



News from the California Climate & Agriculture Network

September 15, 2015

California Legislature Leaves Climate Solutions on the Table, Healthy Soils Initiative Delayed

California's 2015 legislative session ended on September 11th with some big disappointments on climate policy. Among the setbacks was a delay in allocating \$1.7 billion in cap-and-trade funds for a number of climate change programs, including the Governor's proposed Healthy Soils Initiative.

Two ambitious climate policy bills were among the big issues facing legislators during the last few weeks of the session. SB 350, authored by Senate Pro Tem Kevin DeLeón, ran into fierce opposition from oil lobbyists and business interests. The bill passed but only after removing a key provision to



require a 50% reduction in petroleum by 2030. SB 350 mandates a target of 50% renewable energy for the state and a doubling of the energy efficiency in buildings by the year 2030.

Another bill, authored by Senator Fran Pavely (D–Santa Monica), would have set a greenhouse gas reduction goal of 40 percent 1990 levels by 2030 and 80% below 1990 levels by 2050. However, this bill failed to get sufficient support in the Assembly from moderate Democrats.

A casualty of these political fights was the question of how to allocate \$1.7 billion in cap-and-trade revenue in the 2015–16 budget year that could be used to fund greenhouse gas reduction activities in many California communities. With many competing ideas and interests, the legislature was unable to come to a comprehensive agreement on dividing up the funds.

The legislature approved \$250 million in cap-and-trade funding, along with funding for “continuously appropriated” programs. The agriculture and climate change programs that will receive funds include the [State Water Efficiency and Enhancement Program](#), coordinated by the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA), which provides grants for improved irrigation efficiencies and other water savings strategies on farms and ranches. The program’s funding will increase to \$40 million, up from \$10 million. The Strategic Growth Council received a little over \$400 million for its climate change programs, including the [Sustainable Agricultural Lands Conservation Program](#) (SALC). The Council will have to determine how much of the SGC funds will go towards the SALC program, which funds agricultural land conservation activities aimed at stopping sprawl development.

Among the programs that was not funding because of a lack of legislative consensus on new programs, was the [Healthy Soils Initiative](#). Proposed by Governor Brown, the Healthy Soils Initiative is effort aimed at supporting on–farm practices that increase carbon sequestration, reduces greenhouse gas emissions and improves soil health overall. This important initiative will provide technical support and financial incentives for growers and ranchers to adopt innovative practices that reduces their overall carbon footprint while providing other benefits like greater resilience to climate change impacts.

Additionally, the dairy digester and biofuels programs at CDFA did not receive funding in this round of cap and trade allocations.

CalCAN is a coalition of organic and sustainable agriculture organizations that advances policies to provide resources for climate–friendly farming practices.

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CalCAN, along with our coalition partner CAFF, co-sponsored a bill this session ([SB 367](#)) that created a climate change focus for the Environmental Farming Program at CDFA, including new members of the Advisory Panel who have expertise in climate change and agriculture issues. SB 367 also proposed up to \$40 million for farmland conservation and \$25 million for on-farm practices that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and sequester carbon. The bill was authored by Senator Lois Wolk (D-Davis), an ardent champion for climate-friendly farming. The proposal gained almost unanimous bipartisan votes from both parties at every step of the legislative process, as well as support from environmental and conventional agriculture organizations. However, in the end, the legislature did not move forward on either SB 367 or any of the other bills that allocated cap-and-trade dollars.

This is not the end of the effort, however. The legislature will return in January, and climate change will surely be back on the agenda, including future cap-and-trade allocations. CalCAN will continue to represent the interests of farmers and ranchers around the state who are eager to play a constructive role in providing climate solutions.

For more information on SB 367 and the message we will continue to deliver to the legislature and Governor Brown, please see our [website](#). We will need your ongoing engagement and support!

Groundwater Rules Informational Meetings

The State Water Resources Control Board and the Department of Water Resources will hold a series of informational meetings to discuss implementation of the [Sustainable Groundwater Management Act](#) (SGMA) and to answer questions from the public:

- **October 21st – Valley Glen, CA:** Los Angeles Valley College Campus Center Building Monarch Hall, 5800 Fulton Ave, Valley Glen, CA 91401
- **October 22nd – Visalia, CA:** 210Life, 210 W. Center Ave, Visalia, CA 93291
- **October 27th – Sacramento, CA:** CalEPA Building, Coastal Hearing Room, 1001 I St, Sacramento, CA 95814 (*meeting will also be available via Webcast*)

All meetings will have technical sessions from 1 to 4pm focused on SGMA implementation and public forums from 6 to 8pm for groundwater users and the general public.

Proposition 1, passed by voters in November 2014, provides

DWR with \$100 million for sustainable groundwater management planning and related projects. For more information, please visit DWR's [website](#). Information on the State Water Board's Proposition 1 funds is available [here](#).

Funding

Western SARE Farmer/Rancher Grants Applications due December 2

Producers typically use their grants to conduct on-site experiments that can improve their operations and the environment, and that can be shared with other producers. Projects may also focus on marketing and organic production. Up to \$20,000 per proposal is allowed for a single producer and up to \$25,000 for three or more producers. Any producer in the Western Region may apply.

Click [here](#) for more information.

Events

Webinar: Agricultural Solutions to Climate Change Thursday, Sept. 17, 11am

Join host Arty Mangan, Bioneers Restorative Food Systems Director, to learn about exciting advancements in climate-friendly farming with two leaders in the field:

- Innovative rancher John Wick of the Marin Carbon Project, who is proving the power of soil as a carbon sink
- Renata Brillinger from CalCAN will provide a climate and agriculture policy update and discuss their blueprint for a California program on agriculture and climate

Both Renata and John will be at the 2015 Bioneers Conference this October, and this free webinar will be a great lead-in to their sessions. We'll also be offering a special conference registration price for webinar attendees.

Space is limited! [Register now](#).

Mitigating Drought with Holistic Management Sept. 24 & 25, Oct. 8 & 9, Oct. 22 & 23 TomKat Ranch, Pescadero, CA

This workshop series is part of Holistic Management International's [Whole Farm/Ranch Land Management program](#). It's designed to educate participants

about how nature functions and how producers can improve agricultural practices to increase their land's productivity and resilience in good times and bad.

Click [here](#) for more information and tickets.



**Hoes Down Harvest Celebration
Oct. 3 & 4, Full Belly Farm, Capay Valley**

Two fun-filled days of events and seminars for all ages will take place at Full Belly Farm in rural Capay Valley – a region of many small farms that supply Northern California's neighborhood grocery stores and eateries with fresh organic produce. This 28th annual event offers the public a special opportunity to connect with rural life and deepen our understanding of the local food system.

The event is a fundraiser for several sustainable agriculture and family farm organizations, and CalCAN was a recipient in 2014.

Click [here](#) for more information and tickets.

**Artisans of the Grasslands: Crafting the Future
of Food and Agriculture
Oct. 2 – 4, San Francisco**

This unprecedented event will be a venue for producers and consumers to come together and celebrate the cadre of people embracing the holistic paradigm shift in ecology, health, and diet. The event is organized by the Savory Institute and focuses on holistic grassland management.

Click [here](#) for more information and tickets.

**Pasture Cropping: Discussion with Colin Seis
Oct. 7, 9am – 3pm, Paicines Ranch**

Join in a discussion with Colin Seis, farmer and pioneer of pasture cropping, to explore this revolutionary practice of growing crops that can lead to: topsoil development, water

infiltration, increased profit, increased carbon sequestration, restoration of grasslands, improved soil health and more.

Click [here](#) for more information and tickets.

Building Green Blocs: Collaborative Climate Policy Innovations
Oct. 15, 9am – 4pm, San Rafael

Join a diverse group of groundbreaking leaders from civil society and government to explore how collaborative approaches to climate change are changing the game, pointing us towards a resilient and climate-ready future, and how we can participate in this emerging movement. CalCAN's Executive Director Renata Brillinger will participate in this Bioneers pre-conference day-long discussion. Other speakers include Tom Hayden, Vien Truong, Andy Lipkis, and more.

Click [here](#) for more information and tickets.

Central Coast Rangeland Coalition Fall 2015 Meeting
Oct. 15, 8:45am – 4:30pm, Hollister

This meeting provides an opportunity for ranchers, regulators, scientists and others to develop a more nuanced understanding of each other's perspectives and of the possibilities to manage for highly functional water cycles on rangelands. The Central Coast Rangelands Coalition hopes that continued communication between these groups will lead to improved water quality and quantity flowing through rangelands.

Click [here](#) for more information and tickets.

Restoration Agriculture & Farm Scale Permaculture Workshop with Mark Shepard
Oct. 30 – Nov. 1, Orella Ranch, Santa Barbara County

Restoration Agriculture offers vibrant, productive, real-world alternatives to save water and restore our soils. Spend three days with Mark Shepard, at Orella Ranch on the Gaviota Coast learning the ins and outs of Restoration Agriculture for resilience in times of flood or drought. Topics include: biome identification and ecology; perennial crop establishment, maintenance and breeding; pruning, coppicing and grafting; integrated multi-species grazing; on-farm renewable energy and more.

Click [here](#) for more information and tickets.

**'Do No Harm' Workshop: Considering pathogens, pests, and plant disease in restoration activities
Nov. 5, UC Palm Desert Campus**

We invite restoration practitioners, native plant nurseries, researchers and agencies to learn how to identify and address issues of unintentional pests, pathogens and disease spread through ecological restoration activities. In addition to presentations and networking opportunities, this one-day inaugural workshop will host a poster session.

Click [here](#) for more information and tickets.
Contact egornish@ucdavis.edu with questions or for information on sponsorship opportunities.

**Healthy Forests, Healthy Soils, A Resilient California
Nov. 18–21, Tenaya Lodge in Yosemite**

Join the California Association of Resource Conservation District's (CARCD) 70th Annual Conference in the Sierra National Forest. We will discuss how smart, integrated management projects on a seemingly small-scale are the building blocks that affect water abundance, water quality, soil health, tree/plant health, forest health, groundwater, and climate change throughout the state.

In addition, we will examine innovative developments to solve new world challenges like the latest developments in carbon markets, building partnerships to solve complex, multi-jurisdictional issues, state programs focused on solving California's problems, capacity building for RCDs and much much more.

Click [here](#) for more information and tickets.

Jobs

**Communications & Development Specialist
National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition (NSAC)
Washington, DC**

NSAC is seeking a Communications and Development Specialist to support our policy and grassroots work through strategic communications efforts and expanded development capacity. This position is located at NSAC's DC office on Capitol Hill.

Learn more [here](#).

**Administrative Council Seats
Western Sustainable Agriculture Research &**

Education (SARE)

Nominations accepted until November 6

SARE is seeking nominations or self-nominations for the following seats:

- Organic Farmer/Rancher
- Sustainable Farmer/Rancher
- Conventional Farmer/Rancher
- Tropical Farmer/Rancher
- NGO/Nonprofit Representative

The Administrative Council, working with Western SARE Regional Coordinator and staff in Utah, Wyoming, and Montana, sets guidelines, develops calls for proposals, and establishes project priorities. The council tries to ensure that funded projects have the appropriate balance and diversity that can represent the region's wide-ranging geography and subject matter.

Learn more [here](#).

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