RESOURCE
CONSERVATION DISTRICT
OF SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

820 Bay Avenue, Suite 136
Capitola, California 95010
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www.rcdsantacruz.org

MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 14, 2024 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 **6:31PM on August 14, 2024,** the meeting was conducted in person at the District Office 820 Bay Ave Suite 136, Capitola, 95010 and virtually via Zoom, Meeting ID: 708-386-048.

Directors Present:	Mike Eaton (Zoom)
	Robert Ketley
	Howard Liebenberg
	Mike Manfre, Vice President
	Jim McKenna, President
	John Ricker
Directors Absent:	Kelley Bell
RCD Staff Present:	Tangi Chapman, Recorder
	Lisa Lurie, Executive Director
	Laurel Bard
Others Present:	Chris Berry, City of Santa Cruz Water Compliance Manager
	Angela Bernheisel, CalFire Forest Manager, Soquel Demo Forest

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:31PM, with a quorum present; Mike Eaton joined via Zoom due to illness. Jim McKenna chaired the meeting. The role was called; Kelley Bell absent; Mike Eaton present on zoom; Robert Ketley present; Howard Liebenberg present; Mike Manfre present; Jim McKenna present; John Ricker present.

2. INTRODUCTIONS & WELCOME

Jim McKenna welcomed everyone to the hybrid meeting.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

There were none given.

4. INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATION- City of Santa Cruz Anadromous Salmonid Habitat Conservation Plan and Non-Flow Conservation Fund

Lisa Lurie introduced Chris Berry, Water Compliance Manager for the City of Santa Cruz. Chris gave a slideshow presentation on The City of Santa Cruz Anadromous Salmonid Habitat Conservation Plan: Non-Flow Conservation Fund. The ASHCP has been in development since 2001 with partners National Marine Fisheries Service and California Department of Fish and Wildlife. The Plan covers water system and storm water, flood control channel operations and maintenance activities that may adversely affect special status anadromous salmonids with the goal to avoid, minimize and fully mitigate adverse effects on anadromous salmonids. Additionally, the Plan sets up a non-flow conservation fund for habitat restoration projects that address remaining biological effects after other avoidance and

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minimization measures like flow improvements are in place. The Plan would also monitor for success of the program. The non-flow conservation fund would set up a long-term partnership with the City of Santa Cruz and the RCD through a cooperative agreement for the RCD to conduct restoration work to offset remaining effects. Chris estimates that over the life of the permit, the Fund would receive approximately $8 million (2018 dollars, to be adjusted annually for inflation) for restoration projects with approximately $347,000 going to the RCD annually (2018 dollars, to be adjusted annually for inflation). He explained that while the Plan has not yet been approved, it is getting close and permit issuance is anticipated for fiscal year 2025. (Angela Bernheisel entered the meeting)

5. NRCS REPORT

Drew Mather was not present at the meeting, the NRCS report was circulated to the Board.

6. CONSENT AGENDA

The Board considered the Consent Agenda. The consent agenda items included the July 10, 2024, Regular Meeting Minutes, and July 2024 Vendor Expenditures. Robert Ketley moved approval of the Consent Agenda Items. John Ricker seconded the motion. The ayes included Mike Eaton, Robert Ketley, Howard Liebenberg, Mike Manfre, Jim McKenna and John Ricker. The motion passed unanimously.

7. ACTION ITEMS

7.1. Review and consider approval of Staff Recommendation to enter a contract with ESA for continued Scott Creek Lagoon restoration and bridge redesign and support per 1080.8.4 of the Procurement Policy.

Lisa presented the Board with the Staff Recommendation Memo for Environmental Science Associates to provide continued restoration and design support for the Scott Creek Coastal Resiliency Project. ESA previously completed 60% restoration design for the Scott Creek Lagoon, and this would provide support for integrating restoration designs into the larger lagoon restoration and new Highway 1 bridge over Scott Creek River mouth which is being led by Caltrans. The contract with ESA is for $112,623.00, with the potential to increase to $120,000.00 if additional assistance is required. Staff is seeking an exemption to competitive procurement per 1080.8.4, Compatibility and continuity, given the previous satisfactory work by ESA on the 60% designs and their extensive knowledge of the details of the project. After discussion, John Ricker moved to approve entering into contract with Environmental Science Associates for continuation of the Scott Creek Coastal Resiliency Project per 1080.8.4 of the Procurement Policy. Mike Manfre seconded the motion. The ayes included Mike Eaton, Robert Ketley, Howard Liebenberg, Mike Manfre, Jim McKenna and John Ricker. The motion passed unanimously.

7.2. Review and consider approval of Staff Recommendation Memo to enter a subaward agreement with University of California Regents for the Pajaro Valley Ag Water Conservation Program per 1080.8.1 of the Procurement Policy

Lisa shared that as part of the recently awarded grant agreement with Pajaro Valley Water Management Agency, the subaward before the Board will continue the RCD partnership with Dr.

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Michael Cahn's group at UC Davis Agriculture Natural Resources to provide technical advising and assistance to the Pajaro Valley Ag Water Conservation Program. UC Davis ANR, as an institution of higher education, is exempt from competitive procurement per 1080.8.1 of the Procurement Policy. The partnership will continue efforts to increase water use efficiency of Pajaro Valley growers and explore new methods for increasing efficiencies. After discussion, John Ricker moved to approve the Staff Recommendation Memo to enter into a subaward agreement with UC Regents for the Pajaro Valley Ag Water Conservation Program, per 1080.8.1 of the Procurement Policy. Robert Ketley seconded the motion. The ayes included Mike Eaton, Robert Ketley, Howard Liebenberg, Mike Manfre, Jim McKenna and John Ricker. The motion passed unanimously.

7.3. Review and consider approval of Staff Recommendation Memo to enter into contract with Community Tree Services for continuation and connection off forest health work per 1080.8.2, 1080.8.4, and 1080.8.7 of the Procurement Policy

Laurel Bard introduced the project. They shared that CalFire currently has a 194 acre project on Hyland Way on Soquel Demonstration State Forest, and the RCD has a project on the Aptos Creek Fire Road. CalFire and State Parks have identified 70 acres that would connect the two projects. Community Tree Service is currently under contract with CalFire and is already mobilized with the necessary equipment near the site. Additionally Laurel added that the CalFire contract with Community Tree Service was procured via a competitive bid process. Staff are recommending that the RCD enter into contract with Community Tree Service through competitive procurement exemptions, 1080.8.2, 1080.8.4 and 1080.8.7. Current work of the project is underway, competitive procurement would be impractical as grant funding for the project ends March 31, 2025; the new project is compatible with the existing projects on State land and continues the effort already underway; since Community Tree Service has submitted a competitive bid the RCD can "piggyback" and use the existing bid to negotiate a new contract. The Board discussed the project and asked if the project would be delayed due to weather conditions, Laurel responded that work would be delayed depending on weather conditions and that adds to the urgency of getting under contract. Robert Ketley moved approval of the Staff Recommendation to enter into contract with Community Tree Service for continuation and connection of forest health work on Soquel Demonstration State Forest and the Forest of Nisene Marks State Park per competitive procurement exceptions 1080.8.2, 1080.8.4 and 1080.8.7 of the Procurement Policy. John Ricker seconded the motion. The ayes included Mike Eaton, Robert Ketley, Howard Liebenberg, Mike Manfre, Jim McKenna and John Ricker. The motion passed unanimously.

7.4. Review and consider adoption of Resolution RCDSCC 2024-05 to enter into agreement with Pajaro Valley Water Management Agency for the Multi Benefit Land Repurposing Program

Lisa presented the Board with Resolution RCDSCC 2024-05 to enter into an agreement with the Pajaro Valley Water Management Agency and designate a representative to negotiate and sign the agreement and any amendments. She further explained that PV Water has received nearly $9 million from the Department of Conservation to administer a grant for "Pajaro Valley Multi-Benefit Land Repurposing Program". The RCD subaward would focus on Managed Aquifer Recharge projects as part of a multi-benefit goal. The RCD would continue to partner with Dr. Andy Fisher at

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the University of California Santa Cruz and the Natural Resources Conservation Service who will provide technical assistance. Design and construction of projects would be contracted directly by the RCD. After discussion, Robert Ketley moved approval of Resolution RCDSCC 2024-05 to enter into agreement with Pajaro Valley Water Management Agency for the Multi Benefit Land Repurposing Program. Howard Liebenberg seconded the motion. The ayes included Mike Eaton, Robert Ketley, Howard Liebenberg, Mike Manfre, Jim McKenna and John Ricker. The motion passed unanimously.

8. DISCUSSION ITEMS

8.1. Ad hoc Policy Committee Report

Lisa gave an update on the ad hoc policy committee. She reported that the Compensation and Benefit Study is nearing the next phase. Data has been collected from comparable agencies. Currently, the team is updating job descriptions to align with comparable agencies. There is a meeting scheduled for August 27 with staff to request input into job descriptions and how they line up with the levels. A meeting with the ad hoc policy committee will be held in September when the draft of the Compensation and Benefit is ready, with a presentation to the full Board anticipated for the October Board meeting.

8.2. Executive Director's Report

Lisa has been working with Angie Gruys on background materials and RCD talking points for the local measure that will be on the November ballot. Lisa will send those along with the CSDA guidance document on special district engagement in ballot measures after the Board meeting. She shared that she is following the development of Proposition 4 which will be on the ballot in November as well. Additionally, construction season is in full swing with many projects underway or in the contracting phase. She reported that Top Tier Grading was awarded the Amber Ridge Sediment Reduction project contract. The grant for the State Water Efficiency and Enhancement Program is in the project selection phase, approximately 36 applications were received. Additionally, the RCD has been partnering with Kitchen Table Advisors, an organization which provides support to underserved growers and recently purchased an incubator farm where RCD will provide ongoing technical assistance. A Board member asked if the RCD is involved with the Land Trust of Santa Cruz County's property acquisition that was in the Sentinel recently. Lisa shared that the RCD provided a letter of support for funding the acquisition and has offered to serve as a project advisor as appropriate.

8.3. Director/Associate Director Reports

Mike Manfre reported that he attended the California Association of Conservation District Business meeting that was held on July 29. Due to the lack of a quorum, there was no action taken. He said that CARCD has difficulty in getting a quorum at meetings as the number of member RCDs shifts frequently. Having no quorum, the meeting turned into a discussion of the bylaws, record keeping, and reporting. There has been recent turn-over at CARCD and they are working to be more transparent, and part of that will be updating the bylaws. He shared that CARCD is looking to recruit members to a policy committee that will help to update the bylaws and create more accountability. Mike reported that CARCD will be sending out a draft of the voting

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bylaws and Policy Committee bylaws. The Board discussed the need to review these when they come out and provide recommendations for updating. Lisa said that she would provide a bullet point of important items to consider, the Board suggested keeping it simple.

9. CALENDAR DATES

October 5, 2024, 10AM to 3PM Central Coast Good Fire Fair, Henry Cowell Redwoods State Park
October 17, 2024, Central Coast Area RCD Meeting at Piacines Ranch, San Benito
October 23, 2024, Executive Session Santa Cruz Mountains Stewardship Network
December 10-12, 2024 CARCD Annual Conference in Sacramento

10. COMMUNICATIONS

LAFCO Referral Letter to Affected/Interested Agencies "Lockwood Lane/Graham Hill Parcel Annexation" was shared with the Board.

11. ADJOURN

The next regular meeting of the RCD Board will be held at the at the District Office, 820 Bay Avenue, Suite 136, Capitola and via Zoom on September 11, 2024, at 6:30PM. Robert Ketley moved to adjourn. Howard Liebenberg seconded the motion. All were in favor, the meeting adjourned at 8:36PM.

(TC:JM)

James J. McKenna

AGENDA

Final Audit Report 2024-10-05

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