



**East San Joaquin**

**WATER QUALITY COALITION**

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

## Why We Were Organized

The Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program (ILRP) was adopted in 2003 by the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (Water Board). To be in compliance with the regulation, owners or operators of irrigated cropland in the Central Valley have two options:

- Obtain an individual permit for each farming operation.
- Join a group that represents farmers across a specific geographic region.

Throughout the Central Valley, there are seven water quality coalitions or third-party groups organized to represent farmers in the ILRP. The California Rice Commission formed the only commodity specific coalition. These coalitions handle administrative functions, operate water monitoring programs to identify problems in agricultural areas then work with members to solve the problems identified.

## How We Started

In November 2003, ten local farm groups and county agencies formed a “Co-op” or water quality coalition to give growers an option for complying with the ILRP. In November 2005, the East San Joaquin Water Quality Coalition (ESJWQC) was granted non-profit status as a 501 c5 organization by the Internal Revenue Service. The Coalition is managed by a Board of Directors and Executive Director. Technical consultants are used to collect and analyze water samples and prepare reports to the Water Board on coalition activities.

## What We Are

A group formed by agricultural interests that operates similar to an agricultural cooperative. Member dues collectively pay for administering a “group permit” on behalf of members to be in compliance with the Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program.

## What We Are Not

- A commodity group
- A lobbying entity
- A trade organization
- A special interest group

## Core Objectives

- Develop and implement an economical and scientifically valid water monitoring program for area rivers, agricultural drains and groundwater basins.
- File required reports with the Water Board to maintain member's compliance with the Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program.
- Spread costs equitably among farm land owners/operators who are coalition members.
- Communicate to landowners where water monitoring indicates problems and work to solve those problems.

## Water Monitoring Program Objectives

- Characterize discharge from irrigated agriculture in the Coalition region
- Identify locations where water quality objectives are violated
- Identify potential source(s) of the exceedances
- Promote to landowners the implementation of management practices to address water quality problems when needed.

## Coalition Membership

*As of April 1, 2013*

2,604 members  
572,438 acres

## 2013 Membership Dues Cover:

- 56 cents per acre fee paid to State Water Board
- Operation of surface water monitoring program
- Development of Groundwater Assessment Report for region
- Membership management and administration
- Executive Director
- Technical Program Management

## ESJWQC Region

The Coalition encompasses the lower Stanislaus, Tuolumne and Merced River watersheds and includes the irrigated farm land that falls into Stanislaus and Merced counties. These irrigated farmlands lie south of Stanislaus River, east of the San Joaquin River, north of the San Joaquin River up to and including irrigated farmland at the base of the Sierra Nevada Mountains to the east.

## **Coalition Management**

A Board of Directors manages Coalition affairs. The Executive Director is Parry Klassen, a fruit grower and also Executive Director of the Coalition for Urban/Rural Environmental Steward

ship (CURES). The technical and monitoring program is managed by Dr. Michael Johnson, who is a water quality consultant and former scientist with U.C. Davis.

## **Board Members**

Bill Brush, almond grower, Modesto  
Amanda Carvajal, Merced County Farm Bureau  
Gary Caseri, irrigated pasture, Atwater  
Bill McKinney, almond grower, Modesto  
Mike Niemi, Turlock Irrigation District  
Alan Reynolds, Gallo Vineyards, Inc.  
Anja Raudabaugh, Madera County Farm Bureau  
Al Rossini, grape grower, Madera  
Jim Wagner, Wilbur-Ellis, Hughson  
Wayne Zipser, Stanislaus County Farm Bureau

## **Non Voting Members**

Milton O'Hare, Stanislaus County Agricultural Commissioner  
Stevie McNeill, Madera County Agricultural Commissioner  
David Robinson, Merced County Agricultural Commissioner  
Diwana Wallrer, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Stanislaus County

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