

**PLACER COUNTY RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT
MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
Regular Meeting
August 19, 2008**

CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Placer County Resource Conservation District (RCD) Board was called to order by RCD Board Chair Tom Wehri at 4:00 p.m.

MEMBERS AND OTHERS PRESENT

Directors Present:

Thomas (Tom) Wehri
Robert (Bob) Wiswell, Jr.
Stanley (Stan) MacDonald
Claudia Smith
Scott Harvey
Andrew (Dave) Funk

Directors Absent: Steven (Steve) Garcia

Others Present: Mike Brenner, NRCS District Conservationist-Auburn Field Office

Rich Gresham, RCD Manager
Katie Maloney, RCD Programs Manager
Ryan Bellanca, RCD/NRCS GIS Coordinator

APPROVE THE AGENDA

Claudia Smith moved to approve the agenda as presented. Stan MacDonald seconded; motion carried unanimously.

GUESTS

Virginia Getz and Brooks Taylor, Ducks Unlimited
Jeff Darlington, Placer Land Trust

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

APPROVE PREVIOUS MINUTES

Scott Harvey moved to approve the minutes of the July 15, 2008 RCD Board Meeting as presented. Bob Wiswell seconded; motion carried unanimously with Claudia Smith abstaining as she had not reviewed the minutes.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Katie Maloney presented the Financial Statements and the Grants and Programs Summaries for the month ending July 31, 2008

Stan MacDonald moved to approve the financial statements and reports as presented. Claudia Smith seconded; motion carried unanimously.

BUSINESS

New Business:

- a) *Board Update: Regional Red Sesbania Eradication and Control Efforts:*
Rich Gresham introduced Virginia Getz of Ducks Unlimited (DU, invited to give the Board an overview of DU's regional activities that include Red Sesbania control efforts.

Virginia thanked Rich for the opportunity to inform the Board of DU's conservation efforts. Virginia gave a PowerPoint presentation. DU, a non-profit organization, was formed in 1937, and currently has over 792,000 members. DU is focused on wetlands conservation in not just the United States, but also in Canada and Mexico with \$2.7B spent on conservation, 39M acres have been conserved within the US of which 12.2M acres consists of prime wildlife habitat.

Virginia reviewed DU's conservation efforts in terms of the Central Valley Joint Venture (Venture) that includes the partnership of 17 agencies and conservation organizations with the mission to protect, restore, and enhance migratory bird habitat in California's Central Valley. She stressed the importance of the Central Valley Venture to the Pacific Flyway as the Central Valley provides habitat for migratory birds to over-winter. The Venture has helped guide DU's efforts in the Central Valley. Virginia noted that although rice lands provide 92%-95% of the energy needs of waterfowl that over-winter in the Central Valley, rice lands are not currently protected and under pressure from potential development. NAWCA was formed in 1989 to provide federal funding to encourage partnerships that would protect, restore, and enhance waterfowl habitat. She reviewed the current partners involved in the effort and thanked the RCD for being a new partner in the effort.

Virginia stressed the importance of eradicating Red Sesbania in the Dry Creek Watershed and noted the project has solidified a more diversified partnership to protect the valuable corridor and indicated the RCD should be proud of their watershed-based conservation efforts including the Dry Creek and Coon Creek watersheds.

Rich closed the discussion by re-enforcing the importance of Red Sesbania eradication efforts in terms of benefits to wildlife and bird populations, as the plant is toxic to birds and wildlife, in addition to the incredibly invasive plant's potential to negatively impact flood control efforts.

Discussion closed with recognition of the importance of multiple partner projects that address regional issues across jurisdictional boundaries and their ability to accomplish multiple beneficial objectives.

- b) *Discussion to Consider and Possible Action Re: Placer Land Trust Funding Request:*

Tom Wehri welcomed Jeff Darlington Executive Director of Placer Land Trust (PLT) and noted the PLT would be a natural partner in the RCD's efforts to protect, restore, and enhance wildlife habitat in Placer County.

Jeff reviewed PLT's current efforts in terms of land management activities and their subsequent search for funding to purchase a tractor to assist their land management activities.

Board discussion revolved around PLT's efforts and highlighted a potential to partnership in areas including erosion control, land management, restoration, and enhancement activities.

The Board agreed that additional discussions between the RCD and PLT should be held to identify areas of mutual benefit and cooperation. The Board expressed an interest in a "meet and greet" type of situation to become better acquainted.

In terms of the RCD funding assistance for the purchase of a tractor, the Board noted the RCD's expected budget constraints resulting from the state budget deficit and did not take any action, but instead offered possible RCD grant match if the PLT can find an appropriate grantor to submit a funding proposal for the tractor, among other suggestions such as renting a tractor when needed for specific land management tasks.

Jeff closed by inviting the RCD to PLT's annual community event slated for the afternoon of September 27th at the Taylor Ranch located on Coon Creek in North Auburn.

The Board thanked Jeff for the invitation and his time and instructed staff to pursue further discussions regarding the potential areas of partnership.

c) *Discussion to Consider and Possible Action Re: Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) Services Request:*

Rich Gresham reviewed the SNC Services Request to provide contractor services to conduct five tasks to implement SNC's Working Landscape-Healthy Forest-Healthy Watersheds Conservation and Enhancement Project. He noted there is the potential for another \$50K contract from SNC to assist them in the implementation of SNC mission and goals, once the state budget has been settled and funding is once again available.

Tom Wehri recommended the Board approve the Services Request as presented. Scott Harvey moved to approve the request as presented. Claudia Smith seconded; motion carried unanimously.

d) *Discussion to Consider and Possible Action Re: Annual Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA):*

Rich Gresham reviewed the Federal General Salary Table with the Board and requested they consider approving a Annual COLA increase of 4% for employees effective July 1, 2008.

After Board discussion, Bob Wiswell moved to approve a 3.75% COLA increase to be effective July 1, 2008. Dave Funk seconded; motion carried unanimously.

e) *Discussion to Consider and Possible Action Re: CalFire Fire and Resource Assessment Program (FRAP) Funding Request:*

Rich reviewed the request as presented in the Board Package for consideration and asked the Board to approve a \$250 contribution for the FRAP Unit.

Board discussion revolved around the how the FRAP Unit is a resource not just available to CalFire, but also relied on by others outside of the agency, including RCDs and private foresters for information upon which to plan and implement resource-based projects.

Scott Harvey moved to approve a contribution of \$250 as requested. Stan MacDonald seconded; motion carried unanimously.

Old Business:

f) *Update Re: Placer County Chipper Program Funding:*

Katie Maloney reported the expected execution the \$200K in Prop 40 funding to support the chipper program has come through.

Ryan Bellanca reviewed the Wildland/Urban Interface (WUI) Funding Proposal he developed to provide for continued Chipper Program sustainability and asked Board approval to submit the proposal for funding consideration.

Scott Harvey moved to approve the submission of the WUI funding proposal. Stan MacDonald seconded; motion carried unanimously.

Ryan indicated he has developed two additional funding proposals for Sierra Nevada Conservancy funding consideration. He requested Board approval to submit two funding proposals, one to support updating the Healthy Forest/Defensible Space Handbook and the other to develop environmental documentation for Placer Sierra Fire Safe Council projects.

After a short discussion that revealed Ryan's need for the Board to pass a formal Board Resolution giving permission to submit each proposal and due to the time constraints with the deadline for submission coming before the next regular board meeting is scheduled, the Board determined due to the time sensitive nature of the need, to make an exception in terms of the presented agenda and consider passing two resolutions approving the submission of the proposals as requested and authorizing Rich Gresham to serve as the RCD representative. Scott Harvey moved to pass both resolutions as requested. Stan MacDonald seconded; motion carried unanimously.

RCD COMMITTEE REPORTS

None

DIRECTORS' REPORTS

Dave Funk:

- Dave gave an overview of the August 18th meeting held with the US Army Corps of Engineers at their Sacramento Field Office. The RCD requested the meeting to identify potential projects and sources of funding to conduct watershed-based restoration, preservation, and habitat creation projects. The meeting resulted in the identification of in-lieu mitigation fees as a potential source of funding for such projects. Corps staff encouraged the RCD to continue pursuing opportunities to conduct watershed-based restoration, preservation, and habitat creation projects.

Scott Harvey:

- Scott reported meeting with the CA Department of Conservation (DOC) with Rich and others to further the formation of a State Resources Advisory Committee by addressing formation issues including the definition of committee tasks.

Bob Wiswell:

- Bob reported he attended his usual Farm Bureau meeting and announced upcoming High Sierra Resource Conservation and Development council meetings.
- Bob reported the mobile poultry processing trailer unit is getting closer to becoming operational.
- Bob reported changes to the Small Farm Progress Days annual event are being considered. He will keep the Board posted.

Tom Wehri:

- Tom Wehri noted potential results of the final Farm Bill.

RCD STAFF REPORTS

In addition to the written activity reports for the month of July, submitted in the Board Package, the following points were discussed:

- Rich Gresham reported he will be attending the October 11th *Annual Wildfire on the Divide* event promoting stewardship and the CA Forest Improvement Plan (CFIP) cost share program. Rich noted the field trip to showcase on-the-ground projects including healthy forest and fuel load reduction, invasives control and eradication, and vegetation management practices will be held on its own to avoid competing with the Divide event. PG&E has been approached for funding to defray expenses.

- Katie Maloney reported she awaits a response from the CPA regarding her comments on the Draft Financial Statement for Fiscal Year ended June 30, 2007.
- Ryan Bellanca reviewed his GIS mapping efforts and noted he developed three funding proposals for this funding cycle.

AGENCY REPORTS

In addition to the written activity reports for July/August, submitted in the Board Package, the following points were discussed.

- Mike briefly reviewed the activity report detailing the processing of Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) applications, field checks and site visits, and canceled contracts from 2003. .
- Mike reported Auburn Field Office Engineer will begin serving surrounding field offices.
- Mike reported incurring more vehicle vandalism regardless of landlord having installed a 24 hour security camera surveillance system.

COMMUNICATIONS

- Letter dated July 31st from the Placer County Land Trust soliciting funding for a tractor to conduct land management activities.
- Letter dated August 8th from the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) thanking the RCD for our \$250 contribution to the NACD Capital Court Campaign.
- Letter dated August 13th from the City of Auburn regarding a Subordination Request relating to the Proposed Bond Issue for the Auburn Redevelopment Project of the Auburn Urban Development Authority.
- RCD Letter of Support dated July 21st to the Sierra Nevada Conservancy for the University of CA Davis "Fish and Habitat Response to the Natural Flow Regime of the North Fork American River" funding proposal.
- Placer county Election letter dated July 11th informing the RCD of new regulation related to agency gifts and related reporting requirements.
- Placer County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo) Agenda for the August 13th meeting
- Placer County Agricultural Commission Agenda for the August 11th meeting
- Placer County Flood Control and Water Conservation District Agenda for the August 7th meeting

- National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) newsletters, *Forestry Notes*, for August 2008
- NACD newsletter, *News & Views*, for July/August 2008
- NACD report, *An Inventory of Conservation Districts' Urban and Community Conservation Activities April 2008*.
- *CalPERS Employers News* for summer 2008.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

The September RCD Board Meeting Agenda will include the following items:

- Review of Funding Proposal Executive Summaries

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to conduct, Scott Harvey moved for adjournment. Bob Wiswell seconded; motion carried unanimously. Tom Wehri adjourned the meeting at 6:23 p.m.