



## Your Local Partner in Conservation & Agriculture

The Coastal San Luis Resource Conservation District is committed to protecting and enhancing natural resources through education, restoration and collaboration with stakeholders.

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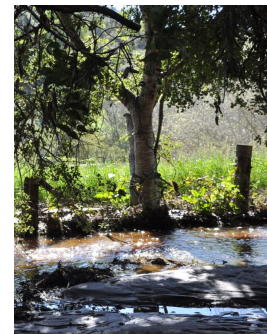
SPRING 2017

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## EQIP Offers Financial and Technical Assistance— Deadline to Apply is May 26, 2017

Agricultural producers can apply to receive financial and technical assistance to address natural resource concerns through the Environmental Quality Incentives

Program (EQIP) by May 26, 2017 (the final date for fiscal year 2017). The program exists to deliver environmental benefits such as improved water and air quality, conserved ground and surface water, reduced soil erosion and sedimentation, and improved or created wildlife habitat.



The types of assistance offered include the following:

- Replace old diesel-powered farm equipment
- Improve tillage practices
- Stabilize unpaved roads/areas to limit dust
- Establish windbreaks and shelterbelts

For a complete list of EQIP types of assistance and more information about this program, managed through the Natural Resource Conservation Services (NRCS) and funded by the Farm Bill, [click here](#).

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### Upcoming Events

**April 21, 12:30 p.m.**  
**Board of Directors Meeting**  
UCCE Auditorium, SLO

**May 26, 12:30 p.m.**  
**Board of Directors Meeting**  
UCCE Auditorium, SLO

**June 23, 12:30 p.m.**  
**Board of Directors Meeting**  
UCCE Auditorium, SLO

[Support local conservation with a donation to the RCD.](#)



## Limited Number of Free Mobile Irrigation Lab (MIL) Evaluations Are Available Through June 30, 2017

Landowners who want to improve irrigation system effectiveness are invited to request a Mobile Irrigation Lab (MIL) evaluation from the Coastal San Luis Resource Conservation District (CSLRCD). The evaluation, which measures Distribution Uniformity, monitors system flows and pressures in order to pinpoint specific problem areas and provide constructive solutions to improve system function and water application rates.

A limited number of free MIL evaluations are available through June 30, 2017. Call (805) 772-4391 or email [cslrccd@coastalrcd.org](mailto:cslrccd@coastalrcd.org) for more details and to schedule your evaluation.

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## Los Osos Landowner John Swift Honored for Conservation Efforts



*Above: CSLRCD President Neil Havlik (right foreground) congratulates John Swift as the San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors look on.*

*Below: John Swift stands atop the cut bank with others while observing a portion of the completed Los Osos Creek Bank Stabilization Project in January 2017. All of the project elements (boulder protection, large wood structures, soil lifts) have performed as intended during this winter's storms.*

John Swift of Los Osos received the Conservationist of the Year Award from the CSLRCD for making outstanding conservation-related improvements to his ranch. The presentation took place Tuesday, March 7, at the San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors' chambers. The Supervisors also awarded Swift with a Certificate of Recognition.

In the early 1980s, Swift began farming in Clark Canyon and created Swift Subtropicals on the 600-acre Bear Creek Ranch. The operation specializes in subtropical fruits, heirloom vegetables and grass-fed beef. A holistic rotational grazing strategy is used to both manage a herd of 40 longhorn-angus cross cattle and to create healthy native grasslands and oak woodlands. Swift values sustainability and biodiversity and strives to promote native grasslands and



the overall health of his land.

“My passion for conservation goes way back to my undergraduate degree at UC Berkeley in the newly created interdisciplinary program CNR, Conservation of Natural Resources,” Swift said. “The diversity and legacy of my ranch has been enhanced greatly over the years with thoughtful conservation.

“At the headwaters of Los Osos Creek and striving to be a good steward of the land, we began with a gully conversion to a grassy waterway project, which the Soil Conservation Service (now called the NRCS) designed and implemented with the CSLRCD. Several stream bank stabilization projects followed, trying to reduce sediment from ending up in the Morro Bay National Estuary.”

Although not the first of its kind on John Swift's ranch, another streambank stabilization project was successfully implemented on a portion of Los Osos Creek that runs through his property during November 2016. As a result, the streambank and stream channel were stabilized. It is estimated that 758 tons of sediment will be prevented from entering Los Osos Creek as a result. This project involved immense coordination between the CSLRCD and John Swift as well among various regulatory agencies, watershed partners and contractors. Leading up to implementation, various surveys and site visits were held.

“Despite all of the coordination and potential hiccups leading to actual project implementation, John was receptive, engaged and welcoming,” said CSLRCD Conservation Programs Manager Jen Nix. “John was always willing to work with us through the challenges to ensure we got all of the project elements in the ground and were out of the creek just in time for the start of the rains. Without John's cooperation, this project would have remained plans on paper.”

The project involved installation of a boulder weir, boulder toe protection, soil lifts and root wads in an effort to protect the creek from future incision, protect a rail car bridge spanning the creek, and enhance habitat for sensitive resources such as steelhead trout and California red-legged frogs.

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**Watershed Stewards Program (WSP)  
Works to Make a Difference**





*Khaalid Abdullah (left), a WSP member with SLO Steelhead Initiative, and a Cal Poly student dig holes for planting along San Luis Obispo Creek.*

Since fall 2016, the CSLRCD has participated in the [WatershedStewards Program](#) (WSP), a community-based watershed restoration, education and outreach program. The CSLRCD's WSP member has had the opportunity to partner with organizations throughout San Luis Obispo County to expand stream-monitoring efforts, implement restoration projects and organize outreach events.

The San Luis Obispo Creek Restoration Day was held February 26, 2017, in partnership with the California Native Plant Society and the City of SLO. More than 30 volunteers and WSP members came together to remove invasive species and plant native riparian plants along the banks of SLO Creek near Mission Plaza. This event built upon work done at previous restoration events to improve the habitat and health of the creek.

WSP members from CSLRCD and Upper Salinas-Las Tablas RCD worked together to teach the Wonders of Watersheds education series to 50 third and fourth graders at Cappy Culver Elementary School. The series involves lessons and hand-on activities about watersheds, salmonids and conservation. The WSP members are grateful for the opportunity to work with these kids and see watersheds through their eyes.



## **Board of Directors**

**Neil Havlik  
President**

Expertise: botany and natural resource management

**Jean-Pierre Wolff  
Vice President**

Expertise: vineyard management and engineering

**Dave Alford**

Expertise: agricultural business

**Linda Chipping**

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**Cheryl Lendhart**

Expertise: construction and civil engineering

**Dave Alford**

Expertise: agricultural business

**Rob Rutherford**

Expertise: holistic grazing management

**Ron Munds**

Associate Director  
Expertise: water

**Learn More About CSLRCD at**

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

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*Cappy Culver's third and fourth graders send a thank you to WSP.*

## What's With the Ag Ponds?

At the March 21, 2017, Board of Supervisors hearing, the Supervisors unanimously decided that all new agricultural ponds, that are groundwater fed, are to be permitted through the county process and not the Alternative Review Program (ARP), which allows the resource conservation districts (RCDs) to do the processing. This decision stems from a controversy in the North County over grading violations.

Coastal San Luis Resource Conservation District spoke in support of the staff's recommendation to allow the RCDs to process agricultural ponds that are 5 acre-feet or less. We explained that our RCD has an internal policy for approving pond permits or sending the applicant back to the county for processing; has a board and staff with capacity to provide this service, including CEQA; and, to date, we have had no problems in our review and permitting of agricultural ponds.

To our disappointment, the Supervisors chose not to allow the RCDs to process any agricultural ponds that are groundwater fed, regardless of size. It was the issue of groundwater pumping and its effect on neighbors that drove the ultimate vote. We understand this concern, and we will continue our efforts in working with landowners and municipalities in conserving water—Storm Rewards Rebate Program, development of stormwater plans, drought-tolerant ranchland, and other projects.

*Note: For the agricultural community who wants to build a pond to capture rainwater, such as a stock pond, you*



### Staff

**Jackie Crabb**  
District Manager

**Jen Nix**  
Conservation Program Manager

**Hallie Richard**  
Project Manager

**Peter Rowland**  
Restoration Coordinator

**Mark Skinner**  
Restoration Specialist II

**Tim Pesce**  
Restoration Specialist I

**Cindy Gonzales**  
Financial Manager

**Della Barrett**  
Board Secretary

can still go through the ARP that is processed through theRCDs.

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## Join the Team at CSLRCD-- Agriculture /Environmental/Civil Engineer (San Luis Obispo)

Compensation: \$75–\$110K/year (FT); \$30–\$70/hour (PT)

Employment type: employee's choice

Not an ordinary engineering position!

The Coastal San Luis Resource Conservation District is looking for an experienced, licensed engineer that is entrepreneurial, self-sufficient, and able to develop and implement innovative projects that are community-supported and science-driven. The ideal candidate has a solid engineering background and is willing to learn something new every day.

We have longterm opportunities for 1–1/2 engineers. We offer a flexible work environment, health stipend, retirement and leave benefits. To learn more about us, please visit our website at <http://www.coastalrcd.org/>.

This recruitment will remain open until filed. Please send an email with the position title in the subject line to [Cheryl@lenhardtengineering.com](mailto:Cheryl@lenhardtengineering.com). Include a cover letter and a resume tailored toward this position.

CSLRCD IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

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1203 Main Street  
Suite B  
Morro Bay, CA  
93442

### Board Member Vacancy

For over 50 years, the Coastal San Luis Resource Conservation District has been doing important environmental protection work, helping landowners with soil and water conservation projects. Low key and effective, the CSL RCD's grant-funded engineering and education has helped protect the creeks and rivers leading into Morro Bay, Oso Flaco Lake, and the Cuyama River.

The seven member volunteer Board of Directors currently has a vacancy. Anyone wishing to learn more about CSL RCD and its current projects, or serving on the Board of Directors, please see [CoastalRCD.org](http://CoastalRCD.org) or call the RCD office at 805-772-4391.

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*For additional information, please see [CoastalRCD.org](http://CoastalRCD.org) or call the RCD office at (805) 772-4391.*

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# Services

Call us today at [\(805\) 772-4391](tel:8057724391) for help with all of the following:

- Irrigation Evaluations
- Engineer Design
- Alternative Agricultural Grading Review (ARP)
- Erosion & Stormwater Control
- Conservation Easements
- Conservation Planning
- Permit Coordination
- Watershed & Habitat Restoration

Coastal San Luis Resource Conservation District | 1203 Main Street Suite B, Morro Bay, CA  
93442

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