

**PLACER COUNTY RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT
MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
Regular Meeting
March 21, 2006**

CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Placer County Resource Conservation District Board was called to order by RCD Board Chair Chris Paull at 3:22 p.m.

MEMBERS AND OTHERS PRESENT

Directors Present: Stanley (Stan) MacDonald
Stewart Feldman
Chris Paull
Gregory (Greg) Nau
Claudia Smith
Whitney Nicholas, Associate Director

Directors Absent: Thomas (Tom) Wehri
Robert (Bob) Wiswell, Jr.

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

APPROVE THE AGENDA

Mike Brenner requested Agency Reports follow the Financial Reports. Stewart Feldman moved to approve the agenda with the requested change in order. Stan MacDonald seconded, motion carried unanimously.

GUESTS

Christina Abuelo, Foothill Farmers' Market Association Marketing Manager

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

Greg Nau moved to approve the minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of February 21, 2006 as presented. Stewart Feldman seconded; motion carried unanimously.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Katie Maloney reported due to the loss of her father and having to conduct family business she was unable to present the *Financial Statements for the Month Ended February 28, 2006*, the *Schedule of Expenses and Warrants Issued for February 2006*. The Board expressed their sympathy and deferred approving the financials until next month.

BUSINESS

Old Business:

- a) *Central Sierra Regional CA Association of RCDs (CARCD) Spring Meeting Update:*
Rich Gresham handed out copies of the agenda for the regional meeting and the Board noted who is planning to attend the meeting so Katie could complete the meeting registration process.

Rich noted the CARCD Central Sierra Regional Mapping proposal will be discussed at the meeting for feedback.

After discussion regarding the sharing of the expenses for the meeting with the El Dorado County/Georgetown Divide RCD (EI D/GD RCD) and the possibility that the \$30 lunch charge for participants might not cover all of the meeting expenses, Stewart Feldman moved to share 50/50 additional meeting expenses with the EI D/GD RCD not to exceed \$400. Claudia Smith seconded; motion carried unanimously.

Claudia has provided a framed poster of this year's Foothill Farmers' Market Poster as a raffle prize and Christina Abuelo offered to acquire some bottles of wine from local vintners to augment the poster.

The Board accepted and thanked Christina for her offer.

b) *Discussion Re: RCD 2006-2007 Annual Planning Process:*

Chris Paull reviewed past discussion regarding the planning process and the possibility of meeting at the Loomis Library on June 1st from 3-7 p.m. to discuss the upcoming fiscal year's workplan, etc.

Mike Brenner offered to look into meeting at the Loomis Library on June 1st with May 25th as an alternate date.

Chris reported reviewing the current annual and five year plans with Rich in anticipation of the annual planning process.

Board members talked about sending Katie their top five issues of importance to be compiled and used in the planning process.

New Business:

c) *Discussion to Consider and Possible Action Re: Foothill Farmers Market 2006 Brochure Funding Request:*

Stewart Feldman noted the funding request was not considered by the Education Committee and instead was routed directly to the Board for consideration

Christina Abuelo thanked the Board for their support last year in the printing of the 2005 Market Schedule and handed out copies of the brochure that included an acknowledgement of the RCD's support. Christina asked the Board to consider continued support for the 2006 Market Schedule. She expressed the hope of printing 30K brochures that will include this year's schedule. She noted that when the website is up it is hoped that the products available for sale will be noted on the website for each market. She reviewed expected brochure distribution points and indicated that more face-to-face promotion is being planned for implementation like having a presence at Chamber of Commerce Mixers.

Greg Nau moved to support the Farmers' Market Association brochure printing with a contribution of \$1K. Stewart Feldman seconded; motion carried unanimously, with Claudia Smith abstaining.

Christina thanked the Board for their support and closed discussion by noting the brochures have been a very effective way to get the word out about the Farmers' Market.

d) *Update Re: RCD Mid-Year Accomplishment Report:*

Rich Gresham referred to the Accomplishment Report included in the Board Package and reported on the results of initial meetings with the Placer County Executive Office (CEO) and Supervisors Kranz and Holmes. He noted the county's interest in re-focusing some RCD efforts towards stormwater management, Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) issues, continued efforts in terms of Best Management Practices (BMPs) for erosion and sediment control for developers and contractors focused on eastern slope communities, watershed group support, vegetation management, and grant writing assistance.

Rich handed out a spreadsheet of Items of Potential RCD Assistance for Board review.

Whitney Nicholas reviewed past Western Shasta RCD efforts in terms of runoff education for local stakeholders.

Rich noted CEO is asking to re-direct \$12.8K in funding from Placer County Fire Safe Alliance and Urban Forestry support to stormwater management and erosion and sediment control workshops and TMDL issues.

Stewart Feldman suggested the RCD consider continuing support for the Fire Safe Alliance.

Rich noted the County Office of Emergency Services would be taking over the task in total, but the RCD would continue to participate as a member of the Alliance.

Board discussion revolved around on-the-ground assistance; Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) efforts; the possibility of continued RCD support for the urban forestry group, Placer Tree Partners; assistance with grant opportunities; vegetation management planning and the need for shaded fuel break maintenance; the potential for Hidden Falls Regional Park demonstration projects; and the need for the RCD to find resources to continue support in those areas deemed important to the RCD regardless of the county support.

One issue of importance reflected in Board discussion was the necessity of the RCD to be viewed as a landowners' resource and not a regulatory body. And the importance of choosing tasks that will enforce that perception and avoid those that detract from that perception.

Discussion continued regarding the changing political climate of Placer County.

Rich indicated he will continue to set meetings with the remaining Placer County Supervisors and expects the upcoming county contract will be for the same amount with a redirection of some RCD activities.

Stewart stressed he would like to see the items that fall out of the county contract be placed in the hopper for consideration in the annual planning process.

Mark White suggested the Board review the rates charged in contract work and noted he has received feedback from Dept. of Facility Services that rates charged in the private sector for his kind of expertise run from \$110 - \$120 per hour and his current contract hourly rate is \$55.

Greg Nau moved that Rich review the current rates being charged and make recommendations for possible action at the next Board meeting. Stan MacDonald seconded; motion carried unanimously.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

RCD Education Committee:

Stewart Feldman reported that although the Education Committee did not meet the budget was amended to reflect the \$1K contribution to the Foothills Farmers' Market Association.

RCD Forestry & Fuels Management Committee:

Stan MacDonald reported the first phase of the I-80 Firesafe Freeway Project has been completed with the next phase to address that portion of freeway from Newcastle to Colfax.

Stewart noted CalTrans has been pleasantly surprised with the receipt of positive feedback from the public regarding the project and how good it looks to those passing by.

Katie Maloney reported she will be meeting with Nevada-Yuba-Placer Battalion Chief Rob Paulus regarding the Placer County Chipper Program as Nevada County is interested in setting up a sister program.

Rich reported the Colfax Shaded Fuel Break project is the process of being completed.

DIRECTORS' REPORTS

Claudia Smith:

- Claudia reported attending numerous meeting during the month that included Placer GROWN, Sierra Business Council's Art-Heritage-Agriculture (AHA) Committee meeting, and a grant steering committee meeting.

Stewart Feldman:

- Stewart attended the Sierra Business Council's Art-Heritage-Agriculture (AHA) Committee meeting and noted the CA Heritage Corridor Act allocates resources to list heritage trails and allows for local entities to participate in the process.

After Board discussion, it was determined that Claudia and Stewart will serve as Board liaisons for the AHA Committee.

- Stewart promoted CA Association of RCDs (CARCD) *Day in the Capitol* slated for May 17th.
- Stewart attended the Sierra Nevada Alliance meeting focused on identifying projects for the Sierra Nevada Conservancy.

Chris Paull:

- Chris met with Rich to discuss the annual planning process and review the current RCD '05-'06 Annual Plan and 5 Year Plan.
- Chris hosted the CDSA-Placer Chapter (Chapter) meeting on March 1st with Katie's support. He briefly reviewed Supervisor Kranz's presentation regarding the administration and allocation of Middle Fork Project (MFP) revenue in anticipation of 2013 FERC re-licensing.

The Chapter voted to provide Supervisor Kranz a letter of support for his concept that entails forming a JPA governed by a board of consisting of two PCWA representatives, two Placer County Supervisors, and a fifth representative, a city council member or special district representative, to handle the revenue that will be generated from the MFP post 2013. He noted the county is financing the development of defining guidelines for the MFP FERC re-licensing effort.

Chris noted the topic of administrative support for the Chapter was also discussed and will be taken up further at the CSDA Annual Meeting.

Chris reported being appointed to serve as the CSDA representative on the Placer County Treasury Oversight Committee.

The Special District Representative seat on the Placer Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo) is vacant and a subsequent election will held in the near future. He noted the importance in maintaining participation in the CSDA as a means of maintaining a seat on LAFCo.

Board discussion resulted in the Board requesting Rich to submit Chris Paull as the Special District Representative nominee.

- Chris reported he was present at the meetings with Supervisor Kranz and Holmes and noted their concerns revolved around stormwater management and fire safe issues.
- Chris reported preparing for his trip with Tom Wehri to Washington D.C to attend the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) Legislative Conference the end of May.

STAFF REPORTS

RCD Report:

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

- Katie Maloney noted the Annual 700 Forms are due by April 1st.
 - Mark White handed out CARCD *Day in the Capitol* materials for Board review. He will be organizing the RCD's participation in the event as usual.
- Stewart noted CARCD is looking to have RCDs, unable to attend the event, send in a list of their issues and concerns to be added to a formal CARCD letter.
- Mark reported participating in the '06 Annual Ag Tour planning meeting and invited participation and/or input from the Board.
 - Mark reported meeting with PCWA and UC Extension personnel to discuss the protocol for selection of suitable sites to install the neutron probe moisture sensor. He briefly reviewed the grant pilot program that will provide sensors to a select group of volunteer growers to determine the effectiveness of moisture sensors in terms of productivity, quality of fruit, and water conservation. Site selection will be completed by the end of March with probe installations to be completed prior to the irrigation season. It is planned to dovetail the effort with EQIP and might provide the opportunity to feature the moisture sensing device on the Ag Tour.
 - He noted working on an *in-field* training workshop under contract with the county and has also begun to develop Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plans (SWPPPs).
 - Bill Templin handed out copies of his activity report and reviewed his activities that included attending a Cosumnes-American-Bear-Yuba (CABY) Integrated Regional Water Management Plan (IRWMP) planning meeting. He indicated meetings provide him with education and additional outreach opportunities.
 - Bill participated in a Foothills Water Network meeting providing an opportunity to work with fly fishing and commercial rafting representatives on ideas for stream flow and fish populations, distributions, and habitat for the FERC re-licensing process.
 - Bill participated in a Water Forum Successor meeting where water conservation, supplies and sources in the Lower and Upper American River watersheds were topics of discussion after a presentation on *Water Conservation Technical Analysis*.
 - Bill outlined his current efforts in terms of implementing education and outreach, fostering opportunities for collaboration among stakeholders, and informing landowners on water quality issues.
 - A North Fork American River Creek Week slated for April 21st -30th will culminate in a clean up effort being sponsored by the RCD at Oxbow Reservoir.
 - Gregg Bates handed out copies of his activity report and reviewed his activities that revolved around strengthening the Dry Creek Watershed Council's organizational capacity, promoting Low Impact Development (LID), and DOC grant coordination. His activities included the development of a full funding proposal to establish an American Basin non profit organization in response to participate in the next level of consideration, planning annual creek week activities, and continued participation in PCWA's East Basin Canal Efficiency Study.

AGENCY REPORTS

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

- Mike Brenner reviewed the activity report that reported the paperwork has been completed and EQIP projects can now move forward. There are six forestry projects and 4 irrigated crop/pastureland projects for a total of \$260,864 in funding. Sites are currently undergoing cultural resource review by the State Archeologist before proceeding.

NRCS is now offering incentives for eligible projects completed in a timely manner in terms of structure installation. All four EQIP irrigation projects are eligible for these incentives.

- Mike reported completion of the documentation for Conservation Security Program (CSP) '06 payments totaling \$85,117.
- Mike reported on the NEPA process component *Farmland Protection Policy Act* that will determine how many prime, unique, statewide and locally important farmlands will be impacted by the Auburn Indian Community Housing Project that seeking to bring 1,100 acres into Federal Trust near Camp Far West. The Farmland Conversion Impact Rating will be submitted to the Bureau of Indian Affairs and if moved forward, will construct tribal housing for members of the United Auburn Indian Community.
- NRCS also assisted the Federal Highway Administration in determining the Farmland Conversion Impact Rating for five alternative alignments of new highway planned south of Sunset Boulevard West in the Roseville area. The five routes combined comprise an area of 8,868 acres and includes land in Sutter County.
- Staff has conducted one completion check and numerous irrigation designs are in differing stages of completion.
- Kirsten Losse attended an irrigation workshop.
- Mike reported working with Rich and Chris on the CARCD Central Sierra Region mapping effort and passed around copies of the map that he had compiled for Nevada County that reflects CA Forest Incentives Program (CFIP) and EQIP projects from 1999 thru 2005. He encouraged the board as to the usefulness of such a map in terms of future project planning and the development of stronger grant proposals. He has begun to develop a map for Placer County.
- Mike handed out copies of an article and a cartoon.
- Mike reviewed the numerous meetings he attended in the last month.

The meeting review instigated Greg Nau's opening wondering how to best quantify the economic value of government agency services rendered to landowners. He noted the missing factor in reporting is exactly the specific component that would best quantify the benefits of our tax dollars at work.

Stewart added the information would also serve as a great marketing tool and would serve to add credibility to the RCD and NRCS. He suggested, if it is reasonable, adding an economic component to monthly reports and future Annual Reports could reflect the economic benefits the community received during the reporting year.

Mike closed discussion by noting NRCS does compile economic statistics and offering to add an economic component to his reporting. He noted the economic benefits should include the benefits derived from the minimum use of resources as well as the value of services rendered.

COMMUNICATIONS

- Thank you note dated March 13th to Rich Gresham for speaking at the Colfax Garden Club last fall on fire safety issues.
- Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo) letter dated March 15, 2006 re: Call for Nomination-Special District Representative.
- Thank you letter dated February 22nd from Foothill Farmers' Market Association for past brochure funding support.

- Letter from Living Systems Land Management promoting their products and their brochure.
- Placer County Flood Control and Water Conservation District Meeting Agenda for March 13th at 4 p.m.
- Postcard promoting the Western States Conservation Districts Regional Meeting slated for June 10-14 in Boise, Idaho.
- Postcard promoting the Great Valley Center Event, *At the Tipping Point*, slated for May 10th and 11th in Sacramento.
- NACD newsletter, *News & Views*, for January/February 2006.
- NACD newsletter, *Forestry Notes*, for February 2006.
- NACD newsletter, *Buffer Notes*, for February 2006.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

The following items will be on the April agenda:

- CARCD Regional Spring Meeting Update
- RCD Annual Planning Process Update
- RCD Contract Rate Review
- CARCD *Day in the Capitol* Update

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to conduct, Greg Nau moved to adjourn the meeting. Stewart Feldman seconded; motion carried unanimously. Chair Chris Paull adjourned the meeting at 6:25 p.m.