



**MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 9, 2015 BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING OF THE  
RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT OF SANTA CRUZ COUNTY**

The Regular Meeting of the Resource Conservation District (RCD) of Santa Cruz County Board of Directors was called to order at **6:40PM, September 9, 2015** at the District Office, 820 Bay Avenue, Suite 136, Capitola, CA 95010.

Directors Present:	Robert Ketley Jim McKenna, President John Ricker Roberta Smith
Directors Absent:	Gordon Claassen Mike Manfre, Vice President Howard Liebenberg
Associate Directors Present:	Vasiliki Vassil
RCD Staff Present:	Chris Coburn, Executive Director Tangi Chapman, Recorder Gerardo Spinelli
Member of the public:	Devii Rao, UC Cooperative Extension

**WELCOME - INTRODUCTIONS**

The meeting opened at 6:40PM when Roberta entered to create quorum; Jim McKenna chaired the meeting. Introductions were made. Gerardo Spinelli, who was recently hired to serve as an Agronomist / Irrigation Specialist for the District, was introduced to the Board.

(Roberta entered to create a quorum)

**ORAL COMMUNICATIONS**

Devii Rao told the Board that she has been working with Swanton Pacific Ranch to identify ranching and grassland restoration research projects on which they can collaborate. She told the Board that they will be meeting again in the future to see what opportunities exist. Ms. Rao will be speaking at the Elkhorn Slough Coastal Training workshop regarding California red-legged frog conservation and livestock grazing. She also reported that the Bureau of Land Management is looking to develop a grazing Best Management Plan for plants and wildlife on the Coast Dairies property on the north coast of Santa Cruz County.

**REPORTS**

**NRCS Report**

The NRCS Activity Report for July and August was circulated. Rich Casale gave updates and highlights. Additionally, he mentioned that April Jernberg has resigned from the NRCS as of September 9<sup>th</sup>. Rich reported that NRCS has funded 17 EQIP projects this year, with contracts totaling \$523,000. He pointed out that new to the 2014 Farm Bill, NRCS can help horse facilities as long as there is acreage and livestock has access to the land. Rich will be speaking at four winter preparedness workshops this fall.

## MINUTES

The Board reviewed the July 22, 2015 meeting minutes. John Ricker moved approval of the July 22, 2015 meeting minutes as presented. Roberta Smith seconded the motion. All were in favor of the motion. The motion carried.

## BUDGET & FINANCE

FY 2015-2016 Expenditures – The July 2015 Expenditures were reviewed by the Board. Robert Ketley moved approval of the July 2015 Expenditures as presented; Roberta Smith seconded the motion. The vote was called: John Ricker abstained; Robert Ketley, Jim McKenna and Roberta Smith approved the motion. The motion carried.

FY 2015-2016 Expenditures – The August 2015 Expenditures were reviewed by the Board. Robert Ketley moved approval of the August 2015 Expenditures as presented; Roberta Smith seconded the motion. The vote was called: John Ricker abstained; Robert Ketley, Jim McKenna and Roberta Smith approved the motion. The motion carried.

## ACTION ITEMS

Resolution 2015-05 – Chris Coburn presented the Board with Resolution 2015-05. The resolution authorizes the RCD to enter into agreement with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife for a grant to support the Livestock and Lands program. These funds will be used cooperatively between the Santa Cruz and Loma Prieta RCDs to reinvigorate the Livestock and Land program. The RCD of Santa Cruz will be the lead and the grant administrator for the grant. John Ricker moved approval of Resolution 2015-05 as presented; Roberta Smith seconded the motion. The resolution passed.

Resolution 2015-06 – Chris circulated Resolution 2015-06 to the Board. The resolution authorizes the RCD to enter into agreement with CALTRANS to receive funds derived from a mitigation settlement stemming from a project on San Pedro Creek in San Mateo County. This funding is allocated to a yet undetermined study that will move the Scotts Creek Highway 1 bridge replacement forward. The RCD, working with CALTRANS, the Regional Transportation Commission and the Coastal Conservancy will determine the best use for these funds. A suite of studies and information needs was previously prepared for that project, and the funds will pay for one or more of those studies. The grant will help to move the project forward and is for \$86,000. Robert Ketley moved approval of Resolution 2015-06. John Ricker seconded the motion. All were in favor. The resolution passed.

Santa Cruz Mountains Stewardship Network Memorandum of Agreement – Chris explained that the MOA before the Board is the result of a process that he and Kellyx Nelson from the San Mateo RCD, among a number of others, have been involved in for the past year. The effort, called the Santa Cruz Mountains Stewardship 5.0 is sponsored by the Sempervirens Fund. The intent of the effort is to build a network of stewardship across the Santa Cruz Mountains, with the intent to, *“help cultivate a resilient, vibrant region where human and natural systems thrive for generations to come”*. Those participating in this process include the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band, Big Creek Lumber, Save the Redwoods League, Girl Scouts of Northern California, University of California – Santa Cruz Natural Reserves, Bureau of Land Management, CalFire, the Land Trust of Santa Cruz County, Stanford – Jasper Ridge Biological Preserve, Santa Cruz County, California State Parks, the Peninsula Open Space Trust, Mid-Peninsula Regional Open Space District, San Mateo RCD, San Mateo County (Parks), San Lorenzo Valley Water District, and Sempervirens Fund. Chris described how land trusts are moving from a model that solely focused on acquisition to one that also includes stewardship of lands. As part of the network development process, the group has developed an MOA as a framework for cooperation. Chris explained that this is a big opportunity for the RCD to interact with large landowners where the mission of resource conservation and land stewardship can move forward and

have a large impact. The Board was concerned about how this document will be received and felt it necessary to defer consideration to a future meeting, and allow them time to gather more information. Chris expressed the value of the RCD's being at the table and working with these groups; the Board supports the process.

**75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration** – Chris reminded the Board about the upcoming 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the RCD. He shared his experience of attending the San Mateo RCD's 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary party last year and felt like this would be a great opportunity to raise the community's awareness about the RCD. As one of the oldest environmental organizations in the county, this would be an excellent opportunity to highlight where we have been, what we are currently involved in and where we are going. Chris suggested the event be held in late spring. He will need the support of the Board to plan, fundraise and hold the event. Robert said he would be willing to be a part of the planning committee.

### **Staff Reports**

Chris Coburn continues to meet with partners to discuss the viability of some version of an open space district in Santa Cruz County. Chris says the meetings have focused on defining the role of an open space entity and has been pushing the dialogue towards stewardship rather than acquisition. As instructed by the County Board of Supervisors at an August 18<sup>th</sup> workshop on the subject, the County Parks Director will be conducting outreach over the next several months to gather input on the need, potential composition and funding of an open space entity.

Chris reported that projects that were approved earlier this year are moving forward with no major issues. Chris reminded the Board that the CARCD Conference is coming up in November and he along with Sacha Lozano and Kelli Camara will be giving presentations.

### **Director Reports**

Roberta gave a report on the community concern regarding a proposal to establish a National Monument on the BLM property on the North Coast (formerly the Coast Dairies property). She said that many people in the Bonny Doon / Davenport communities are concerned about the potential of designation to bringing more people without proper infrastructure and management and what impact that would have on the natural resources of the area. Additionally, she mentioned there are private property concerns as well.

### **CALENDAR DATES**

- November 10 Blue Circle Meeting
- November CARCD Conference
- TBD RCD 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration in 2016


### **WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS**

There were no written communications.

### **NEXT MEETING**

#### **Date/ Agenda Items**

The next meeting will be on October 14, 2015. Roberta Smith moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:43PM. John Ricker seconded the motion. All were in favor of the motion. The motion carried.



Jim McKenna  
President, Board of Directors  
(TC:JM)