

**PLACER COUNTY RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT
MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
Regular Meeting
March 17, 2009**

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 4:04 p.m.

MEMBERS AND OTHERS PRESENT

Directors Present: Thomas (Tom) Wehri
Steven (Steve) Garcia
Claudia Smith
Robert (Bob) Wiswell, Jr.
Andrew (Dave) Funk
Robin Mahoney
Stan MacDonald, Associate Director

Directors Absent: Scott Harvey

Others Present: Rich Gresham, RCD Manager
Mike Brenner, NRCS District Conservationist
Mark White, RCD Resources Management Planner
Katie Maloney, RCD Programs Manager
Ryan Bellanca, RCD/NRCS GIS Coordinator

APPROVE THE AGENDA

Claudia Smith moved to approve the agenda as presented. Bob Wiswell seconded; motion carried unanimously.

GUESTS

Jerry Bushore & Linda Watanabe, PNSSNS Subwatershed Group
Mark Egbert, District Manager El Dorado County & Georgetown Divide RCDs
Stewart Feldman, Former RCD Director

PUBLIC COMMENT

Stewart Feldman introduced himself and encouraged the RCD to develop a more robust outreach and education program. Stewart indicated he would like to become an active participant in the RCD Education Committee. Education Committee Chair Claudia Smith took note of Stewart's request.

APPROVE PREVIOUS MINUTES

Robin Mahoney moved to approve the minutes of the RCD Board Meeting of February 17, 2009 as presented. Dave Funk seconded; motion carried unanimously with Claudia Smith abstaining due to her absence at the February meeting.

After further reflection, Dave Funk made a motion that language referring to the Rockwell property as an easement be amended to reference the property correctly as a preserve. Steve Garcia seconded; motion carried unanimously.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Katie Maloney presented the February 2009 financial reports. Claudia Smith moved to approve the financial statements with a minor change to specifically label the Training Tuition that was listed under Misc. Revenue. Steve Garcia seconded; motion carried unanimously.

BUSINESS

New Business:

- a) *Discussion to Consider and Possible Action Re: Donation Request from Placer-Nevada-South Sutter-North Sacramento Subwatershed Group:*
Jerry Bushore and Linda Watanabe were introduced and gave the Board an overview of the subwatershed group that was formed as a 501(c)(3) to deal with the Conditional Waiver for Discharges from Irrigated Lands Program mandates. The group is currently dealing with a declining membership negatively impacting the group's ability to pay for state mandated water quality testing.

After a lengthy discussion regarding numerous facets of the ag waivers issue, the Board suggested the subwatershed group develop a specific proposal for the RCD to consider through the RCD Ag & Lands Committee.

Discussion regarding the Ag & Lands Committee's membership resulted in Bob Wiswell retaining the position of Chair with Claudia Smith, Robin Mahoney as members, and Mark White as staff advisor.

- b) *Discussion to Consider and Possible Action Re: RCD '08-'09 Budget Review:*
Katie Maloney reviewed the Budget Variance Report for the Eight Months ended February 28, 2009. Katie noted the variance report reflects the need to make minor adjustments to the amount of funding allocated for Insurance and SB-2557 to cover actual costs.

Robin Mahoney moved to increase the allocation for Insurance by \$625 and the allocation for SB-2557 costs by \$600. Steve Garcia seconded; motion carried unanimously.

- c) *Discussion to Consider and Possible Action Re: Reassessment of GIS Position:*
Ryan Bellanca reviewed his Proposal for Change in Duties, Title, and Contract dated 3-12-09. Ryan developed the proposal in response to the current economic situation on both the federal and local level resulting in the loss of current cost sharing partners funding the GIS position for the next fiscal year.

Ryan reviewed three alternatives that included the RCD bearing the full cost of the position, the alternative of placing Ryan under contract to provide services as opportunities and funding present themselves, or the option to end his relationship with the RCD.

Ryan indicated his preference would be to contract his services to the RCD, allowing him the flexibility to build his business Bella Wildfire Services while still providing the RCD with his expertise when the need and funding is available.

Discussion revolved around district needs, funding issues, and overall personnel needs in the coming fiscal year.

Tom Wehri recommended the Board consider the option of placing Ryan under contract with rates to be negotiated on a project by project basis.

After further discussion, the board concurred that the issue be referred to the RCD Operations Committee for further consideration in conjunction with the annual planning and budget review.

Old Business:

d) Update Re: RCD Personnel Policy Review and Update:

Tom Wehri indicated there is nothing new to report, as the next Operations Committee meeting will take place April 7th at 11:00 a.m.

e) Update Re: Rockwell Ranch and Hanley Property Conservation Preserves:

Dave Funk reported the proposal as submitted was well received. He thanked everyone involved in developing the proposal for their efforts.

Dave Funk recommended Ellen Berryman continue contact with the Fish & Wildlife Service and CalTrans on behalf of the RCD while both agencies consider the proposals received from both the RCD and the Lincoln School District.

The Board concurred.

Rich Gresham noted the RCD is still in the loop regarding the Hanley Property.

Tom Wehri thanked Dave and Robin for their work developing the proposal on behalf of the RCD.

f) Update Re: CalFire Hired Equipment Safety Training:

Steve Garcia reported 113 participants in the first CalFire Safety Training class. With the demand high, he is exploring the option of providing another class in addition to the four classes already planned. He indicated he has purchased a DVD player and some sound equipment for the class.

Claudia Smith suggested the RCD post a training update on the RCD Website. Rich Gresham noted he will follow-up with the RCD Webmaster, Dorene Matney.

g) *Discussion to Consider and Possible Action Re: RCD Resource Conservationist Position:*

Mark White reviewed the RCD Resource Conservationist position job description as per past discussions.

Tom Wehri indicated the job benefits details will be determined at the Operations Committee meeting and May 1st was set as the target date for releasing the job announcement with candidate selection by the end of May.

The Board wordsmithed the job description and reviewed announcement options.

RCD COMMITTEE REPORTS

- *Education Committee:* Claudia Smith reported she has a student interested in Range Camp and suggested interested students should come before the Board to present their request for sponsorship.

Mark White reviewed the current process of working with the 4H Coordinator to garner interested students.

Board discussion revolved around having the Education Committee entertain students requesting sponsorship to Range Camp on behalf of the board as well as serving as the judges in the preliminary round of speeches given by Speak off Contestants.

DIRECTORS' REPORTS

Dave Funk:

- Dave asked about the RCD's procurement policy. Rich indicated the RCD policy is in line with state laws governing the bidding process.

Tom Wehri suggested Dave review the existing policy and submit any proposed policy changes to the Operations Committee for consideration.

Robin Mahoney:

- Robin reported he would like to explore the feasibility of a public access trail around Robbers' Roost Rock above Lake Clementine. He indicated the rock is an ideal spot for rock climbing.

Claudia Smith:

- Claudia reported she spent three days at the CA Small Farm Conference, has been working with the Placer County Ag Futures Program, and the development of an intern program.

Tom Wehri:

- Tom reported attending the Sierra Nevada Conservancy meeting in March along with Rich and Ryan. He noted Ryan gave a great presentation at the meeting.

RCD STAFF REPORTS

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

- Rich Gresham reported Jane Keillor has submitted her resignation to allow her more time for her teaching endeavors. Her last day will be March 27th.
- Rich announced the CARCD Central Sierra Regional Spring Meeting is slated for April 17th at the Blodgett Forest facility in Georgetown.
- Rich announced Day in the Capitol is slated for May 5th and 6th. Mark White will be coordinating the activities as usual and will need to know who is planning to attend.
- Mark will be meeting with County Executive Office staff regarding the annual county contract. He noted the county is looking to reduce the contract amount for the coming year by \$5K. He gave an overview of the irrigation workshops coming up and the Annual Ag Tour planning efforts getting underway.
- Mark informed the Board that his Mom is not in good health and that he may have to make unexpected trips to North Dakota to deal with family matters.
- Ryan Bellanca reported pursuing ROP student activities with Colfax High School. Placer Land Trust has expressed interest in acquiring bird boxes made by ROP students.

Steve Garcia offered to pursue a way to place an RCD acknowledgement on bird boxes made by students with RCD assistance.

AGENCY REPORTS

In addition to the written activity reports for February-March, submitted in the Board Package, the following points were discussed:

- Mike Brenner reported NRCS is processing 40 Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) applicants. The total for the projects being considered will most likely exceed the \$800K cost estimate for this year's program.
- Mike reported the National Resources Inventory has been completed and submitted.
- Kirsten Losse has been assisting the Jackson and Placerville field offices.
- Mike reviewed the activities detailed in his activity report.

COMMUNICATIONS

- Letter dated February 27th to Scott Harvey from Bridgett Luther, Director of the CA Dept. of Conservation inviting him to serve and participate on the new Resource Conservation District Advisory Committee being formed to advise the state on fulfilling natural resource conservation goals on a local level.
- Copy of RCD cover letter for the Rockwell Property Conservation Vision dated February 28th to Chris Collison at the CA Dept. of Transportation from Tom Wehri.
- Email dated March 6th from Placer County Clerk of the Board of Supervisors to Rich Gresham informing him of the need for Steve Garcia, Scott Harvey, and Robin Mahoney to complete AB-1234 Ethics Training.
- Letter from USDA Forest Service Georgetown Ranger District of the Eldorado National Forest providing an opportunity to comment on their proposed Chipmunk Grazing Management Project and the continuation of the authorized livestock grazing on the Chipmunk Allotment with a revision to the Allotment Management Plan taking into consideration current conditions.
- Letter of resignation dated March 12th from Jane Keillor informing Rich that her last day will be March 27th and thanking the RCD for the opportunity to work for the district.
- CA Association of Resource Conservation Districts (CARCD) Membership package.
- Working Landscapes – The Environmental Benefits of Grazing Seminar flyer.
- NRCS news release regarding Advisory Meeting on Farm Bill Conservation Priorities for CA.
- Placer County Flood Control and Water Conservation District Technical Advisory Committee Agenda for meeting slated for March 5th and meeting minutes of the January 8th meeting.
- Placer County Flood Control and Water Conservation District Agenda for meeting slated for March 9th.
- Placer County Agricultural Commission Agenda for their March 9th meeting.
- Postcard announcing Sierra Business Council's Sierra Getaway Party.
- Western Forestry & Conservation Association Density Management in Pacific Northwest Forests workshop registration materials
- Private solicitation for online videos from Jim Karnik Films.

- Placer Land Trust newsletter, *Land Lines*, for February 2009
- Protect American River Canyons newsletter, *The Confluence*, for Spring 2009
- National Association of Resource Conservation Districts (NACD) publication, *Forestry Notes*, for March 2009
- Wildlife Supply Company Catalog for 2009

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

The April RCD Board Meeting Agenda may include the following items:

- RCD Personnel Policy Review Update
- CalFire Safety Training Update
- CARCD District Sponsorship

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to conduct, Dave Funk moved for adjournment. Steve Garcia seconded; motion carried unanimously. Tom Wehri adjourned the meeting at 7:28 p.m.