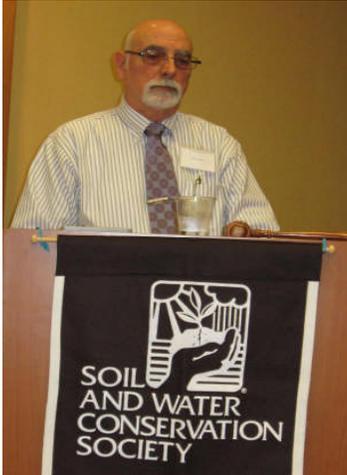




RUNOFF

CALIFORNIA-NEVADA CHAPTER SWCS – SUMMER 2011



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE - Bill Daily

Well hello everyone, it's been an interesting spring and summer so far and seems like it will continue to be a very interesting if not challenging year. I first wish to express my sincere thanks to members of our Chapter who make up the Executive Council for all of their help and support this spring helping me put together the annual Chapter conference and business meeting here in Reno. I would have liked to have had more of a turn-out from the membership but understand that these are tough times economically and that out of pocket travel expenses are often difficult to find within personal budgets. Not having agency support for travel increases the burden on personal budgets as well.

I guess I feel that I should share a bit of personal information here regarding personal budgets and planning ahead. As some of you know, I'm retired; therefore, I know a thing or two regarding fixed incomes and budgets. I've learned that if you want your money to go further, then you have to plan accordingly or it just won't be there when you plan to have it. There will always be some unexpected repair or need or want that will absorb non-allocated funds. The solution (which no one wants to hear) is to plan for such things by sticking to a budget, no matter how restrictive it feels; it will usually be worth it.

So why mention such a thing in the President's message, well there is a method to this and that being the membership not having the excuse that they couldn't afford to attend next year's annual conference because they couldn't afford it! You all know that there's an annual Chapter conference each year, usually mid-spring to early summer, so set aside a small amount in your budget now and each month between now and next spring, so when the time comes the money is there and just getting your supervisor to allow you some time to attend (which can be planned as well) will happen. I know that I shouldn't need to mention any of this, but sometimes a little reminder is helpful.

While I'm reminding folks about some simple things here's another one for the general membership. Your Chapter will only be as good as you're participation. I'm not directing this comment toward the Executive Council, because the majority of the current Council members and the past members continue to give of their time and effort for the good of the organization. The general membership needs to "step up" and participate in your Chapter. If just twenty members contributed one hour a month to some aspect of Chapter activity, it would make a big difference. Everyone is busy with life, but if you belong to an organization (any organization) then you should get up off the bench every now and then and donate a little of your time and talent to that organization. If for no other reason, than it will both help that organization, but will help you in your personal growth and experience. We all sit on the bench now and then, and that sometimes is needed, but while you are sitting there, someone else must carry the load. Such loads are far easier to be carried if multiple persons do the carrying. So get up off the bench and contribute your skills and a little of your time; you'll feel less guilty for having contributed to the organization that you say you belong too.

If you want to know how you can help, email or call any of your Chapter Executive Council members, see the Chapter web site for contact information. In the next issue of RUNOFF, I'll try to be more entertaining and less of an old grouch. As always your feedback is always welcome whether positive or negative.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE HELD IN RENO

Attendance at our Annual Conference at the Hyatt Place in Reno last May 26 and 27 was 20 members and guests. Climate Change and Agriculture was the theme and Nevada NRCS State Conservationist **Bruce Peterson** was the first speaker on the short two-day program coordinated by President Elect **Bill Daily**. **Justin Huntington**, **Jay Davison**, and **Lucinda Roth** made technical presentations. See their abstracts on pages 4 and 5.

The \$1,000 Chapter scholarship for 2011 was presented to Cal Poly student **Emilie Schneider** by Chapter President **Andrea Casey**. She was chosen from the 10 applicants by the Chapter Scholarship Committee chaired by Executive Council Director **Tina Vander Hoek**. More about Emilie on page 5.

The Chapter Distinguished Service Award was presented to **Mark Steffek** from Alturas (see page 6). The Merit Award went to **Chris Davis** from Sacramento (see page 6). **Yolo Land Trust** in Woodland earned an Honor Award (see page 7) and **Cache Creek Conservancy** in Woodland was presented with the Conservation Education Award (see page 7). Executive Council Director and Chapter Awards Committee Chair **Ladi Asgill** made the presentations assisted by **Tina Vander Hoek**.

CHAPTER ELECTION RESULTS TALLIED

Pat Grover and **Walt Bunter** met on April 20 at the USDA office in Davis as the Chapter Ballot Counting Committee and tallied the following results:

For President-Elect: Eleven write-in names.

For Secretary: **Rebecca Hale** received 32 votes.

For Treasurer: **Tom Esgate** received 33 votes.

For Executive Council Director:

Ladi Asgill received 33 votes

Tina Vander Hoek received 32 votes

Wendy Rash received 31 votes

Nominations Committee Chair and Past President **Erik Beardsley** polled the 11 President-Elect write-ins and found that only **Tibor Horvath** from Fresno was willing to serve as President-Elect. The Chapter Executive Council appointed him President-Elect at their May 27 meeting in Reno.

146 ballots were mailed out to Chapter members. 35 ballots were received and all were valid. Allowing electronic voting in the next election is being referred to the By-Laws Committee.



Bruce Peterson
USDA NRCS
Nevada State
Conservationist

“When our work resonates with the public, the public will support us.”



Chapter President **Andrea Casey** presents \$1,000 scholarship in Reno to Cal Poly SLO student

Emilie Schneider

MEET PRESIDENT-ELECT TIBOR HORVATH

I was born in Hungary and received my MS in Ag Engineering in 1985 at the Georgikon University, Keszthely, Hungary. I started my conservation career with a Soil and Water Conservation District in Pennsylvania and later in New York before I was hired by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service New York State Office and became a conservation agronomist. I joined the SWCS in 2001 and was elected New York Chapter President in 2006. I enjoyed organizing the 2005 International SWCS Conference in Rochester, NY when I was the President-Elect for the New York Chapter.

I moved to South Carolina in 2008 still working for NRCS and became the President-Elect for the South Carolina Chapter of the SWCS, but before taking the term as Chapter President, I moved to California as a conservation agronomist in Fresno on the California NRCS Dairy Team. I enjoy working for NRCS because I love our natural treasures and feel responsible for preserving our nature.

INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS



Outgoing Chapter President **Andrea Casey** presents gavel to 2011 Chapter President **Bill Daily** at the Reno Conference



2011 Chapter Executive Council members installed at the Reno Conference from lt. to rt.: **Tibor Horvath**-Pres-Elect, **Ladi Asgill**-Director, **Bill Daily**-President, **Tom Esgate**-Treasurer, **Tina Vander Hoek** –Director, **Andrea Casey**-Past President, **Phil Hogan**-Director, and **Rebecca Hale**-Secretary.

FALL TECHNICAL TOUR

Plans for a short one-day technical tour in October or November were initiated at the Chapter Executive Council meeting in Reno on May 27. Ideas included starting at 10 AM with technical presentations, lunch with speaker, then going to one or two field sites and finishing by 3:30 PM.

Send your suggestions soon to President **Bill Daily** at: woollywilly@charter.net

NEEDED: MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE CHAIR AND COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE CHAIR

Contact President **Bill Daily** for more details at:
woollywilly@charter.net

NEW CA-NV CHAPTER MEMBERS

We extend a **GREAT BIG WELCOME** to the following 19 members who recently joined or rejoined the SWCS and our California-Nevada Chapter or transferred in from another chapter. We had 141 members as of July 25, 2011.

Joe Browde, Petaluma CA
Martin Canning, Pebble Beach CA
Christian Davis, Sacramento CA
Randy Davis, Marysville CA
Walter Duffy, Arcata CA
Julie Fallon, San Luis Obispo CA
Dale Gropp, Visalia CA
John Heissenbuttel, Pine Grove CA
Tibor Horvath, Fresno CA
Leonard Jolley, Napa CA
Allison Jordan, San Francisco CA
William Lincoln, Hidden Valley Lake CA
Daniella Mazaroli, Larchmont NY
Timothy Murphy, Quincy CA
Erika Protos, Tallmadge OH
Rosemary Records, Petaluma CA
Julie Thomas, Morro Bay CA
John Wilson, Los Angeles CA
Jeanette Wrynski, Woodland CA

PLANS FOR 2012 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

At their May 27 meeting in Reno, the Chapter Executive Council decided to change our business plan for the next annual conference. Instead of the President-Elect chairing the annual conference committee, both the President and President-Elect will co-chair the committee.

The Executive Council recognized that planning the annual conference can often be a big challenge for the new President-Elect. The skills learned by the President-Elect will now be better utilized when that individual moves up to be Chapter President.

Our two-day annual conference next spring will be patterned like the Reno Conference to accommodate our members. Co-Chairs **Bill Daily** and **Tibor Horvath** want to have a draft agenda by November and the meeting location selected. Meeting sites from Sacramento down to Fresno will be under consideration. To serve on the committee and/or provide suggestions for the agenda/location contact:

Bill Daily at: woollywilly@charter.net

Tibor Horvath at: Tibor.Horvath@ca.usda.gov

Towards Updating Evapotranspiration Estimates from Irrigated Agriculture in Nevada

Teff as an Alternative to Alfalfa Production in Nevada



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Jay Davidson
Area Forage/
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Irrigation currently accounts for about 80% of total water withdrawals in Nevada. Accurate estimates of evapotranspiration (ET) from irrigated agricultural land are becoming more important as increasing demands are placed on finite water supplies in Nevada due to development and changing climate.

Local, state, and federal water resource agencies require accurate estimates of crop ET and irrigation water requirements for evaluating basin water budgets, irrigation development, transfers of irrigation water for municipal use, and litigation of water right applications and protests.

Ongoing efforts of the Nevada Division of Water Resources and the Desert Research Institute are focused on updating estimates of crop ET and basin water budgets throughout Nevada. Updates are being performed by developing and applying reference ET, crop coefficients, soil water balance, and remote sensing models for estimating irrigation water requirements and actual historical crop ET.

There are now 18 agricultural weather stations but more are needed to obtain remotely sensed data from additional growing areas. Predicted climate change impacts will be a longer growing season and growers planting better adapted alfalfa cultivars.

Crop ET values and irrigation water requirements are expected to gradually increase as the climate changes. With finite water resources, alfalfa growers are expected to concentrate production on their best soils. Crop ET values will also be needed for any new crops.

Approximately 92% of all farmland in Nevada is used to produce alfalfa hay, grass hay or alfalfa-grass mixtures. All of these lands are irrigated. Nevada hay crops are typically cut at least three times annually and require irrigation from April through September. Irrigation water for agriculture is facing severe competition from urban and environmental interests, while many climate scientists predict a future climatic shift resulting in lower amounts of precipitation. All of which will result in less water for agriculture in the future.

The lack of crop diversity also results in economic risks to the producers associated with price fluctuations and market demands. The average long term price for alfalfa hay has remained nearly flat in real dollars over several years while input costs have risen dramatically. Both of these factors indicate that Nevada's agricultural producers would greatly benefit from changing to crops that utilize less water while increasing their economic return.

Teff (*Eragrostis tef*) is a warm season annual grass that has shown great promise in fulfilling both requirements. Teff forage is currently grown in at least 25 states and is rapidly gaining market share in the premium horse feed industry. The markets for Teff grain and flour are also expanding due to the demand from ethnic populations and from individuals who desire non-gluten foods.

Teff grain and forage production started at Fallon in 2005. It requires 33% less water compared to growing alfalfa hay and produces 5 tons per acre with recent prices at \$150 per ton. There is a Teff flour mill in Redding, CA, but hope is for one in Fallon.

Historical, Projected Migration and Adaption to Climate Change in CA and NV



Lucinda Roth - Climate Change Specialist with the US Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service, 3800 Cornucopia Way Ste E Modesto, CA 95358 Lucinda.Roth@valleyair.org

Global sea-level has increased 1-2 mm/yr; growing seasons in the Northern Hemisphere have increased 1-4 days; snow cover globally has decreased by 10%; flowering dates are earlier; and average temperatures have increased every year according to a 2001 report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. Several research articles suggest the recent changes observed in migratory paths and timing of birds and butterflies through California and Nevada have been due to climate change.

Other research suggests climate change will cause changing plant and animal habitats, increased pest pressures, increased demand for water, and changes in crop yields. In the future, multiple models predict increased extreme heat and storm events in California and Nevada, water shortages, earlier snowmelt from the Sierra Mountains, a decrease in winter chill hours in the San Joaquin Valley and rising sea levels.

Agriculture and forestry only contribute 6% of the CO₂ emissions. However, there are about 150 NRCS sustainable conservation practices including reduced tillage that can potentially decrease greenhouse gas emissions back down to the year 1990 levels now required in CA by AB 32 and help farmers adapt to the current and predicted impacts of climate change. CA counties need a climate action plan per SB 375. The USDA Climate Change activities page is at http://www.usda.gov/oce/climate_change/index.htm

SCHOLARSHIP AWARDEE



Emilie M Schneider

Was awarded the 2011 California-Nevada Chapter SWCS Scholarship in person at our Chapter Annual Conference held in Reno on May 26 and 27.

Emilie is a Soil Science major at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo.

She entered Cal Poly as a Biology major but developed an interest in sustainable agriculture and changed her major to Soil Science. She is doing research on the effects soil biology characteristics have on the retention of nutrients contributing to aquatic dead zones. Emilie plans to attend graduate school and continue research to find methods to stop or intercept the loss of these nutrients at the source.

Emilie writes “Studying soil science and supplemental subjects has opened my eyes to the connection between everything on our planet and has caused me to contemplate the positive influence I can have as a small part to the whole.”

Her senior project research supervisor and Associate Professor of the Bio Resource and Agricultural Engineering Department described Emilie as a focused, intelligent individual who is very competent in following instructions, communicating with others, and working with very little supervision.

Another faculty member calls her one of the most outstanding students in the Earth & Soil Sciences Department and said “Besides having an academic gift she “gets along well with others and can be a leader or a member of the team as the situation dictates. Emilie has amazing potential to be a great scientist and a constructive force in society.”

She has worked at Cal Poly’s Organic Farm. Is active as an officer for Department’s student club- Earth Soil & Water Conservation Club at Cal Poly and served as an event coordinator. She is a member of Cal Poly’s Surfrider Club and participated in service events, such as beach and creek clean-ups.

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD



For unusual and extraordinary activities and significant contribution in furthering the objectives of the California-Nevada Chapter Soil & Water Conservation Society.

Presented to **Mark Steffek**, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, Retired, Alturas, CA by Chapter Awards Committee member **Tina Vander Hoek**

Mark has provided tremendous support to the CANV Chapter SWCS. He has served as President Elect, and as President. He has served on numerous committees and has chaired both the Nomination Committee and the Financial Oversight Committee.

While serving as our Chapter President he was instrumental in merging the Nevada Chapter SWCS into the California Chapter SWCS to create our current Chapter.

During his tenure as a Chapter Executive Council member, Mark actively sought out and recruited new members. His committee involvement assisted the Chapter in providing successful annual conferences and ensured the Chapter remains fiscally accountable. His attendance at several International SWCS conferences has kept the CA-NV Chapter informed and well represented. His dedication to the natural resources and the people are commendable.

CHAPTER MEMBER IS NEW WESTERN REP

Mark Steffek won the 2011 SWCS Board of Directors Election to represent the Western Region from July 2011 to July 2014. Mark started his official duties at the 66th SWCS International Annual Conference held this summer in Washington, DC on July 17-20. He will be assisting all the SWCS Chapters in the West. Mark flies his own plane.

MERIT AWARD



For outstanding effort or activity in promoting the conservation and development of natural resources in California and/or Nevada.

Presented to **Chris Davis**, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, Elk Grove, CA by Chapter Awards Committee member **Tina Vander Hoek**. **Mrs. Davis** is in the center.

Christian "Chris" Davis has demonstrated 23 years of exemplary service providing a direct and very personal conservation assistance to land owners, communities and units of government.

As Soil Conservationist in Sacramento County, CA, Chris logged thousands of extra hours with the County, three Conservation Districts, other partners and 1,100 landowners. Chris helped pass on conservation education between farm family generations and inspired the passion to foster the science and art of natural resource conservation from one human being to another.

Of the 1,100 cooperators Chris has worked with in Sacramento County, he developed 1,600 plans with water quality improvement projects on enterprises ranging from 1,200 head dairy farms to small one to three acre urban strawberry plots. A recent outstanding example of his work was the acceptance of a 6,700 acre ranch with vernal pools into the USDA Wetlands Reserve Program.

Another example was partnering with the conservation districts to purchase backflow prevention devices for Hmong strawberry growers and educating them about preventing backflow of herbicides to ground water and drinking water.

HONOR AWARD



Yolo Land Trust
Presented by
Awards Committee
Chair **Ladi Asgill**
to
Michele Clark
Executive Director
221 W Court St Ste 5
Woodland CA 95695

www.yololandtrust.org

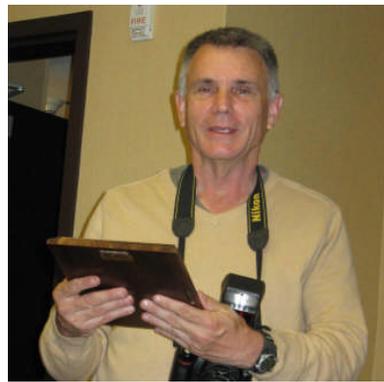
For special accomplishments by outstanding groups or organizations contributing to the objectives of the Soil and Water Conservation Society's California-Nevada Chapter.

The Yolo Land Trust works with landowners interested in protecting their land from development. To accomplish this, Yolo Land Trust can either purchase the property outright or buy only the development rights. Donations of properties and easements are also welcome for consideration. Typically, though, Yolo Land Trust will purchase the development rights by entering into a conservation agreement with the landowner.

These conservation agreements are also called conservation easements, which restrict the uses of a property as needed to protect the land's conservation values. The Yolo Land Trust is a private, non-profit corporation founded in 1988 by an innovative group of farmers, community leaders and conservationists dedicated to protecting Yolo County's land resources. Yolo Land Trust conserves land today to grow food for all to enjoy forever.

To date, Yolo land Trust has helped landowners place conservation easements on 51 parcels of land for nearly 9000 acres. These lands help Yolo County maintain a productive agricultural economy while the public enjoys the open views and locally grown food.

CONSERVATION EDUCATION AWARD



Cache Creek Conservancy
Accepted by Chapter
Director **Phil Hogan** for
Meg Stallard
President
PO Box 8249
Woodland CA 95776-8249

www.cachecreekconservancy.org

To recognize outstanding conservation education activities in California and/or Nevada by individuals, groups, organizations or businesses.

The Cache Creek Conservancy (CCC) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation dedicated to the restoration of the lower Cache Creek corridor in Yolo County. Its mission is to promote the restoration, enhancement and prudent management of the stream environment along Cache Creek from Capay Dam to the Settling Basin. The Conservancy was created in 1996 as a vehicle to implement projects, provide environmental education, hold conservation easements and manage land for wildlife habitat. During the past recent years it has implemented two wildlife habitat improvement projects, worked with local landowners on an experimental erosion control method using rice-straw bales and willows, initiated a Tamarix and Arundo donax removal and control demonstration project, and developed a 130-acre property into the Cache Creek Nature Preserve (CCNP).

Governed by a Board of Directors which reflects the cooperative spirit of the organization, Conservancy Board members include local land owners, scientists, aggregate producers, conservation specialists, and others with expertise relevant to the Conservancy's mission.

THE 67TH SWCS INTERNATIONAL ANNUAL CONFERENCE WILL BE IN FORT WORTH, TX, ON JULY 22-25, 2012

OUR CHAPTER WILL HOST THE 68TH SWCS INTERNATIONAL ANNUAL CONFERENCE TO BE HELD IN RENO, NV, DURING JULY 2013

Conservationist's greeting:

"Every day is a good day for soil conservation."

Chapter Director **Phil Hogan** from Woodland contributed photos for this issue of RUNOFF.

CALIFORNIA-NEVADA CHAPTER SWCS
430 G STREET #4172
DAVIS CA 95616-4172

FIRST CLASS
RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Next Chapter Event:
Fall Technical Tour
(Being planned)



THANK YOU, ANDREA, FOR SERVING AS
OUR 2010-2011 CHAPTER PRESIDENT

CHAPTER EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

- Bill Daily**, President
- Tibor Horvath**, President-Elect
- Andrea Casey**, Past President
- Rebecca Hale**, Secretary
- Tom Esgate**, Treasurer
- Ladi Asgill**, Director
- Eric Berntsen**, Director
- Michael Hogan**, Director
- Phil Hogan**, Director
- Wendy Rash**, Director
- Tina Vander Hoek**, Director

RUNOFF is the official California-Nevada
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Editor and Publisher:
Walt Bunter – wbunter@pacell.net

Please submit articles via email to the Editor.
RUNOFF reserves the right to edit all submissions.

YOUR PHOTOS ARE WANTED
FOR THE CA-NV CHAPTER SWCS
WEBSITE

www.caswcs.org

PLEASE SUBMIT PHOTOS, NEWS
ITEMS, AND FEATURE ARTICLES TO
THE EDITOR FOR THE FALL ISSUE
OF RUNOFF

BY SEPTEMBER 15

EXPECT NEXT ISSUE ON OCT. 1

**“Soil conservation is not just an
incidental bit of the mechanics of
farming; it becomes part and parcel
of the whole business of making a
living from the land, and is the only
way by which we may have
permanently productive land for a
permanent agriculture to support a
permanent Nation”.**

Hugh Hammond Bennett speaking to the
Association of American Geographers.
September 18, 1943, Washington, DC