



MONTHLY BOARD MEETING

Monday, January 24, 2022, 3:00 to 4:00 pm Closed Session

Regular Session 4:00 pm to 6:00 pm

Clovis Memorial Building – Room 2, 453 Hughes, Clovis, Ca. 93612 and via MS Teams

AGENDA

Closed Session will convene at 3 pm – Personnel and other related matters

- I. Call to Order Regular Session 4 pm** President
A. Director roll call

Pete Lassotovitch, Gary Temple, Alan Fry, - SRCD Directors
Steve Haze, Justin Morgan, Kelly Kucharski, Ian Ashby, Blair Duncan, Chelsea Hutchens, Alyssa Flores- SRCD staff
B. Introduction of guests
Rick Flemming (Big Sandy Rancheria), Matt Hurley (Tranquility RCD), John Heywood (People Food and Land Foundation), Mikhael Kazzi (NRCS), Brian Beaty (MMR), Rebecca Ozeran (UCCE)- Guests
- II. Approval of Minutes for October 25, 2021** Directors
Defer for approval of minutes to February 28th Meeting.
- 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 -- (I): Info / (A) Action**
- A. Resolution for Education Grant Proposal with CAL FIRE – 2022-01 **(I) (A)** Directors
Alan Fry made a motion to approve the education proposal for the Cal Fire Fire Prevention Education grants, Gary Temple seconded the motion and all voted, the motion passed unanimously. This is a proposal modification from a submission in May for the Fire Safe
- B. Letter of Support and Participation – Highway 168 FireSafe Grant **(I) (A)** Directors
Lost Meadow Fuel Break, Southern Cal, HWY 168 and Grand Bluffs Property and some Forest Service Sierra National Forest lands on the project, very ambitious fuel break.
Gary Temple made a motion to move forward with supporting the Lost Meadow Fuel Break Project, Alan Fry seconded the motion, all voted, the motion passed unanimously.
- C. Letter of Support for AB-1154 Egress & CEQA Exemption – Patterson **(I) (A)** Directors
For existing subdivisions that are in the WUI for a CEQA exemption for all ingress/egress access projects. ***Alan made a motion to support this letter of support through Assemblyman Patterson’s Office, Gary seconded the motion, all voted, the motion passed unanimously.***
- D. Fresno County LAFCo – Letter of Agreement – FID, AID & CID **(I) (A)** Directors
The letter of agreement with FID, ALTA, and Consolidated Irrigation District have signed a letter of agreement on their end. After a review with the board, they will be part of reviewing all water-related proposals, that is open to interpretation because it is a good faith agreement. LOA with the Kings River Conservation District and SRCD already exists. ***Gary Temple made a motion to sign the letter with the new agreement, Alan Fry seconded the motion, all voted, and the motion passed unanimously.*** District expanded 250k acres, from HWY 99 to the crest of the Sierra’s.
- E. Field Office arrangement with SJR Conservancy Lane Ave. **(I) (A)** Directors
Potential new field office for Sierra RCD staff, on the San Joaquin River on San Joaquin River Conservancy Property. ***Gary Temple made a motion for the feasibility for looking at it as a field office and looking at the feasibility for setting up operations there. Alan Fry seconded the motion and all voted in favor. Passed unanimously.***
- F. Kings-Sequoia Gateway FireSafe & Stewardship Program w/OTFSC **(I)** Staff

Over 75 Fire Risk evaluations. Hit the minimum of the grant requirements. The OTFSC getting more people for FRE's and future fuel break projects in the next grant cycle. Americorps crew will be utilized up on the HWY 180 and doing chipping and cutting on HWY 180. First Firewise Community for Fresno County proposal was submitted through this program, it's the Miramonte-Pinehurst community.

- G. CARCD / NRCS Tree Mortality, NRCS Post-Disaster TA & MOA **(I)** J. Siliznoff DC / Staff / DM
 All applications for the cover crops application were funded in Fresno County, there was a late outreach for the quick turnaround on the program implementation. CIC is a new program with seven different management practices that has funding for additional projects. McMullian area has another funding pool available. Another training is getting put together for Conservation Desktop for the NRCS office. New hire for the Fresno office, Brooke Fuller as the acting District Conservationist. FRE's were completed or in process for Sugar Pine and Calvin Crest for Madera County and Coarsegold RCD, for the Post-disaster technical assistance funding. Tree Mortality and Conservation Planning, Justin Morgan is helping to put those efforts together. Justin has the linc pass and USDA access to their servers, to start with the administrative and contracting process, to get landowners onto the onboarding process with the NRCS-USDA, then new clients can do the EQIP NRCS application. Justin Morgan (SRCD) did the Conservation Desktop training for the software and put together a Conservation plan. SRCD is starting with clients that we have great relationships with to work out that process. Justin Morgan is doing this under the supervision of Rob Roy from the Area 3 office. Working to integrate operations with NRCS and do a better job with the cooperative agreements that have been established between Area 3 and the DC level. Working Group suggestion for the NRCS office to be organized with the heads of RCD's in Fresno County and how to continue to support the onboarding process.
- H. DOC – Southern Sierra Forest Health Watershed Program **(I)** DM / WSC-B / TBWP
 Two more months then this program will be closed out with the DOC. The grant will not be extended. Matt Hurly feels what was started should continue. Without a doubt the DOC was very satisfied with execution on the deliverables and hopeful to find more funding, to continue doing the leading edge of collaboration between the sierra's and the valley floor. There were 9 deliverables were met and exceeded, one of 8 funded in the State. Kelly (SRCD) showed the website that was implemented for the Watershed program. To make access to watershed projects in the Southern Sierra's user-friendly for the non-conservation professionals.
- I. Southern Sierra IRWM Grants – Community Water Systems & Meadows **(I)** Staff / DM
 Chelsea Hutchens will be taking on the administration for the watershed programs for the well-testing pilot project. Big Sandy Rancheria has 3 wells tested for the program. CSU Eastbay and LLMNL scientists are involved in the isotopic analysis and well vulnerability development study. Four meadows are being restored in the Kern area and with the Sequoia National Forest, Chelsea will be assisting with that project administration as well.
- J. Dinkey Collaborative – Staff, Com Planning & Socioeconomic WG **(I)** DM/Develop Advisor/Staff
- K. Tree Mortality Crisis and Biomass Resource Management Development
- 1) Biomass Utilization under USFS-R5 / SNF / SNC Interagency MOU **(I)** DM / Development Advisor
 - 2) CAL FIRE CCI Forest Health – Blue Rush & Hugger **(I)** DM / District Admin
 - 3) Auberry Mill Site – SNC CUP grant **(I)** DM / DA / Tech Partner
- A feasibility study proposal \$147k from MMR for a power production plant for biomass utilization and microgrid infrastructure at the former Auberry Mill Site was brought forward. Working with Proton Power and Reep as a manufacturing representative. This will be brought forward from Brian Beaty with MMR to the board in February with more information. MMR is a power utility company based out of Baton Rouge Louisiana. Next step would be detailed engineering and phased payments. Risk involves in securing feedstock and enough to satisfy long-term funding sources.

Robert Jackson from Yosemite Clean gave an update. The owners engineers out of Houston Texas, finished the final numbers to get to the air board. In the next two weeks, the SJVAB will give technical assistance for a plant in Oroville. To break ground in the summer. By Feb 28th meeting should have everything completed to get to the airboard for the CUP and the SJVAPCB. The same information will be submitting to the airboard in Orville. FEL2 – Secondary stage of engineering was completed for the Orville, moving to the final stage of engineering. Great wood owners who have contributed to the project as loggers, and Yosemite Clean is looking forward to continuing with the Auberry Project. By the Feb 28th meeting, all the

information will be submitted to the County. It will all go through Provost and Pritchard. Rob expressed his gratification that Sierra RCD will be working with the Consolidated Irrigation District. Work on full time for ground water SIGMA, Rob expressed his appreciation that Consolidated will be working with RCD's and going after grant funding to capture flood waters and fill the canals, and how to capture them to maintain groundwater levels.

- 4) Teaming with Highway 168 FSC on contract bidding **(I)** FOS / DM
- L. SWEEP, NRCS/AFT SJV Collaborative, CDFA CUSP and NRCS CIC for producers **(I)** A&RPM / DM
Justin Morgan introduced Alyssa Flores as an intern for the Agriculture and Rangelands program. SWEEP evaluation program was completed at the end of 2020. Was a great opportunity to meet new growers for the agriculture program. The RCPP that started with the Collaborative, which is a 5 year effort to provide Conservation planning at the RCD level. The collaborative is getting close to the implementation phase, and funding the seven management practices as well as a groundwater recharge projects. Visited a Kings River grazing land owned by Kent Kinney for preserving the riparian habitat along the Kings River. There are options for the way to move forward with the RCPP funding for implementing the projects and funding, and learning the best way to approach the new funding opportunities. Sierra RCD has been providing leadership to the other RCD's in the collaborative meetings, and others are benefitting for the work Sierra RCD is doing. Alyssa Flores (SRCD staff) has provided a lot of information to the Sierra RCD website to highlight the Agriculture and Rangeland Programs and other activities for conservation in the area. CIC was awarded for the West Grand bluffs for Ray and Bonnie for implementation for this year. The match will likely be part of the fuel break Cal Fire project with Ryan Stewart and the HWY 168 Fire Safe Council.
- M. CARCD – LAFCo SOI & Annexation – **(I)** Directors / DM
- N. Web Site & District Enterprise Operations Development & support **(I)** District Admin/Consultant
- O. Programs & Projects Status Report **(I)** Staff / District Manager
- P. Grant Opportunities Tracking List **(I)** District Manager

V. Financial Reports

- A. Annual Audit **(I)** Treasurer / District Mgr.
Draft Audit went out to the board, the board has to formalize it to approve the audit.
- B. Monthly Reports **(I)** Treasurer / District Mgr.
- C. QuickBooks Online Migration **(I)** DP&A / District Mgr.
- D. Review & Approval Expenses – Professional Services with CSDA & others **(I) (A)** Directors

VI. Reports:

- A. NRCS Report – Johnnie Siliznoff, DC
- B. RC&D Report – Next meeting – Thursday, 01/27 DP&A / District Mgr.
- E. CARCD – Forestry Committee – Reappointed & Regional Rep
Steve Haze (SRCD) was reappointed to the joint forestry committee. Directors / District Mgr.
- D. Correspondence, Fresno County LAFCo Responses Directors / District Mgr.
- E. Other – Articles, stories, and blogs All

Sierra RCD was highlighted in the Special District's Magazine for their work in Creek Fire Recovery and Fuels Reduction with Team Rubicon. Mountain Press did an article this month for the RCD logs to lumber.

VII. Adjournment...Next Meeting: Monday, February 28, 2022 – at Clovis Veterans Memorial Room 2 & via MS Teams

To make changes/additions/corrections please call or email: Kelly Kucharski – 856-2093 / kkucharski@sierrarcid.com