California’s Future Depends on All of Us

Karen Buhr, Executive Director
Who We Are

- Non-profit hub of the RCDs for nearly 75 years
- For RCDs, we strengthen the statewide network through advocacy, collaboration, technical support, capacity building, and fundraising
- For partners, we provide statewide visioning and coordination of multi-disciplinary, multi-jurisdiction projects
Resource Conservation Districts

• Provide expert technical assistance to landowners and managers
• RCDs have maintained deep connections to farmers and ranchers, and have evolved to meet the changing needs of California’s diverse communities
• Connect people to technical, financial, and educational resources
Where We Work

• 98 RCDs serving
• 10 regions
• Statewide
We believe that every Californian deserves equitable access to the assistance and services that RCDs provide, to ensure that our state’s natural resources can support thriving local communities, food systems, and economies today and for generations to come.
Knowledgeable
Non-regulatory
Publicly Accountable
Trusted
Supporting Agricultural Communities

- **Land management**: RCDs promote land management that supports a sustainable and productive agricultural economy.

- **Trainings**: RCDs provide workshops on a range of topics, from irrigation efficiency for farmers, to water conservation for homeowners.
Comprehensive Technical Assistance
Working at the Local Level

- RCDs understand local context.
- Projects are informed by and address community needs.
- RCDs hold community and stakeholder forums
- RCD boards are made up of local landowners and agricultural producers
On-farm Technical Assistance

- Planning, monitoring, implementation, nutrient management, arranging equipment, preparing sites, on-farm demonstrations
- Sediment reduction/erosion control, water conservation and rainwater catchment, water quality protection, groundwater recharge, habitat enhancement, flood management
Community Technical Assistance

- Application assistance
- Outreach and workshops
  - Local, state, and federal programs
  - Resource concerns
- Permitting assistance
- Securing funding opportunities
- Developing culturally relevant and multi-lingual materials
Navigating the Permitting and Application Process

- Navigating local, state, and federal applications and permits can be an obstacle to completing beneficial conservation practices.
- RCDs hold workshops and work one-on-one with landmanagers to assist with these processes.
Carbon Farm and Conservation Plans

- Carbon farm and conservation plans and made directly with farmers and ranchers
- Guides for implementing conservation practices, to increase sustainability and carbon sequestration.
- Plans are living documents
- RCDs also assist producers in securing necessary funding for implementation, maintenance, and enhancement
Encouraging Urban Farming

- RCDs in urban communities help foster community gardens and farmer’s market development, to provide educational programs and food security.
- RCD of Greater San Diego County has a CDFA Healthy Soils Demonstration grant for their community garden.
Increasing Carbon Sequestration Potential

• Protecting open space and encouraging carbon sequestration projects helps to capture carbon which reduces carbon in the atmosphere.

• RCDs provide landowners a connection to financial and technical assistance to implement these projects on public and private land.
Value

- Producer understanding of current system and potential upgrades
- Guidance of appropriate conservation practices for each unique parcel
- Access to resources
- Outcome improvement of goals: biodiversity, soil health, water quality and quantity, fire prevention, carbon sequestration
- Increase of completed and submitted applications to grant and other funding programs
California Farm Demonstration Network
SHOWCASING OF EXISTING EXPERIENCE
  • focused on experienced farmers
  • public sharing

EDUCATION, COMPILATION OF KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE, AND SHARING OF KNOWLEDGE
  • development of content and information sharing activities

CLIMATE-SMART AGRICULTURE DECISION TOOL GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT

FARM DEMONSTRATION EVALUATIONS
  • implementation of conservation agriculture practices and systems by new wave of farmers
  • showcasing of practical learning
  • connecting people in productive local efforts

FARM DEMONSTRATION PERFORMANCE MONITORING
  • development, testing, of performance-monitoring metrics

ONLINE DATA AND INFORMATION SHARING

CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICTS
CFDN will showcase the implementation of conservation practices and systems which can provide a pathway for adoption by new and experienced farmers. Further, it will provide practical learning opportunities while at the same time fostering the formation of local connections.
Thank You & Questions

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