

**PLACER COUNTY RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT
MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
Regular Meeting
November 29, 2005**

CALL TO ORDER

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

MEMBERS AND OTHERS PRESENT

Directors Present: Stanley (Stan) MacDonald
Stewart Feldman
Chris Paull
Cherie Schiavone
Thomas (Tom) Wehri
Robert (Bob) Wiswell, Jr.
Gregory (Greg) Nau

Directors Absent: None

Others Present: Rich Gresham, RCD Manager
Mike Brenner, NRCS District Conservationist
Katie Maloney, RCD Sr. Administrative Assistant
Bill Templin, American River Watershed Coordinator
Gregg Bates, Dry Creek Watershed Coordinator

APPROVE THE AGENDA

Stewart Feldman moved to approve the agenda as presented. Chris Paull seconded, motion carried unanimously.

GUESTS

Curtis Tarver, NRCS
Claudia Smith, Blossom Hill Farm
Christian Carleton, Foothill Associates

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

Stewart Feldman moved to approve the minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of October 18, 2005 with a correction of an omission regarding process on agenda item e). Chris Paull seconded; motion carried unanimously.

Stewart Feldman complimented Katie on her write up of her presentation of the Direct and Indirect Expense Analysis.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Katie Maloney presented the *Financial Statements for the Month Ended October 31, 2005* and *Schedule of Expenses and Warrants Issued for October 2005*.

Chris Paull moved to approve the *Financial Statement* and the *Schedule of Expenses and Warrants Issued for the Month ended October 31, 2005*. Bob Wiswell seconded; motion carried unanimously.

The board held a brief discussion regarding the chipper program and potential ways to promote RCD's role in the program, uses for the chips left on landowner property, education regarding best management practices, and RCD services available to landowners.

BUSINESS

Old Business:

- a) *CA Association of Resource Conservation Districts (CARCD) Annual Meeting Report:* Chris Paull, Stewart Feldman, Tom Wehri, and Rich Gresham all reviewed their participation at the CARCD Annual Meeting.

The opening session featured a PowerPoint presentation developed by Tom that highlighted our district's strategies for long term success and stressed the development of partnerships and the importance of diversification.

Chris highlighted breakout sessions focused on land trust activities and disseminated useful information on conservation easements, easement management issues and included creek encroachment challenges.

Chris reported the controversial resolution regarding staff being allowed to represent districts in lieu of director participation was discussed and sent to committee for further review. He briefly reviewed an Emergency Resolution addressing rangeland issues. He closed his comments by indicating the conference enjoyed good district participation.

Stewart highlighted his networking activities and reviewed the information he garnered during the opportunities to share with other districts.

Stewart noted the Forestry & Fuels Management Committee tour of post fire Julian Mountain highlighted pertinent issues for our local post fire watersheds.

Stewart briefly reviewed the results of the business meeting where resolutions submitted for consideration were decided.

Stewart Feldman announced he has been elected to the CARCD Board Secretary/Treasurer, filling the vacancy left by Bob Beegle.

Tom reported the district received the CARCD Conservation Star Award in acknowledgement of our full payment of dues.

The district was also awarded third place in the poster contest for the poster developed by Bill Templin on behalf of the district.

The board thanked Bill for his efforts on their behalf.

Tom announced two new RCDs have been formed; Del Norte County RCD and Tuolumne RCD.

Rich noted with new CARCD staff in place, communication between districts and the CARCD are expected to improve.

Rich reported the CARCD dues structure continued to be a topic of discussion at the meeting.

Rich noted better public information exchange with the small landowners about developing a watershed view in regarding to dealing with population density issues, Ag community challenges, and invasives species control.

Greg added it seems that small producers are most receptive to best management practices (BMPs) and suggested the potential to target market information.

Tom closed discussion by thanking everyone for their participation and noting the meeting while expensive to attend was very worthwhile.

- b) *Discussion to Consider and Possible Action Re: Execution of Auburn Recreation District (ARD)/RCD Memorandum of Understanding (MOU):*

Tom Wehri and Rich Gresham gave a brief review of the agreement included in the board package that will provide a structure for the RCD to hold the easement agreement and oversee of implementation of the easement management plan.

After a brief board discussion, Stewart Feldman moved to approve execution of the MOU. Cherie Schiavone seconded; motion carried unanimously.

- c) *Discussion to Consider and Possible Action Re: Execution of Placer County and Sutter County RCDs and Ducks Unlimited MOU:*

Tom Wehri briefly reviewed the agreement included in the board package that will provide a structure to develop the funding proposal discussed at the last board meeting. After a short discussion, Chris Paull moved to approve execution of the MOU. Greg Nau seconded; motion carried unanimously.

New Business:

- d) *Discussion to Consider and Possible Action Re: RCD Letter to the Placer County Board of Supervisors (BOS) Recommending Appointment of Claudia Smith to the RCD Board:*
Rich briefly reviewed the process used to fill RCD Board vacancies.

Tom Wehri reviewed the letter, included in the board package, recommending the BOS appoint Claudia Smith to the RCD Board and moving forward with filling the vacancy created by the resignation of Cherie Schiavone.

After a brief discussion, Chris Paull moved to approve the letter of recommendation. Greg Nau seconded; motion carried unanimously.

- e) *Discussion to Consider and Possible Action Re: RCD Letter of Support for the Bay Institute's How on Earth – The Challenge to Restore Nature PBS Documentary and Potential RCD Participation:*

Tom Wehri reviewed the opportunity for the RCD to serve as a facilitator between the Bay Institute and local senior citizens from Sun City-Roseville in the citizen based restoration effort to be highlighted in a 3 part Public Broadcasting System (PBS) documentary.

After board discussion regarding currently ongoing Sun City resident restoration activities, Greg Nau moved to approve sending the letter of support for Bay Institute's restoration and documentary development effort. Stewart Feldman seconded; motion carried unanimously.

- f) *Discussion to Consider and Possible Action Re: Changing the Regular RCD Board Meeting from 4 p.m. to 3 p.m.:*

Tom Wehri reminded the board that Greg Nau requested last month the board consider changing the time of the regular board meetings from 4:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

After a brief discussion about the best meeting time for everyone, Greg moved to change the meeting time from 4:00 p.m. to 3:15 p.m. on the third Tuesday of each month (normal day, different time). Bob Wiswell seconded; motion carried unanimously.

- g) *Update Re: Required Board Ethics Training:*

Tom Wehri reviewed the new law AB1234 requiring Special District Board Members undergo ethics training every two years beginning 2007 and the subsequent need to update district policies to reflect the new requirements.

Rich Gresham reported he has already sent revised draft policy and draft RCD Expense Reimbursement Forms to Tom for review by the Operations Committee.

After board discussion, Stewart Feldman suggested the board formally refer policy revision to the Operations Committee for possible action at the next board meeting. The board agreed to adopt the RCD Expense Reimbursement Form as presented in the board package.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

CARCD Forestry & Fuel Management Committee:

Stewart Feldman reported the CARCD committee, in conjunction with the CARCD Annual Meeting, held a tour of Julian Mountain's fire damaged area that highlighted the same issues being faced by local watersheds; urban development, the best use of funding, and the need for active land management. The committee's strategic planning effort was also finalized at the November meeting.

Rich Gresham added SoCal folks seem to be focused on preservation and not aware of the need for active land management and thinks it will be a challenge to change their mindset.

The next RCD Forestry & Fuels Management Committee meeting is slated for January 9th at 9:30 a.m. in the conference room.

RCD Fisheries & Wildlife Committee:

Greg Nau reported that while no committee meeting was held, he addressed the American River Watershed Group about the formation of an Upper American River Watershed Foundation modeled on the Henry's Fork Foundation on which he serves as a board member.

Bill Templin added that Greg's talk instigated a great discussion of the topic. No opposition to the idea has been voiced thus far. Discussion has been focused on how the new foundation might differentiate itself from other entities, board formation, and whether to appeal to a broad base of recreational users or focus on gaining the support of anglers.

Board discussion revolved around the possibility of the prospective foundation being formed under the auspices of the RCD, potential funding for the fledgling foundation, and the need to gather additional input from the American River Watershed Institute (ARWI) and other entities.

Greg closed discussion by offering his ongoing support to further the effort.

DIRECTORS' REPORTS

Cherie Schiavone:

- Cherie reminded the board this would be her last meeting and stressed no recognition form the BOS is necessary and noted she will take with her all the things that she has learned while serving on the board.

The board thanked Cherie for her service and wished her well.

Bob Wiswell:

- Bob reported attending the High Sierra Resource Conservation & Development Council Annual Meeting and passed around the annual report. He expressed hope that the new coordinator will have an agricultural background. Bob also lamented Supervisor Kranz's lack of attendance at HSRC&D meetings.

Chris Paull:

- Chris reported the Placer Chapter of the CA Special Districts Association (CSDA) is looking for more participation from special districts. He will be serving on the County Treasury Oversight Committee. The chapter has also been focused on the ethics training issue.
- Chris reported being drafted to serve on Placer County Water Agency's (PCWA)'s Canal Efficiency Study Advisory Committee.

- Franklin School sold \$1,200 - \$1,300 worth of pumpkins.

Claudia Smith noted excess pumpkins can be used for livestock feed.

Stewart Feldman:

- Stewart reported attending the Placer County Fire Safe Alliance meeting that revolved around a potential funding proposal to provide for a biomass facility in the High Sierra.

Tom Wehri:

- Tom reported CARCD has taken on a National Fish & Wildlife Foundation project focused on watershed issues and showcasing watershed efforts called "A District Runs Through It". He has passed on a packet of information to Rich and other RCDs.
- Tom reviewed his activities in Arkansas and passed around an Arkansas newspaper highlighting the Ag community and partnerships.

STAFF REPORTS

RCD Report:

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

- Gregg Bates handed out copies of his activities report, reviewed it with the board, and fielded questions.

Board discussion revolved around the emerging controversy around the county posting signs identifying local stream crossings and the ag community's feeling that they encourage trespassing on private property, and the ag communities desire to be able to post signs encouraging sales of local produce and come up against county rules and regulations that prevent their posting.

Gregg noted that he is finding in the implementation of his second coordinator objective is that a surprising number of developers are interested in low impact development (LID) techniques.

- Gregg reported the DCC Board is considering expanding their area of focus to include the entire American Basin area and funding proposals are being developed with the basin being a focus of developing a monitoring program and conducting a fish passage assessment.
- Bill Templin handed out copies of his monthly activity report, reviewed his activities, and fielded questions from the board.
- Bill handed out copies of a tri-fold to promote interest in the formation of an Upper American River Watershed Foundation.
- Bill reported the PCWA Canal Efficiency Study was resented to the Western Placer Cooperative Watershed Group earlier this year and highlighted the challenge of balancing efficiency and supporting the ecological systems that have evolved around the canal leaks.
- Bill reported the CA Water Forum highlight was a discussion on water rights.

Greg Nau indicated water rights are a timely subject and expressed an interest in having a presentation to the board on the subject.

- Bill reported receiving an invitation to attend the Water Forum Environmental Caucus and noted that PCWA has received high ratings as a cooperative member of the forum. The main challenge seems to revolve around the fact that there is no way to monitor usage, etc.
- Bill noted his focus over the last two months has been on developing funding proposals.

- Bill reported a poll conducted at the last ARWG meeting identified water quality as a number one issue and felt FREC re-licensing is driving the issue.
- Bill attended the reception for Sierra Nevada Conservancy's (SNC)'s Executive Director Jim Branham. It looks like fuel load reduction will be the conservancy's main focus.
- Katie Maloney reported finalizing the financial statements with the RCD's CPA and solicited interest in having Mr. Myers come to the January board meeting. The board expressed an interest and Katie will follow up with an invitation.
- Rich Gresham reported he is working with Jeff Calvert on the extension of the RCD's role in the serving the CARCD subcommittees beyond 6-30-06. Rich noted that he has approached Jeff about removing liability insurance requirements from the RCD contract language for administrative support of the committees due to the prohibitive cost of insurance and the lack of exposure. Jeff had no problem with deleting the requirement for insurance and Rich asked for the board's approval to delete the requirement. After discussion, the board concurred that it was appropriate to delete the insurance requirements from the subcontract.
- Rich reported sending draft policy language to reflect the training in ethics requirements to Tom for review.
- Rich reported the all but a few landowners that applied to participate in the Colfax shaded fuel break project have signed agreements. He noted weather will hold up implementation, but the before photo documentation has been completed.
- Rich reported the individual workplans with the Dept. of Facility Services is in the process of being drafted.
- Rich indicated a discussion at the CARCD meeting regarding the Spring Regional Meeting highlighted a desire for the district to partner with the El Dorado RCD in cost sharing and developing a regional approach to meeting presentations that will encourage cooperation and partnership between RCDs in the region.
- Rich reported he is planning to have Brian Leahy at the next board meeting to talk about the potential development of a bond measure that will provide for baseline funding for RCDs statewide. He will also work to have someone from the state board attend to talk about water rights as requested.

AGENCY REPORTS

- Mike Brenner handed out the NRCS activity report for October/November for board perusal. He apologized for missing the last board meeting and noted his activity report will be included in board packages in the future.
- Mike reported the receipt of 17-18 Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) applications and noted he is hoping to generate more application in the second round of sign-ups. Most of the applications have been forestry related.
- A promotion for the new Conservation Security Program is being planned. The program area has been expanded to include a small area inside Placer County boundaries.
- Mike has been familiarizing himself with current projects by conducting site visits and field verifications.
- Mike solicited board input as to his new monthly reporting format.
- Mike reviewed NRCS training that staff has been attending.

- Mike included a summary of his background in his report and suggested holding a transition meeting to better acquaint him with board members and requested they share some basic information about themselves and identify their particular issues of concern, etc.

Tom encouraged board members and staff to share information with Mike.

- Curtis Tarver gave the board updates on the HSRC&D Coordinator selection process and solicited board input. Applications close on December 14th.
- Curtis noted the two RCDs, newly formed, will need support from successful districts and solicited assistance from the board in mentoring the new districts. He asked that the next regional meeting discuss the development of a mentoring program that could address funding opportunities, share contact information, and provide education to new RCDs. He promoted bi-regional collaboration between the Central Sierra and San Joaquin regional members.

Stewart Feldman noted the Leadership Academy is working hard to develop a program that will be useful for both established and new RCDs including training new RCD board members.

Tom volunteered to assist in an effort to identify needs, provide avenues of assistance, and help facilitate the exchange of information.

Discussion revolved around how to help those RCDs that have no baseline funding and the potential for the development of a bond measure that will address that deficit.

Tom brought up the issue of the Farm Bill's Technical Service Provider (TSP) system and Curtis noted the Request for Proposals (RFP) process is hoped to garner a response from RCDs that are capable of providing technical assistance to NRCS.

COMMUNICATIONS

- Thank you note from Chris Kerston to Mark White for his assistance at the Beard Ranch during the Farm & Barn Tour.
- Notice of Placer GROWN workshop on how to form and operate a Community Supported Agriculture program to market fruits, vegetables, and herbs directly to the community.
- Dept. of Conservation newsletter, *RCD Outlook 2005*, for October 2005.
- Notice of new office location for Valley Vision.
- Notice that CDF Nursery Program seedlings are available from the Magalia Nursery.
- CSDA email regarding compliance with AB1234-Ethics Training.
- CARCD Alert regarding compliance with AB1234-Ethics Training and director expense reimbursement policy.
- NRCS news release announcing Ed Burton's selection as State Conservationist
- Placer County Flood Control and Water Conservation District Technical Advisory Committee Agenda for November 3rd and minutes of the October 6th meeting.
- US Dept. of the Interior notice of intent to conduct 5 year reviews of 31 species in CA and NV currently listed as endangered or threatened under the Endangered Species Act published in the Federal Register on November 3rd and the re-opening of the public comment period until January 3, 2006.

- CA Regional Water Quality Control Board – Lahontan Region, Notice of Availability of Draft Plan Amendments to Adopt a Total Maximum Daily Load for Sediment, Squaw Creek, Placer County. Public comments regarding the plan amendment will be accepted until January 5, 2006.
- CA Regional Water Quality Control Board – Lahontan Region, Notice of Public Hearing Notice of Filing a Draft Environmental Document to be held April 12, 2006.
- Placer County Agricultural Commission agenda for November 14th and minutes of the October 10th meeting.
- Copy of letter dated November 14th to Nevada Irrigation District (NID) General Manager Ron Nelson regarding the annexation of Atwood III into the NID.
- Letter dated November 3rd regarding invitation to continue participating in the Nevada Placer Noxious Weed Management Group by executing a new MOU that will follow the original MOU the RCD previously executed and that will expire on December 31, 2005.
- Letter dated November 17th requesting assistance with the promotion of PlacerGROWN's 11th Annual Farm Conference slated for February 4, 2006 and associated promotional materials.
- Notice of Valley Vision agricultural forum, *Holding Our Agricultural Ground*, slated for November 2nd.
- Registration materials for seminar, *Forest Roads: Advancements in Science and Technology*, slated for December 13-14 in Eugene Oregon.
- Protect American River Canyons (PARC) newsletter, *The Confluence*, for autumn 2005.
- High Ranch Nursery newsletter, *HRN News*, for November 2005.
- CSDA member information packet.
- National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) newsletter, *News & Views*, for September/October 2005.
- Great Valley newsletter, *Great Valley News*, for fall 2005.
- NACD newsletter, *Forestry Notes*, for October 2005.
- CSDA brochure, *CSDA News*, Conference Issue.
- PG&E Stewardship Council newsletter introducing itself to the community.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

The following items will be on the December agenda:

- Water Rights Discussion
- CARCD Statewide RCD Issues Discussion
- Board Elections for 2006
- Personnel Policy Review
- Signage Issues Discussion

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to conduct, Stewart Feldman moved to adjourn the meeting. Cherie Schiavone seconded; motion carried unanimously. Board Chair Tom Wehri adjourned the meeting at 7:23 p.m.