

**PLACER COUNTY RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT
MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
Regular Meeting
September 19, 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 3:20 p.m.

MEMBERS AND OTHERS PRESENT

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

Directors Absent: None

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

APPROVE THE AGENDA

Stewart Feldman moved to approve the agenda as presented. Greg Nau seconded, motion carried unanimously.

GUESTS

None

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

Stewart Feldman moved to approve the minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of August 15, 2006 as presented. Greg Nau seconded; motion carried unanimously.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

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

Tom Wehri moved to approve the August 2006 financial statements and expense report. Stewart Feldman seconded; motion carried unanimously.

After review of the new RCD Grant Monthly Summary Reports for July and August, the Board requested the grant summary reflect the beginning balance of the grant award net expenses to date. Katie had the summary set up to reflect the difference between what has been invoiced to date net of expenses paid to date to give the Board a clear picture for each grant in terms of cash flow and to correspond with the individual grant Income and Expense Reports prepared on a quarterly basis. Katie noted she will amend the reports as requested for the Board's review and approval next month.

BUSINESS

Old Business:

a) *Discussion to Consider and Possible Action Re: NRCS/RCD Collaborative GIS Agreement Approval:*

Rich Gresham reviewed the agreement language and the minor changes made by NRCS for clarification purposes. After a short discussion regarding accountability and management with Greg Nau recommending the development of a mechanism to evaluate and quantify work being accomplished on an on-going basis, Tom Wehri moved to approve the NRCS/RCD Collaborative GIS Agreement. Stewart Feldman seconded.

Rich assured the Board there are identified deliverables and required monthly progress reporting in terms of tracking work accomplished.

After discussion regarding the candidate selection process, the selection committee composition to be comprised of a board or designated staff member of each participating RCD and NRCS, the motion carried unanimously.

b) *Discussion to Consider and Possible Action Re: Reactivation of the RCD Joint Powers Authority (JPA):*

Rich reviewed the initial CA Dept. of Forestry & Fire Protection (CDF) request for RCD assistance with administering the Prop 40 funds related to the CA Forest Improvement Program (CFIP) and the RCD's proposal to CDF to have the existing, but inactive, Sierra Coordinated Resources Management Council a Joint Powers Authority formed in July, 1992 initially consisting of the El Dorado County, Georgetown Divide, Nevada County, and Placer County, and Tahoe RCDs, with the addition of the Amador RCD thereafter, to administer the Prop 40/ CFIP funding for a fifteen county area of the Sierra Nevada region.

CDF approached the Sierra Nevada Conservancy to administer the program, but the conservancy was not ready to take on the job. And as CDF preferred a regional entity to administer the program, the JPA became a candidate.

Chris Paull added that while administration of the program will ultimately be the decision of the members of the JPA, it is expected the Placer RCD will be considered for administering the program on behalf of the JPA with details to be worked out.

Greg Nau made a motion to pursue reactivating the JPA for the purpose of administering the Prop 40/CFIP funds under a proposed agreement with CDF. Tom Wehri seconded; motion passed unanimously.

Rich noted the Board Chair has historically served as JPA designee for each member RCD an alternate(s) will also to be designated.

Chris Paull, Board Chair volunteered to serve as the designated JPA member and Tom Wehri volunteered to serve as alternate. Bob Wiswell volunteered to serve as second alternate.

After a short discussion regarding future potential regional efforts, Stewart Feldman moved to have Chris Paull serve as the RCD's JPA designee, with Tom Wehri serving as first alternate and Bob Wiswell serving as second alternate. Claudia Smith seconded; motion carried unanimously.

New Business:

- c) *Discussion to Consider and Possible Action Re: RCD/NRCS Newspaper Ad Promotion:*
Mike Brenner reporting the state office is still reviewing his request for funding to launch a newspaper ad campaign to promote the NRCS Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP). He proposed running the ad three weeks at \$500 per week in the various local Gold Country Media newspapers at a total cost of \$1,500. Mike proposed the Board consider contributing \$500 with NRCS providing \$1000 of the publication costs, should the state office approve the expenditure.

After Board discussion revolving around the need to target local producers with program information in order to have a successful NRCS program locally and suggestions regarding different avenues to deliver the message, Stewart Feldman moved to contribute \$500 to the printing costs of an ad promotion campaign should NRCS approve the expenditure at the state level. Tom Wehri seconded; motion carried unanimously.

- d) *Discussion to Consider and Possible Action Re: NRCS Project Signage Program:*
Mike Brenner reviewed the concept of project signage to promote resource conservation projects and presented a mockup sign design for discussion purposes. Mike asked the Board to consider the idea and noted he is not requesting the Board take any action at this point in time.

Board discussion revolved around providing additional project and/or resource conservation information at signage points such as flyers as a low-cost, high visibility way to promote resource conservation practices and programs.

Mike will continue to develop the idea and keep the Board updated on his efforts.

- e) *Discussion to Consider and Possible Action Re: Providing RCD Personnel with shirts and/or hats designating them as RCD staff:*
Rich Gresham reviewed Stan MacDonald's idea of providing staff with hats and/or shirts to help identify them as RCD personnel at both events and in the field.

Tom Wehri noted in his experience this is one of the best ways to promote RCDs and while RCDs can use public funds to give staff and board members one item of clothing, anything beyond that is not an appropriate use of public funds.

Claudia Smith suggested purchasing hats and giving them to students on the Envirothon Team and/or other types of outreach and education events the RCD sponsors.

After further discussion, Claudia moved that staff come back to the Board with a proposal for review and possible action. Tom Wehri seconded; motion carried unanimously.

- f) *Discussion to Consider and Possible Action Re: Development of Resolutions for Consideration at the CA Association of Resource Conservation Districts (CARCD) Annual Meeting:*
Chris Paull reviewed two concepts for the potential CARCD Resolution development.

The first concept dealt with alleviating economic pressures to convert farm land and critical habitat lying within the 200 year flood plain and slow the current trend of building on lands dependent on agricultural levies for flood protection by resolving the CARCD formally pursue the inclusion of 50% match funding for the acquisition of farm and conservation easements in the 2007 Farm Bill to be utilized as match for local funding to purchase appropriate easements to ensure continued farming and the protection of critical habitat located within said flood plain while compensating farmers for designating farm lands and critical habitat in perpetuity.

The second concept dealt with catastrophic wildfire and its negative watershed effects by resolving the CARCD pursue funding from appropriate agencies to provide for permanent fuel breaks and on-going fuel load reduction efforts in and around forested communities in accordance with identified needs as defined by the appropriate agencies, including CDF, USFS, and BLM in coordination with local RCD/NRCS staff. Such efforts should be coordinated with biomass utilization projects and include the criteria of enhancing watershed health by utilizing a GIS database to facilitate these efforts. Funding for outreach to property owners, the on-going identification of projects, and maintenance of the GIS database by RCD/NRCS staff is to be included.

After Board discussion, Greg Nau moved to approve development of both concepts into two CARCD Resolutions for consideration at the CARCD Annual Meeting. Stewart Feldman seconded; motion carried unanimously.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

- *RCD Forestry & Fuels Management Committee:*
Stan MacDonald reported no meetings were held since the last Board meeting with the next meeting scheduled for October 2nd at 9 a.m. in the USDA Conference Room.
- *RCD Education Committee:*
Stewart Feldman reported no meetings were held and reviewed language from the RCD Annual Plan that he proposed be used on event materials the RCD decides to sponsor. The Board had no objections to the language proposed.
- *RCD Legislative Committee:*
Tom Wehri reported the Legislature is wrapping up their year, noted Bond issues are pertinent to future conservation funding, and indicated the focus is now on the upcoming November election.

DIRECTORS' REPORTS

Bob Wiswell:

- Bob reported the Farm Bureau is honoring insurance representatives for their referrals to the Farm Bureau with a wine tasting event. The Farm Bureau is also holding a Hoedown on October 28th at the Mt. Pleasant Hall, tickets are available thru the Farm Bureau for \$20 ea.
- The High Sierra Resource Conservation and Development Council will be holding their Annual Meeting at the Loma Rica Ranch in conjunction with a small farm equipment event slated for October 21st; the RCD a sponsor of the event in the amount of \$300.

Claudia Smith:

- Claudia completed Ethics Training, attended Farm & Barn event planning meetings, and solicited volunteers for the event.

Tom Wehri offered his services for the day of the Farm & Barn event.

- Harvest Calendars are being developed for fundraiser and Claudia indicated she has order forms.

Stewart Feldman:

- Stewart also completed Ethics Training and attended Farm & Barn planning meetings among other activities.
- Stewart noted a great photograph he recently saw that Otis Wollan had taken of Bear Valley and suggested the Board consider acquiring one to offer to the Sierra Nevada Conservancy.

Tom Wehri:

- Tom reported he too completed Ethics Training and continues to serve as CARCDS' Air Quality Program Manager.
- Tom has been reviewing the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD)'s Annual Meeting materials and guiding principles. The information is available on the NACD website.

Chris Paull:

- Chris reported many discussions with Rich Gresham about the NRCS/RCDs GIS collaborative program.
- Chris suggested the RCD consider sponsoring an animal at next year's Gold Country Fair after participating on that level himself this year and noting the importance of promoting agriculture to the next generation.
- Chris noted he is working on developing a meeting of the Placer Chapter of the CA Special Districts Association with Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) Executive Director Jim Branham and invited the Board to attend the event. Chris also noted he is pursuing a meeting between Rich, himself, and Mr. Branham in order to begin exploring opportunities for collaboration between the SNC and the RCD.

Tom Wehri pointed out the SNC is still in the process of setting their direction and noted they are holding planning meetings where stakeholders can provide input on the subject.

- Chris reported attending the quarterly CARCD Board Meeting where a new logo was discussed as well as the need to support Proposition 84, which will provide funding for SNC should it pass in November.

STAFF REPORTS

RCD Report:

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

- Bill Templin reviewed his activity report, included in the Board Package, and solicited questions and/or comments.

The Board indicated they liked receiving the report in the Board Package where they have a chance to review the report before the meeting and formulate any questions they might have.

- Bill reviewed the Cosumnes, American, Bear, Yuba (CABY) proposal process and his submissions for inclusion in the Integrated Regional Water Management Plan including a CABY regional water quality monitoring program and education and outreach proposals.
- The fledgling Upper American River Foundation has received another \$700 in donations.
- Bill reviewed the American River Watershed Group meeting agenda and upcoming events taking place in the watershed.
- The Ralston Fire will be the topic of the poster Bill is developing for the CARCD Poster Contest at the Annual Meeting. He has gathered post fire assessment from numerous parties about the effects of the fire. Bill is exploring opportunities for post fire restoration of fisheries in time for the fall and spring runs, gathering partners, and input for a developing effort.
- Katie Maloney reported that in addition to her usual activities, she has been helping with the development of the CSDA meeting as well as gathering contact information, developing an agenda, and a draft resolution for the potential JPA meeting.

- Katie has also been reviewing and providing comment regarding proposed language for numerous GIS NRCS and RCD Participation Agreements as well as the proposed CA Forest Improvement Program (CFIP) Scope of Work.
- Katie continues to provide three watershed groups with meeting agendas and minutes as well as providing the American River Watershed Group's Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) related to the Sediment Dynamics Study with TAC meeting minutes.
- Katie also continues to participate with the Placer Tree Partners (PTP), local supporters of a healthy urban forest. PTP is gearing up to re-paint the sidewalk markers for the Treasured Tree Walking Tour locations in anticipation of releasing the new edition of the Treasured Tree Walking Tour Maps to merchants along the tour route.
- Katie closed her report by indicating she has received notice the RCD will be receiving a little over \$43K in insurance premiums due to a rating systems error that over charged the RCD for the last three years. She reported she has requested details of the credit in order to properly allocate the returned funding appropriately between RCD programs.
- Rich Gresham reported Placer County Planning is interested in participating in the Red Sesbania Management Program and is developing the mechanism to transfer the funds to the RCD for the upcoming program.
- Rich reported receiving a request from the US Forest Service for emergency rental of two chipper units and a Crew Supervisor to assist with post Ralston fire work for \$1,200 per day. The RCD has assisted USFS in post fire efforts before.

AGENCY REPORTS

The written activity report for August-September was handed out and the following points were highlighted:

- Mike Brenner relayed Kirsten Losses' thanks for the Board for approving fiscal assistance with her training even though it turned out she was unable to attend the training event due to unforeseen circumstances.
- Mike showed the Board an article that he spotted in the September 3rd San Francisco Chronicle highlighting Placer County agriculture and mentioning the NRCS Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP). The current EQIP application deadline is December 31st and the District Office has received one more application than received a year ago at this time.
- Mike reported review of the delinquent (EQIP) contracts will result in the seeking of monetary damages in two of the cases.
- Mike thanked both Claudia Smith and Stewart Feldman for their participation in the Local Working Group meeting.

COMMUNICATIONS

- Letter dated September 8, 2006 from the Placer Land Trust to Rich Gresham soliciting sponsorship of their Placer Harvest Celebration 2006 event.

Board discussion resulted in a potential RCD sponsorship being requested for the next agenda.

- Letter dated August 25, 2006 from the Great Valley Center to Rich Gresham soliciting sponsorship of their annual Sacramento Valley Forum.
- Cover letter and Fiscal Impact Report dated August 25, 2006 from the Placer County Auditor regarding the Auburn Amended Redevelopment Project.

- 2004-2005 High Sierra RC&D Council; Annual Report.
- Placer County Air Pollution Control District Agricultural Burning Procedures - Fall 2006 Program.
- CA Association of Resource Conservation Districts (CARCD) Central Sierra Regional Fall Area Meeting Notice and Agenda.
- 2006 National Wildland/Urban Interface Fire Education Conference and registration materials.
- CA Special Districts Association publication, *CSDA News*, for August 2006.
- CA Interagency Noxious and Invasive Plant Committee publication, *Noxious Times*, for Spring 2006.
- National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) publication, *Forestry Notes*, for August 2006.
- NACD publication, *Buffer Notes*, for August 2006.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

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

- NRCS/RCD GIS Update
- CFIP/JPA Update
- NRCS/RCD Ad Promotion Update
- NRCS Project Sign Update
- CARCD Annual Meeting Resolution Update
- CARCD Fall Regional Meeting Update
- Placer Land Trust Sponsorship
- Fair Animal Sponsorship

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to conduct, Tom Wehri moved to adjourn the meeting. Claudia Smith seconded; motion carried unanimously. Chair Chris Paull adjourned the meeting at 6:00 p.m.