

RCD M C

Conservation Connections

RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT OF MONTEREY COUNTY

Rural Roads Erosion and Drainage Assistance for Monterey County

If you live on an unpaved road in Monterey County, this is a good time to take note of how your rural road performed during last winter's storms and identify problem areas that will benefit from treatments to effectively reduce long-term maintenance costs and enhance the drivability and safety of your dirt road.

RCDMC has been addressing erosion and sediment issues related to farm and ranch roads for decades. With assistance from the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), the Santa Cruz Resource Conservation District (SCRCD) and the CA Coastal Conservancy, the RCD is developing and implementing a Rural Roads Erosion Control Assistance Program to help private road associations and landowners identify and treat road erosion and drainage problems for long-term, low maintenance management that reduces sediment movement from rural roads to local waterways. Such projects benefit community access and safety and local wildlife dependent on healthy streams and rivers.

RCD staff and NRCS engineers recently completed two



road assessments in the Cachagua and Big Sur regions. The free service provides landowners with plans that characterize and prioritize problems and associated recommended treatments for each site. The RCD is seeking funding to assist road associations with the costs of implementing the assessment recommendations.

The RCD is also providing education on effective rural road management through individual site visits, workshops and materials development. Please see the 'News Briefs' section on page 4 regarding an upcoming workshop scheduled for June 28 at the Carmel Valley Community Youth Center. Staff are currently hard at work developing a Private Roads Maintenance Field Guide for Monterey County that includes technical information on design and implementation of road drainage and maintenance practices. Nearly everything discussed in the manual is aimed at producing efficient, low-maintenance roads that have a minimal negative impact on our watersheds, from designing rolling dips to culvert placement guidelines. The guide will be available on the RCD website by mid-summer.

What's Inside:

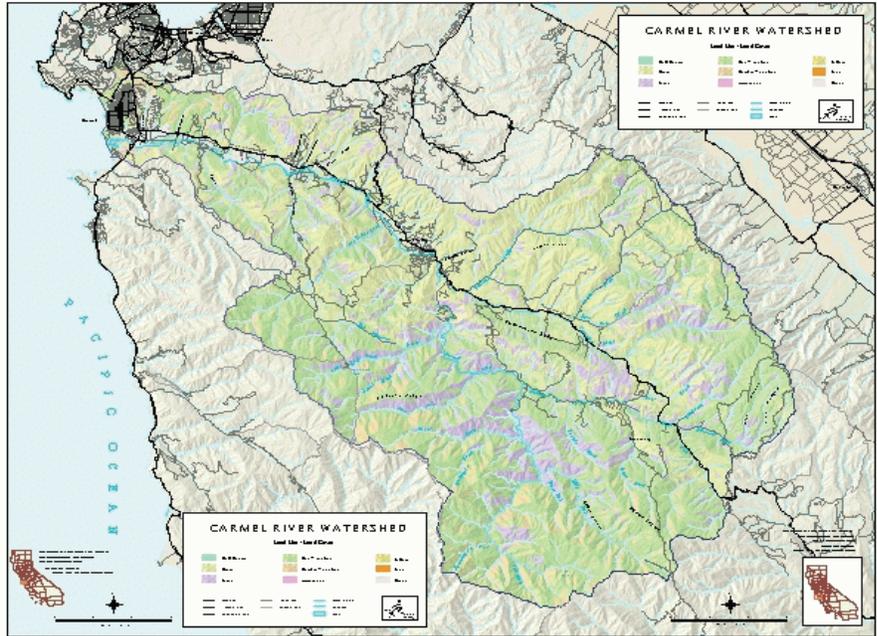
- Rural Roads Assistance Program
- Carmel River Watershed Programs
- Livestock and Land is HOOFin'
- Tamarisk Mapping in Salinas Watershed
- Road Workshop June 28 in Carmel Valley
- Irrigation Evaluation Services
- Conservation Practice Information Available

The Mission of the Resource Conservation District of Monterey County is to conserve and improve our natural resources, integrating the demand for environmental quality with the needs of agricultural and urban users. We seek to achieve the sustainable management of natural resources including soil, water, vegetation and wildlife throughout Monterey County.

New Programs Coming to Carmel Valley

Livestock and Land

A Carmel Valley-focused L&L Program funded specifically to benefit the water quality of the Carmel Bay 'ASBS' (Area of Special Biological Significance) is expected to get rolling in Carmel Valley with the three-week educational workshop series happening in early fall 2011. The program will assist implementation of water quality improvement projects at 6-10 area livestock facilities through 2012. Livestock and Land has been invited to present an introduction to L&L for Carmel Valley and a mini-workshop on local Best Management Practices at the Carmel Valley Trail and Saddle Club on June 2 @ 7 p.m. For more information check out www.cvtsc.org or contact Sarah Clifford @ 831-747-7545.



Watershed Coordination

The RCD is looking forward to working with Carmel River watershed residents, community groups, and local partners and agencies with recent funding from the CA Department of Conservation for 'watershed coordination' in the Carmel River Watershed. The RCD's role will be to work with local groups, agencies, and individuals

already engaged in local resource management to help facilitate small and large projects benefiting the watershed's natural resources and residents. Intended benefits include fire safety, erosion control, water conservation, water quality, and fish and wildlife habitat.

Our decades of experience working closely with the agricultural community and federal, state, and local agencies throughout Monterey County provide the RCD with a unique perspective and platform to support collaborative work in the watershed and better engage landowners and residents in voluntary implementation of conservation projects that benefit watershed health. The basic elements of the grant-funded workplan include:

- Individual site consultations with landowners and residents
- Field meetings and conservation demonstration workshops
- Volunteer access and event coordination
- An annual watershed 'work day' to install small demonstration projects
- Synthesis and distribution of a watershed stewardship guide for Carmel Valley
- Project design, permitting & fund-seeking support
- Community and multi-agency advisory meeting support or facilitation

Supporting entities include: the NRCS, County of Monterey, the Carmel River Watershed Conservancy, the Coastal Watershed Council, Moss Landing Marine Lab, Monterey Peninsula Water Management District, Monterey Peninsula Regional Parks District, Big Sur Land Trust, and state and federal natural resources agencies.

Who's Who

RCDMC Directors

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 Denis Ruttenberg, Streams Engineer
 Susan Hoey-Lees, Engineering Technician

More on the Livestock and Land Program

Livestock and Land for Monterey County is “mooving” right along! The demonstration site application process has concluded and project sites have been reviewed and ranked. We are in the final stages of site selection and project selection for four potential demonstration sites. We are excited about the potential projects and eagerly moving forward into construction season.

Stay tuned for announcements regarding a half-day hands-on technical training to be offered this summer south of Salinas. We will be demonstrating how to properly install practices to safely convey runoff water from roofs and through a property to reduce erosion and muddy patches to protect your animals and downstream water quality.



HOOFS--Hoof Owners Organized For Stewardship is connecting within our community! HOOFS originated as part of the Livestock and Land ‘peer leader’ program and is currently seeking enthusiastic, caring and respected members in livestock communities. If you wish to connect within our community, share learned information, and represent good stewardship, HOOFS WANTS YOU!

For more information about joining HOOFS contact Dina Iden at the RCD to find out how you can get involved. For additional program information, check out www.livestockandland.org. HOOFS is a program run in Santa Cruz, South Santa Clara, San Benito and Monterey Counties with additional opportunities to serve in San Mateo, San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara Counties. Join us also on Facebook – search Livestock and Land!

HOOFS Kick-Off Dinner

June 16, 2011 from 5:30-8:30pm at 101 Livestock, 4400 Hwy 101, Aromas.

To RSVP, please contact Dina Iden, L&L Project Coordinator, at dina.iden@rcdmonterey.org or 831-424-1036 x 126. The Event is Free.

Tamarisk Weed Mapping Effort

With support and guidance from the Monterey County Agriculture Department, the RCD retained a contractor to conduct an aerial survey of invasive tamarisk (or saltcedar) in full spring bloom along the entire length of the Salinas River and infested tributaries (especially Lewis and San Lorenzo Creeks). Saltcedars (*Tamarix* spp.) were brought into the United States from Europe in the early 1800’s, and now occupy approximately two million acres of riparian (streamside) habitat in the western United States. The presence of Tamarisk in the Salinas River is expected to impact channel stability, groundwater availability, soil chemistry, fire frequency, and habitat quality. Channel impacts include trapping and stabilizing sediment, which results in reduced stream capacity and more frequent flooding. Tamarisk has also been blamed for lowering water tables because of its high evapotranspiration rate, and, on a regional scale, dense tamarisk groves use far more water than native riparian plant associations.



The aerial survey complements efforts being conducted by various agencies in mapping invasive plants threatening the habitat of the Salinas River, including *Arundo donax*, or giant reed. While arundo has been extensively mapped along the Salinas River, the RCD’s aerial survey of tamarisk is the first time this invasive tree

has been surveyed along the river that we know of. Initial results show that Tamarisk’s presence in the river system is more extensive than previously thought. The results of the survey will assist the Agricultural Commissioner’s office in planning for the management of this weed.

With tamarisk and arundo mapping information in hand, the RCD is drafting applications for the state and federal permits

necessary for a programmatic riparian weed management program in the Salinas River Valley. Our hope is that this will support individual landowners’ weed management efforts as well as funding applications for the large-scale treatment that will be needed to control these weeds over the next two decades.

NEWS BRIEFS

Rural Roads Workshop--June 28, 2011, 6-7:30pm

Carmel Valley Community Youth Center, 25 Ford Road

The RCD is hosting a Rural Roads Workshop for the benefit of Monterey County residents who live on rural roads and are concerned about their effective maintenance and impact on the surrounding landscape. Workshop topics will include issues and benefits of a road association and how to create one, as presented by a founding member of the Deer Creek Road Association; an overview of rural road management and maintenance practices; an introduction to the road assessment process; and an overview of Monterey County permitting requirements for road work.

Irrigation Efficiency Evaluations In partnership with UC Cooperative Extension, the RCD can provide Distribution Uniformity and Irrigation System Efficiency evaluations for interested growers. Contact the RCD for an estimate or to learn if grant funding is available to cover the cost of an evaluation.

Educational Resources Available from RCDMC If you are interested in these please contact us directly or look for them as downloads on our website (www.rcdmonterey.org/downloads). While many of the documents are designed for agricultural producers, many of the practices described in the manuals, pamphlets and brochures are applicable to other land managers.

In English:

- Handbook of Agricultural Conservation Practices (41 pages)
- Food Safety Considerations for Conservation Planners
- Furrow Alignment: a How-to Guide for Growers (11p)
- Controlling Erosion on Hillside Farm Roads (11p)
- Controlling Erosion (2p)
- Stormwater and Sediment Control (2p)

En Espanol:

- Manual de Practicas para la Conservacion Agricola (41p)
- Surqueo en Campos Agricolas (11p)
- Controlando la Erosion en las Lomas y Caminos Agricolas (11p)
- Como Controlar Erosion (2p)
- Agua Pluvial y Control de Sedimento (2p)

Road Erosion and Drainage Management Workshop on June 28 in Carmel Valley! Contact the RCD at 831-424-1036, ext. 123 for more info

visit our website at www.rcdmonterey.org
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