



MEETING MINUTES

I. Call to Order: 4:18 pm

A. Director Roll Call

Kelly Kucharski, Alan Fry, Blair Duncan, Ted Kimbler, Steve Haze, Faith McClure, John Heywood, Jae Lee, Matt Hurley, Pete Lassotovitch, Gary Temple, Kate Wilcox, Shawn Murphy. Attendance was virtual on MS Teams.

B. Introduction of Guests

Directors: Alan Fry, Pete Lassotovitch, Ted Kimbler, Gary Temple

Staff Present: Steve Haze, Kelly Kucharski, Blair Duncan, Faith McClure, Kate Wilcox

Guests: Jae Lee (NRCS), John Heywood (PFL), Matt Hurley (TRCD), Shawn Murphy (CCC)

II. Approval of Minutes for October 2020 Board Meeting

Alan F. made the motion to accept the minutes for October 2020 as presented, Gary T. 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)

No comments.

IV. SRCD Board Action Items and Discussion Topics:

A. New Staff Assigned to NRCS Air Quality Program- Armando Cervantes

After 18 months hiatus SRCD hired and assigned an employee to the NRCS air quality control program. Armando Cervantes came on board in November and he's working with Ted Strauss who is the state director for the NRCS air quality programs. Will be working through Dec 31st.

B. Annual Plan and 5 year Long Range Plan 2020-25

Succession plan for Steve is in the 5 year plan on how that will be approached, and Steve is available at any time. Steve is going to set up a time with Kelly and Pete to discuss more of the items.

Gary T. made the motion to adopt the 5 year plan as it's presently constituted, Alan F. seconded the motion, all voted, and the motion passed unanimously.



C. Central Sierra Resiliency Fund MOU

There was a MOU set up with the Central Sierra Resiliency Fund.

Ted K. made the motion to approve the MOU with the CSRF, Alan F. seconded the motion, all voted, and the motion passed unanimously.

D. Blue Forest Conservation MOU

John Heywood and Steve Haze (SRCD) have been working to get Blue Forest to look in our area. They are a nonprofit to front end finance through foundations, nonprofits, and other stakeholders, in order to provide funding for meaningful conservation work. They will be brokers for bonds and SRCD will be a recipient of funding to do the conservation work. They are willing to do a presentation with SRCD at the next board meeting. The FEMA hazard mitigation funding they are interested in working with SRCD on.

Gary T. made the motion to approve the MOU with Blue Forest Conservation, Ted K. seconded the motion, all voted, and the motion passed unanimously.

E. Creek Fire – Cal-OES/FEMA session and HMGP \$9.75M max – 5/1 due date

The deadline for this grant application was extended to May 1st instead of next Thursday. Blue forest conservation to help with the resources to commit to this proposal. The FEMA grant is forward looking, it's not based on a past disaster. It requires a one to one benefit cost analysis. There are enough natural disasters in CA and very few dollars, but SRCD will be working on this application.

F. Phase 2 Highway 168 Community Firesafe and Stewardship Program

PARs have been adapted to include a post fire component looking at structures remaining, hazard trees, erosion concerns, and water repellency of the soil. SRCD is trying to tie these into the community work days and setting up additional volunteers to come out and do erosion control treatments on individual properties.

G. Creek Fire Recovery – Community Volunteer workdays

SRCD-CSRF-PFLF-NRCS have organized three community workdays as a collaborative effort in Pine Ridge, Alder Springs, and Auberry Road, with a forth in the planning phase



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for Peterson Road. Blair (SRCD), Jon Chilcote (NRCS), and Chris Velez (PFL) will be meeting with the County Roads Manager tomorrow to coordinate with the County's erosion control work already happening on Peterson Road.

There is a VARS list from the County OES and Planning and Public works, that came out of the WERT report from CalFire, and asked SRCD and CSRF to follow up with 9 landowners on the list. One was already followed up on and additional information for outreach was provided to continue alerting landowners and providing an assessment.

Mowbray's tree service and the County have been providing woodchips, sandbags, and straw wattles and at little to no cost for the community workdays.

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

Something NRCS-SRCD tried to get off the ground pre-covid, which is staff time or technical assistance to do conservation plans for EQIP funding for landowners. NRCS and SRCD are partnering together to jumpstart this program.

I. DOC – Southern Sierra Forest Health Watershed Program

There was a six month extension granted for turning in the reporting documentation that's requested.

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

The Dunlap Mono Indian community had sampling happen in August with CSU East Bay and with Lawrence Livermore National Labs, while SRCD is looking at setting up another sampling in Cold Springs Rancheria as available.

The meadows grant is for 440K and it will be near where the Sequoia complex was at. This meadow restoration project is anticipated to be executed in the next ten days. Kate Wilcox (SRCD) will be looking at getting involved in this project because it correlates with her interests and her masters in geology from Fresno State.

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

Staff and Board are all part of this program and working on being community centric, moving projects and funding to SRA's and not just Federal Lands. The Collaborative is looking forward to being funded again soon.



L. Tree Mortality Crisis and Biomass Resource Management Development

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

The campus has halted and subsided for now. With the weather and with it being the command center for the Creek fire the operations have slowed.

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

Steve (SRCD) and the USFS are working on a re-allocation and extension to March 2023. It has been approved but needs to be detailed out. Steve submitted a revised letter and revised budget until March 2023 for completion of that project. Steve will be taking the position with them that the reallocation of the funding should be 50-50 SRA and Federal Lands instead of 90-10 with the majority to Federal lands.

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

The mill pond breach has been resolved and lifted the hold on the conditional use permit process. The only thing holding this up now is the air quality study that Yosemite Clean said they will get done for submission to the county.

4) 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.

M. Announcement of Funding Awards

1) CFSC – Kings-Sequoia Gateway. First meeting was started in November with the Oak to Timberline Fire Safe Council to launch this program and a second follow up meeting will be later this month.

2) NRCS- Fire Response TA Agreement. This agreement is for Technical Assistance and fire assistance from Tahoe to the Tehachapi's to address post-fire response, now expanded to post disaster response. This will require district coordination and could be the beginning of something bigger.

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



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No update at this time. There are two potential candidates to replace Vue Her, it's held off until the agreement between NRCS and American Farmland Trust is executed, looks like it will start in February and March.

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

There is a draft of a letter of agreement from the Kings River Conservation District, that all areas East of HWY 99 will be supported by Sierra RCD. SRCD is pursuing an agreement of some form with Kings River CD where SRCD will take the underserved areas and white areas.

Gary T. made the motion for the development of a MOU with Kings River Conservation District, Ted K. seconded the motion, all voted, and the motion passed unanimously.

P. Website & District Enterprise Operations Development & support

There is a new blog post on the website from Kate Wilcox (SRCD) and another to be written by an outside conservation professional about the work that SRCD is doing. Kelly (SRCD) is working on setting up ongoing employee reviews so that staff understands their responsibilities and expectations as the Districts programs keep changing and growing. Kate and Blair (SRCD) are working on developing ESRI GIS tools for the District. Kate is getting Lidar training with her graduate program that will be useful to the District operations.

Q. Programs and Projects Status Report

Total awards at 4.6 million, 84k in receivables and advancements just under 900k in the bank. There are 15 programs and projects in progress or about to launch.

R. Grant Opportunities Tracking List

Reviewed the grant tracking list. The list is turning into developing programs that will support a various arrangement of projects. Some of the projects SRCD is not the lead, but the fiscal sponsor or the program manager, and provides admin and other types of support.

Working on a grant with Fish and Wildlife to augment the one that was submitted the State Water Control Board.



V. Financial Reports

A. Annual Audit.

Audit was completed. Nothing jumped out at this time.

B. Monthly Reports

Kelly K displayed for view the:

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

C. Review & Approval of expenses: Forestry Training Program

Forestry Training Program the workshop, need board approval for funding to attend that program. This will be once a week for management objectives, forest management, project development, developing forest management plan, designed for forest owners to design a plan of their own. Will be an in-depth workshop for Blair and Faith to attend.

Alan F. made the motion to approve the expense for Blair and Faith to attend the forestry training, Ted K. seconded the motion, all voted, and the motion passed by vote of Gary T., Alan F., and Ted K.

VI. Reports:

A. NRCS Report

Looking at Sierra RCD to help assist NRCS beyond SRCD District boundaries with other RCDs, this is in the development phase, and will help fast track some of the programs with the NRCS.

B. RC&D Report – Closer Consultations Request - Next meeting 7/30

No report. First quarterly meeting is this Thursday.

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

No report.



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D. Correspondence, Fresno County LAFCO Responses

No report. Notice of the subpoena, Alan and Steve worked on the subpoena for information only, submitted documents and emails with county council. \$169 for the billing.

E. Other – Articles, stories and blogs

CCC updates by Shawn Murphy. The CCC Creek Fire crews have wrapped up and have completed some erosion control projects around Huntington Lake. Kirk Ringgold signed with the CCC for the Auberry Mill Project. SRCD and CCC were partnered in a 581K proposal for Big Dry Creek wildfire mitigation, as a post disaster recovery proposal that Kate was involved with helping in as well. The CCC Forestry Corp will begin in Fresno County in partnership with Reedley College and a new tree mortality crew will be starting next month. The CCC is starting a fish passage with CalTrans, and they are looking for two individuals to participate. The CCC is also involved in starting a female Yosemite fire crew that will be starting soon. The recent budget was good for the CCC programs, but nothing regarding the old Auberry middle school.

Kate Wilcox has the new SRCD laptop with the mobile GIS applications on it.

Pete and Steve (SRCD) received a letter from Dirk Charlie, talking about SRCD and his privilege to be part of SRCD for a time, but he was involved with the Sequoia Complex Fire and Creek Fire and has things to deal with on a personal level, he resigned to have more discretionary time and time for family.

VII. Adjournment: Meeting end 6:11 pm

Next meeting: Monday, February 22nd, 2021 MS Teams videoconference

Respectfully Submitted, Kelly Kucharski