching from all of you. I will certainly miss that.

Personally, it was never my intention to spend so much of my time dealing with the regulatory world, and last year, I decided February would be my last month involved. I have been a consultant for years and my "real profession" is creating, producing and managing equestrian events, nationally, internationally as well as a few World Cup Finals events. My love is riding cutting horses and I'm looking forward to more time in the saddle. So as I ride off, thank you all again for your conversations, cooperation and being such great individuals. That is what I will miss most, and I wish you all the best.

Please Join Us

PNSSNS Annual Member Meeting

**Wednesday,
February 22nd at
10am-Noon**

At

**Placer County Water Agency
144 Ferguson Ave
Auburn, CA
American River Room**

2022 PNSSNS Water Quality Monitoring Efforts

By Walter Clevenger, Biologist

During 2022, PNSSNS again complied with the requirements of the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board's Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program (ILRP). The PNSSNS Monitoring Site is located at Coon Creek at Brewer Road Crossing site (CCBWR). Nine 2022 ILRP monitoring events were conducted focusing on E.coli bacteria, Metals(Copper), Pyrethroids, Chlorpyrifos and Diazinon pesticides acute toxicity levels.

Field parameters monitored included pH, Dissolved Oxygen levels, Electrical Conductivity, Water Temperature and fluctuating Water Discharge Volumetric Flows (CFS). All PNSSNS Coon Creek field parameters monitored were within ILRP established threshold limit values. Water pH was relatively stable at 6.56-7.54 $-\log[H^+]$. Dissolved Oxygen levels registered 7.20- 8.42 mg/L. Electrical Conductivity ranged from 117-249 $\mu S/cm$. Water discharge flows in Coon Creek were recorded at 66.63 CFS during the January 2022 monitoring event and 18.1 CFS in September 2022.

In addition, PNSSNS collected separate water samples for laboratory qPCR speciation / analysis of any E.coli bacteria. Results indicated, when E.coli was detected even at extremely low levels from this laboratory from the CCBWR site during 2022, it was Avian (birds, GFD marker) in origin with low numbers of Bovine (cowM2) and very low Human ((HF183) detected below the detection or reporting limit. PNSSNS believes the avian presence is largely due to the migratory birds of the Pacific Flyway, yet there is year-round presence of some avian as well. 2023 PNSSNS sampling requirements will consist of two field events concentrating on Field Parameters, E.coli detection and Acute Sediment Toxicity such as pyrethroids.

Sediment and Erosion Control Plans

For any new members or members that have made grading changes or other to your farmed property, you will need to complete or update your Sediment and Erosion Control Plan (SECP). There is an online course for your information available online through March 1st, 2023. This is a requirement of your membership in the Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program to complete and keep a copy for your records. If you have already completed a SECP, you do not have to complete another one.

Here is the online link, only available until March 1st:

<https://irrigated-lands-regulatory-program.thinkific.com/courses/online-secp-self-certification-training>

**PNSSNS
Board of Directors**

President - Ed Sills
Sutter County
Organic Diversified Grower

Vice President - Alan Lauppe
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Diversified Grower

Secretary, - Laura Barhydt
Nevada County, pasture

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Placer County, Walnuts/Pasture

Director - Tom Aguilar
Placer County, Mandarins

Director - Gaynell Gleason
Placer County, Cattle/Pasture

Director - vacancy

Executive Director-
Lesa Osterholm
(until February 28th)

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****New Online Course for Nitrogen Certification**

Enroll for Self-certification training and/or continuing education requirements. Please take this course in order to certify your Annual Nitrogen Report only required of High Vulnerability parcels which are typically on the valley floor, not the foothill areas, for potential for nitrogen leaching into groundwater.

**Use this link for the online nitrogen course:
<https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/is/ffldrs/frep/training.html>**

****** NEW CONTACT Management Group for PNSSNS**

The Yuba-Sutter Farm Bureau will be the new management group for PNSSNS selected by the Board of Directors. You can continue calling the PNSSNS telephone 916-645-1774 or emailing to pnsnssubwatershed@gmail.com.

Don't be surprised if someone answers from the Yuba-Sutter Farm Bureau, you're in the right place and they can help you with member questions.

The Yuba-Sutter Farm Bureau direct phone number is 530-673-6550

And the mailing address is :

YSFB, 475 Palora Ave, Suite A, Yuba City, CA 95991