



## Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors

Thursday, February 17, 2022

4:00 – 6:00 pm

The meeting will be held remotely via Zoom at: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89675733636>

If you are using a computer or other device to join the meeting, you may click [here](#). A computer video camera is not required to participate. If you do not have access to a computer or internet during this meeting, or if your computer does not have audio, you can call in by phone: (669) 900-6833 and enter the meeting ID: 896 7573 3636 when prompted.

<b>1. Call to Order</b>
<b>2. Approval of Agenda</b>
<b>3. Convene Closed Session</b> Risk of Litigation Pursuant to California Government Code §54956.9(d)(2). Board will discuss one potential case.
<b>4. (4:20pm) Convene Open Session and Report on Closed Session</b>
<b>5. Introduction of Guests and Staff</b>
<b>6. Public Comment-</b> The Board will hear comments on items that are not on the agenda. The Board cannot act on an item unless it is an emergency as defined under Government Code §54954.2.
<b>7. Consent Agenda</b> <u>The Board of Directors approves:</u> <b>7.1.</b> <a href="#">January 20, 2022 Draft Regular Meeting Minutes</a>  <u>The Board of Directors received into record:</u> <b>7.2.</b> <a href="#">January 31, 2022 report to Congress from NOAA Fisheries: “Recovering Threatened and Endangered Species Report to Congress 2019–2020” in which San Mateo RCD is identified as one of nine nationwide Partners in the Spotlight.</a> <b>7.3.</b> <a href="#">February 8, 2022 letter from stakeholder organizations to California Secretary of Agriculture Karen Ross, “Stakeholder Feedback on HSP, SWEEP, CAPGP and Public Process”</a> <b>7.4.</b> <a href="#">February 9, 2022 article in Half Moon Bay Review, “Regional agencies spark fuel reduction efforts”</a>
<b>8. Regular Agenda</b> <b>8.1.</b> Presentation about San Mateo County Flood and Sea Level Rise Resiliency District, by Len Materman, Chief Executive Officer <b>8.2.</b> <a href="#">Board will consider for approval Fiscal Year 2022 Draft Second Quarter Financials.</a> <b>8.3.</b> Executive Director’s report, including 2021 Year in Review <b>8.4.</b> NRCS report <b>8.5.</b> Board will consider holding a study session to deepen understanding of eucalyptus trees in natural resource management. <b>8.6.</b> Directors’ reports <b>8.7.</b> Board will consider changing the date of its regular meeting in March.
<b>9. Adjourn Meeting</b> The next Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors will be in March.

*Public records that relate to any item on the open session agenda for a regular board meeting are available for public inspection. Those records that are distributed less than 72 hours prior to the meeting are available for public inspection at the same time they are distributed to all members, or a majority of the members of the Board.*

**Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors  
February 17, 2022  
via Zoom teleconference**

Directors: Barbara Kossy, Adrienne Etherton, TJ Glauthier

Associate Director: Steve Stielstra, John Keener

RCD staff: Lau Hodges, Amy Kaeser, Jarrad Fisher, Amanda Brenner-Cannon

NRCS staff: Jim Howard

Guests: Carl Nicolari, Nora Flynn, Michelle Weil, Lisa Ketcham

**1. Call to Order**

Kossy called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

**2. Approval of Agenda**

- Kossy noted the following items would be postponed to the March 2022 Board Meeting:
  - 8.1 Presentation about San Mateo County Flood and Sea Level Rise Resiliency District, by Len Materman, Chief Executive Officer
  - 8.3 Executive Director's report, Including 2021 Year in Review
  - 8.5 Board will consider holding a study session to deepen understanding of eucalyptus trees in natural resource management.
- Glauthier pulled items 7.2 – 7.4 from Consent and moved them to the Regular Agenda.
- **ACTION:** Etherton moved to approve the agenda as amended, Glauthier seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

**3. Convene Closed Session (4:04)**

Risk of Litigation Pursuant to California Government Code §54956.9(d)(2). Board will discuss one potential case.

**4. (4:21pm) Convene Open Session and Report on Closed Session**

Glauthier reported that potential litigation had been discussed and no action had been taken.

**5. Introductions of Guests and Staff**

All in attendance introduced themselves.

**6. Public Comment**

There was general discussion about the desire to return to in-person or hybrid board meetings soon and the hope that it is on the horizon.

## **7. Consent Agenda**

Glauthier moved to approve to approve the consent agenda as amended, Etherton seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

## **8. Regular Agenda**

### **7.2 January 31, 2022 report to Congress from NOAA Fisheries: “Recovering Threatened and Endangered Species Report to Congress 2019–2020” in which San Mateo RCD is identified as one of nine nationwide Partners in the Spotlight.**

Glauthier highlighted the article and noted it is great recognition for our work.

### **7.3 February 8, 2022 letter from stakeholder organizations to California Secretary of Agriculture Karen Ross, “Stakeholder Feedback on HSP, SWEEP, CAPGP and Public Process”**

Glauthier asked if the letter had been acknowledged; Fisher confirmed that it had been but several of the recommendations were not put into action.

### **7.4 February 9, 2022 article in Half Moon Bay Review, “Regional agencies spark fuel reduction efforts”**

- Glauthier noted he was pleased to see a good turnout at the event. Weil agreed and noted the high level of interest within the community.
- **ACTION:** Etherton moved to accept items 7.2 – 7.4 into record, Glauthier seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

### **8.1 Presentation about San Mateo County Flood and Sea Level Rise Resiliency District, by Len Materman, Chief Executive Officer**

This item will be rescheduled for a future date.

### **8.2 Board will consider approval of Fiscal Year 2022 Draft Second Quarter Financials.**

- Glauthier explained the RCD used to accept financial reports on consent, however now that they are quarterly, discussing as part of the regular agenda is preferable. He noted the financials were in good shape and both revenues and expenses (both at 41% projected for the year) were well balanced. Glauthier further noted the RCD has \$1.4 million in cash and that accounts

receivable (the RCD is owed \$3 million) far outweighs accounts payable (the RCD owes \$800K).

- Etherton thanked Glauthier and Stielstra for their work on the Finance Committee and agreed that quarterly statements make the most sense for the RCD.
- **ACTION:** Glauthier moved to approve the Fiscal Year 2022 Draft Second Quarter Financials, Etherton seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

### **8.3 Executive Director's report (Nelson), including 2021 Year in Review**

Nelson is out sick and these items will be rescheduled for a future date.

### **8.4 National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) report (Howard)**

- NRCS will be returning to the office, in phases, with the intent of all staff being back in the office by April 2022.
- Howard has recently been covering Santa Cruz County as well as San Mateo because of an open position; however, the job had been posted and he hopes there will be someone hired by spring.
- Kossy asked Howard to explain NRCS to the guests; Howard explained that NRCS was a United States Department of Agriculture agency, born in the Dust Bowl as the Soil Conservation Service, tasked with helping people help the land. The RCD invites NRCS to operate in San Mateo and provides the partnership office. Howard stated he had been with NRCS for 16 years and was amazed at the ways the RCD has grown.

### **8.5 Board will consider holding a study session to deepen understanding of eucalyptus trees in natural resource management.**

This item will be rescheduled for a future date.

### **8.6 Directors' reports**

- Glauthier stated he looked forward to meeting in the office again.
- Etherton reported that she too was looking forward to in-person board meetings, she had attended Jim Reynold's celebration of life and it was a lovely event, and the City of Half Moon Bay passed the Electrification Ordinance- all new buildings must be electric.
- Keener reported that Cal State Humboldt had identified a new species of fish in San Pedro Creek, the Northern tidewater goby.
- Stielstra echoed earlier comments regarding how great the El Granada listening session was. He was encouraged by the high attendance and presentation by Panorama Environmental, Inc. He observed the goodwill and

said the partnership was seamless and collaborative with solution oriented, positives vibes.

- Kossy reported her continued participation in the California Association of RCDs Annual Conference. Her favorite session, and the one she found the most informative, had been presented by Kellyx Nelson and Val Lopez, Chair of the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band. She continues to enjoy her role as administrator of the California Invasive Plants Facebook Page, which allows her to further one of her personal missions of bringing awareness of the RCD, NRCS and Weed Management Areas.

#### **8.7 Board will consider changing the date of its regular meeting in March.**

Etherton moved to hold the next meeting on Friday, March 18, 200 from 4:00 pm – 6:00 pm, Glauthier seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

#### **9. Adjourn Meeting**

- Kossy adjourned the meeting at 5:11 p.m.



# Recovering Threatened and Endangered Species Report to Congress 2019–2020

January 31, 2022

This report summarizes efforts to recover all domestic species under NOAA Fisheries' jurisdiction. It highlights progress made towards recovery of nine critically endangered species identified in the Species in the Spotlight initiative.



*A Rice's whale (Balaenoptera ricei) surfaces in the Gulf of Mexico. Credit: NOAA Fisheries*



NOAA Fisheries has released the [Recovering Threatened and Endangered Species Report to Congress](#). It summarizes efforts to recover all transnational and domestic species under NOAA Fisheries' jurisdiction from October 1, 2018 through September 30, 2020. This report summarizes the status of each species that has or will have a recovery plan, the status of the recovery plan, and the completion date for the last [5-year review](#).

With this report, NOAA Fisheries is updating progress made on its strategic approach to endangered species recovery. This approach focuses agency resources on species for which immediate, targeted efforts can be taken to stabilize their populations and prevent extinction.

The report highlights recovery progress for nine species identified in the [Species in the Spotlight initiative](#). These species need focused intervention to stabilize their populations and prevent their extinction.

During the 2 years covered in this report, we managed 99 domestic (includes some transnational) species, including:

- Salmon
- Sturgeon
- Sawfish
- Sharks
- Rays
- Seagrass
- Mollusks
- Sea turtles
- Corals
- Marine mammals

We also managed 66 [foreign species](#). In this report, we address 99 transnational and domestic species for which a recovery plan has or will be developed. That included one newly-listed species, Rice's Whale (*Balaenoptera ricei*). It was originally listed as endangered on [April 15, 2019 as Gulf of Mexico Bryde's whale](#) (*Balaenoptera edeni*, *unnamed subspecies*). On August 23, 2021, we issued a [direct final rule](#) to revise the listing to reflect the scientifically accepted taxonomy and nomenclature of the species.

## Status of Recovery Plans

Of the 99 domestic or transnational listed species for which a recovery plan has or will be developed, 55 had final recovery plans, two had a draft recovery plan, and 31 had plans in development. Eleven species recovery plans had not been started. We have many multispecies plans, as well as multiple plans for one species (for example, sea turtles). Thus the number of plans does not directly correspond to the number of species.

The status of these 99 species was:

- 25 (25.3 percent) were stabilized or increasing
- 11 (11.1 percent) were declining
- 17 (17.2 percent) were mixed, with their status varying by population location.
- 46 (46.5 percent) were unknown, because we lacked sufficient trend data to make a determination

[Read the ESA biennial report](#) (PDF, 74 pages).

## Recovery of Species

Recovery is the process of restoring species listed under the ESA to the point that they no longer require ESA protections. A recovery plan serves as a road map for species recovery—it lays out where to go and how to get there. Without a plan to organize, coordinate, and prioritize recovery actions, these efforts may be inefficient, ineffective, or misdirected. Recovery plans are guidance documents—they are not regulatory. The ESA clearly envisions them as the central organizing tool guiding each species' progress toward recovery.

[Learn more about the recovery of species under the ESA](#)

[Find recovery plans](#)

## Partnerships for Recovery

Recovering threatened and endangered species is a complex and challenging process, but one that offers long-term benefits to the health of our environment and communities.

Recovery actions may require one or more of the following:

- Restoring or preserving habitat
- Minimizing or offsetting the effects of actions that harm species
- Enhancing population numbers

Many of these actions also help to provide communities with healthier ecosystems, cleaner water, and greater opportunities for recreation, both now and in the future.

Many partners fund and implement the recovery actions discussed in this report. Partnerships with a variety of stakeholders are critical to achieving species recovery goals. Our partners in these efforts include:

- Private citizens
- Federal, state, and local agencies and tribes
- Interested organizations



# NOAA Programs Funding Recovery Actions

Projects funded through these programs often address priority actions identified in recovery plans and thus make important contributions to the recovery of listed species.

## Species Recovery Grants to States Program

This program provides [grant funding to partnering state agencies](#) to support management, outreach, research, and monitoring projects that have direct conservation benefits for listed species.

## Species Recovery Grants to Tribes Program

This program was started by NOAA Fisheries in FY 2010. This program [supports tribally-led recovery efforts](#) that directly benefit listed species.

## Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund

The fund was established by Congress in FY 2000. It [protects, restores, and conserves Pacific salmon and steelhead populations](#) and their habitats.

## Previous Reports to Congress

- [2016–2018](#) (PDF, 108 pages)
- [2014–2016](#) (PDF, 46 pages)
- [2012–2014](#) (PDF, 37 pages)
- [2010–2012](#) (PDF, 32 pages)
- [2008–2010](#) (PDF, 200 pages)
- [2006–2008](#) (PDF, 184 pages)
- [2004–2006](#) (PDF, 186 pages)
- [2002–2004](#) (PDF, 178 pages)
- [2000–2002](#) (PDF, 52 pages)
- [1998–2000](#) (PDF, 176 pages)
- [1996–1998](#) (PDF, 151 pages)
- [1994–1996](#) (PDF, 92 pages)
- [1992–1994](#) (PDF, 98 pages)
- [1989–1991](#) (PDF, 56 pages)

*Last updated by [Office of Protected Resources](#) on February 12, 2022*



February 8, 2022

Secretary Karen Ross  
California Department of Food & Agriculture  
1220 N St  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Subject: **Stakeholder Feedback on HSP, SWEEP, CAPGP, and Public Process**

Dear Secretary Ross:

We are grateful for your vision and leadership in developing the country's most comprehensive suite of climate smart agriculture (CSA) programs. The recent significant expansion of funding for the CSA programs presents an important opportunity to scale up agricultural solutions to the climate crisis and we look forward to working with you and CDFA staff to advance this work.

It is in that spirit of collaboration that we write to share our feedback about ongoing implementation issues for some of those programs, including the Healthy Soils Program (HSP), the State Water Efficiency and Enhancement Program (SWEEP), and the newly proposed Conservation Agriculture Planning Grant Program (CAPGP).

Much of what we want to share with you are challenges that numerous farmers and technical assistance (TA) providers have shared with CDFA over the years but which remain unaddressed. Some of these challenges relate to program requirements and structural barriers that prevent certain groups of farmers from applying and negatively affect farmers' experience with the programs – challenges which disproportionately impact historically underserved farmers. Other challenges relate to public process, including a weakening of the role of the Science Advisory Panel (SAP). We are concerned that if these issues persist the state will

hamper its ability to meet its goals of expanding healthy soils, water use efficiency, and conservation planning projects effectively across California farms and ranches. We ask for your intervention to address these issues, which we believe can be addressed through changes in program administration under existing statutes and improvements to the SAP's process.

Below, you will find a summary of some of the common challenges we have encountered and our recommendations for addressing them. We would welcome an opportunity to discuss these with you at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,

Craig & Emily McNamara  
Owners  
Sierra Orchards

Brian Shobe  
Associate Policy Director  
CalCAN

Michael Dimock  
Program Director  
Roots of Change

Jean Okuye  
Owner  
Okuye Farms

Dave Runsten  
Senior Policy Analyst  
CAFF

Patricia Carillo  
Executive Director  
Agriculture & Land-Based  
Training Association

Tom Willey  
Owner  
T&D Willey Farms

Jo Ann Baumgartner  
Executive Director  
Wild Farm Alliance

Molly Taylor  
Climate Smart Agriculture  
Program Manager  
Community Environmental  
Council

Ellee Igoe  
Owner  
Carbon Sink Farms

Andy Fisher  
Executive Director  
EcoFarm

Sridharan (Sri) Sethuratnam  
California Farm Academy  
Director  
Center for Land-Based  
Learning

Phil Foster  
Owner  
Pinnacle Organic Produce

Rex Dufour  
Western Regional Director  
NCAT

Steven Cardoza  
Owner  
Cardoza & Cardoza Farming

Torri Estrada  
Executive Director  
Carbon Cycle Institute

Stefanie Kortman  
Soil Greenhouse Gas  
Projects Manager at  
CSU-Monterey Bay

Christine Gemperle  
Owner  
Gemperle Orchards

Tom Stein  
California Deputy Director  
American Farmland Trust

Pam Krone  
Agriculture Water Quality  
Coordinator  
California Marine Sanctuary  
Foundation

Steve Fukugawa  
Owner  
Steve Fukugawa Farms

Rebecca Burgess  
Executive Director  
Fibershed

Jutta Thoerner  
Owner  
Manzanita Manor Organics

Ellie Cohen  
CEO  
The Climate Center

Dave Henson  
Executive Director  
Occidental Arts & Ecology  
Center

Rebecca King  
Owner  
Monkeyflower Ranch

Christine Farren  
Executive Director  
CUESA

Emily Taylor  
Owner  
PT Ranch

Nick Lapis  
Director of Advocacy  
Californians Against Waste

## **Challenges & Recommendations:**

### **1. Healthy Soils Program: Farmers Are Struggling with Inflexible Administrative Rules and Requirements**

We thank you and CDFA staff for all the work over the past few years to improve HSP's application, which has helped additional farmers and ranchers apply to the program. Having improved the application, attention must now shift to other challenges.

As farmers, TA providers, and advocates, we have observed many producers struggling with inflexible rules and requirements in HSP that hinder producers from implementing their planned healthy soils practices. These program requirements are undermining the ability of the program to achieve its desired outcomes.

As you know, California agriculture is incredibly diverse, farming is a dynamic business, and many farmers participating in HSP are experimenting with healthy soils practices for the first time. To be able to successfully implement and maintain new practices, farmers need to be able to adjust their approach as they learn while simultaneously managing a profitable operation. Instead, some of HSP's inflexible rules and requirements have hampered them. Two examples:

- It requires several hours of paperwork and then several weeks to receive approval for small HSP project changes, leading grantees to spend significant time on administrative work that delays project implementation. For example, if a grant recipient needs to adjust their compost application rate or change their cover crop seed mix, farmers must submit a detailed project change request form and a line item shift request form and often wait weeks for approval. Such delays prevent needed field work and can reduce the efficacy of soil building practices. These challenges are especially acute for small, mid-scale, and socially disadvantaged producers who do not have office staff.
- Some implementation requirements disproportionately impede farmers who rotate crops, making it challenging for these farmers to participate in the program. For example, the requirement that practices be implemented on the same field for three years in a row is impractical for many diversified farmers who use crop rotations.

Despite many of us raising these and other concerns over the years with CDFA, we have seen little change in HSP program administration. As a result, some farmers and TA providers in our networks have opted to no longer support or participate in HSP.

**Recommendations:** We request a meeting with you and your team, including grants administration staff, to discuss with farmers and TA providers how to address the challenges farmers are facing in implementing their HSP grants. We ask that CDFA, in consultation with TA providers and the Farmer Equity Advisor, develop and implement more flexible rules and streamlined reporting requirements by the end of 2022.

## **2. SWEEP: Clarity Needed on the Plan and Timeline for Integrating the SWEEP Ad Hoc Advisory Group Recommendations**

We are grateful for your leadership in convening the SWEEP ad hoc advisory group last year to review and recommend updates to the program. Represented by a wide range of expertise, backgrounds, and geographies, the 40-member advisory group spent three full-day meetings over the course of two months evaluating the program, identifying barriers to farmer participation, and making recommendations to address these issues.

CDFA initially committed to adopting many of the ad hoc advisory group's recommendations, but a lack of communication about the plan and timeline for implementing those recommendations has left advisory group members and other SWEEP stakeholders unclear on the implementation of those recommendations.

Of the 26 recommendations CDFA committed to adopting or partially adopting in July 2021, we were only able to identify *one recommendation* that was implemented in the latest round of SWEEP, which was allowing multiple advance payments. CDFA may be working behind the scenes on implementing other recommendations for future rounds; if so, the advisory group and other stakeholders would appreciate an update.

Some of the advisory committee's recommendations – such as paying upfront for pump tests, offering one-on-one training on new irrigation technology, and developing training materials for non-English speakers – appear to have been incorporated into a new and separate Water Efficiency Technical Assistance Program (WETA). This came as a welcome surprise, but lacked any explanation to advisory group members or the public about why a new program was needed and if, how, and when WETA will be integrated with SWEEP. We would like CDFA to explain how WETA and SWEEP will be integrated going forward, especially given that no new funding was proposed for WETA in the Governor's January budget.

CDFA also *rejected* key advisory group recommendations to address the program's largest barriers to farmer participation and improved groundwater sustainability through more efficient and flexible use of surface water.<sup>1</sup> As you know, SWEEP currently excludes many farmers across the state who receive surface water or pressurized irrigation water because of limitations with the program's GHG calculator and GHG reduction requirement. The advisory group recommended overcoming these barriers by creating a "water-focused" category of projects. CDFA initially rejected this recommendation on the grounds that it would conflict with Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund (GGRF) requirements. This explanation confused and disappointed advisory group members, many of whom were well aware that SWEEP had not received GGRF funds since 2016. In fact, the advisory group had explicitly discussed the change in SWEEP's funding source to General Funds as an opportunity for the program to embrace more holistic approaches to adaptive, drought-resilient irrigation systems.

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<sup>1</sup> See CDFA Staff's Considerations & Determinations on the SWEEP Advisory Group Recommendations (pgs. 27-53): [https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/oefi/efasap/docs/20210715\\_binder\\_efa\\_sa.pdf](https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/oefi/efasap/docs/20210715_binder_efa_sa.pdf)

We applaud CDFA's recent course-correction and decision to propose a water-focused SWEEP pilot for farmers in the Southern Desert Region as a first step towards implementing the advisory group's statewide recommendation. We encourage CDFA to communicate with advisory group members and the public how it plans to apply the pilot's lessons to farmers in other regions who have faced similar barriers.

**Recommendations:**

- Communicate with the Science Advisory Panel and SWEEP advisory group members CDFA's plans and timeline for implementing the advisory group's recommendations and integrating WETA and SWEEP.
- Communicate with the Science Advisory Panel and SWEEP advisory group members how lessons learned from the proposed Southern Desert Region SWEEP pilot will be applied to farmers in other regions who have faced similar barriers.

**3. Conservation Agriculture Planning Grant Program (CAPGP): Below-Cost Payment Rates May Undermine Program**

The draft proposed payment rates for most conservation management plans funded under the new CAPGP are well below the actual cost of developing those plans. As a result, many highly qualified TA providers have indicated that they do not plan to apply for the program because they cannot obtain sufficient matching funds to make the program financially viable. This threatens to undermine the ability of the program to support farmers in developing various conservation plans and may leave the program undersubscribed, which could hurt future funding. Stakeholders have shared this concern and recommended an alternative approach to CDFA and the Science Advisory Panel multiple times through the public comment process since June 2021 with no response.

**Recommendation:** CDFA should compensate TA providers for the full cost of developing plans rather than utilizing a fixed payment schedule. As CDFA is considering a block grant approach for its new Pollinator Habitat Program, CDFA may also want to consider using some of CAPGP's funds to invest in regional hubs of TA providers to enable coordinated, regional approaches, efficient resource-sharing among TA providers, and efficient grant administration for CDFA.

**4. Changes in Public Process Undermine the Science Advisory Panel and Public Engagement**

Science Advisory Panel meetings are critical for gathering and operationalizing stakeholder feedback on the climate smart agriculture programs through a public process. The Panel's historical practice, up until this past year, was to discuss and vote on program guidelines ahead of each new round of a program. However, that has not happened with recent program guidelines development, which undermines the public process.

For example, at the July and October 2021 Panel meetings, despite unprecedented stakeholder comments and recommendations on multiple programs, the programs were listed as informational items only, communicating to Panel members and stakeholders that no action would be taken to address stakeholder feedback. As a consequence, the Panel did not recommend or vote on a single change to the programs. This lack of responsiveness to public feedback left farmers and TA providers – the people implementing CDFA's programs – feeling frustrated, unheard, and discouraged from providing future feedback and participating in the programs.

In another departure from the typical process, public comments for these meetings were only agendized for the end of the meeting, which required stakeholders to tune into the meeting at two separate points in the day and make comments on programs only *after* the programs had already been discussed by the Panel. This only changed when Panel members interjected and asked the Chair to allow public comments during the Healthy Soils Program agenda item. Comments on *every other item* were still relegated to the end of the meeting. Some of the program guideline changes made by CDFA were strongly opposed by stakeholders, but without an adequate Panel process, changes to mitigate stakeholder concerns were not made. This has undermined the desire of CDFA's partners implementing these programs to participate in the Panel process.

These changes in the SAP process – no voting on changes to the programs and no ability for stakeholders to provide timely public input into the discussion – undermines the role of the SAP. According to statute, the Panel's role is to: "Advise the secretary on the implementation of the Healthy Soils Program [...] and the State Water Efficiency and Enhancement Program" and, more specifically, "Advise the department on scientific findings, program framework, guidelines, grower incentives, and providing technical assistance." CDFA is also required to "Consult with [Panel] on grant program design, guidelines, and outreach for the technical assistance to improve coordination and information sharing on technical assistance strategies and activities for the department's programs."

To restore stakeholders' confidence that their feedback on how to improve CDFA's programs is valued, we urge CDFA and the Panel to return to the process of consistently taking public comments during each agenda item (similar to the State Board of Food and Agriculture) and voting to approve changes to CDFA's programs.

Finally, the Panel would benefit from additional members who are familiar with program implementation and have the expertise outlined in statute for the panel members<sup>2</sup>. Currently only two of the nine members of the Panel have any experience implementing a Climate Smart

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<sup>2</sup> See California [Food and Agricultural Code Section 568](#):

(B) Two members shall be appointed by the Secretary for Environmental Protection. One shall have a minimum of five years of training and experience in the field of human health or environmental science, and one shall have expertise in greenhouse gas emissions reductions practices related to agriculture.

(C) Two members who have a minimum of five years of training and experience in the field of resource management shall be appointed by the Secretary of the Natural Resources Agency. One member shall additionally have expertise in climate change adaptation and climate change impacts in the agricultural sector.



Agriculture grant. Additionally, appointing CalEPA and Natural Resource Agency members to the panel was meant to broaden the outside expertise on the panel. While we appreciate the expertise of the agency staff who have been appointed by the sister agencies, these staff consistently acknowledge their limited knowledge of farming and CDFA's programs and defer to the CDFA liaison on proposed changes to the programs rather than farmers and TA providers implementing the programs. When agency staff are not strongly engaged and they consistently defer to the CDFA liaison, it eliminates the mechanism for incorporating stakeholder feedback and technical expertise into substantive program improvements. Without engagement from panel members, the Panel meetings cease to be an adaptive process in which programs are evaluated and improved. We need more engagement from those who have the science and technical backgrounds described in statute.

**Recommendations:**

- Return to the process of requiring the Panel to vote to approve changes to the programs.
- Adopt the standard public process of taking public comments during each item on the agenda, reserving public comments at the end of a meeting for "Items not on the agenda," and recording Panel meetings.
- Work with Secretaries Blumenfeld and Crowfoot to identify non-agency panel members who meet the statutory requirements of panel members and have experience implementing CDFA's climate smart agriculture programs or similar agricultural conservation incentive programs.
- Consider term limits for Panel members of two three-year terms (a total of 6 years).

[https://www.hmbreview.com/news/regional-agencies-spark-fuel-reduction-efforts/article\\_c42f8f8a-89c5-11ec-87eb-6f36e1ff3776.html](https://www.hmbreview.com/news/regional-agencies-spark-fuel-reduction-efforts/article_c42f8f8a-89c5-11ec-87eb-6f36e1ff3776.html)

# Regional agencies spark fuel reduction efforts

SMC Parks, Cal Fire, RCD to share wildfire updates

By August Howell  
Feb 9, 2022



Residents of El Granada and the rest of the coast will be interested in hearing from Cal Fire, county parks, and Resource Conservation District officials on Thursday when they discuss the fire threat on the Midcoast.  
Adam Pardee / Review

Adam Pardee

Coastsiders interested in wildfire suppression efforts have an opportunity to hear from officials from multiple agencies responsible for managing and protecting public parks this week.

In what's believed to be an unprecedented meeting, representatives from Cal Fire, the San Mateo County Parks Department and the San Mateo Resource Conservation District will have an online meeting to discuss and get feedback on current and future wildfire fuel management projects on the Coastside.

Presenters and speakers include Cal Fire Deputy Chief Jonathan Cox and Capt. Austin Seely, San Mateo County Parks Department Assistant Director Hannah Ormshaw, and San Mateo Resource Conservation District Program Manager Sheena Sidhu.

ADVERTISEMENT



Carla Schoof, a communications manager for the Parks Department, said the meeting will provide a comprehensive look at what's being done now on the San Mateo County coast as well as future projects. Aside from detailing how each agency operates its wildfire mitigation efforts, she said the presentations will be valuable for homeowners who want to learn more about protecting their homes during fire season.

El Granada and Quarry Park have been the subject of many fire mitigation efforts in the last few years. The county Department of Public Works removed hundreds of eucalyptus trees in the El Granada medians last fall, a project that cost \$500,000.

Much of the meeting will focus on the RCD and Parks Department's fuel reduction efforts in Quarry Park, which is expected to continue this spring by removing 40 acres of undergrowth to create shaded fuel breaks as well as hazard trees on 100 acres. Overall, officials say the efforts at Quarry Park are meant to improve emergency access and escape routes, remove invasive species and bolster natural defenses should a wildfire arise.

Last year, the Resource Conservation District received a \$1 million grant from the California State Coastal Conservancy for a 100-acre fire mitigation project in Quarry Park. The project adds fuel breaks by thinning vegetation within 100 feet of certain trails and cutting down trees within 200 feet of other trails.

The RCD said there are ecological benefits to this project because it involves removing non-native trees while still retaining native vegetation. In September, the Parks Department contracted crews to create nine acres of fuel break by removing eucalyptus, acacia, and cypress trees with diameters of 10 inches or less along part of Quarry Trail, Vista Point Trail and Mirada East Fire Road.

ADVERTISEMENT

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### Watch the meeting

Hear representatives from Cal Fire, county parks and the Resource Conservation District discuss the Midcoast fire risk at 7 p.m. on Thursday.

Find the link at [parks.smcgov.org](https://parks.smcgov.org) or type <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81510696608> into your browser.

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### August Howell

August Howell is a staff writer for the Review covering city government and public safety. Previously, he was the Review's community, arts and sports reporter. He studied journalism at the University of Oregon.

**San Mateo Resource Conservation District**  
**Financial Budget**  
As of December 31, 2021



	FY 22	12.31.21	
	Budget	Actual	%
<b>REVENUE</b>			
<u>Program Revenue</u>			
Agricultural Ombudsman	47,679.00	22,443.22	47%
Climate Mitigation and Adaptation	322,823.42	82,183.04	25%
Conservation Technical Assistance	190,478.00	38,793.31	20%
Cutting Green Tape	NA	12,823.52	NA
Erosion and Sediment Management	76,087.20	2,684.01	4%
Fire and Forestry	2,407,264.14	1,022,357.24	42%
Habitat Enhancement	4,560,095.74	3,008,178.57	66%
Santa Cruz Mountains Stewardship Network	1,429,162.18	448,204.97	31%
Water Quality	335,602.66	121,002.80	36%
Water Resources & Conservation	2,618,568.46	251,941.35	10%
<b>Subtotal Program Revenue</b>	<b>11,987,760.79</b>	<b>5,010,612.03</b>	<b>42%</b>
<u>Other Revenue</u>			
County Contributions	200,000.00		0%
Donations	20,000.00	21,388.24	107%
Interest Income	1,300.00	611.06	47%
Misc. Income	NA	7,531.44	NA
Property Tax	85,000.00	53,526.81	63%
<b>Subtotal Other Revenue</b>	<b>306,300.00</b>	<b>83,057.55</b>	<b>27%</b>
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>12,294,060.79</b>	<b>5,093,669.58</b>	<b>41%</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>			
<u>Operating Expenses</u>			
Personnel (Salaries & Fringe)	2,313,199.68	989,939.87	43%
Other	294,500.00	146,633.79	50%
<b>Subtotal Operating Expenses</b>	<b>2,607,699.68</b>	<b>1,136,573.66</b>	<b>44%</b>
<u>Program Expenses</u>			
Agricultural Ombudsman	1,400.00	291.92	21%
Climate Mitigation and Adaptation	55,220.00	6,949.15	13%
Conservation Technical Assistance	56,185.00	3,277.00	6%
Cutting Green Tape	NA	7,950.00	NA
Erosion and Sediment Management	8,045.00	90.72	1%
Fire and Forestry	1,893,601.00	705,998.84	37%
Habitat Enhancement	3,986,071.03	2,716,513.01	68%
Santa Cruz Mountains Stewardship Network	1,285,198.00	323,023.77	25%
Stream Gage	-	6,982.50	0%
Water Quality	73,015.00	6,604.08	9%
Water Resources & Conservation	2,340,600.00	170,992.84	7%
<b>Subtotal Program Expenses</b>	<b>9,699,335.03</b>	<b>3,948,673.83</b>	<b>41%</b>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>12,307,034.71</b>	<b>5,085,247.49</b>	<b>41%</b>
<b>NET</b>	<b>(12,973.92)</b>	<b>8,422.09</b>	
<b>Operating Reserve Allocation</b>	<b>250,000.00</b>	<b>250,000.00</b>	

# San Mateo Resource Conservation District

## Balance Sheet

As of December 31, 2021

Dec 31, 21

**ASSETS****Current Assets****Checking/Savings**

1030 - Checking Account (5269) 790,052.94

1031 - Restricted State Funds (5012) (Butano Channel) 2,997.47

1032 - Operating Reserve (0202) 600,132.31

**Total Checking/Savings** 1,393,182.72**Accounts Receivable**

1200 - Accounts Receivable 3,007,262.12

**Total Accounts Receivable** 3,007,262.12**Total Current Assets** 4,400,444.84**TOTAL ASSETS** **4,400,444.84****LIABILITIES & EQUITY****Liabilities****Current Liabilities****Accounts Payable**

2000 - Accounts Payable 771,703.87

**Total Accounts Payable** 771,703.87**Credit Cards**

2025 - Visa - Nelson - 1952 4,418.72

2035 - Visa - Issel - 0129 -232.31

**Total Credit Cards** 4,186.41**Other Current Liabilities**

2060 - Accrued Time Off 93,822.85

**2400 - Deferred Revenue**

2401 - NFWF - San Bruno Mtn Butterfly -7,501.09

2405 - NFWF - Bonde Weir 3,263.86

2406 - CARCD - Pesc. Water Monitoring 1,921.74

2408 - Cutting Green Tape 87,176.48

2410 - Santa Cruz Mountain Stewardship 271,307.32

2411 - SCMSN - Atlas Project 17,973.99

2412 - SCMSN-Spotlight Stewardship 10,608.88

2414 - SCMSN - Veg Gen 364,858.38

2415 - SCMSN - DEI 9,481.47

2416 - SCMSN - COVID 23.74

2420 - MROSD - Driscoll Ranch 60.35

2421 - MROSD - Apple Orchard 269,171.97

2425 - Randtron Antenna 3,184.32

2430 - PG&amp;E - Butano Mitigation Proj. 221,143.10

2431 - PG&amp;E - Project Development 33,668.57

2432 - PG&amp;E Foundation - Hedge Rows 3,014.54

2433 - PG&amp;E - Tree Planting 11,694.72

2434 - PG&amp;E - San Bruno Mountain 134,224.15

2435 - Cloverdale Ponds 75,132.38

2451 - SMC - Butano Channel 305,488.31

# San Mateo Resource Conservation District

## Balance Sheet

As of December 31, 2021

	<u>Dec 31, 21</u>
2465 · NACD - Urban Farming TA	1,116.37
2466 · NACD - Conservation TA	19,558.25
2470 · SVCF - Carbon Farm Planning	21,194.29
2471 · SVCF - Mobile Laundry Grant	11,314.75
2473 · RLF - TMDL Pescadero Butano	20,614.51
2475 · SAM - First Flush	4,326.06
2476 · SAM - Mitigation	11,228.54
2477 · COP - First Flush	4,715.50
2489 · PAR - Carbon Farm Planning	15,780.74
2490 · POST - DR Match Funds	13,153.02
2491 · POST - Rangeland Compost	5,526.78
2492 · POST - Ag CRAFT Event	500.00
2499 · Streamgages	89,602.92
Total 2400 · Deferred Revenue	<u>2,034,528.91</u>
Total Other Current Liabilities	<u>2,128,351.76</u>
Total Current Liabilities	2,904,242.04
Long Term Liabilities	
2500 · Recoverable Grants	
2520 · Sillicon Valley Foundation	100,000.00
Total 2500 · Recoverable Grants	<u>100,000.00</u>
Total Long Term Liabilities	<u>100,000.00</u>
Total Liabilities	3,004,242.04
Equity	
3500 · Net Assets	1,348,246.48
3999 · SUSPENSE	39,534.23
Net Income	8,422.09
Total Equity	<u>1,396,202.80</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	<u><u>4,400,444.84</u></u>



## San Mateo Resource Conservation District

## Profit &amp; Loss

July through December 2021

Jul - Dec 21

Ordinary Income/Expense	
Income	
4010 • Contracts	5,017,643.47
4020 • Donations	21,388.24
4040 • Interest	611.06
4055 • Property Tax	53,526.81
4080 • Stipend	500.00
Total Income	5,093,669.58
Gross Profit	5,093,669.58
Expense	
5100 • Personnel	
5110 • Salary	860,046.32
5120 • Benefits	129,893.55
Total 5100 • Personnel	989,939.87
5200 • Operating Expense	
5205 • Bank Fees	300.24
5210 • Communications	9,953.00
5215 • Dues-Membership-Subscriptions	5,789.86
5220 • Equipment	4,537.69
5225 • Information Technology	18,764.51
5230 • Insurance	343.56
5235 • Office Supplies	176.35
5240 • Rent	40,257.40
5245 • Accounting Services	21,683.00
5250 • Legal Services	4,041.20
5255 • Misc. Consulting Services	25,215.00
5265 • Discretionary	7,107.80
5270 • Prof. Development & Meetings	2,857.80
Total 5200 • Operating Expense	141,027.41
5300 • Program Expenses	
5310 • Project Implementation	3,954,280.21
Total 5300 • Program Expenses	3,954,280.21
Total Expense	5,085,247.49
Net Ordinary Income	8,422.09
Net Income	8,422.09

San Mateo Resource Conservation District  
Profit & Loss

July through December 2021

	Jul 21	Aug 21	Sep 21	Oct 21	Nov 21	Dec 21	TOTAL
Ordinary Income/Expense							
Income							
4010 · Contracts	456,549.38	917,035.23	2,246,762.28	58,892.53	100.00	1,338,304.05	5,017,643.47
4020 · Donations	222.98	1,756.19	15,522.98	2,022.98	122.98	1,740.13	21,388.24
4040 · Interest	72.58	70.18	306.89	54.23	53.27	53.91	611.06
4055 · Property Tax	760.46	4,776.69	67.53	2,727.24	3,445.45	41,749.44	53,526.81
4080 · Stipend	0.00	500.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	500.00
Total Income	457,605.40	924,138.29	2,262,659.68	63,696.98	3,721.70	1,381,847.53	5,093,669.58
Gross Profit	457,605.40	924,138.29	2,262,659.68	63,696.98	3,721.70	1,381,847.53	5,093,669.58
Expense							
5100 · Personnel							
5110 · Salary	135,958.76	129,998.91	150,302.85	149,713.14	145,032.32	149,040.34	860,046.32
5120 · Benefits	29,126.87	20,945.49	19,254.28	21,943.50	26,704.84	11,918.57	129,893.55
Total 5100 · Personnel	165,085.63	150,944.40	169,557.13	171,656.64	171,737.16	160,958.91	989,939.87
5200 · Operating Expense							
5205 · Bank Fees	0.00	0.00	0.00	299.71	-0.01	0.54	300.24
5210 · Communications	691.92	691.78	6,002.07	754.48	830.48	982.27	9,953.00
5215 · Dues-Membership-Subscriptions	0.00	22.33	0.00	3,582.93	2,040.00	144.60	5,789.86
5220 · Equipment	2,153.07	0.00	1,303.21	506.33	0.00	575.08	4,537.69
5225 · Information Technology	738.82	7,215.62	1,141.25	4,669.83	1,759.25	3,239.74	18,764.51
5230 · Insurance	0.00	102.38	0.00	241.18	0.00	0.00	343.56
5235 · Office Supplies	0.00	0.00	0.00	176.35	0.00	0.00	176.35
5240 · Rent	12,999.40	970.00	13,144.00	0.00	13,144.00	0.00	40,257.40
5245 · Accounting Services	1,120.00	855.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	19,708.00	21,683.00
5250 · Legal Services	2,734.60	0.00	629.00	677.60	0.00	0.00	4,041.20
5255 · Misc. Consulting Services	1,560.00	375.00	4,190.00	1,665.00	1,725.00	15,700.00	25,215.00
5265 · Discretionary	0.00	3,549.85	44.05	0.00	2,973.90	540.00	7,107.80
5270 · Prof. Development & Meetings	1,105.00	0.00	1,083.64	-492.00	50.00	1,111.16	2,857.80
Total 5200 · Operating Expense	23,102.81	13,781.96	27,537.22	12,081.41	22,522.62	42,001.39	141,027.41
5300 · Program Expenses							
5310 · Project Implementation	85,833.91	746,701.98	2,211,033.21	192,604.86	263,999.49	454,106.76	3,954,280.21
Total 5300 · Program Expenses	85,833.91	746,701.98	2,211,033.21	192,604.86	263,999.49	454,106.76	3,954,280.21
Total Expense	274,022.35	911,428.34	2,408,127.56	376,342.91	458,259.27	657,067.06	5,085,247.49
Net Ordinary Income	183,583.05	12,709.95	-145,467.88	-312,645.93	-454,537.57	724,780.47	8,422.09
Net Income	183,583.05	12,709.95	-145,467.88	-312,645.93	-454,537.57	724,780.47	8,422.09

