

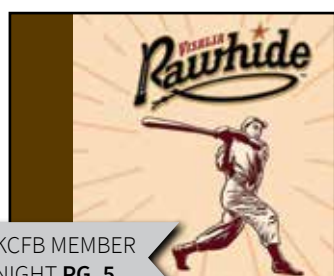
INSIDE



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PG. 3



KCFB MEMBER
NIGHT PG. 5

SGMA Update

By Dusty Ference

January's meetings of the Mid Kings River and South Fork Kings Groundwater Sustainability Agency's (GSA) boards of directors included presentations on proposed updates to the Tulare Lake Subbasin's (TLSB) Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP). The proposed plan updates for both GSAs are very similar because the water use and pumping dynamics are nearly identical in each GSA. With such similar concerns, it seems logical that neighboring GSAs would consider nearly identical management strategies. Since the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) Draft Staff Report was released in the Fall of 2023, the SWRCB has identified three areas of concern they expect to see addressed in the Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) update. Shallow wells that go dry with extra focus on domestic wells, groundwater quality, and subsidence. Local GSAs have identified four key elements that must be protected: the California Aqueduct near Kettleman City, deep municipal wells that collapse, flood levees around Corcoran, and canal systems with impacted capacities. If the TLSB successfully manages these four factors'



GSAs believe they will comply with all other components of SGMA.

For several months, it's been well understood that the SWRCB will not likely approve the TLSB GSP without a robust domestic well mitigation plan. The current mitigation plan for consideration contains two primary strategies. Limit the amount of groundwater pumped and have enough funding available to replace domestic wells damaged due to dropping groundwater levels. Most domestic wells of concern for the Mid Kings and South Fork Kings GSAs are in one of two aquifer zones. The A Zone is a shallow perched aquifer between 70 and 100 feet deep, depending on where it is measured. There are more agricultural wells in the A zone than domestic wells, and they all quickly go dry in years with average and below-

"SGMA" continued on page 7

2024 Neonicotinoid Regulations

By Janet Eckles

The California Department of Pesticide Regulation (CDPR) has adopted a new regulation (California Code of Regulation (CCR) 6690-6990.16) against the use of neonicotinoids in the state of California as a control measure necessary to protect pollinator health. These control methods apply to the four neonicotinoid active ingredients (clothianidin, dinotefuran, imidacloprid, and thiamethoxam) and are specifically based on crop group. They consist of application method and rate restrictions, application timing restrictions, and seasonal application rate caps. This does not apply to neonicotinoid use in non-agricultural or non-production agricultural settings, applications to nursery stock, or seed treatment applications.

In Kings County, we had 68 growers use one or more of these pesticides on over 70,000 acres in 2023. The two crops that



will be most affected from this regulation in our county will be cotton and tomatoes, of which there was a little over 20,000 acres last year. Other commodities that these new restrictions will apply to are berries and small fruits, cereal grains, citrus fruit, cucurbit vegetables, fruiting vegetables, herbs and spices, leafy vegetables, legume vegetables, oilseed, pome fruits, root and tuber vegetables, stone fruits, tree nuts, tropical and subtropical fruit, and other miscellaneous crops.

"Neonicotinoid" continued on page 4



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The Renewable Diesel Rd99 Future

By Ryan C. Lansdowne Vice President J.C. Lansdowne, Inc.

There has been a lot of questions lately on a new diesel fuel that was rolled out in the last quarter of 2023, Renewable Diesel RD99. A number of factors are fueling Renewable Diesels fast growth in California including LCFS (Low Carbon Fuel Standard). Since LCFS went into effect in California in 2011 it requires petroleum refining companies selling transportation fuel in the state to be mixed with biofuels (Ethanol – Gas and Bio Diesel – Diesel) to lower the carbon intensities mandated by the State Of California. The premises set forth with the adoption of LCFS in California was to provide an increasing range of renewable alternatives to reduce petroleum dependence while also achieving air quality benefits.

The main difference in Renewable Diesel RD99 and Petroleum Diesel is the feedstock for which the products are sourced. The difference between the two and what makes RD99 a Renewable is the feedstock components that make up the finished product. RD99 is sourced from multiple renewable feedstocks including soybean oil, canola oil and animal fats. Whereas petroleum diesel uses crude oil from sources all over the world to produce petroleum diesel such as California spec CARB #2 Diesel. The feedstocks are treated to remove impurities and then they are hydrotreated with



high pressure hydrogen to remove oxygen and separate the water. The next step in the refining process of RD99 is isomerization where cold flow properties are managed to ensure compatibility with existing infrastructure and engines. The final step in the refining process is fractionation where the product finishes the refining process and turns into the finished product Renewable Diesel RD99. Being RD99 is a like to like product to petroleum diesel it can use our existing energy infrastructure like pipelines, train tankers, truck tankers and fuel storage facilities to take it to the open market. RD99 can be seamlessly blended, transported and processed with petroleum diesel unlike Bio Diesel.

The largest misconception however with Renewable Diesel RD99 is that RD99 is Bio Diesel or B20 and now R20 as its known at the retail stations and truck stops. However RD99 is a completely new version of Diesel that does not come with the shortcomings of Bio Diesel (B20 or R20). Renewable Diesel RD99 is a HVO (Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil) whereas Bio Diesel is a FAME (Fatty Acid Methyl Ester). The main difference between the two are found within their chemical composition (Feedstocks). Renewable Diesel RD99 has none of the performance or maintenance concerns that Bio Diesel (B20) does as it overall performs like a petroleum diesel (CARB #2 Diesel). Unlike Bio Diesel, Renewable Diesel RD99 goes thru the traditional petroleum refining hydrotreating process which makes it physically and chemically similar to conventional petroleum diesel. This RD99 refining process is free of unwanted components such as sulfur, metals and aromatics found in petroleum diesel making it less harmful to the environment. Bio Diesel undergoes a completely different manufacturing process called transesterification which does not result in the enhanced properties of a hydrotreated fuel like Renewable Diesel RD99 or petroleum diesel. Through the transesterification manufacturing process Bio Diesel contains oxygen making it completely different from RD99 and petroleum diesel thus it can't be a 100% substitute fuel. Bio Diesel must be blended at a maximum rate of 20% with petroleum diesel (B20) or Renewable Diesel (R20) to be put into a tank without the risk of gelling.

The nice thing about RD99 is that it is a backward compatible solution that both older and newer on road and off road equipment can use right away. It has been "Diesel" continued on page 11

GSA MONTHLY BOARD MEETING CALENDAR

Greater Kaweah GSA
Second Monday at 12:00pm
2975 N. Farmersville Blvd. Farmersville, CA

El Rico GSA
Second Tuesday at 1:00pm
1001 Chase Ave. Corcoran, CA

Mid Kings GSA
Second Tuesday at 1:00pm
200 North Campus Dr. Hanford, CA

Southfork Kings GSA
Third Thursday at 5:30pm
429 C St. Lemoore, CA

Tri-County Water Authority
First Thursday at 1:00pm
944 Whitley Ave. Corcoran, CA

Southwest Kings GSA
<https://www.swkgsa.org/meetings.html>

CA State Water Resource Control Board Meetings:
Tuesday, February 6th at 9am
Wednesday, February 21 at 9am
1001 I St. Sacramento, CA
Or log in and watch via Youtube:
<https://www.youtube.com/user/BoardWebSupport>
or <https://video.calepa.ca.gov/#/>

The Southfork Kings GSA meeting date was published incorrectly (the third Wednesday) in the previous issue of FarmLife. Their scheduled meeting time is the third THURSDAY of each month.

Farm Day is fast approaching

By Breanna Larman



Breanna Larman

*Who always has a date on Valentine's Day?
A Calendar.*

On Thursday, March 14th 2024 KCFB and the Office of Education will open the Kings Fairgrounds gates to 2,200 Kings County third grade students for a day of agricultural education. With nearly 60 diverse presenters from all different areas of the industry, we are excited for the valuable lessons the students will be presented. With this large attendance comes a demand for volunteers. Last year we were lucky to have almost 200 volunteers to assist with Farm Day and we hope to have that many return to help facilitate the 2024 event. If you would like to be a volunteer at Farm Day please contact me at the Farm Bureau office. We are thankful for such willing and enthusiastic presenters and supporters of Farm Day. New to Farm Day this year is our event sponsor, Burriss Park Educational Foundation. Burriss Park Educational Foundation generously sponsored Farm Day to ensure the needs of the event were taken care of and this years third grade students were able to enjoy the exciting day of all thing ag. We are fortunate to have such an attentive support system in the Kings community.

Also, coming up on Wednesday, April 10th is our second annual Membership Appreciation Night at the Visalia Rawhide ballfield. We are excited to have this event back on our calendars with an extra special date this year. We were fortunate to schedule our Member Appreciation Night on the second night of the season! That's right, KCFB will be helping Rawhide kick off their 2024 season with a bang! Just a reminder, these tickets are FREE to members and their families. Contact me at the office to claims yours! 🐾





KINGS COUNTY FARM DAY
March 14, 2023
Kings Fairgrounds
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For my information, please contact Breanna at the KCFB office. blarman@kcfb.org or 559-584-3557



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“Neonicotinoid” continued from page 1

Most of the crop groups allow soil and foliar applications, except for fruiting vegetables, legume vegetables, oilseed, and tree nuts. Fruiting vegetables prohibit any foliar applications but does allow for soil applications from pre-planting until third leaf on main shoot unfolded. Legume vegetables allow for foliar applications but not soil applications, but only from pre-planting until bloom. Oilseed prohibits all usage except for imidacloprid, and that can only be applied from pre-plant until bloom. Tree nuts do not allow soil applications but do allow foliar application but only between post-bloom and harvest. Along with these restrictions comes the restriction of application rate for active ingredient per season.

The most common products that were used in Kings County in 2023 were Macho 4.0, Wrangler, Nuprid 4F Max, Provoke, Mana Alias 4F, and Leverage 360. If these are some of the pesticides that you may have used last year, talk with your Pest Control Advisors (PCA) to look for other products or make sure you stay within the new regulations when making applications.

There are a few exceptions to the neonicotinoid regulations. Those exceptions are as follows: (1) an application made to an agricultural commodity grown inside an enclosed space, insect exclusionary structure, or insect exclusionary netting for the entire duration of the bloom period and managed pollinators are not introduced into these areas. (2) An application made to address a local emergency pursuant to Government Code section 8630 or a local emergency declared by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) or the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA). (3) An application to control a quarantine pest declared by USDA or CDFA if the operator of the property obtains written recommendation from a licensed agricultural PCA. (4) An application allowed under an active “Section 18” Emergency Exemption issued pursuant to section 18 of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and



Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) (title 7, United States Code, section 136p). (5) An application authorized for research purposes to support a proposed amendment to these regulations. This, however, will not apply to most of the areas in Kings County.

If you want to know more about them, you can read the new regulations DPR 22-001 Text of Final Regulations (ca.gov) on the CDPDPR website or contact the Kings County Ag Commissioner’s office at 559-852-2830 for more information. 📧

Pesticide Label Changes

Pesticide manufacturers will change formulation and labeling on their pesticides as often as needed depending on either the requirement of regulations and/or based on need. One example of these label changes is for the pesticide Simplicity CA (CA Reg. No. 62719-568-AA). The previous label allowed for the use of Nitrile gloves under the personal protective equipment (PPE); however, the new label specifically requires Barrier Laminate or Viton gloves.

This is why the of reading the labels of all pesticides handled by growers, applicators, and employees is important. Kings County Agricultural Commissioner inspectors look at the PPE section on pesticides for all inspections performed. If you have any questions, please contact the Kings County Agricultural Commissioner’s Office at 559-852-2830.



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“SGMA” continued from page 1

average rainfall and are recharged rapidly. The B zone is the aquifer between the A zone and the Corcoran Clay, down to between 400 and 700 feet on average. The B zone has the most significant number of ag and domestic wells and responds the best to groundwater recharge activities.

Both GSAs have proposed pumping limits of .5 acre-feet per acre in the A zone and three acre-feet per acre in the B zone to reduce groundwater pumping. These allocations are not combinable. If a land owner wishes to pump from multiple aquifer zones, the GSA will determine the allowable amount depending on desired pumping location combinations. The maximum permissible groundwater allocation will be at most three acre-feet per acre. Both GSA boards of directors should take action on these pumping limits during their February meetings.

In addition to pumping limits, the Mid Kings River GSA will likely consider groundwater pumping fees of \$35 per acre-foot in the A and B Zones. The South Fork Kings GSA stated they would only consider groundwater pumping fees after the TLSB SWRCB probation hearing.

Subsidence, generally attributed to pumping from the C zone or below the Corcoran Clay, is another critical issue for the SWRCB. In the TLSB, pumping in the C zone often happens if the B Zone water quality is diminished. Unfortunately, groundwater recharge of the C zone is impossible, thus creating subsidence from dropping water levels. To address subsidence, the Mid Kings River, South Fork Kings GSAs will propose a pumping limit from the C Zone aquifer of two acre-feet per year. The Mid Kings River GSA board estimates a \$20 per acre-foot pumping fee for this water.

The El Rico GSA has taken a different approach to pumping limitations. They have determined a base allocation for every acre in the GSA of .5 acre-feet per year, along with a transitional allocation of 1.5 acre-feet per acre for 2024 through 2029, 1 acre-foot per acre in years 2030 through 2034, .5 acre-foot per acre for years 2035 through 2039. In 2040, the base allocation is the only available groundwater.

GSAs are limited by law in how they can charge landowners. The two most common mechanisms are pumping fees and assessments. In addition to funding GSA operations, groundwater pumping fees will fund the dry well mitigation programs in the TLSB. GSAs can not legally fund mitigation activities with money raised from

assessments.

In 2018, voters in the South Fork Kings GSA were asked to consider assessing themselves a per acre fee paid to the GSA to fund operations. The process is known as a Prop. 218 election and is funded by the agency requesting the funds. Voters in the GSA approved an assessment of \$9.80 with a five-year sunset clause ending the charge in July 2023. The South Fork Kings GSA has proposed another \$9.80 per acre assessment and is currently working through the Prop—218 process. The GSA will count votes at the end of February. Until recently, the Mid Kings River GSA has not considered an assessment. However, during the GSA's January board meeting, staff presented the idea and will likely request the board authorize creating a Prop-218 ballot to be sent to the Mid Kings River GSA voters.

Each GSA can determine the maximum pumping rates to reach sustainability as described in the GSP. Notably, 2024's pumping rates will likely be higher than any future rate. Each year, GSA will measure groundwater levels and annual subsidence, inventory dry wells, evaluate groundwater quality, and use that information to determine the next irrigation year's pumping rates. The pumping rate will be set to achieve the GSP's outlined goals of improving groundwater quality, stopping subsidence, and having no wells dry by 2040; in other words, reaching sustainability under the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act of 2014.

Local GSAs are responsible for creating a plan to achieve groundwater sustainability by 2040, and locals should create a plan that works for their community. On the flip side of that coin is the SWRCB. They are responsible for ensuring that local GSPs comply with SGMA.

The SWRCB Board Members must understand what SGMA means for Kings County, not only to agriculture producers but to the entire community. Next to local government, agriculture is the largest employer in Kings County, and no other industry comes close to providing as many jobs. But job numbers are only one part of the equation. When agriculture jobs aren't available in Kings County, the local economy suffers because income is lost, and there is no place to find a replacement. Local schools lose funding when farm ground is fallowed, and tax rates decrease. Without job opportunities and with failing schools, Kings County cannot survive. Locals will be forced to relocate to provide for their families, furthering the destruction of the community.

The pumping fees and rates mentioned thus far in the Mid Kings River and South Fork Kings GSAs have yet to be voted on by either board of directors when KCFB staff wrote this article. Both GSAs will likely consider the items during their respective board meetings in February. See the GSA calendar on page 2 if you'd like to know when those meetings are scheduled. 🙌

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Kings County Rural Crime Report

Contributed by Detective Dakotah Fausnett

The Kings County Sheriff's Office Rural Crime Task Force is currently conducting several investigations. January:

Throughout the month of March, the Kings County Rural Crimes Task Force has continued to stay busy investigating copper wire theft, heavy ag. equipment and fraud cases. Most recently, we identified a group of thieves responsible for stealing copper wire and ATV's, UTV's in both Tulare and Kings County. The suspects have been identified and arrested and are identified as follows: 28 year old Cody Bierman and 64 year old Terry Wayne Simmons. The suspects drove a 1996 Toyota Tercel (LIC#3RSA036) to commit the above mentioned thefts. Detectives are also working other theft cases where geofence warrants are being written. We hope the geofence warrants will reveal the identities of the suspects.



We continue to investigate all Ag related thefts and encourage members to call and report all Ag related crimes. If we do not receive calls from our members and community we may not be aware of certain crimes occurring in your area. 🙌

Detective Fausnett : **(559) 639-8704**
 Detective Thomas: **(559) 530-1701**
 Detective Holt: **(559) 362-8928**
 Detective Coghlan: **(559) 362-3078**

"Diesel" continued from page 2

reported as well that older engines that are less advanced can even gain more emission cutting benefits from RD99 by cutting GHG (Green House Gas) emissions by up to 75%. However, the most important fact about RD99 is being it is a HVO (Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil) meeting ASTM D975 specifications in compliance with OEM requirements makes it a drop in fuel alternative to petroleum diesel. Not only does RD99 lower the GHG emissions and meet the most stringent OEM specifications but it has been tested to have a higher CETANE rating at 70 where as petroleum diesel has a CETANE rating of 45. Thus many in the petroleum industry actually consider Renewable Diesel RD99 a premium diesel when compared to conventional diesel.

For better or for worse the State of California will continue to be the leader in advancing the green energy agenda at both the state and federal levels. The push towards a green energy future for the oil and gas industry here in the State of California will continue to evolve but for now two major oil refineries (Phillips 66 and Marathon Petroleum) in Northern California will be completely re-tooled to only make Renewable Fuels including RD99, Renewable Gasoline and Renewable Jet Fuel. It is expected that the Phillips 66 Rodeo Refinery in Northern California will be producing 50,000 barrels (2,100,000 gallons) by the second quarter of 2024. As well Chevrons El Segundo Refinery in Southern California is on track to begin production of Renewable Diesel RD99 in late 2024. Not to mention that in 2021 Chevron announced intentions to grow RD99 production capacity to 100,000 barrels (4,200,000 gallons) per day by 2030. As well locally the old Flying J Refinery on Rosedale Highway in Bakersfield, CA is in the process of being retrofitted by their new owners Global Clean Energy Holdings to be able to process and refine 15,000 barrels (630,000 gallons) per day of Renewable Diesel. It has also been reported by Department of Energy (DOE) that RD99 reached 2.6 billion gallons in 2023 and is expected to grow to 5.9 billion gallons by the end of 2025. Thus, the future is here with Renewable Diesel, the big question is you want to make sure you're getting Renewable Diesel 99 (RD99) and not a Bio Diesel derivative from a reputable source. It's important to have a good relationship with your fuel supplier and not to be afraid to ask the hard questions, because it may cost you a lot more in the long run if your sold something that is outside of spec just because you are making a decision solely based on price. 🙌

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