

**DRAFT Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors
Thursday, March 16, 2023**

4:00 – 6:00 pm

**Location: 80 Stone Pine Road, Suite 100, Half Moon Bay, CA 94019
and via Zoom at: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89675733636>**

Directors: Adrienne Etherton (chairing), Steve Stielstra, Michelle Weil, Barbara Kossy (remote)

Associate Directors: John Keener, John Wade

RCD staff: Kellyx Nelson, Lau Hodges, Adria Arko, Barb Kipreos, Eliza Milio, David Cowman, Timothy Federal, Grace Allen, Stephanie MacDonald, Amy Kaeser, Jeff Raifsnider

NRCS staff: Jim Howard

Guests: TJ Glauthier, Cam Tredennick, Heather Wilson

1. Call to Order

Etherton called the meeting to order at 4:07 p.m.

3. Introductions of Guests and Staff

All in attendance introduced themselves.

**6.2 Introduction to new staff: Eliza Milio, Agricultural Stewardship Program
Manager & San Mateo County Agricultural Ombudsman**

Nelson introduced Milio, who spent a decade farming food and flowers in Santa Cruz and Healdsburg. She holds a bachelor's degree in Environmental Studies from UC Santa Cruz, a Certificate in Advanced Ecological Horticulture from CASFS, and a master's degree in Environmental Conservation and Education from NYU. She is currently a Junior Fellow at the Safina Center, where she writes at the intersection of food systems and climate change.

6.5 USDA NRCS (Natural Resources Conservation Service) report

Jim Howard reported that all San Mateo County customers received funding through the Farm Bill for a total of \$1.2M. He expressed appreciation to RCD staff for doing an incredible job in the field.

2. Approval of Agenda

- Etherton noted non-action items 6.2 and 6.5 had taken place prior to quorum arriving.
- **ACTION:** Weil moved to approve the agenda as amended, Stielstra seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

4. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

5. Consent Agenda

ACTION: Stielstra moved to approve the consent agenda, Weil seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

6. Regular Agenda

6.1 Year in Review (Presentation below)

Nelson presented a summary of the RCD's work in calendar year 2022, attached below. Discussion included the format and general content of the upcoming 15-year report; tracking of RCD metrics; the large number of entities the RCD partners with; the level and diversity of projects; how the RCD staffing and systems have evolved to accommodate that; the valuable contribution the RCD is making to San Mateo County and the community; and excitement about the forethought going into the future trajectory. Nelson asked the board to help launch and present the upcoming impact report. There was discussion about potential ways to do that.

6.3 Introduction to new Executive Director of the California Association of RCDs (CARCD) Cam Tredennick.

Tredennick worked for both US Fish & Wildlife Service and Resources Legacy Fund prior to joining CARCD; working mostly in land transactions he was always attracted to boots on the ground work and realized RCDs were best suited to accomplish that. The Board welcomed him to the RCD family.

6.4 Board will consider contracting with Mountain F. Enterprises, Inc. for implementation of the Butano State Park Forest Health Project.

- There was discussion about the lowest bid not being accepted because the bid was not found to be responsive; how RCD staff debriefs with contractors to aid them in future bids if they solicit feedback; how contractors have access to the other bids.
- **ACTION:** Weil moved to approve contracting with Mountain F. Enterprises, Inc., Stielstra seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

6.5 Directors' connection and reports

- Kossy: The California League of Cities has a good webpage protesting the requirement for in-person meetings. Across the state there is interest in returning to meeting remotely. Atherton noted she too had heard of multiple efforts to allow remote meetings, including one from California State Senator Becker's office. Nelson asked Wilson if San Mateo County was tracking it; Wilson confirmed they were. Nelson noted increased public participation at remote RCD meetings. Stielstra asked if Nelson knew where Tredennick stood on the issue; Nelson explained he had just started and was currently 'drinking out of a firehose'.
- Etherton: She is excited to be signing up for the Santa Cruz Mountains Stewardship Network's Spotlight Stewardship program. Stielstra is excited for her; he had really enjoyed it the previous year.
- Stielstra: The RCD's draft procurement policy is before counsel and should be coming before the RCD board at the April meeting.
- Weil: Offered to help with the media for the 15-year report: media plans, PR, design, helping present to local groups, etc.

- Directors then shared their reflections to the following prompt from Weil: What we do outside the RCD, what groups are we in, and how can we incorporate that in our RCD work?

6.6 Board will consider Resolution 2023-2: Approval to File and Application for California Climate Investments Wildfire Prevention Grants Program.

- Discussion included the area of the mapping covering the Santa Cruz Mountains region; that it would update one of the data points used for Quarry Park in the El Granada Wildfire Scoping Project; but that the project would not likely need to be updated.
- **ACTION:** Weil moved to approve Resolution 2023-3, Etherton seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

6.7 Executive Director's report

- Espinoza-Murray accepted a position as Chief of Staff to San Mateo County Supervisor Noelia Corzo and stepped down from the RCD board, creating a vacancy. He is interested in helping find good applicants.
- The new Personnel Manual stipulates Cesar Chavez Day as a day in which staff does service. Working with partners, we were unable to coordinate a single event for 2023. Instead staff are participating in different events to volunteer in service to the farmworking community.
- Staff were writing up lessons learned from all the emergency storm work so in the future the RCD can be clear up front about what services it can and cannot provide.
- A professor at Sacramento State did a case study about Cutting Green Tape; it will be included on the April Agenda.
- The RCD's storm response has created an opportunity to coordinate more highly with OneShoreline.
- San Mateo County will once again be allocating \$200K to the RCD however there are now more restrictions on how the money can be used. We hope the County will make the Agricultural Ombudsman position whole to better deliver on its promise.

7. Adjourn Meeting

Etherton adjourned the meeting at 6:17p.m.

Year in Review 2022



SAN MATEO
RESOURCE
CONSERVATION
DISTRICT



WFFP: accomplishments

- Conserved 175 AF of dry season flows.
- Participated in, advised, or convened 6 statewide and regional forums and planning efforts regarding water management.
- Provided technical assistance to 6 domestic water companies.
- Replaced water distribution infrastructure for SMC Memorial Park campgrounds.
- Provided technical assistance to 20+ farms.
- 9 agricultural projects in the planning, design and permitting phase
- Advanced innovations in state permitting for streamflow enhancement projects.
- Secured funding for stream gauges on San Gregorio and Butano Creeks.
- Held two workshops for bullfrog management.

WFFP: key partners

- NRCS
- CA State Parks
- San Mateo County Parks
- Trout Unlimited
- POST
- Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District
- CA Department of Fish and Wildlife
- NOAA
- Potrero Nuevo Farm
- Fifth Crow Farms
- Loma Mar Mutual Water Company
- Association of Ramaytush Ohlone

WFFP: funders

- CA Wildlife Conservation Board
- CA Department of Water Resources
- State Coastal Conservancy
- POST
- Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District
- San Mateo County
- Silicon Valley Community Foundation
- Moore Foundation
- USDA NRCS
- CA State Parks
- Private landowner contributions

WFFP: networks

- Coastside One Water
- Southcoast One Water
- California Environmental Water Network
- Integrated Watershed Restoration Program
- California Department of Food and Agriculture Science Advisory Committee
- SV2 Epic
- Bay Area Integrated Regional Water Management Plan Coordinating Committee
- Santa Cruz Mountains Stewardship Network

Water Quality: accomplishments

- Conducted water quality monitoring at 15 sites on San Vicente Creek, 17 sites in San Pedro Creek watershed.
- Convened First Flush citizen science water quality monitoring with 20 volunteers at 12 sites
- Developed and implemented the Pacifica State Beach Special Study (plume study) which will show the safe swimming distance from the San Pedro Creek Mouth. This will be an important metric for similar swimming beaches in the future and we will be pushing that forward.
- Completed inspections of the stormwater network at Pillar Point Harbor.
- CCTV'd and mapped the sewer system at PPH. No one knew exactly where this infrastructure was before we did this work.
- Brought cutting edge emerging science and understanding of bacterial pollution to all aspects of bacteria monitoring projects.
- Developed a video to inspire watershed stewardship and an understanding of the land-sea connection.

Water Quality: key partners

- NRCS
- San Mateo County Harbor District
- San Mateo County Office of Sustainability
- Golden Gate National Recreation Area
- Sewer Authority Midcoastside
- Montara Water and Sanitary District
- San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board
- Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary
- Moss Beach Ranch
- CA State Parks

Water Quality: funders

- CA State Parks
- City of Half Moon Bay
- City of Pacifica
- San Mateo County Harbor District
- San Mateo County Office of Sustainability
- NRCS
- Golden Gate National Recreation Area
- City of Pacifica
- Sewer Authority Midcoastside
- San Mateo County Parks

Water Quality: networks

- Coastside One Water
- Southcoast One Water

Ag & Climate: accomplishments

- Completed 3 carbon farm plans covering over 640 acres.
- Implemented 19 conservation practices on 14 farms, which will sequester 2,273 Mg CO₂e (equal to 490 vehicles driven per year)
- Diverted 16 tons of drip tape landfill, to be recycled
- Assisted 10 urban farms with soil health management
- Planned and hosted Ag Markets Summit, with over 80+ in attendance.
- Planned and hosted Ag Markets Working Group to discuss and develop a proposal to address common challenges in accessing Bay Area markets. 10 farmers met 4 times in 2022.
- Assisted 25 producers with permitting assistance requests.

Ag & Climate: key partners

- NRCS
- TomKat Ranch
- Office of Sustainability
- Santa Cruz RCD
- Carbon Cycle Institute
- Farm Bureau
- Kitchen Table Advisors
- Brisa Ranch
- The Mixing Bowl
- Planning Department
- Agriculture Department
- Department of Housing
- Supervisor Horsley's Office

Ag & Climate: funders

- San Mateo County Office of Sustainability
- All cities in San Mateo County (compost brokering)
- Western SARE
- Zero Food Print
- State Coastal Conservancy
- California Department of Food and Agriculture
- Silicon Valley Community Foundation
- Peninsula Open Space Trust
- NRCS
- National Association of Conservation Districts
- Wildlife Conservation Board (via CARCD)
- San Mateo County Department of Agriculture
- UC ANR- Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program

Ag & Climate: networks

- Food System Alliance
- CARCD Ag Task Force
- Soil Health Network
- California Climate and Agriculture Network
- Framework for a Bay Area Ag Plan
- Carbon Cycle Institute's Café Hours for Carbon Farm Planners
- Greater Bay Area Carbon Farm Hub
- Central Coast Rangeland Coalition
- Cascade Ranch Advisory Council
- EcoFarm Planning Committee
- Interagency Convening on Technical Assistance at CDFA
- The People's Vision for Food Sovereignty in the Bay Area
- San Mateo County Agricultural Advisory Committee
- California Agricultural Ombudsmen



Habitat Enhancement

The habitat enhancement program improves our local waterways and landscapes for people and wildlife. This work includes technical assistance, weed and vegetation management, wetland restoration, riparian and creek habitat enhancement, upland restoration, climate resilience, removal of migration barriers, species recovery, pollinator enhancement, and more. These projects restore ecological function and are multi-benefit for both our animal and human communities, with a focus on species at risk of becoming extinct.



Habitat Enhancement: accomplishments

Completed project at Butano Farms restoring 65 acres of habitat (wetland and upland); also benefitted cattle grazing operation by improving and expanding grassland and water duration during dry years

Completed restoration of 3 acres of riparian restoration at Johnston Ranch

12+ projects in planning/design

Assisted 45 landowners in “early detection rapid response” weed mitigation program

Hosted weed identification workshop for 27 participants

Released nearly 200 spawning adult coho to Pescadero and Butano Creeks (includes numbers from Dec 2021)

Conducted 3 snorkel surveys, 2 e-fish and PIT tag days, and multiple lagoon surveys with partners to support salmonid recovery monitoring

Working with partners to develop rapid assessment protocol for wood in creeks

Hosted 2 field days / site visits for the IWRP TAC (with other programs)

Hosted tour for Salmonid Restoration Federation Conference

Began restoration of 47 acres of habitat on San Bruno Mountain for butterflies

Responded to over 25 requests from landowners for on-site technical assistance

Advanced designs with dozens of properties along a ½ mile reach on Pescadero Creek for streambank stabilization, reduce flooding, and improve habitat

Advanced designs to improve water quality and habitat in Pescadero Marsh

Habitat Enhancement: key partners

- private landowners
- City of Pacifica
- San Pedro Creek Watershed Coalition
- San Mateo County Parks
- San Mateo County Department of Public Works
- Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District
- POST
- CA State Parks
- Point Blue Conservation Science
- CA Department of Fish and Wildlife
- NOAA
- Santa Cruz RCD
- Granada Community Services District
- Girl Scouts of Northern California
- US Fish and Wildlife Service
- Coastside Land Trust
- SPHERE

Habitat Enhancement: funders

- CA Wildlife Conservation Board
- US Environmental Protection Agency
- Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District
- POST
- Granada Community Services District
- private landowners
- PG&E
- CA State Parks
- State Coastal Conservancy
- San Mateo County

Habitat Enhancement: networks

- Coastside One Water
- Integrated Watershed Restoration Program
- Santa Cruz Mountains Stewardship Network
- Pescadero Technical Roundtable
- San Francisco Garter Snake Recovery Working Group (in planning)
- San Mateo County Weed Management Area
- California Invasive Plant Council
- CARCD Monarch group
- Process-Based Restoration Network
- Salmonid Restoration Federation

Forest Health and Fire Resiliency: accomplishments

- Implemented over 400 acres of forest health and fire prevention project in Huddart, Wunderlich, and Quarry County parks
- Secured permitting for 2,100 acres of forest health work at Butano State Park using a novel permitting tool through the San Mateo Public Works Plan, and the largest CalVTP project in the Coastal Zone and in San Mateo County.
- Provided chipping services to over 650 homes, creating an additional 300 acres of defensible space in the Wildland Urban Interface.

FHFR: key partners

- NRCS
- CARCD
- CalFIRE
- RCD of Santa Cruz
- Supervisor Don Horsley and staff
- San Mateo County Parks
- California Fire Safe Council
- Fire Safe San Mateo County
- South Skyline Fire Safe Council
- California State Parks
- Girl Scouts of Northern California
- Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District
- POST
- Sempervirens Fund
- YMCA of Greater San Francisco
- San Francisco Public Utilities Commission

FHFR: funders

- San Mateo County
- Cal-FIRE
- CARCD
- Coastal Conservancy
- California Fire Safe Council
- POST
- NRCS
- FEMA Region 9
- California Natural Resources Agency

FHFR: networks

- San Mateo County Fire Steering Committee
- Santa Cruz Mountains Stewardship Network Working Groups
 - Forest & Fire
 - Biomass Management
 - Research
 - PG&E
 - Shared Monitoring Protocols
- CARCD Joint Forestry Committee
- CARCD Forest & Fire Working Group

Sediment & Erosion: accomplishments

- Asd
- Old Haul Road repairs: emergency removal of the damaged Baker Bridge that was at risk of falling into Pescadero Creek. Continued maintenance and monitoring at Dark Gulch stream crossing that we repaired in 2020.
- Sediment inventories and plans: Provided technical assistance to 15 farms and ranches, helping landowners address issues and make recommendations and helping them comply with wq regs for in the Pescadero- Butano watershed for compliance with TMDL.
- Advanced solutions and planning and secured funding to repair/ restore the drainage improvements to private rural roads in Gazos watershed that provide critical access for residents, businesses, emergency responders, and can be a source of sediment to salmon spawning habitat in the creek. Extensive advocacy, navigating Cal OES with support from Congresswoman Anna Eshoo. Resulted in state agreeing to pay for impacts from their damage to roads. We don't know of anyone else who got that far. Secured additional grant funds for upcoming repairs.
- Finished, finalized, have now available an updated analysis of gullying in Pescadero/ Butano watershed. Initial study (2016) was finished before some storms. Now updated and complete. Says 2021 but technically completed 2022. On our website on erosion/ sediment page.

Sediment & Erosion: funders

- Resources Legacy Fund
- State Coastal Conservancy
- US Fish and Wildlife Service
- County Parks
- State Water Resources Control Board