



# COLUSA COUNTY CONSERVATION

VOLUME 4 | ISSUE 3 | MARCH, 2014

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## WELCOME *by Mary Fahey, Projects Manager*

It's all about drought in California right now, and it's hitting hard here in agriculturally-rich Colusa County. The trickle-down effects throughout the county, not to mention the entire State, are going to be painful. Farmers, farm workers, landowners, consumers, businesses, ecosystems and wildlife are all going to suffer.

Water districts are scrambling, trying to find solutions for their growers. The State and Federal governments are offering funding for drought assistance. But really, there's only so much that can be done when the water just isn't there.

It's raining today while I'm working on this newsletter. It makes me wonder; when the weather patterns shift and the drought eases up, will people forget about the consequences of severe drought until the next one comes along? Or will they see this as a walk-up call and take steps to prepare for the next one?



*Photo: Jack Alderson*

## MISSION

The mission of the CCRCDC is to assist local landowners to protect, conserve and restore natural resources through information, education, and access to technical assistance programs. In doing so the CCRCDC will always take measures to protect the individual landowner's rights and fully support "from the ground up" conservation planning that promotes local, social, and economic sustainability through wise land use.

*(Adopted: March 21, 2002)*

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Liz Harper, Restoration Technician

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## VISIT OUR WEBSITE:

[www.colusarc.org](http://www.colusarc.org)

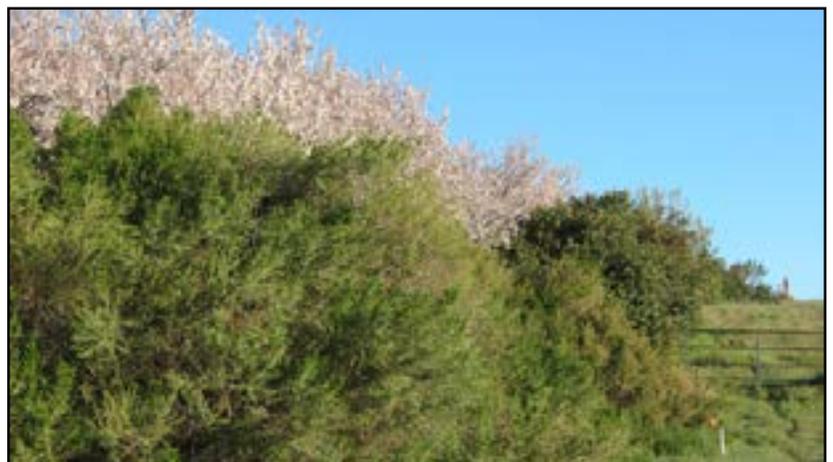
## ABOUT THE COLUSA COUNTY RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT (CCRCDC)

### The CCRCDC focuses their efforts on:

- Promoting resource management and conservation practices that will improve the health of Colusa County Watersheds
- Supporting measures that provide for the best use of the land while sustaining our natural resources and local economy
- Providing conservation education to ensure Colusa County's natural resources will be valued and protected in the future

### CCRCDC's Natural Resource Priorities:

- Identify natural resources issues and concerns within all Colusa County Watersheds
- Reduce erosion and sedimentation
- Work with all agencies of authority to reduce and control flooding
- Improve water quality and development
- Promote conservation practices for municipal, industrial and residential use
- Encourage the use of native vegetation and removal of non-native invasive species
- Improve Rangeland and Forest Resources
- Improve and Conserve wildlife and fishery habitat
- Reduce roadside pollution
- Protect agricultural viability
- Promote conservation education
- Promote director and staff development



*Photo: Mary Fahey*

## A FEW OF CCRC D'S PROJECTS

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### COLUSA COUNTY GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT PLAN

CCRC D staff is working under the direction of the Colusa County Agricultural Commissioner to coordinate implementation of the Colusa County Groundwater Management Plan. See page 4 for information and updates on this endeavor.

### UPPER LITTLE STONY INHOLDER'S ALLIANCE FUELS TREATMENT PROJECT

The Colusa County Resource Conservation District is working with the USDA, Forest Service to implement the Upper Little Stony Inholder's Alliance (ULSIA) Fuels Treatment project. ULSIA is a local watershed group made up of private landowners within the boundaries of the Mendocino National Forest. The private lands targeted for fuels treatment are highly volatile to catastrophic wildfire. The project will include prescribed burning, shaded fuel breaks and thinning practices to approximately 700 acres of private lands. Project funding will afford the hiring of local contractors to provide equipment, labor and site supervision for the project and the Forest Service to implement prescribed burning practices on private lands.

### INTEGRATED REGIONAL WATER MANAGEMENT PLANNING

CCRC D staff have been assisting our local government by representing Colusa County through participation in the Westside and Northern Sacramento Valley Integrated Regional Water Management Planning (IRWMP) efforts. The Westside IRWMP has been adopted. See page 5 for more information about the NSV IRWMP.

### NRCS COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT

CCRC D staff is working with our NRCS office, through a Cooperative Agreement, to assist with customer service and provide outreach to small acreage landowners.

### AUDUBON PARTNERSHIP

Our new staff member, Liz Harper, is working as a subcontractor with Audubon California's Landowner Stewardship Program implementing hedgerow plantings at a ranch in Colusa County. This project is designed to maintain and enhance the physical and economic conditions for agriculture, while improving habitat for wildlife.

### COLUSA COUNTY GROWN

Colusa County Grown is a marketing campaign that showcases Colusa County agricultural producers that sell their products directly to the consumer. The project also has a nutrition education element, highlighting the benefits of eating fresh, local and seasonal produce. Funding for this project from the USDA Farmers Market Promotion Program has ended. We are currently seeking funding and/or volunteers to keep this program going. See page 6 for more information

For more information on our projects, please visit our website at [www.colusarc d.org](http://www.colusarc d.org)

# COLUSA COUNTY GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT PLAN - UPDATE

## The Colusa County Resource Conservation District and Colusa County Department of Agriculture are Moving Forward to Implement the Colusa County Groundwater Management Plan

Staff has been busy over the past few month working on the implementation of Colusa County's Groundwater Management Plan.

### Water Users Group

The majority of members of the Water Users Group was appointed by the Colusa County Board of Supervisors on February 25, 2014. The Water Users Group is comprised of individuals representing a cross section of landowners and managers representing water purveyors and non-organized areas. (*Colusa County GMP, 2008*). We anticipate a few more appointments in the coming months to represent the Public Utility Districts in the unincorporated areas of the county.

### Technical Support Team

The Technical Support Team (TST) had its first meeting on February 27, 2014. The TST consists of five members: the Water Resources Coordinator, a subcontracted advisor, Ag Department personnel, DWR personnel, and a hydrogeologic consultant. The TST is responsible for supporting groundwater management decision-making. The TST will interface with the Water Users Group on the gathering and review of data and the formulation and review of potential water management programs and projects, among other duties. The TST reports to the Groundwater Commission who is the decision-making body.

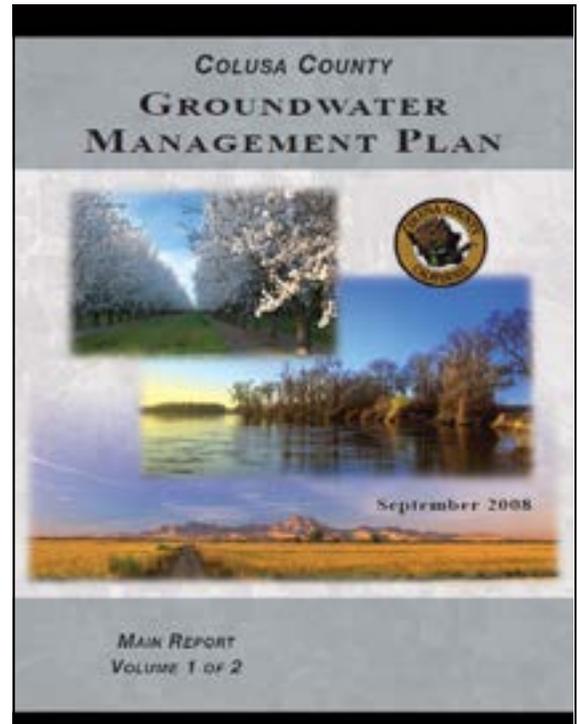
### Groundwater Commission

The next Groundwater Commission meeting will be held on March 13, 2014 at 1:30 p.m. at the Colusa County Farm Bureau. This meeting will include a very informative presentation on water law by Kevin O'Brien from Downey Brand. All Commission meetings are open to the public. Quarterly meeting dates of the Commission have been scheduled for the rest of the year on the following dates: June 26, September 11 and December 11. Meetings are held at 1:30 p.m. Locations will vary.

If you have any questions, or if you would like to get on an email notification list for upcoming meetings and information, please contact:

### Mary Fahey

Colusa County Resource Conservation District  
100 Sunrise Blvd., Suite B  
Colusa, CA 95932  
530.458.2931 X117  
[mary.fahey@ca.nacdnet.net](mailto:mary.fahey@ca.nacdnet.net) (email)



## UPCOMING MEETINGS, WORKSHOPS & EVENTS

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### Colusa County RCD Board Meetings

Regular Board meetings are held the **3rd Tuesday of every month** at the Colusa Industrial Park conference room, 100 Sunrise Blvd., Colusa, CA 95932 at 5:00 p.m. The public is welcome to attend. **Our next Board meeting is Tuesday, March 18, 2014.**

For more information, visit our website:  
[www.colusarc.org](http://www.colusarc.org)

### Northern Sacramento Valley Integrated Regional Water Management Planning (NSV IRWMP)

**Participating Counties in the Northern Sacramento Valley (NSV) IRWMP:**  
Colusa, Glenn, Butte, Sutter, Tehama, Shasta

The latest version of the draft NSV IRWMP chapters and plan can be found on the NSV website:

<http://www.nsvwaterplan.org/>

The NSV Board will, for the second time, consider adopting the IRWMP at the March 3, 2014 Board meeting.

### Next Board Meeting:

**March 3, 2014**

**9:00 a.m.**

Willows City Hall

201 N. Lassen St.

Willows, CA 95988

*Board meetings are open to the public*

### Workshop: Establishment Practices and Benefits of Hedgerows on Farms in The Sacramento Valley

This is the second in a series of hedgerow workshops that will be facilitated throughout the region.

**Wednesday, April 30, 2014**

**10:00 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.**

Center For Land-Based Learning  
Winters, CA

*See page 7 for more information*

### Colusa County Groundwater Commission

Including a presentation on Water Law from Kevin O'Brien, Downey Brand

**Thursday, March 13, 2014**

**1:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.**

Colusa County Farm Bureau  
520 Market Street  
Colusa, CA 95932



*Photo: Mary Fahey*

## COLUSA COUNTY GROWN - UPDATE

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The *Colusa County Grown* project was developed by the CCRCDC to promote our local agricultural producers who sell directly to the consumer through such venues as farm stands, farmers markets, CSAs and other local distribution efforts. The project also promotes the benefits of shopping locally and eating fresh, seasonal, locally-grown foods.

The program got off the ground thanks to generous grant funding from the USDA Farmers Market Promotion Program (FMPP). As of November, 2013, the FMPP grant has been completed. We are currently looking for alternative funding sources, and/or volunteers to help keep *Colusa County Grown* alive. One of our goals is to acquire funding to develop Volume 2 of the Colusa County Farm & Food Guide, with an expanded grower list.

The CCRCDC was recently awarded a generous grant from Premier Mushrooms that will allow us to keep the website ([www.colusacountygrown.org](http://www.colusacountygrown.org)) live. This funding came from mushroom sales at the Colusa



*Photo: Mary Fahey*

Farmers Market, a collaboration between Premier Mushrooms and the Colusa County Chamber of Commerce.

We have marketing materials available in the RCD office at no charge for producers and business owners. Materials include flyers, postcards, recipe cards, bumper stickers, nutrition cards and the very popular Colusa County Grown Farm & Food Guide, Volume 1. If you are interested in any marketing materials, or if you would like to help us keep this program going, please contact the Colusa County Resource Conservation District at 530.458.2931 or email: [info@colusarcd.org](mailto:info@colusarcd.org).



*Photo: Mary Fahey*

# FIELD EDGE PLANTINGS FOR PESTICIDE REDUCTION AND ENHANCED BIODIVERSITY ON FARMLANDS

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Hedgerows provide multiple benefits on farms. The University of California Cooperative Extension Service in Yolo County is working on a hedgerow outreach project to encourage more landowners to plant hedgerows. Under funding from the California Department of Pesticide Regulation, this project focuses on field edge management practices that minimize herbicide use, increase beneficial insect activity, and enhance biodiversity. Specifically the project will focus on replacing clean or semi-managed weedy field edges with hedgerows of native California perennial vegetation in order to help suppress noxious weeds, plant diseases, and insect pests that thrive in residual weeds in conventionally managed field edges.

As part of our outreach efforts, we will be conducting 12 field meetings/workshops over the next two and a half years. The workshops will feature a variety of speakers who have extensive experience in working with hedgerows, including field technicians, pollinator experts, native plant nursery owners, researchers and more.

Our first workshop was held at the Colusa Farm Show in February. Topics covered at that workshop included: hedgerow establishment, pollinators, IPM, and plant selection.

Our next workshop is scheduled for April 30, 10:00 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.  
Center For Land-Based Learning  
5265 Putah Creek Road  
Winters, CA 95694

The agenda for this workshop will include: Hedgerow establishment practices, squash bees and other pollinators, plant selection and resources to purchase native plants, and hedgerow research updates on rodents, integrated pest management, and bird predation of codling moth in walnuts. There are also some beautiful hedgerows at this site that folks can see firsthand.

As part of this project, five demonstration hedgerows of native California perennial shrubs, forbs and grasses will be planted. We are seeking willing landowners to install hedgerows along field edges. Grant funding will cover the costs of implementation of these hedgerows and planting plans will be developed for each site. Ideally, these demonstration hedgerows will be located in different areas throughout the region. If you are in the northern Sacramento Valley and you are interested in establishing a hedgerow on your farm or you know of someone who may be interested, please contact Mary Fahey or Rachael Long at the numbers below.

If you are interested in more information about this project, please contact:

University of California Cooperative Extension  
70 Cottonwood St., Woodland, CA 95695

**Mary Fahey**  
530.458.2931 X117 (RCD Office)  
530.383.4625 (mobile)  
[mfahey@ucdavis.edu](mailto:mfahey@ucdavis.edu) (email)

**Rachael Long**  
Farm Advisor/County Director  
530-666-8734 (office)  
[rflong@ucanr.edu](mailto:rflong@ucanr.edu) (email)

## OPPORTUNITIES FOR SMALLER ACREAGE LANDOWNERS

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As part of a Cooperative Agreement with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Colusa County, the CCRCDD Projects Manager is assisting with outreach to smaller acreage landowners (100 acres or less). Many small acreage landowners are unaware of the valuable programs and technical assistance that NRCS provides. We feel that there are tremendous opportunities to help with natural resource issues such as noxious weed eradication, water use efficiency, pasture management, soil health, integrated pest management and more on these smaller acreage parcels. Typically, smaller acreages have a more diversified system - homestead, crops, gardens, pastures - than do larger acreages. This diversification requires a whole-system approach to ensure the health of the land. Creating a whole farm Conservation Plan is an excellent way for a landowner to get a good overview of their current conditions, and work with NRCS staff to create a road map to achieving their ultimate goals for their land, while ensuring a healthy and productive system.

NRCS provides free technical advice to landowners, and opportunities for producers to participate in cost share programs funded through the Farm Bill. For more information, please contact:

- Mary Fahey, CCRCDD Projects Manager: 530.458.2931 X117; email: [mary.fahey@ca.nacdn.net](mailto:mary.fahey@ca.nacdn.net)

- Wendy Krehbiel, Soil Conservationist, USDA-NRCS: 530.458.2931 X114; email: [wendy.krehbiel@ca.usda.gov](mailto:wendy.krehbiel@ca.usda.gov)

## COLUSA BASIN WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PLAN COMPLETED!

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### DO YOU NEED ASSISTANCE WITH A NATURAL RESOURCE CONCERN?

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The Colusa Basin Watershed Management Plan was completed in December, 2012. The Colusa County Resource Conservation District is working to identify projects to address the goals and objectives of the Plan. Do you have a natural resource issue on your land that you would like to see addressed, but need help? The CCRCDD is currently creating a database of potential projects and seeking funding opportunities for implementation. **Please let us know if we can assist you, or if you would like more information:** 530.458.2931, or email: [mary.fahey@ca.nacdn.net](mailto:mary.fahey@ca.nacdn.net)

## SOLD!

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The CCRC's no-till seed drill has been sold and now resides in Yolo County. The seed drill was just a bit too much for our small staff to maintain, so we are glad that it has found a good home.

Some of the benefits of using a no-till system include:

- *Increases profit by reducing costs associated with conventional tillage*
- *Increases soil quality by increasing soil organic matter and moisture content*
- *Saves fuel*
- *Reduces soil erosion and runoff by keeping the soil covered*
- *Save Energy, Save Money with No-Till*

If you are interested in more information on no-till farming, please contact the Colusa County RCD or NRCS!



## SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL RCD! (DONATIONS ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE)

**As you are contemplating your charitable donations please consider a donation to your local Resource Conservation District. Charitable contributions to governmental units, such as the RCD, are tax-deductible under section 170 (c)(1) of the Internal Revenue Code if made for a public purpose.**

***Why support your RCD?:  
(From the CARCD website)***

RCDs are a leader in on-the-ground conservation efforts. The 99 districts statewide are the center of locally led conservation in their communities and accomplish thousands of practical, hands-on conservation projects every year. Often these projects involve agriculture and private land, but we also accomplish much more.

*Typical projects include:*

- Water conservation
- Watershed protection
- Creek restoration
- Stream bank restoration
- Habitat improvement
- Fish passage
- Hedgerow plantings
- Community education
- Grower workshops
- Native plantings
- Creek clean-ups
- Education of agriculturists on better and new environmental practices particularly around water conservation and BMPs
- Classroom visits
- Fire prevention projects
- Fire prevention education
- Technical assistance to agriculturists
- Watershed Management

RCDs are special districts that are a good example of strong local government. We are responsive and accountable to our communities to promote local conservation goals.

Since most RCDs do not receive tax payer funding, we bring millions of dollars to local communities through conservation projects funded mainly through grants and private contributions.

*We are your partner in local conservation and agriculture.*



Watershed Education



Stream Bank Restoration & Habitat Improvement

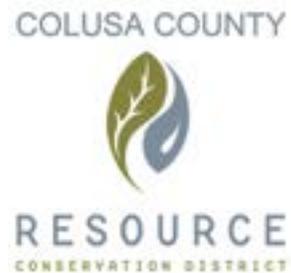


Field Days



*Photo: Jack Alderson*

# Thanks for Reading!



100 Sunrise Boulevard, Suite B, Colusa, CA 95932 | 530.458.2931 | [www.colusarcd.org](http://www.colusarcd.org)  
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