

2024 Local Work Group (LWG) Meeting

Survey Results

1. Please rank the following resource concerns or focus areas according to priority (high, medium, low):

Resource Concern	Examples of Related Agricultural Practices	Low	Medium	High	High Priority Ranking
Pest Management	Integrated pest management; insecticide management/reduction.	1	3	11	1 (tie)
Weed management	Herbaceous and woody noxious weeds management; pesticide management/reduction; cover crops; integrated weed management.	1	5	11	1 (tie)
Soil health	Soil amendments (gypsum, mulch, compost); increased soil organic matter; water infiltration and retention; cover crops; crop rotation; nutrient management.	1	2	10	2
Biodiversity	Creating and/or enhancing habitat for native plants, beneficial insects (including pollinators), and wildlife; increasing crop diversity; hedgerow installation.	4	4	8	3 (tie)
Fire risk	Stand thinning; brush management; rangeland planting; prescribed fire.	5	3	8	3 (tie)
Air quality	Maintaining soil surface cover; managing particulate emissions (dust from ag production, rural road usage, etc.); reducing smoke; reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.	5	4	7	4 (tie)
Wildlife habitat	Riparian restoration; oak tree protection and mitigation; pollinator habitat; aquatic and terrestrial vertebrates protection.	7	2	7	4 (tie)
Water quantity	Access and outlets for agricultural uses; irrigation efficiency.	7	4	6	5
Livestock production	Water source development and distribution; cross-fencing; grazing management.	6	3	5	6 (tie)
Organic transition	Organic pest management; intercropping; crop rotation.	10	2	5	6 (tie)
Water quality	Erosion control; sediment removal; nutrient management; riparian restoration.	5	8	4	7

2. What additional working lands resource concerns do you have and how would you rank their priority (high, medium, low)?

Too much tillage in our area. Need to focus on farming within balanced natural ecosystems, but without all the red tape and regulatory hurdles • weed management • Development pressures are high. • managing large invasives like eucalyptus • Feral pig management – pig pups are increasing and natively impacting working and conservation lands. Few owners have the means to control them. • free compost, wood chip, pest management • pest management, wind damage • wind damage, water damage, pest management • water and wind damage, fire risk • hoop houses, organic transition • pest management • pest management, wind damage • Feral pigs (high) – pig damage is pervasive/severe and a regional approach to management is needed. Stock ponds (high) – maintaining functional pond for wildlife habitat and agriculture. •

3. What technical assistance services would be helpful for your operation to receive from USDA and/or the RCDs?

Help with applying for grants/funds • machines to harvest Asian vegetables • storm/flooding damaging grants • cover cropping, irrigation systems, soil health, crop insurance • I'd love to use prescribed burns, but would have no idea how to do it safely. Would be amazing to partner with the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band • water permitting • funding for conservation project implementation; water permitting •

4. Please share with us your knowledge of historically underserved communities that you believe would benefit from expanded outreach and access to USDA programs.

Additional language (Cantonese) • small growers of all ethnicities, races, cultures • all non-English speaking farmers and young/beginning farmers • Regulatory/permitting is slow, labor-intensive and often confusing. • We lease ag lands to farmers who have struggled with water regulations and understanding what is required of them. •

5. Are you aware of any barriers agricultural producers face that limit their ability to access services or implement conservation practices?

Red tape and expensive regulatory obstacles • language barriers • I feel like there is a lot you offer that we are not aware of, so getting the word out more about services/funding would be great. Funding applications/reporting expectations can be time consuming, and farmers are busy! • pig management; livestock pond restoration for benefitting wildlife • Business costs are too high, and fertilizer is too expensive. • Green tape – confusing/burdensome permitting processes, especially around water management. • They might not be on these types of mailing lists. I need to forward workshops like these to our Ag tenants. •

6. Are there other types of services or programs you would like to see offered in the future?

Grants for ecosystem creation • organic growing method for Asian vegetables • grants for compost, organic growing • cart for equipment tools • costs for equipment/tools • funding for fire mitigation, partnerships with indigenous tribes, support for no till systems (like weed abatement) • NRCS services are fairly clear but it's difficult for ranchers to know what the local RCDs can help with. • creek • Growers require more translation services. • wildlife friendly ponds program (like ACRCD); feral pig control program •

7. Are there other types of services or programs you would like to see offered in the future? No comments provided.