

**PLACER COUNTY RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT
MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
Regular Meeting
February 22, 2005**

CALL TO ORDER

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

MEMBERS AND OTHERS PRESENT

Directors Present: Stanley (Stan) MacDonald
Gregory (Greg) Nau
Stewart Feldman
Chris Paull
Cherie Schiavone
Thomas (Tom) Wehri
Whitney Nicholas, Associate Director

Directors Absent: Robert (Bob) Wiswell, Jr.

Others Present: Rich Gresham, RCD Manager
Cliff Heitz, NRCS District Conservationist
Katie Maloney, RCD Sr. Administrative Assistant
Bill Templin, American River Watershed Coordinator

APPROVE THE AGENDA

Stan MacDonald moved to approve the agenda with a change in order moving item f) before item b). Stewart Feldman seconded; motion carried unanimously.

GUESTS

William (Bill) Myers, Certified Public Accountant

Rich introduced Bill Myers, the RCD's Certified Public Accountant, and indicated he invited Bill to come and meet the board and to answer any questions they may have about the yearly audit he conducted and/or the RCD's Financial Statements for Year Ended June 30, 2004.

Bill gave a brief overview of the financial statements and the additional information required to comply with recent General Accounting Standards Board (GASB) rulings.

Bill noted the RCD is financially sound. He invited board members to contact him directly if they have any questions and shared his contact information. He noted if there were differences between what the board has been presented by staff and what his audit reveals, any differences would be noted in his audit.

Bill noted it is his opinion that the financial statements are fairly represented in response to Greg Nau's inquiry

Bill indicated Katie Maloney is doing a good job with the accounting in response to Stewart Feldman's inquiry.

Cheryl McNabb, Science Docent Program Coordinator for Franklin School

Chris Paull introduced Cheryl McNabb and reported he instigated her letter requesting RCD's assistance with the purchase of equipment for use in the Franklin School Science Program.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

Stewart Feldman moved to approve of the minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of January 18, 2005 as presented. Cherie Schiavone seconded; motion carried unanimously.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

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

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

BUSINESS

Old Business:

a) *National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) Annual Meeting Report:*

Chris Paull thanked the board for sending him to the national meeting. He reported learning quite a bit from networking with other attendees and participating in offered seminars at the meeting. He briefly reviewed funding strategies, opportunities to partner with others, and endangered species act information garnered at the meeting.

Tom Wehri handed out a written report that reviewed information gained in the general sessions including the NRCS '05-'06 budget and the programs being funded with the emphasize on the Conservation Security Program (CSP), and the promotion of partnerships throughout all sessions. Tom stressed his belief that the RCD needs to better assist NRCS in rolling out CSP of which the western region of Placer County will be eligible to participate.

Cliff Heitz noted the CSP roll out meeting is slated for March 17th and invited interested board members to participate.

Tom also emphasized his desire to strengthen the RCD's public outreach program and the need to develop a PowerPoint presentation about the RCD and its partners to better inform constituents of the assistance opportunities available to them.

Chris Paul and Tom both noted it is critical to get the word out about CSP and provide application assistance as it will be eight years before the next opportunity for producers to participate in the program is presented.

Cliff noted there may be funding problems associated with the new program.

Stewart offered the RCD assistance with any lobbying efforts that NRCS may be mounting.

Tom recommended sending at least one RCD representative to the NACD meeting annually and noted next year it will be held in Louisiana and in 2007, Los Angeles, where more RCD representatives might attend due to the proximity of the meeting.

Tom noted the NACD meeting was the most positive meeting they have had in 6-7 years and closed by thanking the board for sending him.

New Business:

f) *Discussion to Consider and Possible Action Re: Franklin K-8th Grade School Request for RCD Funding of Equipment:*

Cheryl McNabb noted her background in environmental regulation and indicated she volunteers as Science Docent Program Coordinator at Franklin School and gave an overview of the 4th and 6th grade science curriculums that includes learning about the affects of water erosion and how it can shape streams, rivers, and valleys. She noted the 5th grade science curriculum also includes a weather component in addition to learning about the water cycle.

Cheryl noted Franklin School is currently working to develop a green house and garden program.

Stewart Feldman suggested the Franklin School Science Docent Program may be transferable to other schools and Cheryl indicated she would be willing to write the program up.

Whitney Nicholas noted the potential of acquiring grants for education programs.

Cheryl noted there is an underused lab at the Franklin School.

Bill Templin noted the GLOBE program provides educational opportunities for teachers interested in science programs.

Cheryl's letter requesting the board consider contributing \$466.50 to purchase four stream tables, a weather station, and a water cycle poster was included in the board package for board review prior to the meeting.

Stewart Feldman moved to approve the funding request. Stan MacDonald seconded; motion carried unanimously with Chris Paull abstaining.

b) *Discussion to Consider and Possible Action Re: RCD Board Resolution #05-01 giving RCD Board Approval of an Amendment to the CA Dept. of Forestry & Fire Protection (CDF) Wildland/Urban Interface (WUI) Grant Funding Agreement #2CA23145:*

Rich Gresham reviewed the proposed resolution needed to complete the execution of the WUI grant funding agreement amendment that will increase funding to \$775,476, extend the term of the agreement to 12-31-05, and provide funding for the '05 CDF 4291 Fire Safe Inspection Program as well as the continuation of the Placer County Chipper Program.

Rich noted that in past seasons, inspectors have been hired as independent contractors and proposed the RCD hire inspectors for the '05 season as extra help employees. He noted that extra help employees are limited to 1000 hours per fiscal year and do not accrue any benefits. He requested the board approve the RCD hire 4291 Inspectors as extra help employees in addition to passing the proposed resolution.

Tom Wehri recommended the board approve the Rich's request to hire inspectors vs. contractors.

Stewart Feldman moved the board pass RCD Board Resolution #05-01 as well approve the hiring of Fire Safe Inspectors for the '05 4291 Fire Safe Inspection season as extra help. Chris Paull seconded the motion.

After further board discussion revolving around the change in inspector status from contractors to RCD extra help employees, the motion carried unanimously.

It was noted by the board that the RCD Personnel Policy should be reviewed for the possible updating per the addition of extra help employees.

c) *Discussion to Consider and Possible Action Re: Concept Proposal for the establishment of an American River Watershed Coordination Center at the Auburn Recreation District (ARD) Canyon View Community Center:*

Chris Paull reported attending the tour that Bill Templin put together of the Auburn Dam Site restoration area that afforded the opportunity to have a conversation with ARD regarding a potential partnership between the RCD and ARD regarding the establishment of a watershed center at the ARD Canyon View Community Center.

Rich Gresham reviewed the concept proposal included in the board package regarding the potential opportunity to build partnerships between the RCD, ARD, and others; the potential

to establish an interpretive center for watershed coordination, and education outreach activities.

Rich proposed the RCD provide \$1,372 in cash for office space worth \$4,248 per year with the difference made up of in-kind services to be provided by Bill under the terms of the Dept. of Conservation (DOC) Watershed Coordinator Grant. The \$1,372 in RCD cash is currently allocated under the terms of the grant for office space in kind match and Bill's workplan can accommodate 96 hours of in-kind services at \$30 per hour for the remaining \$2,880. Tasks consistent with the workplan could include services to further education and outreach efforts as well as searching for funds for collaborative projects which could potentially benefit not just the RCD, but ARD, US Bureau of Reclamation, Placer County Water Agency, the Auburn State Recreation Area, and others.

The concept proposal is for the period of time ending June 30, 2007 when the DOC grant funding ends. Rich stressed it is hoped that during the agreement period funding to continue efforts beyond the grant timeframe will be acquired.

Rich requested the board approve his moving forward with the proposal to gain Bill office space at the Canyon View Center in partnership with ARD.

Stewart Feldman moved that Rich move forward with negotiating a lease agreement for office space with ARD at the Canyon View Center as conceptually proposed. Stan MacDonald seconded; motion carried unanimously.

d) *Discussion to Consider and Possible Action Re: Submission of a CA Clearinghouse Funding Proposal to Provide a Senior/Disabled Assistance Program for Fire Safe Activities:*

Rich Gresham reviewed the \$94K concept proposal that will provide assistance with the implementation of defensible space for seniors and disabled citizens within the county. He noted the proposal originated with the Placer County Fire Safe Council and has been updated by Bill Templin to reflect current conditions. The concept proposal was included in the board package for review. If the proposal is chosen, it will be expanded more fully for further competitive funding consideration.

Tom Wehri recommended the proposal be approved for submission.

Greg Nau moved to approve submission of the concept proposal for funding consideration. Chris Paull seconded; motion carried unanimously.

e) *Discussion to Consider and Possible Action Re: Submission of a CA Clearinghouse Funding Proposal to Provide Cost Share Grants for Strategically Placed Area Treatments within Ponderosa Fire Safe Council Communities:*

Rich Gresham reviewed the US Forest Service concept of 'Strategically Placed Area Treatments' (SPLATs). He noted the concept proposal will provide for expansion of the Prop 13 City of Colfax grant effort by providing \$109,063 in cost share program funding for private landowners to implement SPLATs within the Ponderosa Fire Safe Council communities. The concept proposal provides for the treatment of 100 acres representing approximately 100 homes with landowners providing a 25% cost share match for the treatment of private property located within a designated SPLAT and is meant to build upon efforts currently underway by the RCD/City of Colfax effort.

Stewart Feldman moved to approve submission of the concept proposal for funding consideration to be further expanded should it be selected. Chris Paull seconded.

After board discussion regarding the desire to address fire safety issues on a county-wide scale, the motion passed unanimously.

f) *Discussion regarding the '05-'06 Annual Plan Preliminary Discussion:*

Rich asked the board for their input regarding how they would like to address the '05-'06 fiscal year planning process.

Stewart Feldman suggested the March board meeting be used to establish a planning agenda and recommended the use of the board's committee structure to identify specific work plan items to be accomplished in the next year.

It was determined the next board meeting will be devoted the planning process for the RCD's '05-'06 efforts.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Operations Committee:

Chris and Greg met with Rich regarding the potential ARD/RCD partnership regarding a watershed center at the ARD Canyon View Center.

It was noted that Tom, Chris, and Greg are current committee members as the committee consists of the current chair and vice chair, and past chair. Board elections in December changed the constituency of the committee for the current '05 calendar year.

Forestry & Fuel Management Committee:

The next meeting is slated for March 1st at 10 a.m. in USDA Conference Room #101.

DIRECTORS' REPORTS

Stewart Feldman:

- Stewart attended an Ag marketing workshop conducted by PlacerGROWN. He indicated it was a great workshop and requested the RCD pay \$35 to support their effort. There were no objections to the request.
- Stewart reported working on the '04 RCD Annual Report with staff members, attending the Teichert Cool Cave Quarry tour, and assisting in the development of several grant proposals.
- Stewart reported the first Western Placer Collaborative Watershed Group Meeting was a success and quarterly meetings are being planned to address common issues and concerns that cross watershed boundaries.
- Stewart reported applying for the Sacramento River Watershed Program (SRWP) Education Coordinator position.

Chris Paull:

- Chris reported attending the Placer County CA Special Districts Association meeting where changes in the state budget, mandatory sexual harassment training, board member training, accountability issues, and opportunities to collaborate between districts were topics of discussion. Chris announced that he agreed to serve as Vice President of the association.

Tom Wehri:

- Tom handed out copies of the letter he drafted to the CA Association of RCDs (CARCD), per the board's request, to address issues and concerns brought forth at the last board meeting and made specific recommendations on how CARCD might address the issues. He noted he touched base with Central Sierra Regional Chair Bob Dolton and CARCD President Patrick Truman before sending the letter on the board's behalf.

STAFF REPORTS

RCD Report:

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

- Rich Gresham reported attending a Prop 50 funding workshop with Bill Templin.
- Rich noted he will continue to pursue potential collaboration with ARD, not just on the watershed center, but also potential pond management and water quality assistance.
- Rich reported CARCD's *Day at the Capitol* event is coming up on May 18th.

- Katie Maloney reported in addition to her normal monthly activities with the watershed groups and the fire safe alliance, she has been busy with annual reporting requirements and noted all reports have been submitted in a timely manner.
- Bill Templin handed out his monthly activity report and reviewed his activities.

AGENCY REPORTS

- Cliff passed around an activity report for January and reported meeting the Acting State Conservationist.
- Cliff reported the receipt of 33 Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) applications and noted funding of approximately \$550K for this year's program.
- Cliff announced that staff member Carol Rutenbergs delivered a baby boy, Dominik, six weeks early and that both are doing well.
- Cliff reported that he and Mark White had a booth at the annual Farm Conference that took place in February. He noted attendance seemed to be down.
- Cliff reviewed erosion and water quality issues in relation to a proposed Loomis horse boarding facility.

Rich noted the issues present an opportunity for the RCD to contract with the Town of Loomis to address these kinds of issues. The board asked to be kept abreast of the situation.

COMMUNICATIONS

- Copy of RCD letter dated February 16, 2005 from Tom Wehri to CARCD President Patrick Truman outlining concerns regarding CARCD processes brought forth at the last board meeting and making recommendations to address those concerns on behalf of the board.
- Copy of RCD letter of support dated February 3, 2005 from Rich Gresham to the CA Clearinghouse regarding a concept proposal submitted by the Auburn Lake Trails Fire Safe Council to provide funding for fuel load reduction efforts.
- Copy of email dated February 11th from Nadine Scott answering inquiries from various RCDs about *Day at the Capitol* activities.
- Notice from the Nevada County RCD regarding the spring CARCD Central Sierra Regional Meeting slated for April 14th at the Empire Mine in Grass Valley.
- Placer County Water Agency (PCWA) notice of an East Loomis Basin Informational Open House slated for February 23rd.
- PCWA newsletter, *PCWA Update*, for February/March 2005.
- Notice of LAFCO Lapalooza slated for March 3rd in Sacramento.
- Notice of Ponderosa Fire Safe Council fire safe meetings in regards to the City of Colfax Shaded Fuel Break Grant.
- Announcement of US Fish & Wildlife workshops on protecting vernal pool species, CA Tiger Salamander, and CA Red-legged Frog.
- Notice of Sacramento Municipal Utility District information meetings regarding the Upper American River Project and proposed Iowa Hill Pumped Storage Development.
- Announcement of 21st Annual CA Range and Natural Resources Camp slated for June 19-24, 2005.

- Forestry Institute for Teachers application brochure for 2005 curriculum.
- Placer County Agricultural Commission agenda for February 14th and minutes of January 10th meeting.
- Letter dated February 2, 2005 from NRCS State Conservationist Chuck Bell announcing his retirement from the service and thanking RCDs for their support of NRCS and their conservation mission.
- Letter of thanks dated February 3, 2005 from Peace for Families Executive Director Arla Gibson for the donation of a wood desk.
- County of Placer Treasury Oversight Committee Compliance Audit for the year ended December 31, 2004.
- CA Special Districts Association Legislative Update dated January 28, 2005.
- The High Ranch Nursery newsletter, *High Ranch News*, for February 2005 and their 2005 *Fruit Trees Price List*.
- Positive Promotions *Earth Day* product packet.
- Workplace Pro *Earth Day* product flyer.
- CA Biomass Collaborative, *Quarterly Newsletter*, for winter 2005.
- National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) newsletters, *Forestry Notes*, for December 2004 and January 2005 and Special Report, *Profiles of Success in Conservation*, from NACD's Forest Resource Committee.
- NACD publication, *New & Views*, for January/February 2005.
- NACD/NRCS publication, *Buffer Notes*, for January 2005.
- Department of Water Resources publication, *Water Conservation News*, for fall/winter, '04-'05.
- Agricultural Issues Center, University of CA publication, *Conserving Agricultural Land Through Compensation*, issued December 2004.
- *Journal of Soil and Water Conservation* for January/February 2005.
- US Forest Service Technology Marketing Unit publication, *Small-Diameter Success Stories*.
- USDA publication, *Building Better Rural Places*, issued August 2004.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- RCD '05-'06 Annual Planning Discussion

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to conduct, Cherie Schiavone moved to adjourn the meeting. Chris Paull seconded; motion carried unanimously.

Board Chair Tom Wehri adjourned the meeting at 5:46 p.m.