

**Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors
January 17, 2013
Location: RCD Office**

Directors present: Rich Allen, Neal Kramer, Jim Reynolds

Staff present: RCD – Kellyx Nelson, Renee Moldovan, Karissa Anderson, Chelsea Moller
NRCS – Jim Howard

Guests: Susie Bennett (GGNRA), Ron Sturgeon, Barbara Kossy

1 Call to Order

- Allen called the meeting to order at 6:33 pm.

2 Introduction of Guests and Staff

3 Public Comment

- No public comment

4 Approval of Agenda

- Reynolds moved to approve the agenda, Kramer seconded. The agenda was approved unanimously.

5 Consent Agenda

5.1 December 12, 2012 Draft Regular Meeting Minutes

5.2 October 2012 Draft Financial Statements

5.3 November 2012 Draft Financial Statements

5.4 December 2012 Draft Financial Statements

- Reynolds moved to approve the consent agenda, Kramer seconded. The consent agenda was approved unanimously.

6 Discussion Items

6.1 Discussion on the possibility of RCD name change

- It was discussed that the RCD's name (1) makes it difficult to distinguish us from the County, (2) is not descriptive of our district boundaries, i.e. the coastal half of the County, and (3) does not identify the geography we serve as our constituents identify the area.
- The group discussed changing our name to "Coastal San Mateo Resource Conservation District." The discussion included others RCDs that have changed their name, do not use the County name in their name, or have "coastal" in their name.

- NRCS and RCD staff noted the difficulties posed in working with private landowners by having the words “San Mateo County” in our name, particularly when they seek nonregulatory help or feel that their resource problems were caused by the County. Most people are not tuned into the different distinctions and divisions of local government, so they do not understand that we are not part of the County even if we tell them we are not.
- When the RCD of Santa Cruz County changed their name from Santa Cruz County RCD their Board of Directors and then County Board of Supervisors approved it. Nelson has not entered into a formal discussion with our County because we had not yet discussed it with our Board. She let them know it was on the agenda for this meeting and asked if they had any immediate objections, which they did not.
- Taking out “County” and adding “Coastal” is helpful because it more accurately describes the geographic area we serve, and it is a word that people identify with across our entire District.
- It was discussed whether there would be an additional cost to change our name. The only known costs were for personnel time to do things like update letter heads and business cards, plus the time preparing documents our Board and the County Board of Supervisors.
- It was discussed whether there would be any downsides related to funding eligibility related to the bayside of the County and noted that the Bayside is already out of our district, so this might help manage those expectations. We would not typically have been eligible for those funds anyway.
- There was discussion about whether a name change would change our status as the oldest RCD in the state. Nelson said that she looked into how it might affect our status as the oldest RCD and it won’t affect our standing.
- A question was posed about whether changing our name would have any effect on current contracts that have our name as it is currently.
- **ACTION ITEM:** Nelson will ask County Counsel if we will have to update our current contracts if we change our name.
- It was determined that the next step would be an action item unless something comes up that merits more discussion.

6.2 Presentation on 2012 First Flush Program and Results – Karissa Anderson

- Anderson started her presentation by introducing the two volunteers that helped out with First Flush that are in attendance tonight. Keith Manggold and Renee Moldovan both helped out, and Anderson thanked Keith in particular for his tireless help as an RCD volunteer.
- First Flush is an event that happens each year during the first big rain of the season. Volunteers take water samples from runoff that is concentrated at storm drains, which gives you a snapshot of everything accumulated on the land.
- First Flush is a measurement of what has built up over the landscape and is then flushed out in a short time. The data represents the most concentrated snapshot of how land use is affecting water quality, because pollutants are generally in their highest concentration after they have built up over the dry season. Most of the sites are not flowing in dry weather, and are not as concentrated in subsequent rain events once the pollutants have been flushed out

after the first rain. These data do not represent the levels of pollutants that are entering the ocean over the course of time, just during the first rain.

- We partnered with the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary. They started the program and administer it, while we do coordination and fundraising for our county. We also work with Sewer Authority Mid-Coastside, San Mateo County Public Health Lab, Granada Sanitary District, and Surfrider Foundation.
- We are considered to be the north coast portion of the Sanctuary. Our sites range from Montara south to Surfers' Beach.
- The chosen sites were selected because they are accessible, safe to access in a storm, and provide a good representation of the "stormwater watershed"
- We test for:
 - Fecal Indicator Bacteria (FIB) – *E. coli*, *Enterococcus*, and total Coliform bacteria
 - Nutrients – nitrate, orthophosphate, ammonia, and urea. Impacts to aquatic life can be acidification, over nitrification of ocean waters that leads to algae bloom
 - Metals – zinc, lead, copper. All heavy metals are extremely toxic to aquatic life
 - Total suspended solids (TSS) – this pollutant is not a huge issue for us Coastside. If you were to see high levels here it would indicate a large non-point source or a very specific point source like a denuded landscape or some other point source. High levels of TSS typically indicate a landuse issue.
- Field tests include transparency, pH, electrical conductivity, and water temp.
- Mobilizing volunteers – volunteers are trained and taken on a tour of the site, and then they are on-call until Anderson contacts them saying that it's raining hard enough to take the samples. They fill out the field sheets, take the samples, and do the field tests. Anderson checks their work and takes the samples to the labs.
- Results – in general our sites are much lower than in other counties for all pollutants tested, aside from bacteria. Metals and nutrient samples were generally very low. Anderson looked back through the data and found that every single sample we have taken for First Flush as far back as 2008 has been in exceedance of the threshold for bacteria.
- Bennett asked if we'll be doing any microbial source tracking (MST) based on the FIB results
- Anderson said not as part of this program, because it would be cost prohibitive. It's difficult with First Flush, because to do MST on these samples someone would have to drive all the way down to the Monterey lab. That is not realistic to coordinate when you cannot predict when the samples will be taken. It would be great to do, but at this point it is logistically quite difficult and cost prohibitive.
- Nelson reminded everyone that we are doing some MST for creeks under our Pillar Point Harbor project and the County also has a grant through Proposition 84 to reduce nonpoint source pollution into the Fitzgerald Marine Reserve in which they are doing MST on additional creeks. The RCD is a subcontractor to do upland best management practices (BMPs), and the County is doing water quality monitoring and stormwater management BMPs.

- It is important to note that the thresholds being discussed here are for the receiving water, not the threshold for the effluent. An exceedance here does not take into account the dilution that occurs once the stormwater reaches the ocean.
- Anderson noted that the *E. coli* & *Enterococcus* graphs have an anomalous data point for the 2008 results that is very low. She believes that was a blank sample that was accidentally included with the results from the regular samples.
- *E. coli* & *Enterococcus* both had high results based on the thresholds used. *Enterococcus* is more troublesome because it can survive for much longer in the ocean water.
- Copper is the most significant pollutant out of all the metals. Slightly more than half of the samples we have taken were in exceedance of the threshold. Copper can be toxic to aquatic life. Sources include metal siding, car by-products (from combustion, brake pads), and various other landscape sources. Anderson showed data points from our County in comparison with other areas down the coast, and though copper is higher in our area than other metals, overall our numbers are very low in comparison with others in the area
- Zinc was generally below threshold, and much lower than most other sites that are sampled between here and Monterey county
- Lead – no samples exceeded the threshold, our levels are much lower than farther south
- Orthophosphate – sources are disparate, common sources include soaps and detergents, car washing, laundry detergents. Some samples were over threshold, but not particularly high, especially in comparison to farther south.
- Nitrate – never had any sample exceed the threshold, our levels are lower than further south.
- Kossy asked if groundwater is ever sampled to see whether pollutants are infiltrating that far.
- Anderson would suspect that some pollutants do make it to the groundwater, but the purpose of this program is to test water that is running off of largely paved surfaces and into storm drains, so would never reach the groundwater
- Nelson added that when the RCD was assisting the County with the Midcoast Groundwater Study, we convened a meeting to determine all the different water monitoring being done in the Midcoast. It turns out that mainly water districts are testing groundwater.
- Anderson has raw data available for those that want to see it.
- In the future we would like to expand the scope to include all the way up to Pacifica and as far south as San Gregorio, and have more sites in Half Moon Bay. We would like to expand volunteer recruitment and expand partnerships with city of Pacifica, city of Half Moon Bay, and the San Gregorio Environmental Resource Center (SGERC). We'd like to have SGERC and the City of Pacifica mobilize volunteers, and we would find them funding.
- Kossy asked who uses the data and for what purpose.
- The County uses our data for their water quality monitoring program. The Sanctuary uses our data and publishes a State of the Sanctuary report which gives people info on the health of the Sanctuary. The data has implications for other storms, even if the concentrations are not as high. The RCD utilizes this data to help us know what we need to focus on when we are doing projects. We know that we need to focus on bacteria because of this data, and can make recommendations on BMPs in targeted areas. It also helps us get funding to address the problems, since we can show that we know what the problem is. The County has also

used this data for developing grant proposals. It is a good historical background for prioritizing where to install BMPs, and allows you to do a comparison of before and after BMP installation.

- Reynolds asked what Anderson thought the results for a bayside First Flush would be.
- Anderson supposes that pollutant levels would be much higher across the board, probably even at least one order of magnitude higher for all pollutants we've measured as well as ones we did not measure.

6.3 Executive Director Report – Kellyx Nelson

- Nelson presented the resolution that was passed at the County Boards of Supervisors meeting recognizing us for receiving the District of the Year award at the California Association of Resource Conservation Districts (CARCD) conference this year. Some RCD staff and Directors Allen and Reynolds attended the meeting. Nelson also delivered her annual presentation about the RCD to the Board of Supervisors. It seemed well received.
- We were going to update the Board on our audit, but the auditor has had some turnover and illness on staff, so it has been postponed until the next meeting.
- PG&E energy workshop
 - Correction from last meeting – PG&E rates will change in March, not February as stated during the last Board meeting. Through discussions with PG&E and the workshop held this month it has been determined that most of our irrigators will not see a significant change in their bills, and some will save money. It is not anticipated that anyone's bill will double, based on the most current information from PG&E.
 - The RCD partnered with the Farm Bureau and PG&E to host a Farm Energy Planning Workshop to help SMC producers understand upcoming changes to PG&E's billing rates, and to inform them about the various rebate, cost share, and technical assistance programs available through PG&E, RCD, NRCS, and others to help producers make energy efficient upgrades to their operations. These programs are a win-win for conservation and producers, as they improve energy efficiency while saving producers money on their PG&E bill.
 - Howard stated that there weren't as many producers there as he would like to see, and instead there were lots of PG&E representatives, politicians, County employees, etc. Howard and Moller agree that if the agenda was shorter and more focused on rebate programs as opposed to having a keynote speaker and long presentations there would have been more interest among producers. Also, since the word got out that people's bills would not increase, they may have been less interested in attending.
 - Sturgeon asked if there was any push to get growers to produce solar energy.
 - PG&E is a big fan of that, but it was only discussed briefly at the workshop. The NRCS is not allowed to provide cost share for energy production.
 - Reynolds asked how our partnership with the Farm Bureau has been lately
 - Nelson stated that there hasn't been much news. We have agreed to update each other at each other's respective Board meetings

- Howard noted that if they had the capacity to hire more staff there would be more going on. We've talked about getting a mobile irrigation lab together. Bill Power made a comment at the workshop that he used to have programs that he did with RCD and Farm Bureau, but Farm Bureau has had to step back after their financial issues.
- Nelson has talked with Bill Power about what we can do to get the mobile irrigation lab started again. Either Coastal San Luis Obispo RCD or Cachuma RCD submitted an application to help RCDs get labs running. We were included on the application, but haven't been super involved and don't know the status of the application. We will engage the Farm Bureau if that moves forward.

7 Action Items

7.1 Recommend Board approval of Memorandum of Understanding for Pilarcitos Workgroup

- In 2006 or 2007 we brought forward the first memorandum of understanding (MOU) that established this group to create the Pilarcitos Integrated Watershed Management Plan. This group has been very functional with most members continuously participating this whole time. The plan is not being implemented rapidly, but it's also not collecting dust on a shelf. It's hard to get funding, because it's not a coho stream.
- The current MOU expired, and the new one is about implementation of the plan and no longer about establishing the group.
- We have an agreement with SFPUC, CCWD, and SAM that provides some funding for the RCD to move the Plan forward and Dick DeAtley from the quarry just offered us \$10,000 for this year.
- There is no funding obligation in the MOU. The main change made in the update to the MOU was to remove language about establishing the group and developing a watershed plan, since that has been completed, and focus on implementation.
- Kramer asked if the agreement has been adequate so far.
- Nelson said that there have been some questions about what membership means, but mostly it's been functional. Coastside Land Trust joined recently. NRCS is not an official member, but dedicates resources to this at Howard's discretion since becoming an official member would require NRCS approval at the state level.
- Reynolds moved to approve the Memorandum of Understanding for Pilarcitos Workgroup, and Kramer seconded. The MOU was passed unanimously.

7.2 Recommend Board approval of Agreement between San Mateo County RCD and Alameda County RCD

- There are two discussions regarding potential projects to assist with vegetation monitoring on San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC) property. One is under this agreement, one is under a potential different agreement that Nelson might bring to Board in the future.
- SFPUC is doing pipeline upgrades, and have to do significant vegetation monitoring for a long time as part of its mitigation plan. SFPUC has a relationship with Alameda County RCD, and asked them to do vegetation monitoring. Alameda County RCD offered to subcontract with us and train our staff.

- Howard and Nelson discussed vegetation management as an unfunded resource priority in our district. It would be great to have this paid training from Alameda County RCD.
- Though the initial amount in this agreement is small and typically would not require Board approval, Nelson thinks there is a chance that the agreement might be renewed and, over time, cumulatively be an amount that would require Board approval. She thought this merited a public discussion and Board approval.
- The copy of the agreement distributed at this meeting is still in draft form as details are being negotiated.
- Allen asked if any of the pending comments in the draft agreement are deal killers if they don't work out.
- Nelson said mutual indemnity and the confidentiality is an issue since it is public dollars for work on public property done by public employees. If someone does a public record request we could not maintain confidentiality. The contract also says it does not pay for overhead but our billing rates include that so we need to make sure that is clear and we don't get ourselves into a situation where we have to send them money back.
- Since the amount is small the Board does not feel that this needs Board approval. The Board informed Nelson that she can sign it when the pending contract issues are resolved and Nelson feels comfortable with the agreement.

8 Adjourn

- Allen adjourned the meeting at 8:09 pm.