



## State Water Board Adopts Revised ESJWQC Order

After more than two years of deliberations, the State Water Resources Control Board adopted on February 4, 2018 a General Order that regulates irrigated agriculture in the East San Joaquin Water Quality Coalition. While the new rules pertain to only the ESJWQC, all other growers in the Central Valley will have the same requirements when General Orders for the other coalitions are adopted in early 2019.

Key changes include: a requirement to sample for nitrates in all domestic wells located on member parcels; replacement of the Nitrogen Management Plan with the Irrigation and Nitrogen Management Plan; requirement for growers in low vulnerability areas to submit a Nitrogen Summary Report starting with the 2018 crop year; and submitting a Farm Evaluation once every five years rather than annually. Other changes in due dates and reporting deadlines will be more fully explained in the 2018 Member Annual Report.

## Dues Remain at \$4 Per Acre Despite State Fee Increase

Membership dues remain unchanged for 2019 at \$4 per acre despite another increase in fees charged by the State Water Board. At a meeting earlier this year with Central Valley coalitions, the State Water Board said all irrigated lands programs in California can expect a 10% rate increase each year for the next three years to cover increasing program costs. The State fee, which is used to pay for Regional Water Board staff and other program expenses, was increased by 9 cents per acre

bringing the total to 95 cents per acre in 2019. The coalition pays the acreage fee on behalf of its members as do all water quality coalitions statewide. As for the ESJWQC 2019 budget, operating costs are expected to rise slightly but are offset by new memberships and late fees charged to members who dropped out in years past and rejoined after being contacted by the Regional Water Board. As is always the case, the detailed ESJWQC annual budget is available to members on request.

## Crop Specific Workshops Continue In 2019

ESJWQC plans to continue organizing crop specific workshops starting in February 2019 and continuing into the Spring. A final round of meetings are held in Fall 2019 for those who cannot attend the Winter/Spring 2019 events. Workshops will be set up for the major acreage crops grown in the coalition region including almonds, walnuts, wine grapes, silage corn and tomatoes. Each meeting will focus on agronomy and irrigation as it relates to

protecting groundwater from nitrogen fertilization impacts. The meetings will count toward the one meeting per year requirement for each member. Members can also view a video taping of the meeting to obtain their meeting credit for the year. Announcements on dates and locations will be mailed out prior to the meetings and posted on the coalition member portal.

## Web Portal Provides Online Access to Member Info

Use of the secure ESJWQC member portal is a convenient way for members to access membership information or make updates and changes. A feature recently added to the password-protected portal is the option of naming a secondary contact such as a farm manager or crop advisor who is then allowed access to the Farm Evaluations and Nitrogen Summary Reports. You can also indicate if you would like to receive all coalition materials electronically. The portal is accessible using any computer, laptop, tablet or phone with internet capabilities and a web browser. If you are interested in using the portal, the first step is emailing ESJWQC staff at [contactesj@esjcoalition.org](mailto:contactesj@esjcoalition.org) and requesting a passcode. You can also request a passcode by calling 209-846-6112. Then you can log in at [www.esjmember-login.com](http://www.esjmember-login.com). All your existing member information is prepopulat-

ed. Select from a menu to view the current invoice (including any unpaid balance), enrolled parcels and associated acreages and a page to request adding new parcels. Members can also print a summary of acres enrolled, review status of member requirements such as whether or not required surveys have been returned, which surveys are required for the member, and a designation by parcel of surface and groundwater vulnerability. Other features include a calendar of events, parcel maps, and data entry forms for the Nitrogen Management Plan Summary Report and Farm Evaluation Survey. Members with large acreage and numerous parcels find the portal especially useful. A new feature on the portal is a document repository that enables members to retrieve and print records from previous years.



# UPDATE NEWSLETTER

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

## Certification Training for Sediment and Erosion Control Plans

Training courses are again being planned for members who intend to certify their own Sediment and Erosion Control Plans (SECP). A recent expansion of the requirement to properties adjacent to waterways is likely to prompt more interest in attending the ESJWQC-sponsored, half-day courses. A SECP is required for irrigated land with the potential to discharge sediment either in storm water or irrigation drainage into waters of the State. The existing requirement is that a professional such as an engineer must develop and approve these farm specific plans.

The self-certification courses enable growers to participate in the training, take a test, then sign-off on their own SECP. To more accurately gauge interest in attending the courses, a sign-up page has been set up on the coalition website where members can request to be contacted when the next workshop is scheduled: <https://www.esjcoalition.org/secpTraining.asp>. Members can also be added to the contact list by calling the coalition office. Once twenty or more members respond, one or more sessions will be scheduled.

## Irrigation and Nitrogen Management Plan Certification Sessions

Growers who farm parcels in areas designated "high vulnerability" to groundwater contamination are required to have their Irrigation & Nitrogen Management Plan (INMP) Worksheet certified by a Certified Crop Advisor (CCA) who received a nitrogen management certification or other qualified professional such as a soil scientist or agronomist. Another alternative is for a grower to attend a course that enables them to self-certify their own INMP Worksheet. The courses, developed by the California Department of Food and Agriculture and managed by the Coalition for Urban Rural Environmental Stewardship (CURES), are in their fourth year and are expected to be scheduled in early

2019. A grower may attend any session in the Central Valley to obtain the certification. Course dates are posted at <http://www.curesworks.org/grower-Training>. Classes in 2019 will be updated to include the new INMP Worksheet template that was recently approved in October 2018 and included in your packet. Once a member completes a course, they are required to attend continuing education (CE) courses that total three hours within three years of completing the self-certification course. Courses where the CE hours are offered are listed on the website address above.

## 2018 ESJWQC Board of Directors

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## 2018 ESJWQC Staff

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**Brittany Grogan**, Grower Relations  
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