San Mateo County Resource Conservation District

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Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors
March 21, 2013
Location: RCD Office

Directors present:	Rich Allen, TJ Glauthier, Dave Holland, Jim Reynolds
Staff present:	RCD – Kellyx Nelson, Renee Moldovan, Holly Van Houten, Karissa Anderson
	NRCS – Jim Howard
Guests:	Carolanne Towe, Ron Sturgeon, Victor Rabinovich, Suzie Bennett (GGNRA)

11 Call to Order

- Allen called the meeting to order at 6:32 pm.

12 Introduction of Guests and Staff

13 Public Comment

- There was a question and discussion about the status of the audit. The auditing firm had staff turnover and the RCD is being asked to resubmit a number of documents that had been submitted before.

14 Approval of Agenda

- Reynolds moved to approve the agenda, Holland seconded. Agenda approved unanimously.

15 Consent Agenda

- The January meeting minutes were corrected to note that Susie Bennett is with GGNRA.
- Reynolds moved to approve the consent agenda with the noted change, Glauthier seconded. Consent agenda approved unanimously.

16 Discussion Items

16.3 Presentation on Livestock & Land Program – Holly Van Houten

- Presentation is included as Attachment A
- There was discussion of how the program is constrained by the current funding (geographic limitations on staff ability to reply to requests for help, labor compliance requirements that were not intended for this type of project, the amount spent on reporting, water quality monitoring that may not be illustrative of the benefits of the project, etcetera) and that relatively small projects are expensive due to the number of grant funding requirements.
- The program is a partnership with the RCDs of Santa Cruz and Monterey Counties, but this presentation reported on outcomes of the program in San Mateo County.

- Implementation of Best Management Practices as a result of program technical assistance and workshops, but not directly funded by the grant, are difficult to track and quantify. The work is not necessarily reported to us and we are not monitoring the results.
- Karissa Anderson discussed various water quality monitoring strategies for the Livestock and Land program including water quality sampling and pollutant load reduction modeling. Both help us determine the value of the conservation work done by demonstrating a reduction in concentration of pollutants in the water column pre and post-construction and estimating the actual load reduction based on site land use, infrastructure and rainfall regime.

16.4 Mid-year Budget Review

- We have earned and spent less than we predicted, and the variance has been fairly evenly distributed across projects for a variety of reasons.
- Some projects look very low because we have not yet billed for our work, some are going to ramp up in the second half of the year, and some have had workplan changes.
- There was some discussion about the Cloverdale Pond Enhancement Project. By the time we got all permits were in hand, the contractor had filled his schedule for the construction season. We secured all permits, the contractor did preliminary vegetation work to prepare for construction, and the project will go to construction this summer.

16.5 Executive Director Report – Kellyx Nelson

- **New Directors**
  - New directors Dave Holland and Barbara Kossy were welcomed.
- **FRGP applications**
  - Nelson provided history of our previous efforts to submit Fisheries Restoration Grant Program (FRGP) proposals to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (formerly Fish and Game) for rural road improvements.
  - This year the RCD:
    - Submitted for road work in Gazos watershed on State Parks property and to decommission a road on private property.
    - Submitted for a project to improve fish passage in San Mateo County Memorial Park.
    - Nearly completed a proposal for rainwater harvesting in San Gregorio watershed, but made the decision not to submit. There was a lack of concurrence among CDFW staff about whether or not there needed to be a forbearance agreement in place before submitting the proposal.
    - Decided not to submit for road work in San Gregorio watershed, as the project is more likely to get done without the grant program.
    - Contributed to/partnered with MROSD on their proposal for road work.
  - We also recently applied for a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) grant to do endangered salmonid restoration south of the Golden Gate. We applied for nearly $4 million which would be split amongst Coastal Conservancy, Resource Conservation District of Santa Cruz County (RCDSCC), and SMCRCD

- **Statewide capacity building and strategic positioning**
  - Nelson has been working quite a bit on this, and we are going to add this as a recurring agenda item for future Board meetings.
  - District Leadership Summit on March 20, 2013 in Sacramento
    - Mark Nechodom (head of Department of Conservation [DOC]) sees RCDs as an effective delivery system for state programs through Division 9.
      - He is interested in supporting RCDs and "going to the mat" to establish and maintain a baseline operating fund for each district, perhaps somewhere in the area of $100-200K. The elephant in the room is spotty RCD performance and underperforming RCDs.
      - He would like to see consolidations of RCDs, all lands in CA incorporated into an RCD, and performance standards. Our plans to change our name are on hold, as our boundaries may expand in the future to include bayside San Mateo County and San Francisco County.
      - Nelson and Karen Christensen (RCDSCC) have been talking a lot with Nechodom about the need for RCDs to be funded through DOC, since DOC is non-regulatory. A lot of our funding comes from regulatory agencies, and it creates a lot of problems in trying to get our confidential, non-regulatory work done as they add more requirements tied to the funding that help with their regulatory work.
    - Sustainable Conservation (SusCon) is a San Francisco based non-profit that looks for environmental solutions on private lands that make business sense.
      - They are the home of programmatic permitting, which they have rolled out through RCDs. They have realized that they can't do this on a county by county basis, but hesitate to do this statewide through RCDs because of the varying qualities of RCDs. Statewide entities see districts as spotty. As long as they see them that way districts are not part of the statewide solution.
      - Daniel Mountjoy began working for SusCon after leaving his position at NRCS. He encouraged us to make use of Division 9. It is very permissible, allows us to be very flexible in how we can get our work done, and we should explore the options.
      - Suscon is looking to do statewide programmatic permitting through RCDs. This might be an opportunity for fee for service with RCDs providing permitting coordination services
  - Discussion of permitting clusters, not every District needs to have every position. We can share staff within regions. One problem that may come up is that there are seasonal demands on staff time that may make it difficult to share staff (like biologists during construction season), but there are also a lot of opportunities where we can be more efficient with staff sharing.
  - Conservation Strategies Group (CSG)- John McCall

- A "firm where all paths lead." CSG created the funding measures behind every bond that has funded us for at least 20 years.
- They have previously been unaware of us, but now that they know we exist they are very excited about including RCDs in their bond measures.
- The most recent water bond will not be voted on this year because there is too much controversy around it, but now we have an opportunity to get ourselves included in this bond instead of just being consulted about it afterwards.
- CSG made the point that RCDs need to be part of the conversation in Sacramento, not briefed afterwards.
- He said, "Division 9, Division 9, Division 9." It makes us special.
- He will assist Mark Nechodom in trying to get RCDs baseline funding.
- The water bond on the ballot for 2014 will never pass. It needs to be pulled off and reconstituted because there is too much controversy. This is a HUGE opportunity for RCDs to get involved.
- CSG thinks CA needs funding specifically for RCDs in a bond measure so we're not competing with anyone.
- CSG is also working to get RCDs into the Budget Act. They think RCDs should engage with the state as a partner, not as a grantee.

- There was a lot of discussion about the NRCS relationship, and how it is evolving.
- After that Nelson and Christensen met with representatives of the Integrated Regional Water Management Plan (IRWMP) and CSG.
  - Nelson talked to them about the types of small projects we have around the state.
  - She brought up the "pay to play" issue – we don't have staff people to go to lots of meetings in Sacramento and lobby for our projects, so our high value projects that score highly under IRWMP are not being funded, and that is not the vision that this program had initially.
  - Nelson let them know that because we are an entity of the state they can contract directly with us. Furthermore, they can contract with us through CARCD so they don't have to manage individual contracts with 99 RCDs throughout the state.
- Bottom line: there are some emerging opportunities through the water bond, new relationships in Sacramento, programmatic permitting, ecosystems services markets, etc. There is a window of opportunity right now.

- Barbara Kossy offered to attend California Invasive Plant Council (Cal-IPC) meetings on behalf of the RCD.
- **Bonde Weir Fish Passage Project**
  - We have completed 85% designs and permitting is underway.
  - There is concern about a potential funding shortfall of up to $30,000, but we don't know because no one has bid on it yet.

- There is also concern about getting good contractors in time, as this late in the year most of the good contractors are booked for the season.
- This project may go to construction next year.
- When it does get done, whether this year or next, it will improve access to tens of miles of salmonid habitat.

- **Request for Proposals (RFP) to Develop Solutions to Flooding on Pescadero Road**
  - The contract amount will be $240K ($77K IRWMP, $18K USFWS, $145K County). USFWS funds are to develop alternatives to see if we can find a solution that addresses flooding and fish passage. County funds are to develop a dredging model
  - We are starting to field inquiries, and sense that there is a lot of interest.
  - Proposals are due April 1st, up to 4 will be selected for presentations sometime during the week of May 6th. We will bring recommendation to the Board during the May 16th meeting.
- **Hedgerows**
  - We are in the process of completing the second round of hedgerows funded by a grant from USFWS. The program provides up to 50% cost share for the installation of a native plant hedgerow to provide habitat for birds, bees, and other pollinators. These projects are very cost effective, because they are low-tech, require no permits, and can be installed by the landowner.
  - We have agreements with 1 residential customer and 4 agricultural customers, and demand for assistance outstripped the available funding. It is unclear at this time whether the program will receive additional funding, or where the funds will come from.
  - This round of hedgerows will be completed by May 15th, 2013.
- **Fitzgerald Pollution Reduction**
  - Selection committee approved 4 categories of projects- rural road improvement, horse property improvements, backyard habitat program, and dog waste management.
  - We will be filing for permits to do construction on equestrian properties in the next few months.
  - Outreach to bring on other projects will happen concurrently, with the backyard habitat program ramping up in the fall. This is a 2-year project.
- **Upcoming Timeline**
  - Spring
    - Pescadero contractor selection and contracting
    - Bonde Weir permitting
    - Cloverdale vegetation clearing and preparation for construction
    - Finalize designs and permitting for FPR
    - Hedgerow plantings
    - Complete PPH project

        - Fish trapping
    - Summer
        - Cloverdale construction
        - Finalize designs and permitting for FPR

17 Action Items

17.3 Resolution 2013-1 in appreciation of and gratitude for the contributions of Rich Allen

- Glauthier moved to adopt Resolution 2013-1, Reynolds seconded. Resolution 2013-1 passed unanimously.
- Nelson presented Allen with a plaque to thank him for his work and commemorate his time on the RCD Board.

17.4 Resolution 2013-2 in appreciation of and gratitude for the contributions of Roxy Stone

- Holland moved to adopt Resolution 2013-2, Glauthier seconded. Resolution 2013-2 passed unanimously.

17.5 Election of Officers

- Nelson stated that at this point the only officer we need to elect is President, and we can elect other officers at the next meeting when all Board members are present.
- Reynolds nominated Glauthier for Board President, Glauthier accepted the nomination. No other nominations were offered.
- Reynolds moved to approve the nomination, Holland seconded. Glauthier was elected Board President unanimously.

18 Adjourn

- Glauthier adjourned the meeting at 8:25 pm.

Attachment A: Livestock & Land Program Update

Livestock and Land Program

Update March 2013

San Mateo County RCD
Board of Directors Meeting
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Program Goals

- Education and technical assistance
- Implement BMPs at demonstration sites
- Confined animal community "owns" water quality

Education and Training

- Fall 2011 Trainings:
  - Served 26 unique (and many new) customers on over 1200 acres
- 2012 Trainings:
  - Four programs provided
  - Hands On Training- community compost "raising"
  - 36 new participants
- 40 livestock facilities served by RCD training

Success! New income for ranch selling compost

Bringing Community Together

- Hands On Training September 2012 – Community Manure Bunker "Raising"

Evaluating Success

- 2011:Average rating for workshops 4.55 out of 5
- Generated 21 site visit requests
- Voluntary BMPs implementation after trainings

Site Assessments & Site Plans

- 16 assessments completed (Skyline/Coastside only)
- 3 requests pending
- RCD, NRCS, Building Equestrian Dream
- 5 plans completed; 4 in process

BMPs Installed: Montara 2

Vegetated Swale

Manure Composting Bins

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BMPs Installed: Montara 1

Pasture Rehab – to better manure management

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BMPs Installed: Montara 1A

Pasture Rehab – Vegetated Swale to Manage Drainage

2013 Plans:

- Coordinate with Native Hedgerow project
- Install micro-size manure bunker

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2013 Program Plans

- Complete Moss Beach 2 (paddock set back from creek/footings)
- Complete site planning for:
  - Rain harvesting / catchment at Montara 2
  - Manure compost bin at Montara 1A
  - Manure composting, paddock footing, and filter strip at Montara 3 (new site)
  - Manure composting & paddock footing at Moss Beach 3 (new site)
- Spend ASBS construction $$s ~ $50K by August
- ASBS Grant close out Nov 30
- Program can continue in Fitzgerald under diff. fund source through 2014
- Uncertain beyond that

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