

2016-2017

Annual Report



Upper Salinas-Las Tablas
Resource Conservation District



A letter from our **DIRECTOR**

Dear Friends,

What a wonderful year it was to watch the rainfall totals inch up seemingly every week after so many years of drought. The storms of the 2016-2017 winter season provided an example of how diverse the weather patterns in our region can be. The rainfall also serves as a reminder to make wise choices and make the most out of the opportunities we have.

This past year brought on some innovative developments and new staff for the RCD. For the first time, the Upper Salinas – Las Tablas RCD was a placement site for the AmeriCorps Watershed Stewards Program (WSP). Partnering with Coastal San Luis RCD, we hosted two WSP members, Britta Dornfeld and Alyssa Bucci. Britta and Alyssa were instrumental in helping the RCDs in San Luis Obispo County implement and complete projects, ranging from watershed restoration to education programs in our local schools to mobile irrigation evaluations.

Speaking of mobile irrigation evaluations, this year our Mobile Irrigation Lab completed more evaluations than any year in the past. The Lab is an opportunity for growers to utilize the expertise of the RCD in order to make sure their irrigation systems are functioning as efficiently and effectively as possible. Despite increased rainfall, water conservation still remains a priority for our growers, and ensuring their system is efficient is a valuable service the RCD provides.

This year has also brought a new, expansive project to the RCD aimed at identifying and treating high priority invasive weeds. Through a variety of collaborative partnerships in San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara counties the RCD will work to combat five highly invasive species over the next five years.

We are also proud to have worked with Parrish Family Vineyard to implement riparian restoration on the headwaters of Adelaida Creek. This project involved restoring over 1,000 feet of riparian habitat within the vineyard with native trees and shrubs. The project has been highly successful and the landowner has asked the RCD to implement a second phase to complete the restoration of the creek on the property.

As we look forward to the year ahead, we see enormous opportunities to further the mission of the US-LT RCD by building on the partnerships and experiences of the past year.

-Devin Best



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California Association of Resource Conservation Districts **DISTRICT OF THE YEAR AWARD**

“

***This District is highly collaborative**—with partnerships with county, state and federal agencies, as well as numerous non-profit groups such as Audubon, watershed councils, fire safe councils, and agricultural groups.*

***This district is innovative**—for example, helping both landowners and local government by offering an alternative grading permit process for agricultural roads in the county.*

***This district is visible**—for example, collaborating recently with a neighboring RCD to triple baseline county funding by showing the value the RCDs have brought to the region.*

***This district is relevant**—for example, hatching a plan to bring all the conservation groups in the county together to develop a conservation vision for the county.*

This year's District of the Year is a bright example of the many small yet mighty districts around the state that are working against the odds to create big impact at the local level—while also feeding sector-wide change at the state level.

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-Karen Buhr
Executive Director, CARCD

We were humbled and honored to be awarded the District of the Year Award at the CARCD Annual Conference in November of 2016.

Our Work,
OUR IMPACT

**In partnership with the
Watershed Stewards Program,
our AmeriCorps Member
Britta Dornfeld:**

- Recruited 30 volunteers
- Educated 34 4th grade students
- Cleaned up 1.2 miles of waterways
- Performed 1746 hours of service



**Our Mobile Irrigation Lab
Assessed:**

- 2177 Acres of vineyards
- 17 acres of olive orchards
- 25 acres of avocado orchards



{Our Mission}

Provide services and education to landowners supporting their management and stewardship of soil, water and natural resources.

Spotlight on Restoration: ADELAIDA CREEK



This past year, we successfully completed the restoration of a portion of Adelaida Creek. This particular spot had been hidden from view after previous owners planted pistachio and almond trees in the creek area starting in the early 1900s.

This project is a wonderful demonstration of how collaboration between our RCD, the County of San Luis Obispo, and a private landowner can work.

David Parrish, the owner of this piece of property, became interested in restoring the waterway, and he found a partner in the San Luis Obispo County public works department. The county was looking for projects to help offset environmental impacts caused by the construction of the Nacimiento Water Project, which made the creek restoration an ideal opportunity. Officials from SLO County then contracted with the US-LT RCD to complete the restoration.

During restoration of this .64 acre area, crews replaced the non-native plants that had grown along the creek with native species. These restoration activities will help prevent runoff and erosion when it rains and allow water to percolate into the aquifer below.

Revenue, Expenses and **FINANCIAL HEALTH**

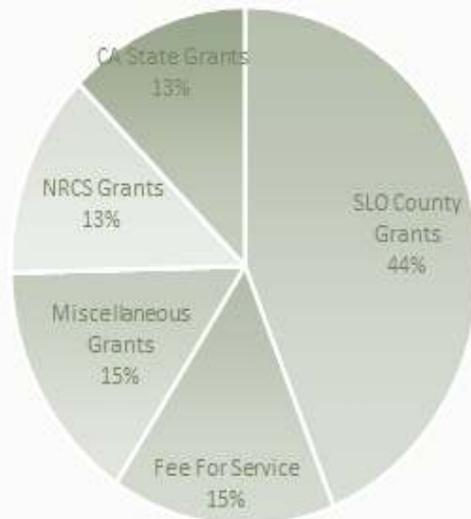
Gross
Revenue:
\$216,781



Gross
Expenses:
\$203,390

Diversified Funding: **SOURCES OF REVENUE**

Net
Revenue:
\$14,390





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