



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 **6:40 November, 10 2004**, at the Resource Conservation District Office, 820 Bay Avenue, Suite 128, Capitola, California.

Directors Present:	Steve Butler, Vice President Howard Liebenberg Tom Lukens Mike Manfre Jim McKenna, President John Ricker
Directors Absent:	Roberta Smith
Associate Directors Present:	Kathryn Tobisch Vasiliki Vassil
RCD Staff Present:	Tangi Chapman, Recorder Karen Christensen, Executive Director of Programs Sharon Corkrean, Executive Director
NRCS Staff Present:	Richard Casale, District Conservationist
Others Present:	

WELCOME - INTRODUCTIONS

The meeting opened at **6:40PM** as there was then a quorum present.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

There were no oral communications.

MINUTES

John Ricker moved to accept the October 13, 2004 minutes as presented. Steve Butler seconded the motion. All were in favor.

BUDGET & FINANCE

Expenditures

General Expenditures – The General Expenditures for October 2004 were circulated for review. John Ricker moved to approve them. Tom Lukens seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Transfers

There were no Transfers.

ACTION ITEMS

Program Discussion Items

There were no action items.

REPORTS

Staff Reports

See attached October Staff Minutes for details on each grant. Karen reported a successful Blue Circle on November 9. Both presentations by State Parks and the Cultural Council were great. The meeting was well attended. Karen reported that the RCD has hired a new staff person, Arianne Rettinger, to help coordinate the Pajaro/Watsonville Sloughs grant. In addition, Ruthie Shafer was in the paper regarding her work coordinating the Taste of San Benito. Dawn has been working on another Proposition 13 grant application in collaboration with Marc Los Huertos of UCSC and Marc Buchanan of Buchanan and Associates. The intent of the grant is to

upgrade a wetland runoff treatment system. This constructed wetland will be used to treat tail-water runoff. The grant is very technical and is an outgrowth of the Ag Waiver conditions and the success of the Beach Road ditch. Mike Manfre told the Board that he and other area farmers have formed a non-profit to work together to collect the monitoring data required by the Ag Waiver. The Board discussed at length the monitoring requirements recently required in state-funded grants. The Board discussed the EPA requirements for the Clean Water Act and how they work with the Regional Water Quality Control Board. Without knowing the details of how the monitoring results will be used, the Board expressed concerns about accepting state funds. Karen also said that it is unclear what level of monitoring the Regional Water Board will require. Mike told the Board that area farmers are concerned because there is no baseline data available to judge the success of projects coupled with the uncertainty of how the data will be used. Karen will coordinate a presentation by Dawn Mathes and John Ricker regarding this issue. Karen reported that the Local Working Group met on October 11 at Cal Poly Swanton. Both Santa Cruz and San Mateo members were present. They discussed changes to the EQIP program as well as proposed changes to the screening program and the cost share list. Rich told the Board that at a recent Area 5 meeting with DCs from Modesto to Santa Monica, no other District proposed as many changes as San Mateo/Santa Cruz. Rich reported that there will be a twenty percent increase in EQIP funds this year, with eighty percent of the funds available upfront. The deadline for applications will be January 21. Rich reported on major changes to the program including an extension to give back funds until the first or second week of December. NRCS will now be taking up 90% of the administrative process (the role of the Farm Service Agency is to establish eligibility); high priority will be given to those applicants with a Conservation Plan; and, finally, there are changes to the cost-share list. Rich acknowledged all the hard work by office staff to make these changes possible. Nice work.

Congratulations to Karen for receiving the Community Hero Award! The award will be presented at Dominican Hospital on November 22.

Directors/Associate Director Reports

Kathryn Tobisch attended the Area 5 CARCD meeting in King City. She reported that the bulk of the Regional Work Plan meeting was spent editing the document. She presented a copy of the new and improved work plan. While there was no formal time for people to comment on the program, Kathryn reported that the Director for the RCD of Monterey County expressed concern over devoting staff time to this issue. After discussion, the SCCRCD indicated they would not support this issue. The Board discussed support for collaboration on trainings, workshops, and programs where appropriate but not Staff time or more meetings.

Vasiliki Vassil attended the CARC&D State Conference in Arrowhead, California. The conference topic was Forest & Fuels and the Urban Interface. Vasiliki reported that CARC&D has \$10,000 budget for funding projects. Vasiliki suggested the RCD could apply for funding to supplement a project. If there are any of our partners who could benefit from this kind of grant, she suggested referring them to CARC&D. She also reported that they would like to know if we have a template we could share with them on "how to do a roads workshop." At the meeting Vasiliki said Burt questioned what RCDs were doing about fuel load. Karen replied by citing the funding which was just received to train fire fighters for wildland fire certification.

Steve Butler visited the Kings Creek Roads Project with Nick Lasher and Craig Ficenecc. Steve reported that the visit was a success as it brought "idealism in line with reality." Steve and Rich gave presentations to the Pescadero Conservation Alliance on winter preparedness. There were 20 people in attendance and the discussions were informative.

Sharon reported that John Ricker, Mike Manfre, and Howard Liebenberg had all been reappointed by the County Board of Supervisors; Sheryl Bailey was appointed to fill the opening since Steve Butler chose not to run again.

NRCS Reports

The NRCS activity report for November was circulated for review. Rich read an email that he had forwarded to Carter Christenson that illustrated the benefits of giving informal technical assistance to non-EQIP landowners. Rich was able to give the landowner some suggestions for decreasing the erosion in his avocado orchard. The landowner emailed Rich after the first couple of rains saying that the suggestions had worked and he was grateful for Rich's ideas.

Calendar Dates

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

There were no Calendar Dates given.

ADJOURN

Adjournment

Steve Butler moved to adjourn the Meeting at 8:45PM. Howard Liebenberg seconded the motion. All were in favor. The next **Board Meeting will be at 6:30PM on January 12, 2005**, at the **Resource Conservation District Office, 820 Bay Avenue, Suite 128.**

James G. McKenna
President, Board of Directors

(TC:JGM)