



MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 8, 2008 BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING OF THE RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT OF SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

The regular Meeting of the Resource Conservation District of Santa Cruz (the District) Board of Directors was called to order at, **6:40PM October 8, 2008**, at the **Community Foundation of Santa Cruz County, 2425 Porter Street, Suite 16, Soquel, CA 95073**.

Directors Present:	Howard Liebenberg Mike Manfre, Vice President Jim McKenna, President John Ricker Roberta Smith
Directors Absent:	Sheryl Bailey Tom Lukens
Associate Directors:	Kathryn Tobisch
RCD Staff Present:	Tangi Chapman, Executive Assistant Karen Christensen, Executive Director
Concerned Citizens:	Carol Carson, Valley Women's Club Margaret Kinda

Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board: Monica Barricarte

WELCOME - INTRODUCTIONS

The meeting opened at 6:40PM with a quorum present. Jim welcomed the visitors to the RCD Board meeting and introductions were made. Margaret Kinda expressed her interest in finding out more about the RCD and the Board of Directors.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Karen informed the Board that the next CCRC&D meeting would be October 29, 2008 in King City and requested a Board Member attend. Mike Manfre indicated that he would be unable to attend. Karen also circulated a letter of thanks from Rich Casale to Suzanne Shettler for her help revising the list of fire resistant plants.

MINUTES

The Board reviewed the September 17, 2008 meeting minutes. Mike Manfre moved to accept the September 17, 2008 meeting minutes. Roberta Smith seconded the motion. All were in favor of the motion.

BUDGET & FINANCE

General Expenditures – The General Expenditures for July 2008 were circulated for review. Karen highlighted several line-items. John Ricker moved to accept the September 2008 General Expenditures. Mike Manfre seconded the motion. All were in favor of the motion.

Transfers

There were no transfers.

ACTION ITEMS

Program Discussion Items

Central Coast Irrigation and Nutrient Management Program – Karen introduced Monica Barricarte from the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board. Monica gave a description of her background in micro-irrigation and then her

work with the mobile lab at the Cachuma RCD identifying nutrient and irrigation needs of farmers. She went on to explain that about six months ago the Regional Board decided to develop a grant entitled Central Coast Irrigation and Nutrient Management Program (CCINMP) and that she hopes to finalize the scope of work for this project by October 10, 2008. Monica circulated handouts and a PowerPoint presentation (see attached). She began the presentation by discussing various farming techniques and their impacts on water quality. Monica explained that there is currently no grantee for the Central Coast Irrigation and Nutrient Management Program and that the program is in the development stages. She said she is working with the Pajaro Ag Water Quality Program in order to make the two programs look similar. The CCINMP, she explained, would be a \$3 million grant that would run for three years using bond money from Proposition 84; the program would be non-regulatory and voluntary. The area of focus would be the middle to southern region of the central coast. Monica outlined the overall goal of the project which would be to improve water quality by encouraging growers to implement irrigation and nutrient BMPs. The growers would be supported by technical advisors that would provide resources for growers to implement the BMPs, all on a voluntary basis.

Monica proposes achieving the goal of improved water quality by reducing the amount of pollutants (i.e., nutrients, pesticides) and sediment that enter surface water by reducing the amount of irrigation runoff that drains to surface water, as well as to optimize the timing and quantity of nutrient and fertilizer delivery to prevent surface and groundwater runoff. Monica explained that this project is of high priority since they found that there was much irrigation run-off during the summer of 2008. After examining water flows along San Juan Creek, it was discovered that there were excessive flows in the creek, especially at night. Roberta noted that the San Andreas Fault runs under that creek, and maybe the increase in flows is due to water running along the fault. Monica said that this may be true, but that the increase in water flow follows a pattern of increase during the night and that would not be explained by the fault. Monica then presented various monitoring results that showed significant problems across the region, including sediment, bacteria and nitrates.

Monica then showed examples of the three main irrigation systems used by growers and their potential for run-off and leaching. She highlighted that the grant program would focus efforts on farmers who flood furrows (highest potential for run-off) and use sprinklers (high potential for run-off). The program would not address drip systems due to their low potential for run-off and leaching. Monica noted that the problem is that water carries the pesticides and fertilizer off-site and into watersheds. The Board asked questions and gave comments regarding the program.

Monica then showed a flow chart for how the program would work. She explained that the Irrigation Advisor and the Nutrient Advisor would work in concert with the grower to improve irrigation efficiency and reduce excessive fertilizer application. This would reduce off-site movement of pollutants and irrigation run-off, which would then be monitored and measured. This would then lead to improved water quality that could be measured and quantified. Monica noted that there is much resistance to getting onsite data and that she is working on possible solutions to that problem.

Monica then outlined the roles of the Irrigation and Nutrient advisors and how they would work with the growers to develop appropriate practices. At the end of her presentation, Monica asked for questions and comments. Jim suggested that there need to be incentives for growers to participate, and Monica replied that, though there are incentives, they are not significant. She explained that most of the money that goes to the agency administering the grant will be to pay for the advisors and the monitoring. Mike suggested that perhaps rather than using advisors, there could be an agriculture presentation or handbook that would talk about what growers are currently doing, what they could be doing, and what growers need to change to improve efficiency and water quality. Board members agreed that any incentive needs to be voluntary and it was noted that the regulatory nature of RWQCB may cause problems. With regard to the monitoring of success, the Board suggested that for the purposes of the scope of the CCINMP it is important to maintain enough clarity in the scope so that the intent is obvious but there will need to be a flexible and collaborative process to determine how best to attain their goals. The Board thanked Monica for her time in presenting the program. Monica said that Arianne Rettinger and Karen Christensen are helping with the scope and that further comments could be given to them.

REPORTS

Staff Reports

Karen explained that staff has been very busy, with the construction season set to close October 15. She reported that the first Coho Recovery Project was completed last Friday and hopes to schedule tours to the project next spring. Karen told the Board that the Integrated Watershed Restoration Project grant closed September 30.

Karen and Rich Casale met with folks from the State Emergency Assessment Team; there is great concern about erosion and flooding after the Summit Fire of late spring. Rich, she said, has posted a "Do's and Don'ts" list for preparing burned areas for winter on the RCD Website. There will be a press conference on the SEAT Report. Karen informed the Board that the RCD website has several publications available for landowners fire preparedness.

Director/Associate Reports

Calendar Dates

October	29	CCRC&D Meeting, 1-4PM, King City, CA
November	18-22	CARCD/CARC&D Councils 63 rd Annual Conference, Riverside, CA

Directors/Associate Director Reports

Roberta Smith reported on the surprise discovery of Chromium 6 (hexavalent chromium) found in airborne particulate matter sampled at locations in Davenport. The two locations downwind from the Cemex Cement Plant where sets of samples were taken measured significantly higher levels of Chromium 6 than is legally acceptable in California. Roberta explained that Chromium 3 is found in the raw material used to make the cement; when heated Chromium 3 converts to Chromium 6, a carcinogen. She further explained that Cemex has been getting their iron from recycled steel slag and mill scale which may contain perhaps be easier to process than iron ore, but may have higher levels of Chromium 3 than the iron ore previously used. They are returning to the iron ore. Roberta attended a meeting October 7 where Dr. Bob Blaisdell of the State Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment tried to put the findings into perspective. However, Roberta reported the community of Davenport is in shock and upset. She further reported that the staff at Cemex is looking at what they can do and what they will need to do to address the problem. She will keep the Board informed of any developments.

NRCS Reports

No NRCS reports were given.

NEXT MEETING

Date/ Agenda Items

The next **Board Meeting will be on November 12, 2008 at 6:30PM at the RCD office 820 Bay Avenue, Suite 136, Capitola, CA. 95010. John Ricker moved to adjourn (8:40PM). Howard Liebenberg seconded. All were in favor of the motion.**

Jim McKenna
Director, Board of Directors

(TC: JM)