

## North County Hillside Farming & Erosion Control Best Management Practices (BMPs)

**Stop 1:** Hillside strawberry production fields, Blohm Ranch, Elkhorn Slough Foundation

### Challenges

- Steep hillside farms on sandy soils prone to dramatic winter erosion
- Nutrients, agrichemicals and sediments in runoff affect local roads, ditches and streams
- Short-duration agricultural leases do not support investments into long-term solutions

### Actions

- NRCS and RCD staff provide Erosion Control Planning and engineering support for drainage management practices including underground outlets and catchment basins
- Farmers align strawberry beds to slow runoff, and plant roads and furrows with grass cover crops in winter to stabilize and protect soil
- Conservancies and Land Trusts invest in sustainable farm and land management
- RCD, Sustainable Conservation, NRCS and partners assist with permitting and project funding

### Key Partners

- USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, Sustainable Conservation, Monterey County Agricultural Commissioners Office

## Watershed Approach to Nutrient Management in the Moro Cojo Slough Watershed

**Stop 2:** Water Quality Treatment Wetlands on PGE land receiving runoff from cooperating vegetable farms

### Challenges

- Some farms need water quality treatment systems in addition to in-field management practices to meet water quality standards
- Current water quality regulations promote individual, isolated water quality improvement projects across many farms, which is financially inefficient and difficult to prove cumulative benefits
- Scientific information on practice effectiveness in our region is still in development

### Actions

- Local industry and conservation partners received grant funding to demonstrate effectiveness of cooperative water quality projects and management.
- Multiple wetland treatments installed and under testing
- Multiple farms with shared drainage outlets tracking water and nutrient applications and methods

### Key Partners

- Grower-Shipper Association, The Nature Conservancy, Central Coast Wetlands Group, California Marine Sanctuary Foundation, SeaMist Farms, D'Arrigo Brothers, Sustainable Conservation, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (local and national Conservation Innovation Grant)

## Salinas River Arundo Control & Stream Maintenance Program

**Stop 3:** Floodplain land and 'Secondary Channel 4.22' at the Gonzales River Bridge

### Challenges

- Non-native vegetation introduced for erosion control spread to dominate 1,500 acres of Salinas River floodplain
- Maintenance of winter storm flow capacity requires careful balance of human and fish and wildlife needs
- Dramatic floods along the Salinas River threaten public safety and local economy
- Flood management work on Salinas River stalled in 2009 because of permitting conflicts

### Actions

- RCD, Ag Commissioner and Dendra, Inc developed program, permits and funding for low-impact, high benefit noxious weed control program in the river
- Local industry and conservation partners collaborated to develop a multi-benefit approach for flood management projects by mimicking the natural, historic, braiding pattern of the river

### Key Partners

- Monterey County Water Resources Agency, Grower-Shipper Association, The Nature Conservancy, Salinas River Channel Coalition, Conservation Collaborative, CA Wildlife Conservation Board, Monterey County Farm Bureau

## RCDMC Strategic Direction 2017-2022

In fall 2016, the RCD surveyed and conducted Listening Sessions with local partners and leaders to guide the development of our work and organizational development. This tour is an outgrowth of that effort, as we conduct our mission:

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

1. An established Stream Management Plan exists for the Salinas River
2. Monterey County farmers and landowners work with the RCD to reduce water use, reduce erosion, and manage invasive vegetation
3. Monterey County growers are known as proactive, engaged, and efficient
4. Members of the community understand conservation and the RCD, and are inspired to help achieve our goals
5. The RCD has robust and diverse sources of revenue
6. The RCD Board of Directors is committed, effective & engaged
7. All Monterey County students see the importance of agriculture in our county and understand the potential for ag careers

## Other RCDMC Activities

- Integrated Watershed Restoration Program to support design, permitting and installation of fish and wildlife restoration projects:
  - North Monterey County Amphibian Habitat Restoration Project at NMC High School
  - Santa Rita Creek Restoration at Ferrasci Park
  - Fish passage improvements on Big Sur River, Cachagua Creek, and Arroyo Seco River
- Partnership for grant-writing with the Fire Safe Council for Monterey County
- Spanish language irrigation efficiency training for farm workers and small farmers
- Development of a high-school conservation education program
  - RCD 'Speak-Off' Competition
  - Land-Judging Contests
  - CA Range and Natural Resources Camp Scholarships

Learn more at:

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**RCDMC**  
RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT OF MONTEREY COUNTY

