

Newman Drain Multi Benefit Conservation Project Proposal

The West Stanislaus Resource Conservation District (WSRCD) has been asked to submit a final proposal to the Natural Resource Conservation Service's Regional Conservation Partnership Program.

The WSRCD is proposing a multi benefit project that diverts water from the "I" line of the Newman Drainage District tile drain system into a system of wildlife and hunting ponds. As is, the "I" line discharges water that contains high concentrations of salt and boron directly into the San Joaquin River near Hill's Ferry. The WSRCD proposes to pipe the water to Mickey Saso's wildlife/hunting ponds where the water will help maintain critical levels necessary for wildlife and riparian habitat. The WSRCD also proposes to develop wetland habitat near the Azevedo Drain to filter irrigation runoff and then return the filtered water to irrigated pasture land. After wetland filtration and reuse on irrigated pasture to the extent possible the water will then be piped to the Saso wildlife and hunting ponds. Salts and boron stored in the wetland will be periodically washed out when the San Joaquin River reaches flood stage and inundates the wildlife/hunting ponds.

If funded, the benefits accrued will include: greater irrigation capacity, improved water quality, improved wildlife habitat and more recreational opportunities.

The WSRCD is soliciting partnership support, critical feedback and assistance from stakeholders in the basin.