



**MINUTES OF THE MARCH 10, 2021 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 **6:33PM on March 10, 2021** at Zoom Meeting ID: 708-386-048.

Directors Present:	Kelley Bell Robert Ketley Howard Liebenberg Jim McKenna, President John Ricker
Directors Absent:	Mike Manfre, Vice President
RCD Staff Present:	Tangi Chapman, Recorder Lisa Lurie, Executive Director
NRCS Staff Present:	Whit Haraguchi
Members of the Public:	None

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 6:33PM, with a quorum present. Jim McKenna chaired the meeting. Roll was called and connectivity confirmed; Kelley Bell present; Robert Ketley present; Howard Liebenberg present; Mike Manfre absent; Jim McKenna present; John Ricker present.

**2. INTRODUCTIONS & WELCOME**

Jim McKenna welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**3. PUBLIC COMMENT**

There were no public comments made.

**4. NRCS REPORT**

Whit Haraguchi shared that on March 16, 2021 Carlos Suarez the State Conservationist will be holding a virtual tour of the Capitola LPO, in addition to NRCS staff, several RCD staff will participate. NRCS staff have been working to meet the March 17 EQIP deadline which was extended due to a technical issue. Finally, he reported that the District Conservationist position in the Salinas office has been filled.

**5. STAFF PRESENTATION**

Lisa Lurie introduced, Erin McCarthy who has been coordinating the Manage Aquifer Recharge (MAR) efforts in the Pajaro Valley. Using Recharge Net Metering (ReNeM) as an incentive for landowners to implement MAR projects on their properties; the program seeks to help achieve groundwater sustainability by capturing run-off and recharging it back to the aquifer and offer monetary credits for the recharged water. Erin gave an update on the program and information on two different MAR projects, including monitoring results, challenges, and success of each.

**6. CONSENT AGENDA**

The Board reviewed the consent agenda items and then, Robert Ketley moved to approve the consent agenda items. John Ricker seconded the motion. The vote was called, ayes included Kelley Bell, Robert Ketley, Howard Liebenberg, Jim McKenna, and John Ricker. There were none opposed. The motion passed unanimously.



## 7. ACTION ITEMS

There were no action items.

## 8. DISCUSSION ITEMS

### 8.1 Santa Cruz County Long Term Recovery Group Participation

Lisa has been asked to participate in the Santa Cruz County Long Term Recovery Group. The group has been spearheaded by the Community Foundation of Santa Cruz County with the mission to support the community effected by the CZU Lightning Fire to rebuild, provide mental health support and social and financial services. Lisa explained that she feels like it would be good for the RCD to be at the table to provide a holistic support in building back better. Lisa said that David Reed at the County is in charge of the Resiliency, Recovery and Response effort and is acting as the hub with county agencies, faith-based and community-based organizations. Lisa will be attending the next meeting and will have more information at that time. In the meantime, she wanted to share with the Board the proposed bylaws and agreements that the group is creating as their governing structure.

### 8.2 Programmatic approaches for permitting forest health and fuels management projects in the Coastal Zone

Lisa wanted to call attention to the effort underway to improve mechanisms for permitting forest health and fuels management projects in the Coastal Zone. The only mechanism for permitting fuels management work in the Coastal Zone currently is through a coastal development permit or timber harvest plan. None of which really fit the intent of these types of projects. Staff have been engaging with the Coastal Commission and other partners to identify the best way to move these projects forward and develop collaborative, programmatic approaches to permitting this work.

Lisa reported that locally the Coastal Commission is onboard with a public works plan for programmatic permitting for defined forest health and fuels management actions within the coastal zone, based largely on the CalVTP, which provides CEQA compliance for a set suite of practices for forest health, fuel load reduction and hazard tree removal. Included would be standards for practices to minimize impacts. This public works program exemption would be a pilot program in Santa Cruz and San Mateo counties that could then be evaluated for broader implementation across the California Coastal Zone. Currently, the group is working on the public works plan application which will be provided for public review at a future RCD board meeting before going to the Coastal Commission for approval. Once approved then the RCD will work at the Coastal Commission local staff level to ensure that our projects fall within the program and are expedited for implementation. RCD staff are working to get two projects implemented this year. The application that we will put together must define the types and scopes of projects, the standard for compliance with the Coastal Act using the CalVTP defining actions and assurances and then work on the process to work with the local Coastal Commission staff. At this point, we hope to batch projects like we do in PIR to the greatest extent possible, then have a review of the program after three years to check-in on how the process is working and tweak as needed.

### 8.3 Executive Director Report

Lisa referenced the City of Santa Cruz Toxic Run-off Report that highlighted the RCD's work with the city, County, and California Conservation Corp to prevent toxic run-off from the burned homesites within the City watershed. The Board gave rave reviews of the report. Lisa also mentioned that the annual report has been completed and will be sent out shortly. In addition, Lisa shared the comment



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letter to the Regional Water Board. She was pleased to find that the RWB incorporated many of their comments that were submitted last year and that the new comment letter touched on the few remaining “sticking points”. Lisa has been participating in a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion training. The training began by discussing the history of systemic injustice withing the conservation community, then focusing on the organizational culture and finally on personal learning and change, and will be bringing resources and lessons learned back to the RCD. Board member recruitment to fill the vacant position continues.

#### 8.4 Director/ Associate Directors Reports

There were no Directors Reports given.

#### 9 ADJOURN

The next meeting of the RCD Board will be April 7, 2021 at 6:30PM via Zoom. **John Ricker moved to adjourn at 8:07PM. Howard Liebenberg seconded the motion. Ayes included Kelli Bell, Robert Ketley, Howard Liebenberg, Jim McKenna and John Ricker. The meeting was adjourned.**

(TC:JM)

DocuSigned by:

*Jim McKenna*

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