



MEETING MINUTES

I. Call to Order: 4:07pm

A. Director Roll Call

Kelly Kucharski, Alan Fry, Ted Kimbler, Gary Temple, Steve Haze, Jae Lee, Matt Hurley, Kate Wilcox, Johnnie Siliznoff, Mark Hutson, Rebecca Ozeran, John Heywood. Attendance was virtual on MS Teams.

B. Introduction of Guests

Directors: Alan Fry, Ted Kimbler, Gary Temple

Staff Present: Steve Haze, Kelly Kucharski, Kate Wilcox, Justin Morgan, Gurbinder Kang, Ian Ashby

Guests: Jae Lee (NRCS), Johnnie Siliznoff (NRCS), Mark Hutson (Madera NRCS), John Heywood (PFL), Matt Hurley (TRCD), Shawn Murphy (CCC), Rebecca Ozeran (UCCE), Jae Lee (NRCS)

II. Approval of Minutes for March 2021 Board Meeting

Alan F. made the motion to accept the minutes for March 2021 as presented, Ted K. seconded the motion, all voted, and the motion passed unanimously.

III. Public Comment for any item not on the agenda (No action can be taken)

Ted Kimbler announced he will be moving to Kentucky at the end of June.

IV. SRCD Board Action Items and Discussion Topics:

- A. Introduction of Ian Ashby, Gurbinder Kang & Nathan Jumps
- B. REEP and Proton Power & Community Future – Site visits to AMS & SFP
- C. Creek Fire- Cal-OES/FEMA sessions and HMGP \$9.75M max – 5/1 due date

Gary T. made the motion to approve the document for a request for funding from FEMA as presented, Ted K. seconded the motion, all voted, and the motion passed unanimously.

- D. Phase 2 Highway 168 Community FireSafe and Stewardship Program

This program ends in May 2021. Since the Creek Fire SRCD has turned this opportunity into community outreach and Recovery workdays, with fuels reduction at Shaver Springs. The final Phase 2 activities will include log hauling at Meadow lakes and with the Reedley



College Forestry program meeting on May 7th at Shaver Springs to chip all the debris that was removed from the Creek.

E. Creek Fire Recovery – Community Volunteer Workdays – Shaver Springs & Mile High

This week finished the 7 and 8th community workdays at Shaver Springs with the Solar Energy Partners and at Mile High. Both were very successful in the treatments and efforts completed as well as the impact to the community for having a place to gather and work on private properties for those who are overwhelmed with the amount of work that needs to occur.

F. Kings-Sequoia Gateway Communities FireSafe & Stewardship Prgm w/OTFSC

This program started in November 2020 and started PARs in February 2021, which are now being changed to Fire Risk Evaluations by name. The SRCD staff has completed close to 20 PARs in about 2 months. The SRCD staff is meeting with the OTFSC to review the status of the program and talk about implementation steps and outreach efforts.

G. CARCD/NRCS Tree Mortality, NRCS Post-Disaster TA & MOA

Johnnie Siliznoff will be acting as the new DC for Fresno County for some time, the workload there is huge, 150 active contracts, and batching period is large. They do not have a range con or a forester in Fresno. Starting today Johnnie is the new DC for Fresno County, at minimum 120 days for this new position.

H. DOC – Southern Sierra Forest Health Watershed Program

Matt and Steve will be meeting with the DOC to do a check in at that time.

I. Southern Sierra IRWM Grants- Community Water Systems & Meadows

Three community wells were tested in Cold Springs Rancheria for well vulnerability and sustainability, with CSU Eastbay. Isotopic analysis will be made with Lawrence Livermore Labs, and SRCD has the Tule River tribe to test their wells and then this pilot project will be completed.

J. Dinkey Collaborative – Steering Committee, Com Plng & Socioeconomic WG

The committee has met to discuss how the Collaborative is evolving and looking at prospects moving forward. CFLRP, Forest Service Grant money to sustain these programs for the last 10-15 years is unavailable at the moment. They are waiting to see if it's included



in an upcoming budget or stimulus package. There is \$686 in the fund left for this program. The Steering committee wants to have it persist even with no funding there, with periodic meeting quarterly. Field trip amongst the collaborative in June or July to go the Creek Fire area and have a strategic planning session.

Who can manage the sourcing for the Dinkey Collaborative for funding? John Heywood has suggested that the SRCD take a more central role for supporting the existence of the Collaborative.

K. Tree Mortality Crisis and Biomass Resource Management Development

1) Biomass Utilization under USFS-R5 / SNF / SNC Interagency MOU **(I)**

John Heywood (PFL) and Steve Haze (SRCD) touched on that the activities through Proton and REED as it relates to additional technology partners. This Wednesday, the Tigercat 60/50 that consumes 120 logs in one 8 hour shift and one ton a hour of bio char should arrive at AMS. Alan gave approval to get coverage on that equipment, the value of which is \$750k. It is an air curtain burner plus, a big box that allows you to burn woody debris, logs, in a way that the emissions are reduced. It Produces pure carbon for a hour. It is larger than standard air curtain burners that produce only ash. SRCD is not looking at purchasing it but demonstrating it and looking at options in capital expenditures as another to put on the table for their review.

2) CAL FIRE CCI Forest Health – Blue Rush & Hugger – COVID19 Extension **(I)**

Under the grant, the covid 19 extension for one year was approved into March 2023 instead of March 2022. Looking at reallocation for the funds out of public lands into the WUI, and the impacts from the Creek Fire and minimizing the potential fire threats that were not burned but have severe tree mortality. Blair went to two sites in Meadow Lakes that have log decks and standing dead trees and looking at moving that forward, with AAA tree service 80 cubic yard vehicles with grapples without the need of logging trucks to go on site.

3) Auberry Mill Site – SNC CUP grant- 1 year Extension thru 12/31 **(I)**

The air quality study is supposed to be completed this week and submitted to Fresno County, and their CUP application as we have. With technology partner Yosemite Clean, after a year and a half extension.

4) CalRecycle /Cal-OES and Assigned Contractors



Contractors received an initial award to remove over 100k trees in this area on Dec 27th. The contractors were out last week to start marking the trees.

5) CARCD / Carbon Cycle Institute – Grand Bluffs FCP & Potential Sale (I)

This item has been put on hold at this point in time. Grand Bluffs is the 240 acre private forest conversation easement SRCD has where some of the KREW research is being conducted.

L. Announcement of Funding Awards

- 1) Tools and Trailer Grant was awarded to SRCD for tools and a trailer to complete fuels reduction projects in Eastern Fresno County. The tools and trailer will be used to organize work crews with the CCC and possibly the volunteer fire departments and through the Creek Fire Recovery Collaborative.
- 2) PGE awarded SRCD through the YSRC&D to conduct fuels reduction projects within 1000ft of PGE infrastructure on private lands in the post fire conditions. This funding will pair with the new tools and trailers to start this program.

M. CARCD/CDFA SWEEP & NRCS/AFT Healthy Soils for diverse small growers

Justin Morgan and Gurbiner Kang (SRCD) have been working on launching this program. Justin been at SRCD for two months now and have a list of 43 growers in Fresno County who have received funding from CDFA in 2019, for drip irrigation system improvements. SRCD's role is to identify if they have completed their enhancement and efficiency projects and see if they are interested in evaluation, with distribution uniformity testing. They are also working on identifying farmers who are growers who have traditionally not have had access to these kinds of programs. A lot of growers haven't completed their projects, some are not calling back yet. First on site visit happened last month, a young and new farmer, who might be interested in the evaluation phase. Justin and Gurbinder are working on making connections or relationship through the UCCE and NRCS with the growers they are actively engaged with. Gurbinder to help with the association of Punjabi farmers in Fresno.

N. CARCD- LAFCo SOI & Annex. – KRCA & MOU – Watershed Coordinator

There is a meeting this Wednesday.

O. Website & District Enterprise Operations Development & support



Kelly (SRCD) is working with staff on updates for the website and with new programs for property assessment reports/ fire risk evaluations, sharing data on the website, and using programs like Avenza, ESRI, and LiDar to improve operations. Kelly purchased QB online for District financials to assist with more staff users for improving accounting, invoicing, payroll, as a shared responsibility. All staff is being trained on MS Teams to improve communications in remote work.

P. Programs and Projects Status Report

Total awards at 4.4 million, and there are 15 programs and projects in progress or about to launch.

Q. Grant Opportunities Tracking List

Grant writing for a large proposal to CalFire is the first for two staff, Kelly and Blair. This is part of a transition of District responsibilities and staff development over time. This may also include a SNC funded proposal as well. Steve is writing a FEMA proposal for 9 million for Creek Fire watershed recovery.

V. Financial Reports

A. Monthly Reports

Kelly K displayed for view the:

- Balance Sheet
- the Profit & Loss
- the Transactions by Account
- Central Valley Bank Summary

B. Review & Approval of expenses: Insurance for Tigercat demonstration @ AMS

Insurance for the Tigercat, quoted at \$988 dollars for 30 days. It will be at the AMS on a demonstration basis when this occurs.

Gary T. made the motion to go forward with purchasing the insurance knowing that it will be negotiated for a lower amount to host the equipment, Alan F. seconded the motion, all voted, and the motion passed unanimously.

VI. Reports:



Sierra Resource Conservation District
Monthly Board Meeting
Online MS Teams Meeting

Monday, April
26th, 2021
4:00pm-6:00 pm

A. NRCS Report

Justin (SRCD) and Johnnie (NRCS) will connect to get a list for SRCD of the growers contact list and connect on relationships with producers moving forward.

B. RC&D Report – Closer Consultations Request - Next meeting 4/29

The meeting for this is this Thursday, Kelly (SRCD) has met with YSRC&D staff and will take coordination to the next level working on a day to day basis instead of a quarterly basis.

C. CARCD – Forestry Committee /SJV Region (Area 9) – Presentation to NACD

Steve (SRCD) was invited to the Western summit for Wind, Fire and Floor, dealing with large disasters through the Forestry Committee. Steve will be attending on May 9th to share some of the experiences from the Creek Fire. Free registration for everyone, including the board to register and potentially the staff based on availability.

D. Correspondence, Fresno County LAFCO Responses

No report at this time.

E. Other – Articles, stories and blogs

No report at this time.

VII. Adjournment: Meeting end 6:12 pm

Next meeting: Monday, May 26th, 2021 MS Teams videoconference

Respectfully Submitted, Kelly Kucharski