



Santa Cruz County Resource Conservation District

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MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING OF THE SANTA CRUZ COUNTY RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

The regular Meeting of the Santa Cruz County Resource Conservation District (SCCRCD) Board of Directors was called to order at **6:40PM** on the **12th Day of March 2003**, at the Resource Conservation District Office, 820 Bay Avenue, Suite 107, Capitola, California.

Directors Present: Jim McKenna, President
Steve Butler, Vice President
Tom Lukens
Mike Manfre
John Ricker
Roberta Smith

Directors Absent: Howard Liebenberg

Others Present: Tangi Chapman, Recorder
Karen Christensen, Executive Director of Programs, SCCRCD
Carter Christenson, NRCS
Nicole Martin, Sustainable Conservation
Daniel Mountjoy, NRCS
Kathryn Tobisch, Associate Director

WELCOME - INTRODUCTIONS

The meeting opened at **6:40 PM**, as there was then a quorum present. The Board welcomed Nicole Martin of Sustainable Conservation, and Carter Christenson and Daniel Mountjoy of NRCS.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE FLOOR/CALENDAR DATES

Communications from the floor

No communications were reported at this time.

Calendar Dates

For more information, contact the person or office listed in parenthesis.

March 13 Watsonville Sloughs, Pajaro Dunes, Watsonville, 3:30PM (KC)
March 20 SCCRCD Staff Meeting, Capitola, 9:00-10:30AM (RCD)

MINUTES

Minutes

Roberta Smith moved to approve the February 2003 Meeting Minutes. Tom Lukens seconded the motion. All were in favor.

BUDGET & FINANCE

Expenditures

General Expenditures – No General Expenditures were discussed at this time.

David & Lucile Packard Foundation Expenditures – No D&L Packard Foundation Expenditures were discussed at this time.

David & Lucile Packard Foundation Supplemental Expenditures – No D&L Packard Supplemental Expenditures were discussed at this time.

Transfers

General Budget Transfers – No transfers were made at this time.

David & Lucile Packard Foundation Budget Transfers – No transfers were made at this time.

David & Lucile Packard Foundation Supplemental Budget Transfers – No transfers were made at this time.

BUSINESS ITEMS

Program Updates

Reports

Staff Updates – Karen reported that the RCD would like to contract with Traci Roberts to write the reports necessary for the Watsonville Sloughs cost-share grant. Traci knows the status of the projects and can make recommendations for the most productive use of the remainder of the grant money. Karen also informed the Board that a “Safe Harbor” grant written three years ago as an Outreach program for the Watsonville and Pajaro areas has been funded. Unfortunately, there is no current staff person available to facilitate this project. Karen has asked Traci Roberts to consider working on this project. Karen reported that the San Lorenzo Roads cost-share contract has been executed. Carey will be administering this project. The RCD Roads Workshop given March 12 was received enthusiastically. Rich Casale and Steve Butler both spoke at the workshop and Steve demonstrated two useful techniques for lessening the impact of roads on stream habitat. The County of Santa Cruz Fisheries Resource Planner Kristen Schroeder gave a fish talk at the workshop. Karen relayed to the Board that there are many grants ending and several that are beginning and that this is a challenging time for all staff.

Annual Work Plan – Discussion of the Annual Work Plan will be pushed to the next meeting. The revisions to the Annual Work Plan will be mailed to the Board before the next meeting.

Permit Coordination – Daniel Mountjoy of NRCS and Nicole Martin of Sustainable Conservation gave a Power Point presentation on the permit coordination process. Daniel outlined the success of the Elkhorn Slough Watershed permit coordination program. Under the permit program 37 projects have been completed, an estimated 41,000 tons of sediment have been prevented from entering the slough and ultimately the Monterey Bay NMS, and more than two miles of stream bank and channel have been restored. Nicole explained that the role of Sustainable Conservation would be to provide expertise in regulatory compliance, to facilitate agency relationships, to obtain watershed based permits, and to guide NRCS and RCD through the process with technical support. Nicole reviewed the agencies that would be participating in the process along with the associated regulatory requirements for each. Nicole explained that NRCS, RCD, Sustainable Conservation and the regulatory agencies would negotiate the watershed based permits, then NRCS and RCD would work directly with the farmer to approve a conservation plan and sign a cooperator agreement. Finally, the project would move into the implementation phase. NRCS and the RCD would provide an annual report to the regulatory agency on projects that have been completed. Nicole and Daniel pointed out that this would also provide good PR for the regulatory agencies that their system is working and that progress is being achieved. Nicole outlined the role of the RCD Board in/and/what compliance procedures as well as CEQA compliance issues. Nicole reported that she recently attended a meeting with the regulatory agencies which will be taking part in the process and they were overwhelmingly in support of the process. She conceded that it might be a challenge to get through this process. However, both she and Daniel felt confident that the permit coordination process could succeed. The Board was reassured that the RCD would be able to pull out of negotiations if the process was not moving as anticipated. Karen explained that the RCD has several go, no-go points throughout the process. Several Board members were concerned that the RCD not get in the position of “whistle blowing” on landowners. Nicole explained that the RCD would simply be providing agencies with a list of potential projects at the beginning of the year and then a report at the end of the year; this would list all those projects that were actually completed. John Ricker pointed out that the RCD would need to have the technical support available to ensure that project designs will not fail. Roberta suggested sponsoring those projects that are sure to succeed. Jim McKenna assured Nicole that the SCCRCD was supportive of the process and thanked Nicole and Sustainable Conservation for great work that they have provided thus far.

ASSOCIATE DIRECTORS

There were no Associate Directors reports at this time.

NRCS

Reports

The NRCS monthly report was distributed for review (see attached). Carter Christenson reported that he would be hiring a new Engineer soon. Carter informed the Board that due to Congressional changes to the Budget there might be a large pool of money available for technical assistance (third party vendors). He reported that congress is ramping up EQIP and WHIP funding. Carter also spread the word that Sam Farr in the Agriculture Appropriations Committee secured \$600,000 for the Monterey Bay NMS, much of which will go to NRCS and the Sanctuary Partners.

RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Directors Reports

Jim McKenna reported on the International Erosion Control Association Symposium he attended last month. He toured restoration work done on a creek outside of Las Vegas on which cutting edge techniques were used to stabilize the canyon forming downstream of the City. Jim gave the materials received at the symposium to Karen for office reference.

Roberta Smith reported that the Scotts Creek Watershed Council is working on a watershed assessment. The group will be meeting with Marty Gingras tomorrow. She is hopeful that the process will be completed soon.

Staff Reports

No Staff Reports were given at this time.

ADJOURN**Adjournment**

Steve Butler moved to adjourn the Meeting at 8:50PM. Roberta Smith seconded the motion. All were in favor. The next Board Meeting will be at **6:30PM** on **April 9, 2003**, at the **Resource Conservation District Office**.

James G. McKenna
President, Board of Directors

(TC:JGM)