

MINUTES OF THE JULY 15, 2009 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 **6:37PM, July 15, 2009** at the Resource Conservation District Office, 820 Bay Avenue, Suite 136, Capitola, CA 95010.

Directors Present: Margaret Kinda
Howard Liebenberg
Jim McKenna, President
Roberta Smith

Directors Absent: Mike Manfre, Vice President
John Ricker

RCD Staff Present: Tangi Chapman, Executive Assistant
Sharon Corkrean, Director of Finance
Alicia Moss, Program Specialist
Jen Stern, Restoration Ecologist

WELCOME - INTRODUCTIONS

The meeting opened at 6:37PM with a quorum present. Jim McKenna chaired the meeting.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

No oral communications were given.

MINUTES

The Board reviewed the June 10, 2009 regular meeting minutes. Howard Liebenberg moved to accept them. Margaret Kinda seconded the motion. All were in favor of the motion.

BUDGET & FINANCE

2008-2009 Expenditures – Sharon circulated the June 2009 Expenditures for review and approval. Sharon pointed out that the District has received funds from the state for all outstanding invoices for work done prior to the December 17, 2008 freeze on state funds. Consequently, she has paid all bills from prior to the freeze. Margaret asked how the District checks that funds are spent appropriately. Sharon explained that by the time the Board sees the expenditures invoices have been reviewed multiple times. First, staff members put together the invoice; it is then reviewed by the Program Manager, followed by Sharon or Karl Fieberling (Grant Administrator) depending on the project. The county as well as the funding agency reviews all invoices. In addition, the District is audited annually by an independent auditing firm. Howard Liebenberg then moved to accept the June 2009 Expenditures. Roberta Smith seconded the motion. All were in favor of the motion.

2009-2010 Budget – Sharon circulated the revised and expanded 2009-2010 Budget for review and adoption. The Board reviewed line items and sought clarification from Sharon where needed. Sharon explained that the budget assumes that all anticipated funds will be received and projects will proceed as planned. Roberta requested that the District use “in-house” employees to conduct “professional services” wherever possible. Sharon explained that, due to work load and expertise, it is often more cost effective to use outside professionals. Howard Liebenberg moved to adopt the 2009-2010 Budget as presented. Margaret Kinda seconded the motion. All were in favor of the motion.

ACTION ITEMS

Program Discussion Items

Upper San Vicente Restoration Project– Alicia Moss circulated a project description for the Upper San Vicente Restoration Project. Alicia gave an overview of the project; it consists of restoring and creating a series of pools and habitat structures

located adjacent to San Vicente Creek near Davenport. San Vicente is a watershed known to support Coho salmon, steelhead and California red-legged frogs (see project description for full details). She noted that a similar restoration project was completed in 2008 on the lower San Vicente pond (just upstream from the tunnels under Highway 1 and the railroad line which convey the creek to the ocean). Balance Hydrologics has completed the plans and the estimated cost of the project is \$125,000. The Board reviewed the plans, making minor recommendations. Alicia explained that the project is currently awaiting Environmental Clearance from the County, after which staff will start the bidding process. She anticipates starting the work September 1. Roberta Smith moved to accept the Upper San Vicente Restoration Project as presented. Margaret Kinda seconded the motion. All were in favor.

West Branch Soquel Creek Fish Passage Project– Jen circulated a project description for the West Branch Soquel Creek Fish Passage Project (for specific details see project description). She explained that this is a relic project that has been in the works for many years. This high priority IWRP project, Jen explained, has been hung-up in the permitting process where it was denied due to another bridge too close by and that too much fill would be deposited in the flood plain. The District then took the project to another engineer who scaled down the project, this time designing a ford crossing that would meet the county's requirements. The project includes replacing the existing fish passage impediment with a series of three natural-bottom culverts to provide access to 3.5 miles of habitat and to improve passage to available spawning habitat for adult salmonids. The total cost of the project is estimated at \$529,000. Jen explained that the boxed culverts will be cast on site, and that a stream diversion must be created while the project is in progress; the anticipated start date is September 1. Roberta Smith moved to approve the West Branch Soquel Creek Fish Passage Project as presented. Margaret Kinda seconded the motion. All were in favor of the motion.

Weed Management Area Strategic Plan– Jen Stern circulated the Weed Management Area Strategic Plan for review and approval. She explained that the WMA is a county-wide coordinated group effort and that each county can form a WMA to address exotic invasive plant infestations. Previously, the Santa Cruz Chapter of the California Native Plant Society led the WMA, but it fizzled. Last July Jen coordinated an effort to reestablish the local WMA; the meeting brought together around 50 people from various agencies, all interested in weed management issues. As part of the WMA work a Strategic Plan and a Memorandum of Understanding have been drafted to guide members and coordinate efforts to eradicate invasive exotic plants within the county. Roberta complimented Jen on the document. Jen explained that the RCD will play a lead role in the WMA, and that the WMA will become a new program within the District. She also reported that the program has received \$16,000 of guaranteed funding though currently the state is sending out IOUs. Of that money, \$9,000 has already gone to fund projects. In addition, Jen has written a proposal for a \$60,000 grant for an invasive weed rapid response program. Jen also informed the Board that she will be leaving the District at the end of July to start a new job doing weed management in the North Bay and hopes that another staff member will pick-up where she leaves off. The Board wished her well and has appreciated all that she has done for the District. Howard then moved to sign-on to the Memorandum of Understanding and adopt the Strategic Plan, Attachments A,B and C, for the Weed Management Area of Santa Cruz County. Roberta Smith seconded the motion. All were in favor of the motion.

REPORTS

Staff Reports

There were no Staff Reports given.

Written Communications

Tangi shared the results of the LAFCO Special District elections. Jim Anderson was elected to a four-year term on LAFCO ending May 2013.

Directors/Associate Directors Reports

Roberta Smith reported on a Cal Poly Forestry class she has been attending at the Cal Poly Swanton Pacific Ranch.

NRCS Update

Sharon reported that she has met the new soil conservationist Erin Foreman who recently started with the NRCS.

NEXT MEETING

Date/ Agenda Items

The next **Board Meeting will be on September 9 2009 at 6:30PM at the RCD office 820 Bay Avenue, Suite 136, Capitola, CA 95010.** The Board meeting adjourned at 8:20PM.

Jim McKenna
Director, Board of Directors

(TC: JM)