

COALITION NEWS: UPDATE

August 2014

Westside San Joaquin River Watershed Coalition

*A Coalition of Westside Water Districts and the San Joaquin Valley Drainage Authority
Providing Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program Coverage for Farmers and Landowners*

Long Term Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program

On January 9, 2014, the Regional Board adopted General Order R5-2014-0002 that affects Growers in the Western San Joaquin River watershed. Key components of the Order are regulation of discharges to groundwater as well as the continuation of the current surface water program. Groundwater requirements include nitrogen management plans and farm evaluations for each farm and subsequent implementation of practices that will minimize discharge of nitrates and salt to the groundwater. A copy of the Order can be downloaded from the Coalition's website at www.westsidesjr.org.

Coalition Field Meetings Were Held in July

A series of meetings were conducted in Los Banos, Newman, and Westley on July 15 – 17. The meetings were well attended and provided updates on new Grower requirements under the Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program as well as discussions of recent pesticide exceedances. The central focus of the meetings was on the increased level of reporting of on-farm information and the new forms Growers are required to use to provide that information.

New Forms are Coming Your Way Soon

Be on the lookout for a packet of forms that are required by the Regional Board to be filled out and returned to the Coalition by 12/15/2014. The forms outline Grower obligations to protect surface and ground water quality by implementing best management practices. In the packet is a set of forms that provide information on the current practices employed, such as, pesticide and nutrient applications. The forms also require specific irrigation and nutrient information for each crop grown in 2014. The forms will be sent on a schedule set-up by your Water District and should be arriving in the next few weeks. If you would like more specific information, you can contact your Water District or the Coalition at 559-592-9237.

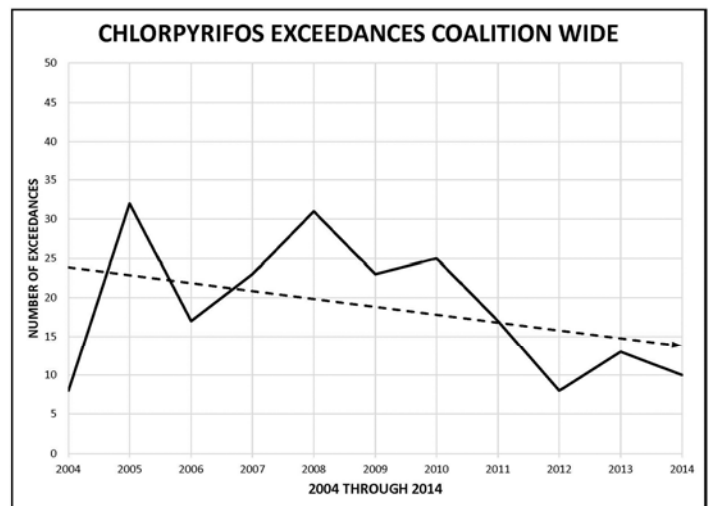
Upcoming Groundwater Assessment Report

The Coalition is managing the development of a Groundwater Assessment Report (GAR) which is scheduled to be finished in March 2015. The finished report will be instrumental in designating high and low vulnerability areas within the Coalition's service area. The high/low areas will establish timelines for Growers of when their Farm Evaluation and Nitrogen Management

Plans need to be submitted to the Coalition. The GAR also forms the nucleus of a new groundwater monitoring program that will begin to identify water quality problems in our area, namely Nitrate and Salts.

Chlorpyrifos (Lorsban, Lock-on, Govern, and NPhos) Continues to be a Problem

There have been 10 exceedances for Chlorpyrifos so far this year and while that is down from the 2011 total of 17, it still falls below the requirements established by the Regional Board.

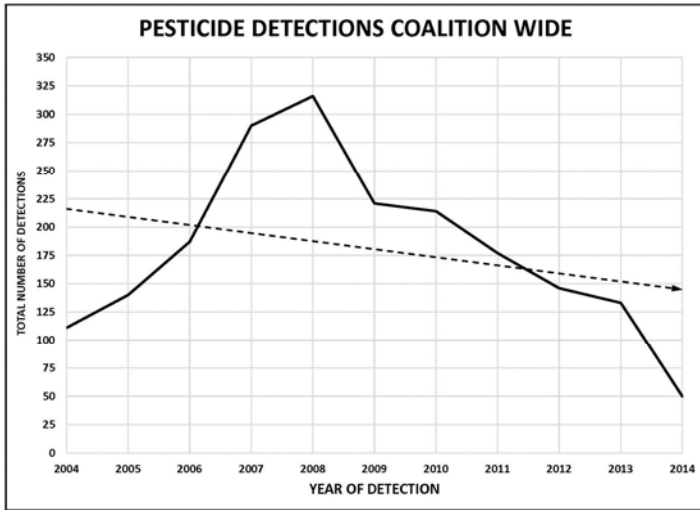


The exceedance chart above shows a downward trend (dashed line) and this can be attributed to Growers efforts to eliminate pesticide discharges. These efforts need to continue to meet the program requirements.

Good News About Pesticide Detections!

While the goal of Growers should be to have no detections of pesticides in water or sediment moving off their fields, there have been numerous detections none the less. The top 4 pesticides detected (Diuron 453 times, Chlorpyrifos 249, Prowl 196 and Dimethoate 190) accounted for nearly 55% of all detections since 2004. It should be noted that not all detections exceeded water quality objectives, but the detections can be used as an indicator of overall progress of the implementation of on-farm pesticide management practices. The chart below indicates that between the years 2004 and 2008, there was an increase of 285% in pesticide detections, but from 2008 to the present, detections have been reduced

by over 630%. This noticeable reduction over the last 6 years coincides with the efforts of Growers to implement better on-farm pesticide management practices.



It is incumbent upon Growers to continue their efforts with pesticide management practices and those efforts will be rewarded with continued reductions of pesticide detections.

Coalition Field Representative

Rich Peltzer and Jorge Alvarado have been working with the Coalition to review activities on the ground. They are helping farmers understand their responsibilities and following up on surveys and management practice efforts of the Westside Coalition which the charts above demonstrate that their efforts are paying dividends. Rich and Jorge are making weekly visits to the Coalition area visiting with farmers and observing discharges. If you would like to receive a one-on-one visit they can be contacted at 209-404-2642 or 209-541-4630 respectively. Rich works for CURES and is funded by the Westside Coalition. Jorge is funded by the West Stanislaus Resource Conservation District.

Coalition Member Districts

Your local Water Districts were instrumental in forming the Westside Coalition. They are committed to assisting landowners and farmers in reaching its goals and include:

- * Del Puerto Water District
- * Patterson Irrigation District
- * San Joaquin River Exchange Contractors Water Authority (including Central California Irrigation District, San Luis Canal Company, Firebaugh Canal Water District, and Columbia Canal Company)
- * Tranquillity Irrigation District
- * Fresno Slough Water District
- * Twin Oaks Irrigation District
- * West Stanislaus Irrigation District
- * Oak Flat Water District
- * White Lake Mutual Water Company
- * Lone Tree Mutual Water Company
- * Turner Island Water District
- * San Luis Water District
- * Grassland Water District and RCD

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