

*Land Of The West Wind*  
 SRCD Newsletter  
 2544 Grizzly Island Road  
 Suisun CA 94585  
 Address Correction Requested



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**Information About Potential Disaster Declaration**

*By: Steve Chappell, SRCD Executive Director*

The first two weeks of January 2017 put the 200 miles of Suisun Marsh managed wetlands exterior levees to the test. Extreme high tide events, coupled with atmospheric river storm events, high local creek inflows and excessive Delta outflows has damaged many of the Suisun Marsh exterior levees.

On January 24<sup>th</sup>, the Solano County Board of Supervisor ratified the Proclamation of a Local Emergency and the State of California included Solano County in the declaration of a State of Emergency. Since that time, the CA Office of Emergency Services (OES) has been conducting tours and inspections of flood damages in coun-

ties throughout California, with Solano County and the Suisun Marsh included. The next step is the State of California has to request Federal Disaster Declaration from FEMA and FEMA has to review the extent of damages and make a determination. As of today, this process is still ongoing, but a determination by FEMA has not yet been made.

*If a FEMA Disaster is declared,* it should provide access to flood fight, flood clean up, and flood damage repair cost share assistance for public facilities. In the past, those landowners with flood damages in Reclamation Districts (Public Facilities) should be eligible to participate

in flood damage repair assistance. For the private landowners, there may be State or Federal loans available, but it is unknown at this time.

In the immediate future, SRCD recommends all landowners collect detailed documentation of all flood fight expenses, obtain estimates for flood damage repairs, and take extensive photos or videos of the damages while it is occurring or shortly after. Don't wait until the weeds have grown 3 feet high to document your levee flood damage. If things progress with FEMA or CA OES, there will be public workshops to get information on their program requirements and eligibility.



# Land of the West Wind

Volume 17 Issue 1

March 2017

**Free Sandbag Locations within Solano County**

- Cordelia Fire Protection District - corner of Suisun Valley Road and Rockville Road
- Dixon Fire Protection District - 205 Ford Way and at the end of Industrial Way
- Montezuma Fire Protection District - Jericho Dredging at 1285 Collinsville Road / 2151 Collinsville Road (bags only) / Fire Station 21 on North Fourth Street (bags only)
- Suisun Fire Protection District - 4965 Clayton Road
- City of Suisun - 701 Civic Center Blvd, behind Police Department
- Vacaville Fire Protection District - 4135 Cantelow Road

**Flood Fight Supplies Vendors:**

Bags

Pacific Fuller  
 1060 Piper Drive, Vacaville  
 (707) 446-6020 - ask for Beverly  
 Hours: Mon-Fri 8:00AM-5:00PM  
 \$.60/bag 14" x 26" Poly bags  
 \$1.00/bag 18" x 30" Poly bags (both sold as 1,000 bag lots)

Visqueen & Bags

H.D. Supplies White Cap  
 9330 West Cordelia Road, Fairfield  
 (707) 863-8282  
 Hours: Mon-Fri 6:00AM-5:00PM  
 \$90/roll - 6 mil 20' x 100' rolls  
 \$160/roll - 10 mil 20' x 100' rolls

**California's New Gun Laws.... What Hunters Really Need To Know**

*By: Bill Gaines, Gaines & Associates*

California has long been renowned for the toughest firearms laws in the nation. But fortified by the San Bernardino shooting in late 2015, the California State Legislature and Lt. Governor Gavin Newsom's "Safety for All Act of 2016" on the November 2016 ballot upped the ante.

By late summer 2016, the Legislature had placed numerous gun bills on the Governor's desk. Working with Gaines & Associates, the Suisun Resource Conservation District did their part to slow the historic anti-gun onslaught - including joining eleven conservation organizations in signing onto several coalition letters to the Governor urging his veto. Although he vetoed a few - the majority of the bills were signed into law. A short time later, California's public passed Newsom's "Safety for All Act of 2016" on the November ballot.

With so many new gun laws approved at once, it took some time for even the experts to sort through the

damage. With the dust now settled and inventory taken, below is a "layman's look" at what folks who just want to hunt really need to know....

A couple bills passed which expanded the definition of an assault weapon to include more semiautomatic firearms - but neither will impact most hunters. These bills were limited to center-fire rifles and pistols, and only those which also had a "military-style feature" such as a thumbhole stock, forward pistol grip, or have an overall length of less than 30 inches - eliminating nearly all standard hunting rifles.

Another bill was signed which prohibits loaning a firearm to anyone other than immediate family, unless you go through a licensed dealer. But the bill did not delete the already existing exemption which allows hunters to loan a firearm to another licensed hunter for the duration of the hunting season.

Here's the real bad news... Beginning on July 1, 2019,

**Land of the West Wind**

Quarterly newsletter of the Suisun Resource Conservation District  
 Address: 2544 Grizzly Island Road  
 Suisun, CA 94585  
 Telephone: (707) 425-9302  
 Fax: (707) 425-4402  
 Water Manager office: (707) 426-2431  
 E-mail: srcd@suisunrcd.org  
 Website: www.suisunrcd.org

**SRCD Staff**

Steven Chappell, *Executive Director*  
 Bruce Wickland, *Operations Manager*  
 Kelli Perez, *Office Supervisor*  
 Tim Edmunds, *Biologist/Water Manager*  
 Dean Podolsky *Biologist/Water Manager*  
 Jeff Taylor, *Biologist/Water Manager*  
 Steve Witherspoon, *Caretaker LJI*

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**SRCD's public meetings are held at 2 PM on the second Wednesday of each month at the Solano County Supervisors Chambers 675 Texas Street, Fairfield, CA 94533**

SRCD represents private landowners of the Suisun Marsh at the Federal, State, and local levels. Its historic goal has been to achieve a water supply of adequate quality so that preferred wetland habitat values will be retained through appropriate management practices. Through cooperation with landowners and various agencies, SRCD seeks to develop new programs aimed at protecting and improving the Suisun Marsh for future generations.

**Pacific Flyway Center Gaining Ground in the Suisun Marsh**

*By: Suisun Resource Conservation District*

Progress continues to be made on the Pacific Flyway Center, a project conceived and developed by Kenneth Hoffman. While the project is still in the early phases of development, positive steps have been made over the past few months to make this conceptual vision into a reality. The Flyway Center will be developed on the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's Garibaldi Unit along Interstate 680. In November, a local vote passed 72% to 28% to annex the property into the City of Fairfield, a critical element in making the project a reality.

The mission of the Pacific Flyway Center is to inspire conservation of the Pacific Flyway, a "superhighway in the sky" that stretches for 10,000 miles from the Arctic to Patagonia, where more than a billion birds travel the Flyway on their annual migrations. The Flyway Center will also seek to educate the public on the wonder and value of the wetlands, watersheds and wildlife of the Flyway and to encourage good land stewardship.

The Flyway Center Partners have been working to acquire the necessary permitting, CEQA documentation, and wetland delineation work to move the project to its next phases of development. They have worked with the Department of Fish and Wildlife to begin the appraisal process of a land swap for the approximately 280 acres needed on the Garibaldi unit to build the indoor/outdoor facilities and learning center. The remaining acreage of the property will continue to be managed as a wildlife sanctuary for local and migratory birds.

There is still a lot to be done before any construction begins, but the PFC partners are dedicated to creating this one of kind information center.



Image from Pacific Flyway Center video at www.pacificflywaycenter.org

**(IMPACT cont. from pg. 1)**

to purchase ammunition in California you will need to provide your driver's license, telephone number and date of birth. The data will be electronically submitted to the Department of Justice (DOJ) for an "on the spot" check to confirm you are allowed to purchase ammo. If you pass, the vendor must record the brand, type, and amount of ammunition that you buy - then submit all of the information to DOJ for their new database.

What will DOJ do with this data? Who knows - but they will know exactly what caliber or gauge gun you own, and how much you shoot them. Note, a few entities are exempt from the above requirements when purchasing ammo - including commercial hunting and game bird clubs, target facilities, and non-profits that use the ammo for recreational shooting or hunting events.

Second, on July 1st, 2019, the non-lead mandate for hunting in California goes into full effect, making non-lead loads of any caliber nearly impossible to buy from a local vendor. Coincidentally, that is the exact same day new law will prohibit the purchase of ammunition

over the internet or via mail order, unless you go through a licensed ammunition dealer. Thinking of driving up to Cabela's in Nevada to buy yours? Think again. The new laws also prohibit bringing in ammunition purchased out of state unless you go through a licensed vendor. The law does allow hunters to bring into the state 50 rounds or less of ammo purchased outside the state for hunting outside of the state. A similar exemption applies to a competition target shooter who is participating in an organized competition outside the state.

What's the "take home" message for the typical hunter from last year's legislative assault on our firearms? Your everyday hunting arms are more than likely legal, but beware on the ammunition front. If you hunt anything besides ducks, plan ahead and be sure to acquire all the ammunition you could possibly use before July 1, 2019.

*Editor's note - The above is just a quick overview of the new laws that will apply to the "average" hunter. If you have any questions regarding your sporting arms, play it safe and check with an expert to be sure what laws may apply to you.*

**Water Year 2017 Shaping Up as One of the Wettest Ever**

*By: Department of Water Resources (Press Release)*

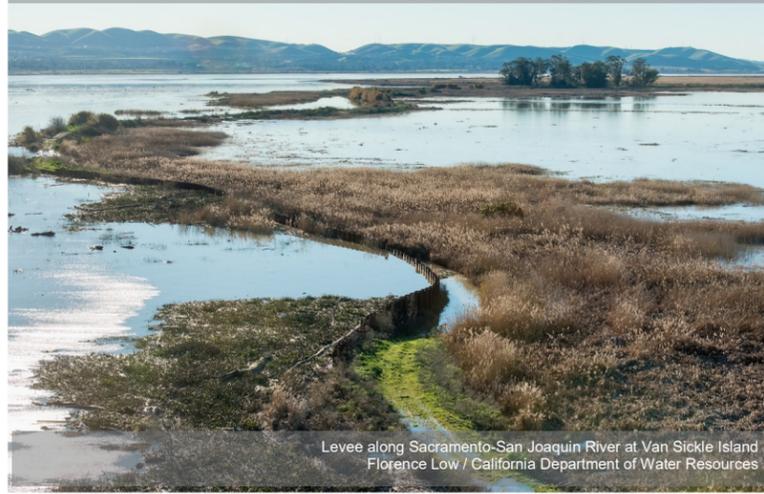
The Department of Water Resources (DWR) hosted the news media on February 2 for the second manual snow survey at Phillips Station in the Sierra Nevada. Frank Gehrke, chief of the California Cooperative Snow Surveys Program conducted the survey, which began at 11 a.m. just off Highway 50 near Sierra-at-Tahoe Road about 90 miles east of Sacramento.

The first months of Water Year 2017 (October 1 to today) have been exceptionally wet in California due to atmospheric river storms and rainfall from lesser storms that drenched the state. All three regions DWR monitors continuously for rainfall had recorded more by January 23 than their annual averages for the entire water year, which runs from October 1 through September 30.

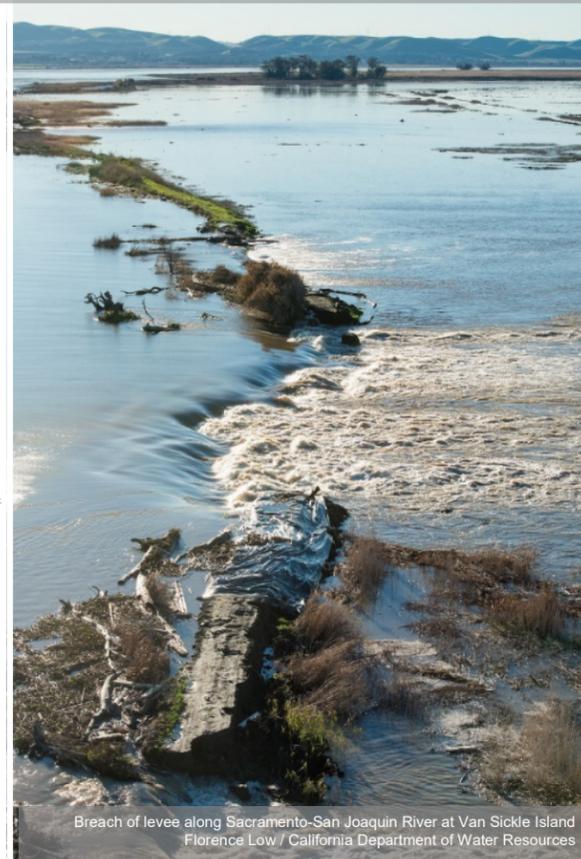
**Statewide Snowpack Water Content February 1 Average**

<u>Year</u>	<u>Percentage of Average (February 1st)</u>
2008	116
2009	58
2010	111
2011	129
2012	37
2013	87
2014	14
2015	23
2016	116
2017	173

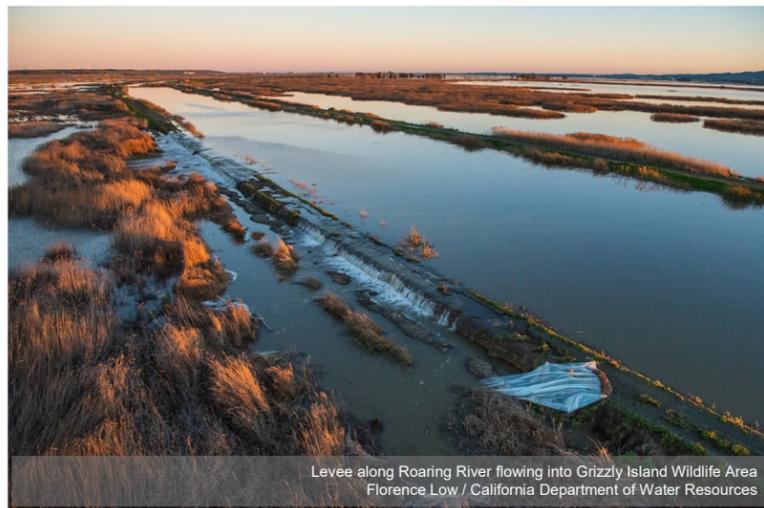
January Storm-Related Damage Photos From Around Suisun Marsh



Levee along Sacramento-San Joaquin River at Van Sickle Island  
Florence Low / California Department of Water Resources



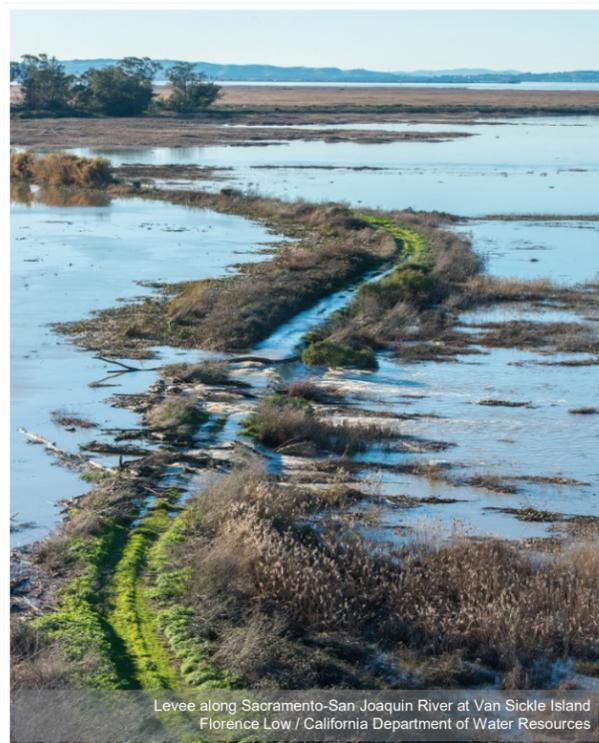
Breach of levee along Sacramento-San Joaquin River at Van Sickle Island  
Florence Low / California Department of Water Resources



Levee along Roaring River flowing into Grizzly Island Wildlife Area  
Florence Low / California Department of Water Resources



Department of Water Resources and other agencies filling sandbags  
Florence Low / California Department of Water Resources



Levee along Sacramento-San Joaquin River at Van Sickle Island  
Florence Low / California Department of Water Resources



Roaring River being overtopped from wetlands adjacent to Sacramento-San Joaquin River  
Florence Low / California Department of Water Resources

**Bradmoor Island Tidal Restoration Project**

By: Elaine Jeu, Environmental Scientist, and Caitlin Roddy, Senior Environmental Scientist Specialist, Department of Water Resources

Tidal Restoration Planning

Over the past two years, The Department of Water Resources (DWR) has completed the acquisition of three private clubs on Bradmoor Island and are currently in the planning phase for tidal restoration to meet the goals of the Suisun Marsh Plan and the Fish Restoration Program.

The goal of the project is to create habitat for threatened and endangered native fish species, including longfin smelt, delta smelt, and Winter-run Chinook salmon, as well as to provide high quality habitat for native terrestrial species. Breaching the island would create approximately 490 acres of tidal wetland along with enhancement of associated tidal berms and upland areas and the transition to upland areas, which may allow the site to be more resilient to sea level rise. The Island is scheduled for construction in 2019. In the meantime, DWR is maintaining the property as a managed wetland, conducting vegetation management activities, and evaluating several alternatives to find optimal breach locations.

Maintenance

DWR maintenance activities at Bradmoor Island include controlling invasive vegetation and fixing and protecting the levees and other infrastructure as needed. *Phragmites australis* is a major invasive weed for both duck club operation and restoration. It spreads in tidal wetlands in Suisun alarmingly fast, as seen in DWR's Blacklock Restoration Project. It is important to control invasive vegetation in managed wetlands before breaching, since it is much more difficult to control in tidal wetlands due to regulatory and logistical challenges. DWR sprays and mows *P. australis* on Bradmoor Island during the spring and summer with the goal of complete eradication.

Levee maintenance this season required more rigorous levee protection measures than usual. Due to the storms and higher tides, DWR had help from the California Conservation Corps at Bradmoor to prevent levee erosion with visqueen and sandbags. DWR will be removing these materials in the spring and beginning repairs.

Surveys

DWR surveys Bradmoor Island biweekly for waterfowl and water birds to evaluate changes in waterbird use following restoration activities. Caitlin Roddy, a DWR Senior Environmental Scientist Specialist, is conducting a study evaluating seed production in conjunction with the bird surveys at Bradmoor to quantify food availability for waterfowl in a variety of habitats. These surveys will help understand possible effects of restoration on habitat quality for waterfowl. This work at Bradmoor Island is a pilot study that will be expanded geographically in coming years in collaboration with UC Davis and the USGS to look at large-scale habitat quality for waterfowl in Suisun Marsh.



Location of Bradmoor Island near Highway 12 and off of Shiloh Road on the east side of Suisun Marsh.



Maintenance activities at Bradmoor Island include controlling invasive vegetation such as *Phragmites australis*.

## January Roaring River Flood Damage

By: Rhiannon KlingonSmith, Senior Environmental Scientist Supervisor,  
Department of Water Resources

As we all know, this storm season has already taken a toll and it's not over yet. In early January, we had the combination of perfect storms; an "atmospheric river" and king tides that lasted for days. Tide levels were 1.5-2 feet higher than predicted due to large volumes of water coming from the sky, water releases at our reservoirs, and mass amounts of water in our systems.

DWR, SRCD and DFW set out to survey levees for overtopping and erosion locations. On the first Monday of the perfect storm, we located sections along Roaring River that had overtopping and serious erosion scours. DWR, began laying visqueen and sandbags as water began to quickly sweep over the levee (Editor's note: see photos below and on Page 6 for more storm-related damage elsewhere, including private levees).

As water continued to flow over the Roaring River levees, and with the threat for a potential breach to occur, DWR was in high flood fighting mode with crews from all over the state on site, in addition to much needed help from the California Conservation Corps. By Friday of that same week, DWR declared an official emergency on Roaring River with all hands on deck to support efforts to cover erosion sites and place thousands of sandbags. The more we fixed, the more we found newly eroded sites or fixed areas that had been washed away by the increasing flows coming over the levees.

By the end of the second week of storms, crews had worked hard day and night in awful weather conditions to stabilize the levees from eroding further. DWR communicated with SRCD and DFW throughout the flood fighting efforts and we assisted each other whenever needed. Overall the team work that occurred between our agencies was successful in aiding DWR's quick response to protecting our levees throughout the Suisun Marsh. As of January 19, 2017 a total of 13 locations along Roaring River were sandbagged (4,400 linear feet) and/or visqueened (3,380 linear feet). At present, Roaring River is closed to traffic on both sides until damage can be repaired.

Moving forward, DWR is already working on how to bring the levees back to pre-storm conditions in addition to addressing raising the levees to withstand high (king) tides and storm surges. Erosion repairs will take place this 2017 work season as soon as we can get equipment safely out to erosion sites and obtain permits. We will continue to provide updates to SRCD and DFW so landowners in the Marsh can stay up to date.



Overtopping along Roaring River caused damage to the levee.



Crews worked to stabilize the levees from eroding further.

## HOW TO: Fill a sandbag & build a sandbag barrier

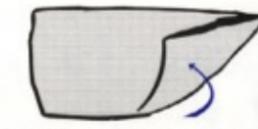
**a.** Work with another person, with one of you holding the bag while the other shovels sand or other material. The first shovelful is placed on the edge of the bag to keep the bag open. The bag holder should bend at the waist, with elbows resting on knees. The shoveler gets rounded scoops of sand and fills the bag **to just one-third full**. Avoid injury by not twisting while shoveling.



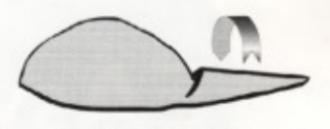
**b.** Fold over the open end of the bag in a triangle to prevent sand from leaking out. Close-knit burlap bags are recommended.



**c.** Your finished bags will look like this:

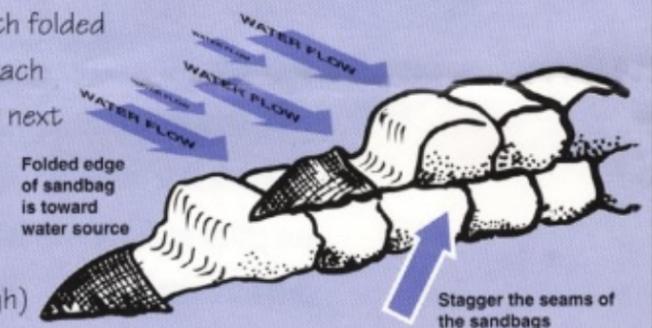


sandbag, 1/3 full, open end folded over - top view

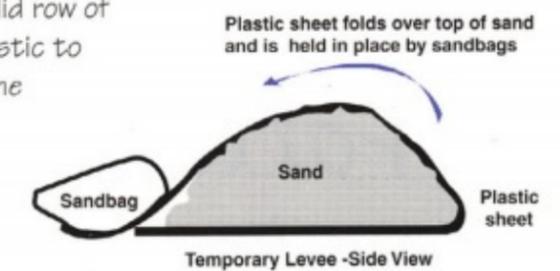
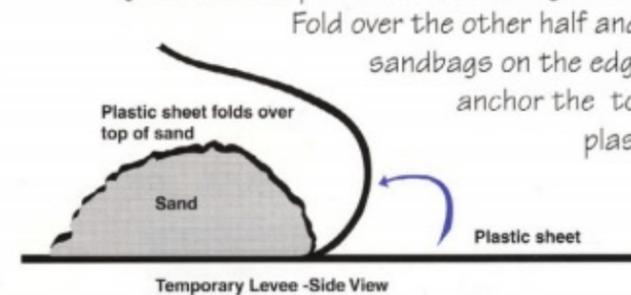


sandbag, open end folded over - side view

**d.** Place a line of bags with the folded side up, with folded edges facing the direction of water flow. Stomp each bag into place. Like you would with bricks, stagger the next layer of bags over the folded tops of the bags underneath. Stomp each layer of bags. To give the structure stability, the base should be 1.5 times wider than the height. (Example, 6 ft. wide by 4 ft. high)



**e.** When you don't have time to build a sandbag barrier, use a temporary levee to raise low areas. Prepare ahead by buying 20-foot-wide sheets of plastic (6-10 mil thickness). Lay out the length you need and place sand, dirt, or gravel on the half facing your property.



**f.** In locations where water could rise with no current, such as at lake shores, lay visqueen plastic on the ground and up to walls, and form a half pyramid of sandbags. Cover doors and vents with plywood.

