RESOURCE
CONSERVATION DISTRICT
OF SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

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MINUTES OF THE JULY 14, 2016 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 **6:37PM, July 14, 2016** at the District Office, 820 Bay Avenue, Suite 136, Capitola, CA 95010. A Quorum was present.

Directors Present:	Mike Manfre, Vice President
	Robert Ketley
	Roberta Smith
	Howard Liebenberg
Directors Absent:	Jim McKenna, President
	Gordon Claassen
	John Ricker
RCD Staff Present:	Chris Coburn, Executive Director
	Angie Gruys, Recorder
	Kelli Camara
NRCS Staff Present:	Rich Casale, District Conservationist

1. **CALL TO ORDER**
   The meeting opened at 6:37PM. Mike Manfre chaired the meeting.

2. **INTRODUCTIONS AND WELCOME**
   No members of the public attended the meeting.

3. **PUBLIC COMMENT**
   There were no oral communications.

4. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**
   The Board reviewed the meeting agenda. Robert Ketley moved approval of the meeting agenda. Roberta Smith seconded the motion. All were in favor of the motion. The motion passed.

5. **NRCS REPORT**
   NRCS District Conservationist, Rich Casale, circulated the NRCS activity report for June. Rich was involved in the interview process to fill the Soil Conservationist position. A national recruitment was held for this position, but unfortunately, only three candidates are currently being considered. Interviews have been completed with each candidate, and NRCS is in the process of making an offer to the highest-ranking candidate. If accepted, the position could be staffed starting in September. NRCS has also begun the recruitment for the Engineering position. There has been a greater response to this recruitment than for the Soil Conservationist position, 6 candidates have made the list, and the top three will be interviewed. Rich stated that he is considering recruiting two possible Earth Team volunteers for the fall, and he hopes his successor will continue the internships relationship with UCSC. Rich again indicated that it is his intent to retire at the end of 2016.

6. CONSENT AGENDA

Robert Ketley moved approval of the Consent Agenda items. Roberta Smith seconded the motion. All were in favor of the motion. The motion passed.

7. ACTION ITEMS

7.1. Tier 3 Projects for Board Approval

A projector was used to project the designs and specifications for each project so that the Board could review details and discuss each of the following projects.

7.1.1. Amesti Sediment Basin Project

The purpose of this project is to address nutrient loading (primarily phosphorous) to Pinto Lake. Over the past several years, the lake has experienced algal blooms that have resulted in toxic conditions in the lake. The proposed project will construct an on stream sediment basin to capture sediment and at the same time improve an access road that bisects the project site. Phosphorus binds to sediment, so it is believed that capturing the sediment will also sequester phosphorous, since the basin is on-channel, it will have limited riparian impact; yet the Regional Water Quality Control Board is requiring this be mitigated.

Mike Manfre expressed concern that an environmentally beneficial project, funded through the Regional Water Quality Control Board, is being required for mitigation for the limited impact. Chris responded that this is a new requirement for this type of project, which have been considered self-mitigating in the past. Chris stated that the Regional Board's opinion is that on-channel structures should be the last resort, and first work should be done upstream to control the source(s) of sediment. Chris and Rich expressed that NRCS and the RCD have been working with a number of upstream landowners and growers, but the problem persists, which led us to this project. Mike expressed concern that we would be setting precedent for mitigation requirements in the future with this project.

Rich asked about who is responsible for maintenance and notes that this is in a long term contract. Chris responded that County Parks Department is required to maintain the project for its useful life. Rich wants to know what happens after the useful life, i.e. how do we decommission projects after their useful life? Chris responded that we are limited in what we or a landowner can reasonably commit to for ongoing maintenance, but ideally it will be maintained in perpetuity.

Howard asked about inlet plugging that would result in an overtopping of the facility. Howard suggested that a collar be installed over the inlet structure to capture debris and prevent the inlet from plugging. Chris will follow up with staff and respond to the Board regarding the feasibility of this suggestion. Howard made an additional comment that a finished grade should never be 0%, a condition that would lead to road impacts and potholing due to insufficient drainage. Chris indicated that this concern will be relayed to the construction inspector and contractor selected for construct the project.

Mike asked if this project is more complicated than others because it seemed like here there were new issues. Chris answered that this is pretty typical of other projects we have done.

Howard asked for a project cost estimate. Chris stated that the engineer's estimate is approximately $172,000 including a 15% contingency.

Howard Liebenberg moved approval of the Amesti Sediment Reduction Project designs with a requested follow-up from Chris to the questions outlined above. Roberta Smith seconded the motion. All voted in favor of the motion, and the motion passed.

7.1.2. Storrs Water and Sediment Control Project

This project was developed as part of the work that the RCD has been doing with Andy Fisher and his colleagues at UCSC to map recharge suitability across Santa Cruz County. That work was funded by a

grant from the State Coastal Conservancy. The purpose of this project is construct a recharge basin in an area overlying the Aromas formation to facilitate enhanced groundwater recharge. Chris presented the project and described that it's relatively straight forward idea – i.e. capture surface runoff and direct it to an excavated basin that would allow for passive infiltration to groundwater. A formal engineer's estimate has not been completed, but the current estimate based on similar work is that the basin will cost approximately $120,000 to construct. Robert Ketley moved approval of the Storrs Water and Sediment Control Project. Howard Liebenberg seconded the motion. All voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed.

7.1.3. Bryant-Habert Ecological Restoration Project

The purpose of this project is to restore wetland function at the Bryant-Habert portion of the Watsonville Slough Farms property, which is owned and managed by the Land Trust of Santa Cruz County. Project implementation is being funded through the Wildlife Conservation Board. Designs and permits were funded through grants awarded to the Land Trust of Santa Cruz County from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the State Coastal Conservancy. The RCD had hoped to construct this project last year but had to delay because CEQA was not complete in time. The estimated cost for this project is $250,000. In addition to restoring wetland function, there is a future bioreactor project being designed for a portion of the Bryant-Habert property. Robert Ketley moved approval of the Bryant-Habert Ecological Restoration Project Designs, and Roberta Smith seconded the motion. All voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed.

7.1.4. Airport Recharge Project

(Kelli Camara, RCD Technical Director, arrived at 8:07 PM)

Similar to the Storrs project, this project came out of the MAR suitability mapping conducted by the UCSC team. This project is located on the City of Watsonville Airport property, but rather than installing a basin this project will utilize engineered dry wells. Kelli and Andy Fisher worked though permit issues including additional restriction to having open, standing water due to this being an airport property (concern over attracting birds), as well as the fact that the property contains Santa Cruz tarplant. Chris discussed the specifics of the dry well designs. Chris explained that it works like a typical well only instead of pulling water out, it will passively infiltrate water back into the ground. Kelli Camara provided additional information about the project including showing dry well location on a map to the Board. Robert Ketley also showed potential future projects near the Airport parking area. Robert Ketley moved approval of the Airport Recharge Project Designs; Howard Liebenberg seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the motion passed.

8. DISCUSSION ITEMS

8.1. Executive Director's Report

Chris Coburn presented the written Executive Directors Report, dated June 30th. Chris highlighted the new network manager for the Santa Cruz Mountains Stewardship Network, Dylan Skybrook, had been hired and started work. He also updated the Board on efforts to consolidate the RCD offices into one suite, and expressed particular appreciation for Sharon and Tangi who have done the lion's share of the work, and for Kelli and Angie who have had to relocate their desks. Mike Manfre asked about the diversification plan notes and he expressed concern with the word 'liability' being used several times. Chris also responded to Roberta's questions regarding funding for a project on Scotts Creek that will come through a mitigation settlement from the CEMEX Corporation. He also shared two additional items not in the report:

1) For the first time ever, State Government allocated $2.5 Million for RCDs in the annual budget, which was signed by the Governor. While details are being worked out, the idea now is that the funds will be run through the Department of Conservation and will be allocated in a non-competitive grants process to support RCD capacity building.

2) Chris stated that a proposal to the State Coastal Conservancy for the implementation of a managed aquifer recharge basin in the Pajaro Valley has been recommended for full funding. Chris discussed the budget for this project, which includes funding for final permitting, construction, and validation (to be carried out by UCSC).

8.2. Director Reports

Mike stated that he is a member of the County's Agricultural Policy Advisory Commission, and they are currently reviewing the County's draft Cannabis ordinance. Mike shared the comments he made on the report with the board and his concerns over the definition of Cannabis as an agricultural commodity versus a product and the implications of that distinction. Mike asked about the road program and Angie stated that the final report has been submitted and the program has ended under the current grant funding. Angie provided additional details about the final report.

9. **ADJOURN**

Robert moved to adjourn, Howard seconded the motion. The Meeting adjourned at 8:42PM. The next regular meeting of the Board of Directors will be on September 14, 2016.

Jim McKenna
President, Board of Directors

(AG:JM)