RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT OF SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

820 Bay Avenue, Suite 136
Capitola, California 95010
tel 831.464.2950
www.rcdsantacruz.org

MINUTES OF THE APRIL 9, 2025 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 **6:30PM on April 9, 2025.** The meeting was conducted in person at the City of Capitola Community Room, 420 Capitola Avenue, Capitola, 95010 and virtually via Zoom, Meeting ID: 708-386-048.

Directors Present:	Mike Eaton
	Robert Ketley
	Mike Manfre, Vice President
	Jim McKenna, President
	John Ricker
Directors Absent:	Kelley Bell
	Howard Liebenberg
RCD Staff Present:	Lisa Lurie, Executive Director
	Lily Ruderman, Administrative Assistant
NRCS Present:	Drew Mather, District Conservationist (Zoom)

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:30PM, with a quorum present; Jim McKenna chaired the meeting. The roll was called; Mike Eaton present; Robert Ketley present, Mike Manfre present; Jim McKenna present; John Ricker present; Kelley Bell absent; Howard Liebenberg absent.

2. INTRODUCTIONS & WELCOME

Jim McKenna welcomed everyone to the hybrid meeting.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

There were none given.

4. NRCS REPORT

Drew Mather joined via Zoom to give the NRCS report covering March 13, 2025, to April 9, 2025. He shared a PowerPoint presentation with images from recent work the NRCS has been involved with, including a fuel break project. Drew also gave staffing updates and reported on the status of various NRCS programs.

A second Deferred Resignation Program (DRP) and Voluntary Early Retirement Authority (VERA) offer was made on March 31, 2025, to all federal employees. NRCS staff received the DRP and VERA offers, and the deadline to accept was April 8, 2025.

Staffing Updates:

- Dillon Beatty has accepted the DRP offer, with his last day in the Capitola NRCS office to be determined.
- Jennifer Nowark continues to assist the Capitola office along with Petaluma, Hollister, Templeton, and Half Moon Bay offices with various program support requests.

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- Rich Casale, Agriculture Conservation Experienced Services (ACES) Contractor, continues to assist both the NRCS and the RCD of Santa Cruz County (RCD). His hours have been reduced, and he is currently scheduled to work eight hours a week.
- Jackie Chaboneau, acting Biologist and Bay-Delta Ecologist stationed in Livermore, continues to assist the Capitola NRCS office with the Emergency Watershed Protection Program (EWPP), and reviewing the biological practices in the RCD's Partners in Restoration Permit Coordination program.

Emergency Watershed Protection Program (EWPP) pre-construction meetings took place with the County of Santa Cruz at seven properties. Three properties have construction start dates of April 15, 2025. Another four properties will have start dates in May and June of 2025. Drew has completed ranking Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) applications, and five previously submitted EQIP applications have been selected for funding. Two of the funded applications are for animal feeding operations, and one is for a larger sized parcel working with a Registered Professional Forester. Additionally, Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) applications were due by April 2, 2025. Eight applications have been submitted. Drew and NRCS staff continue to work to ensure available funding sources are utilized to meet the needs of the community.

5. CONSENT AGENDA

The Board considered the consent agenda. The consent agenda items included the March 12, 2025, Regular Meeting Minutes, the March 19, 2025, Special Meeting Minutes, the March 2025 Vendor Expenditures, and the Fiscal Year 24-25 Quarter 2 Financials. The consent agenda also included a review of the Annual Statements of Water Diversion and Use from the City of Santa Cruz for 2024 in accordance with the Agreement for the Forbearance of Water in the Pogonip Creek and Redwood Creek Systems for Fisheries Enhancement in the San Lorenzo River Lagoon and Wildlife Conservation Board Monitoring and Reporting. John Ricker moved approval of the Consent Agenda Items. Robert Ketley seconded the motion. The ayes included Mike Eaton, Robert Ketley, Mike Manfre, Jim McKenna, and John Ricker. The motion passed unanimously.

6. ACTION ITEMS

6.1. Consider and vote for Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) runoff election for regular and alternate member seats

The board considered the runoff election for the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) and reviewed the candidates. Board members emphasized the qualities which are important for those serving on LAFCO and discussed options for the regular and alternate seats. After discussion, Mike Eaton motioned to nominate Iwalani Faulkner for the regular member seat and Ed Banks for the alternate member seat. Robert Ketley seconded the motion. The ayes included Mike Eaton, Robert Ketley, Mike Manfre, Jim McKenna, and John Ricker. The motion passed unanimously.

6.2. Consider approval of resolution RCDSCC 2025-03 A resolution of the Board of Directors of the Resource Conservation District of Santa Cruz County to enter into agreement with San Benito Water District and Santa Clara Valley Water District for the Stormwater Capture and Aquifer Recharge Project

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Executive Director Lisa Lurie introduced the resolution and described the partnership it would entail. This would be a three-fold partnership including the Resource Conservation District of Santa Cruz County (RCD), the San Benito Water District, and the Santa Clara Valley Water District. All three organizations will work together, with the San Benito Water District taking the role of lead grantee. The RCD will implement one managed aquifer recharge project in the Pajaro Valley and share lessons learned from our Recharge Net Metering Program (ReNeM) with Santa Clara Valley Water District, who will be developing a decision support tool to support recharge in their district. The Board considered the resolution, and after discussion, John Ricker moved approval of Resolution RCDSCC 2025-03. Mike Manfre seconded the motion. The ayes included Mike Eaton, Robert Ketley, Mike Manfre, Jim McKenna, and John Ricker. The motion passed unanimously.

6.3. Consider staff recommendation to enter into contract with the most qualified bidder for the Conceptual Design and Alternatives Analysis for the Waddell Watershed Restoration and Trail Rehabilitation Project in Big Basin Redwoods State Park per 1080.6.2.2 of the procurement policy
Lisa Lurie summarized that this staff memo documents the procurement process of obtaining a formal bid for the conceptual design and alternatives analysis of this project in Big Basin State Park. The Waddell Watershed Restoration and Trail Rehabilitation Project will be conducted in partnership with California State Parks; funded through the Cannabis Restoration Grant Program (CRGP) and ParksCalifornia. The procurement for this project will be based solely on qualifications. Board Members inquired about the potential start date for the project and Lisa shared that while the work was intended to begin promptly, the project is still in the planning phase. The Board considered the resolution, and Robert Ketley moved approval. Mike Eaton seconded the motion. The ayes included Mike Eaton, Robert Ketley, Mike Manfre, Jim McKenna, and John Ricker. The motion passed unanimously.

7. DISCUSSION ITEMS

7.1. Board Secretary Admin Update

The Board Secretary, Lily Ruderman, addressed the Board regarding upcoming Board Meeting locations and potential recess dates. The RCD is in the process of finalizing an agreement with Santa Cruz Public Libraries (SCPL) to utilize the meeting room at the Capitola Branch Library for Board Meetings scheduled for Summer of 2025. The Board opted to hold the May Meeting at the City of Capitola Community Room prior to moving the following month to the Capitola Library for the June meeting. Lily also inquired whether The Board would like to take a recess in either July or August of 2025. Board members discussed potential recess dates and opted to hold an informal vote for a tentative recess in July. The majority of the Board was in favor of a July recess.

7.2. Executive Director's Report

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Lisa Lurie gave the Executive Director's report. She shared updates on personnel matters, strategic planning, and preparation for Measure Q. With regard to personnel matters, RCD employees have been informed of payroll issues affecting some Roth 401(k) accounts. The RCD is working with the County of Santa Cruz to resolve this matter. At a future meeting the Board will further discuss proposed changes to retirement accounts.

In other personnel updates, the RCD has completed the hiring process for our Watershed Restoration Program Specialist, and we are excited to welcome a new team member on board.

Lisa also shared that The RCD is contracting with Donna Meyers to work on strategic planning. Additional items discussed in the Executive Director's report will be considered by the Board at the May Board Meeting, including options for receiving Measure Q funding, and possible dates for a Board and staff retreat.

7.3. Director/Associate Director Reports

Mike Eaton congratulated Lisa Lurie on her handling of personnel matters regarding retirement plan adjustments. Lisa extended that gratitude to Tangi Chapman.

8. CALENDAR DATES

April 11, 2025 – CSDA Luncheon with Assemblymember Gail Pellerin
April 19, 2025 – Earth Day Santa Cruz
April 27, 2025 – Earth Day Watsonville
April 29, 2025 – Area Meeting Hosted by Cachuma Resource Conservation District

9. COMMUNICATIONS

9.1. CSDA Board of Directors call for Nominations

10. ADJOURN

The next regular meeting of the RCD Board will be hybrid May 14, 2025, at 6:30PM at **City of Capitola Community Room 420 Capitola Ave, Capitola, 95010** and via Zoom meetings: https://zoom.us/, Meeting ID: 708-386-048, Meeting PW: 599600. Robert Ketley moved to adjourn. Mike Eaton seconded the motion. All were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 7:45PM.

(LR:JM)

R. michael manfre