

**PLACER COUNTY RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT  
MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
Regular Meeting  
January 16, 2007**

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 3:17 p.m.

MEMBERS AND OTHERS PRESENT

Directors Present: Chris Paull  
Robert (Bob) Wiswell, Jr.  
Stanley (Stan) MacDonald  
Claudia Smith

Directors Absent: Thomas (Tom) Wehri

Board Vacancies: Two Seats

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

APPROVE THE AGENDA

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

GUESTS

Stewart Feldman, Former RCD Director  
Don Nelson, Prospective RCD Director  
Douglas Ferrier, Registered Professional Forester on RCD Retainer

PUBLIC COMMENT

Claudia Smith, as a member of the public, gave the Board an overview of the High Sierra Resource Conservation and Development Council's grant funded pilot project providing small poultry producers with the opportunity to use a mobile poultry processing facility in collaboration with Sierra College and UC Cooperative Extension.

Claudia noted project partners need to raise approximately \$20K in additional funds and/or in-kind contributions to complete the processing facility and solicited interest from the Board in sponsoring the effort in some way.

Bob Wiswell added that while some legal issues are being worked through, the project is moving forward.

The Board agreed to entertain the subject next month and requested the item be added to the agenda for further discussion and possible action.

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

Stan MacDonald moved to approve the minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of December 19, 2006 as presented. Bob Wiswell seconded; motion carried unanimously.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Katie Maloney presented the Financial Statements for the Month Ended December 31, 2006 and the Schedule of Expenses and Warrants Issued for December 2006.

Bob Wiswell moved to approve the December 2006 financial statements and expense reports as presented. Stan MacDonald seconded; motion carried unanimously.

## BUSINESS

### New Business:

a) *Discussion to Consider and Possible Action Re: Placer County Conservation Plan:*

The Board discussed the county's efforts over the years resulting in planning Alternatives the Placer County Board of Supervisors (BOS) will be considering and their potential adoption of a Placer County Conservation Plan (Plan).

It was noted federal regulatory agencies have indicated they will only approve an Alternative that will provide for the survival of 51% of the vernal pool complexes within the Plan area. Of the Alternatives being considered, Alternative #14 has been identified as the only Alternative that will provide that assurance. Alternative #14, if adopted, will serve as a starting point for additional discussion between the county, regulatory agencies, developers, and stakeholders.

It was noted the Plan is predicated upon the acquisition of easements and that the agricultural community has issues with potential land use restrictions that would reduce their options in terms of what they can do with their properties in the future and would want any Plan that may be adopted, to be voluntary.

With many unanswered questions and no specifics upon which to base an opinion, The Board expressed a favorable position regarding the Plan's concept of in terms of resources conservation, but expressed concerns regarding potential negative impacts to the agricultural community and encouraged continued discussion with landowners within the Plan area.

Tom Wehri, the appointed RCD representative will be present at the next BOS meeting when Supervisors consider the Plan to let them know the RCD's position regarding the PCCP effort at this point in time as stated above.

### Old Business:

b) *Discussion to Consider and Possible Action Re: Colfax Shaded Fuel Break Project Signage:*

Rich Gresham reported he continues to pursue the placement of project signage on one of the Colfax Shaded Fuel Break project properties to promote private landowner fuel load reduction efforts.

c) *Discussion to Consider and Possible Action Re: CA Special Districts Association (CSDA) Dues:*

Rich Gresham reported CSDA personnel have indicated the increased cost of CSDA membership up from \$158 to \$720 will cover the organization's cost projections over the next five years including outreach publications and additional staff that will include legislative analysts to better promote special district interests.

After Board discussion, Claudia Smith moved to approve payment of the 2007 dues. Bob Wiswell seconded; motion carried unanimously.

d) *Discussion to Consider and Possible Action Re: RCD Sponsorship of a Public Outreach Program for the Development of Program Timber Harvest Plans for Fuel Load Reduction:*

Rich Gresham reviewed the RCD's role in the development of the Program Timberland Environmental Impact Report (Program) that provides residents within the Program area with a simpler environmental process for the removal of saleable timber from their property in conjunction with private landowner fuel load reduction efforts.

Rich noted the RCD Board Forestry & Fuels Management Committee has recommended the Board consider sponsorship of a neighborhood outreach program to inform and encourage landowners within the Program area of Meadow Vista about the opportunity to defray costs of

fuel load reduction using the simplified environmental process to remove and sell saw logs from private property without having to prepare a full blown Timber Harvest Plan.

Doug Ferrier stressed the challenges of informing landowners in an established community about the need to properly space established trees in terms of providing improved fire protection for the community at large from crown fires and noted it is easier to inform landowners about ladder fuels vs. the proper spacing of established trees. He noted Placer Hills Fire Protection District Fire Chief Ian Gow is supportive of residents using the Program to reduce the community's wildfire risk and has identified three main areas of concern; the ridge between Placer Hills Road and the I-80 corridor and the corridors along Placer Hills Road and Combie Road.

Doug Ferrier noted he would focus outreach efforts on these identified areas of concern by sending letters to residents in those areas with a response option to help gauge community interest in an effort to encourage greater fire risk reduction. Doug encouraged the Board to consider sponsoring the proposed outreach effort even though potential results are an unknown.

Don Nelson reviewed past Placer County Fire Safe Alliance efforts and the challenges of overcoming community apathy in terms of implementing fire safety measures. He briefly reviewed the county's effort to develop a Community Wildfire Protection Plan and advocated working together on mutual objectives with both the county and local fire safe councils.

After Board discussion revolving around highlighting the Colfax Shaded Fuel Break project as a positive example of vegetation management and potential ways to provide incentive to landowners, the Board directed Rich to move forward with the public outreach effort.

#### COMMITTEE REPORTS

- *RCD Forestry & Fuels Management Committee:*  
Stan MacDonald reported the January meeting revolved around promotion of the Meadow Vista PTEIR and the RCD's continued support for the development of county parks.
- *RCD Board Applicant Review Ad Hoc Committee*  
Rich reviewed the applications received and reported after conducting interviews the committee has recommended four of the seven applicants for consideration by the Placer County Board of Supervisors.

#### DIRECTORS' REPORTS

##### *Stan MacDonald:*

- Stan attended the American River Watershed Group (ARWG) meeting where the discussion revolved around the question of, where do we go from here?

##### *Bob Wiswell:*

- Bob reported discussion at the last High Sierra Resource Conservation & Development Council meeting revolved around the mobile chicken processing facility project. Quarterly meetings will now be held on the third Friday of first month in a quarter at the Sierra Economic Development District office at 1 p.m. The next meeting is slated for April 20<sup>th</sup>.
- Bob noted the next Farm Bureau meeting will focus on the Williamson Act and the perception of possible abuses going on with the potential for county review and potential changes in Williamson Act criteria.

##### *Claudia Smith:*

- Claudia reported she has been approved for a CA Association of Resource Conservation Districts \$1K stipend to attend the upcoming National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) Annual Conference and Meeting in February. She noted she is looking forward to the event and has signed up for restoration project tours.

- Claudia reported several workshops are coming up for growers and promoted the Placer GROWN conference taking place early February.
- Claudia reported the Foothills Farmers' Market Association is looking for a new Market Manager and noted the position has been redesigned after undergoing a review. The annual Farmers' Market potluck dinner is slated for February 27<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 at the Loomis Veterans' Hall. Contact Claudia if interested in attending.

*Chris Paull:*

- Chris reported attending ARWG meeting where future direction was discussed.
- Chris also attended the Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) meeting and noted the need for the RCD to maintain a presence at SNC meetings and reviewed discussions that have been held in terms of identifying areas of potential collaboration. The March SNC meeting will see the rollout of SNC programs.
- Chris served on the RCD Board Applicant Review Ad Hoc Committee.
- Chris attended a lunch with Rich and Supervisor Robert Weygandt to discuss the county's PCCP effort.
- The next Sierra Coordinated Resources Management Council meeting is slated for tomorrow evening where the final CDF/Prop 40 Agreement is expected to be executed by the Council.

STAFF REPORTS

*RCD Report:*

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

- Bill Templin handed out copies of his progress report and highlighted last month's activities and the speakers he has lined up for the upcoming ARWG meeting.
- Bill reported that with the support of the RCD, brochures for the Upper American River Foundation have been printed and copies were handed out to the Board. He thanked the Board for their support of the fledgling foundation.
- Bill reviewed discussions revolving around priorities for what will be accomplished in the last six months of the coordination grant. He noted he has not been very successful at drumming up interest within ARWG Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) in terms of developing future funding proposals and noted the Sediment Dynamics Study (SDS) has been the focus of the TAC resulting in a large time commitment from TAC members, making it hard for members to commit additional time to developing proposals. However, the TAC is discussing next steps in terms of following up the SDS. He noted the Consumnes-American-Bear-Yuba (CABY) effort may provide another avenue for developing future funding proposals.
- Bill reported he has begun development of the State of the Upper American River Watershed Report that will mirror the State of the Lower American River Watershed Report.
- Katie Maloney reported in addition to her normal RCD activities, she is providing support for the Placer Chapter CA Special Districts Association, developed a five year RCD Grant Activities Report for the county that was included in the Board Package, and drafting the 319(h) Final Report.
- Katie continues to move the Sierra Coordinated Resources Management Council efforts forward in preparation of administering the Prop 40 Fuels Management Program.
- Rich Gresham reported on his activities in terms of the Sierra Coordinated Resources Management Council, RCD management activities, the preparation of a grant proposal on behalf of county parks, and providing direction to the new GIS Coordinator.

- Gregg Bates handed out his monthly activity report and highlighted his activities including 2007 Creek Week planning. He reviewed American Basin Council of Watersheds meeting discussions, proposed changes and additional potential sites for the 319(h) signage being developed, and potential future funding proposals.

#### AGENCY REPORTS

In addition to the written activity reports for the month of December-January the following points were discussed:

- Mike Brenner reported the number of 2007 EQIP applicants has tripled over last year. Unfortunately, funding for this year's program will suffer a 10% funding reduction with \$393K available for the cost share program. Staff is busy developing preliminary cost estimates now that ranking has been completed. He noted the top ten applications exceed the program's allocation by \$10K so only the top eight or nine projects will be funded this year. Placer County has received higher funding allocations by \$30K than the surrounding counties. Mike noted 5 or 6 EQIP applications resulted from the newspaper promotion and noted his disappointment that funding levels are down now that application levels are up.
- Mike reported he has received authorization to make the annual Conservation Security Program payments, another program negatively impacted by federal budget constraints.
- Mike attended the quarterly HSRC&D meeting.

#### COMMUNICATIONS

- Letter dated December 19<sup>th</sup> from Assistant County Executive Officer Mike Boyle regarding the upcoming RCD Board vacancies and thanking Rich for meeting with him to apprise him of those vacancies and bringing him up to date on RCD activities.
- RCD letter dated January 12, 2007 recommending the Board of Supervisors choose from four of the seven applicants for the RCD Board vacancies, Scott Harvey, Steve Garcia, Don Nelson, and Dave Funk.
- Farm Services Agency letter to producers informing them of the agency's payment review process that revealed the need to ensure proper documentation is received from producers before payments are made.
- CA Special Districts Association (CSDA) save the date postcard for the October 2007 Annual Conference.
- CSDA publication, *CA Special District*, for November/December 2006.
- Placer County Agricultural Commission meeting agenda for January 8<sup>th</sup>.
- PlacerGROWN fall newsletter.
- USDA Placer/Nevada/Eldorado FSA newsletter for December 2006.
- Placer County Flood Control & Water Conservation District meeting agenda for January 8<sup>th</sup>.
- National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) publication, *News & Views*, for November/December 2006.
- NACD publication, *Forestry Notes*, for December 2006.
- Salmon Restoration Federation newsletter for winter 2006.
- Stewardship Council newsletter for winter 2006.

### FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

The following items will be on the February Regular Board Meeting agenda:

- RCD Support of Mobile Poultry Processing Plant Project
- Colfax Project Sign Update
- GIS Coordinator Update
- Sierra Coordinated Resources Council Update

### ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to conduct, Chris Paull adjourned the meeting at 5:47 p.m.