RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT OF SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

2425 Porter Street, Suite 19
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MINUTES OF THE APRIL 15, 2026 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 April 15, 2026.** The meeting was conducted in person at the Resource Conservation District Office, 2425 Porter St Suite 19, Soquel 95073, and virtually via Zoom, Meeting ID: 708-386-048.

Directors Present:	Kelley Bell Don Croll Robert Ketley (via Zoom) Mike Manfre, Vice President Jim McKenna, President John Ricker
Directors Absent:	Howard Liebenberg
RCD Staff Present:	Lisa Lurie, Executive Director Lily Ruderman, Administrative Assistant
Others Present:	Adria Arko, Associate Director Drew Mather, NRCS Emily Steffenhagen, Swanton Pacific Ranch Peter Van Dyke, Board of Director's President Loma Prieta RCD

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:31PM, with a quorum present; Jim McKenna chaired the meeting. The roll was called; Kelley Bell present; Don Croll present; Robert Ketley present; Mike Manfre present, Jim McKenna present; John Ricker present. Howard Liebenberg absent.

2. INTRODUCTIONS & WELCOME

Jim McKenna welcomed everyone to the meeting. Those present in person and on Zoom introduced themselves. Jim McKenna administered the Oath of Office to Don Croll, the District's newly appointed Board member.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

Peter Van Dyke, President of the Board of Directors of Loma Prieta Resource Conservation District addressed the Board. Peter spoke about the importance of working together on conservation efforts.

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4. NRCS REPORT

Drew Mather gave the NRCS report for the period from March 12, 2026, to April 15, 2026. He began with staffing updates. Deedee Soto, Area 3 Xerces/NRCS Pollinator Partner Biologist, is assisting Area 2 (Central Coast) with pollinator related requests. Sloane Goldfader, NRCS Forester based in the Petaluma Field Office, is available to assist the Capitola and Half Moon Bay Local Partnership Offices with forestry related requests. Evelyn Avalos, CSUMB Agricultural Plant and Soil Sciences student, has been selected as a summer intern/Earth Team Volunteer starting June 1, 2026, and ending August 7, 2026.

Technical and financial assistance updates were also covered in the report. NRCS is still receiving many requests for more information about the Regenerative Pilot Program, and several visits are scheduled on properties throughout Santa Cruz County to look at the possibility of projects utilizing regenerative agriculture. EWP projects have all been completed except for one, and a pre-construction meeting is scheduled next month with the County for the last remaining project. Twenty-five EQIP applications and 4 CSP applications were received by the application due date of January 15, 2026. Site visits were scheduled and applications were ranked by the ranking due date of April 10, 2026.

Drew shared that he attended and presented at the second installment of the Conservation Planning Training Series being held by RCDSCC with support from NRCS. He concluded his report with a moment of the month photo from a site visit to a property affected by the CZU Fire, where a forest thinning project supported by an EQIP contract has been successfully implemented post-fire.

5. CONSENT AGENDA

The Board considered the consent agenda. The consent agenda items included the March 11, 2026 Regular Meeting Minutes, the March 2026 Vendor Expenditures, and the Fiscal Year 25-26 Q2 Financials. The consent agenda also included a review of the Annual Statements of Water Diversion and Use from the City of Santa Cruz for 2025 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 (WCB) Monitoring and Reporting. RCD Executive Director Lisa Lurie gave a summary of financial information shown in the Q2 Financials. Lisa also gave background on the Statements of Water Diversion and Use, pointing out that there was no diversion from the creeks. John Ricker moved approval of the consent agenda, and Mike Manfre seconded the motion. The ayes included Kelley Bell, Don Croll, Robert Ketley, Mike Manfre, Jim McKenna, and John Ricker.

6. ACTION ITEMS

6.1. Discuss and consider Resolution 2026-03 Adopting the Santa Cruz County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan 2025 Update

Jim McKenna introduced the resolution, and Lisa Lurie described the RCD's role in the Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan (MJHMP) and how hazard mitigation actions included in the plan will help protect natural resources, people and property in Santa Cruz County. The RCD worked with a

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coalition of Santa Cruz County local governments and special districts on the planning process to prepare for and lessen the impacts of the hazards specified in the plan. Lisa presented documents pertaining to the MJHMP to the Board, including the online dashboard, and outlined the sixteen actions identified on the RCD's Annex of the plan, describing what the priorities are for the RCD to address. She concluded by discussing how the MJHMP provides a comprehensive and coordinated hazard mitigation strategy for the entire Santa Cruz County planning area, and an opportunity for communication about hazard mitigation across agencies and to the public. Associate Director Adria Arko asked questions about the plan and Lisa answered. Jim McKenna and other Board members engaged in a discussion about the benefits of the MJHMP, including FEMA funding eligibility. John Ricker asked to clarify that this is hazard mitigation, not disaster recovery, and Lisa confirmed. Following discussion, John Ricker moved approval, and Kelley Bell seconded. The ayes included Kelley Bell, Don Croll, Robert Ketley, Mike Manfre, Jim McKenna, and John Ricker.

6.2. Consider and approve updating Policy 113 of the Employee Handbook changing Cesar Chavez Day to Farmworkers Day

Lisa Lurie gave a description of the action item for this policy update. Kelley Bell inquired whether this had been prompted by updates at the state level and Lisa answered that this name change has already been enacted at both the State and County level. Don Croll moved approval, and John Ricker seconded the motion. The ayes included Kelley Bell, Don Croll, Robert Ketley, Mike Manfre, Jim McKenna, and John Ricker.

7. DISCUSSION ITEMS

7.1. Executive Director's Report

Lisa Lurie gave the Executive Director's report. She began by reporting on policy updates, including Assembly Bill 1584, the Monterey Bay Area Stewardship Authority. This would create a tri-county authority based in the Monterey Bay Area, focused on securing and allocating durable funding for land stewardship. Under the leadership of Assembly Member Pellerin, the bill has now passed through the Natural Resources Committee. There has been a request for letters of support and Lisa Lurie, with review and input from Jim McKenna, provided a letter stating RCD support for the bill with considerations to address potential unintended risks or burdens to working lands. Don Croll asked if stewardship was defined in the bill, and Lisa answered that, while not explicitly defined in the legislation, in this context it includes maintenance; there are a lot of lands with conservation objectives associated with them but little funding to maintain that work. Board members asked additional questions about AB1584 and Lisa answered.

Another piece of pending legislation was then discussed, SB949, which would designate the Santa Cruz Mountains as a Resource of Statewide Significance. Lisa explained that the RCD was not involved in the development of this bill, and we are interested in understanding its implications for our area. The first draft of the bill did not include mention of working lands; changes have now been made to amend that.

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Lisa went on to give updates on personnel and hiring, as well as leadership development. She welcomed Don Croll as a new Director with the RCD Board of Directors and introduced Emily Steffenhagen from Swanton Pacific Ranch. In concluding her report, Lisa shared upcoming events and presentations.

7.2. Director/Associate Director Reports

There were none given.

8. CALENDAR DATES

April 18, 2026 – Earth Day Santa Cruz
April 30, 2026 – Area RCD Meeting hosted by RCDSCC

9. COMMUNICATIONS

News from Your RCD Spring Newsletter

10. ADJOURN

The next regular meeting of the RCD Board will be hybrid May 13, 2026, at 6:30PM, **Resource Conservation District Office, 2425 Porter St Suite 19, Soquel 95073,** and via Zoom meetings: https://zoom.us/, Meeting ID: 708-386-048, Meeting PW: 599600. Mike Manfre moved to adjourn. Kelley Bell seconded the motion. All were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 7:30PM.

(LR:JM)

R. michael manfre