



MINUTES

DATE: **Wednesday, May 13th, 2026**

PLACE: **Marin Farm Bureau Conference Room, 520 Mesa Road, Point Reyes Station, CA 94956**

1. A regularly scheduled meeting was called to order by Terry Sawyer, President, at 9:05 a.m.

Roll call of Directors: Terry Sawyer, Gerald Meral, David Sherwood and Melissa Williams.
Mike Moretti Absent

Associate Directors: George Clyde, Paul Ingle and Guido Frosini

Staff: Nancy Scolari, Cora Richard, Preston Duncan, Gerhard Epke, Lee Farese, Sarah Skinker, Fiona O'Neill, Elise Suronen, Emilie Winfield

Additional Attendees: Isaiah Thalmayer (STRAW), Jessie Ditmar (STRAW), Libby Kennedy (STRAW), Chad White (Marin Biomass Project), Scott Dunbar & Sarah Marshall (MALT), Martha Davis (Nicasio Land Owners Association), Greg Richardson & Rodd Kelsey (The Nature Conservancy), Regina Pozzi (Marin Farm Bureau), Joe Deviney (Marin Ag Commissioner), Dylan Voeller (Seashore- National Parks Service), Rick Holland (Agroforestry Network), Chris Choo (Marin County Assistant Director), Chase Garcia, Carlos Suarez & Alan Kerr (NRCS) and Devii Rao (UCCE Advisor)

ACTION ITEMS:

2. DISTRICT:

A. Board approval of regular Meeting Minutes. ~ *Cora Richard, RCD Board & Operations Manager*

MOTION: David; SECOND: Jerry; AYES: Terry, Jerry, David & Melissa; NOES: None;
ABSENT: Mike; to approve March 2026 Board Minutes.

B. Board approval of the Financial Report. ~ *Cora Richard, RCD Board & Operations Manager*

MOTION: David; SECOND: Melissa; AYES: Terry, Jerry, David & Melissa; NOES: None;
ABSENT: Mike; to approve the Financial Report.

C. Approve actions contained within the five-year Marin RCD Communications Plan ~ *Elise Suronen, Operations & Impacts Director*

MOTION: Jerry; SECOND: David; AYES: Terry, Jerry, David & Melissa; NOES: None;
ABSENT: Mike; to approve the actions within the new Marin RCD five-year Communications Plan

D. Approve Measure A Ad Hoc Committee-recommended Measure A Plan and Schedule ~ *Nancy Scolari, Executive Director*

MOTION: David; SECOND: Melissa; AYES: Terry, Jerry, David & Melissa; NOES: None;
ABSENT: Mike; to approve the Measure A Ad Hoc Committee-recommended Measure A Plan and schedule

3. PROGRAMS:

- A. Approve the Marin RCD Seashore Ad Hoc Committee recommendation to enter into a Cooperative Agreement with The Nature Conservancy and to act in an advisory capacity in the planning of vacated Seashore ranches. ~*Nancy Scolari, RCD Executive Director*
MOTION: Jerry; SECOND: Melissa; AYES: Terry, Jerry, David & Melissa; NOES: None; ABSENT: Mike; to approve entering into a Cooperative Agreement with The Nature Conservancy.
- B. Approve Cooperative Agreement with the US Department of Interior, National Park Service to collaborate on the implementation of resource management projects and in providing monitoring assistance. ~*Nancy Scolari, RCD Executive Director*
MOTION: David; SECOND: Jerry; AYES: Terry, Jerry, David & Melissa; NOES: None; ABSENT: Mike; to approve Cooperative Agreement with the US DOI, NPS.

4. INFORMATIONAL:

- **Virtual Fencing** ~*Devii Rao, UCCE Livestock and Natural Resources Advisor*
 - Virtual fencing allows operators to draw fence lines on a smartphone app or computer, which transmit to collars on cattle, sheep, or goats. As animals approach the virtual boundary, they receive audio cues, followed by a mild vibration if they continue toward the fence. A separate vibration on the back of the neck encourages forward movement into new pasture areas. The system includes safeguards limiting shock intensity and frequency. Startup costs vary by company (\$5,000-\$40,000+ for towers). NRCS provides cost-sharing through EQIP and CSP programs, covering approximately \$5,000 for initial towers and \$40-50 per collar annually. Virtual fencing can be more economical than replacing traditional fencing, which costs \$12,000+ per acre.
- **Local Area Management Plan/Septic Regulations** ~*Chris Choo, Marin County Assistant Director and Liz Darby, Outreach Consultant Marin County Community Development Agency*
 - Chris explained that septic systems are critical infrastructure across much of Marin County, particularly in West Marin and unincorporated areas where no sewer systems exist. The county's regulations are currently scattered across multiple documents (state code, county municipal code, building permits), making them confusing for residents and landowners. The county is required by the State Water Resources Control Board to update its Local Agency Management Plan (LAMP). The goal is to have this approved by end of 2026, with clearer regulations around inspections, permitting timelines, and alternative septic technologies. They are collecting feedback through early June. Draft regulations will be published in the summer, and the Board of Sups will finalize in the fall.
 - Some key concerns from the public included ADU development, farmer participation in water quality programs, farm worker housing and financial burdens.
 - Some key recommended solutions included a low interest loan fund with liens as security, inspection exemptions, investments in septic infrastructure, septic

educational programs, using new technology and coordination with the coastal commission

Partner Updates:

- **The Nature Conservancy**- Greg Richardson, The Nature Conservancy
- **Marin Agricultural Commissioner**- Joe Deviney, Marin County Ag Commissioner
- **USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)**– Petaluma Field Office Staff Chase just passed his 20-year anniversary with NRCS! He brought with him Carlos Suarez, the head of California NRCS and Allen Forkey who is the Assistant State Conservationist. Chase shared that NRCS has accepted roughly 300 applications across programs CSP, EQIP & RCPP. Of the 300, there have been 93 current pre-approvals for about \$11.5 million. For CSP they have ranked 66 applications, 53 have been funded so far, at about \$5.4 million. Chase said that normally about 16% of the workload for the Petaluma field office comes from Marin. For EQIP there have been 38 pre-approvals so far amounting to \$6 million. RCPP has funded 2 projects for about \$150,000.
- **Marin Agricultural Land Trust/SAP** – MALT Stewardship Staff MALT has an upcoming Ag Happy Hour on June 9th at 4pm at the Old Western Saloon in Point Reyes Station.
- **Point Blue & Students & Teachers Restoring a Watershed (STRAW)**– Point Blue Staff Fully in maintenance mode right now. Also starting to think about next season, and the STRAW team have been going to site visits with Sarah and Preston to scope out different projects. STRAW is also doing a lot of work to revamp their data systems within the organization.
- **All Hands Ecology (formerly Audubon Canyon Ranch)** – Jim Jensen Not present at this meeting.
- **Marin Farm Bureau** – Regina Pozzi The farm bureau is looking forward to Western Weekend from June 6-7th. On August 31st they will be holding a member appreciation lunch.

RCD Program Updates (See staff report for details):

- **West Marin Compost** - Nancy Scolari, RCD Executive Director The RCD is the lessee to the county in the operation of the West Marin Compost facility. This facility was partially funded by the Conservation Innovation Grant- around 2013. We need to decide whether we want to stay engaged in that effort as a lessee. Nancy said that she will bring this to the board at the June meeting, and probably ask for a formal decision at the July meeting.
- **Nicasio Water Expansion**: John Dolcini, Marin RCD Associate Director Martha Davis updated us: the NOP closed in April, there were 69 comments and all will be posted in a few weeks. Marin Water said they will issue DEIR in the fall.
- **USDA Advancing Markets for Producers Program**: The new AMP program is now entering the planning phase. Project solicitation is expected to begin June 1.
- **Justice Equity Diversity Inclusion (JEDI)**: The JEDI Committee will meet this spring to discuss an RCD DEI statement and Tribal Engagement Policy.
- **Media/Messaging/Outreach**: Our digital newsletter subscribers have increased to 418 from 404.
- **Biomass Project**: The Project released its comprehensive report on biomass flows, gaps, and opportunities. The Marin Biomass Study: Pathways to Improved Utilization and a

Regenerative Biomass Economy is now available on the MRCD website here:

<https://www.marinrcd.org/marin-biomass-project>. The Project is now creating roundtables around the specific recommendations in Chapter 5 of the report, with the goal of creating alignment and more detailed plans for development of biomass utilization opportunities.

● **Permit Coordination Program (PCP):** Ongoing review of Vegetation Treatment Plan for All Hands Ecology's Cypress Grove and Tom's Point. Exploring options for updating PCP analysis.

● **Urban Streams Program:** During the months of April and March, Phillips has remained engaged in a plethora of activities, providing support as well as leading the charge in the County. She's attended many meetings, including Vice Chairing the quarterly Lagunitas TAC meeting in addition to attending the Gallinas Watershed Council's meeting to help the group redefine their priorities. She's been supporting Mill Valley StreamKeepers in a fish passage project on Mill Creek and assisted County Flood Control with fallen trees in Miller Creek. Phillips helped Marin Water with the installation of the Rotary Screw Trap and has been a busy beaver this smolt monitoring season with a lot of coho outmigrating in late April. Phillips continues to work with Sup. Rodoni's office with various requests in the district. Finally, she attended and led a session on restoration at the regional Salmonid Restoration Federation Conference in Redding, CA.

● **Conserving Our Watersheds Program (COW):** COW MILC is the most recent Nonpoint Source Pollution Water Board grant. Of the six projects at dairies selected in the Stemple Creek watershed, three are in the design and permitting phase and three are entering implementation. The grant also funds practices in Drakes Bay watershed of the National Seashore. Design is 60% and NEPA review with NPS is underway for manure pond decommissioning at historic A, B and C ranches. RCD staff gave members of the EPA, State and Regional Water Board a tour of some Tomales Bay COW project sites on March 26 (thank you Terry, Mike and Melissa for your help!) The application for COW GIRL phase IX was not selected for funding this year, unfortunately.

● **Carbon Farming Program:** The team is revamping the funding application portal for farmers in preparation for the new federal AMP grant. RCD was awarded a microgrant from CA Native Plant Society for the CF team to conduct a spring field day to build staff skills in native forb and grass identification on rangelands.

● **Walker Creek Watershed:** No report

● **Finance Committee:** The Finance Committee reviewed health stipend options. The next FC meeting is scheduled for May 18th.

● **District:** Admin staff are focused on FY25 financial audit.

● **Landowner Assistance Provided:**

Urban Streams: 29 individuals requested assistance and were consulted, 53 individuals were educated in the USC Program, and 2 site visits were conducted.

Conserving Our Watersheds: 2 or 3 consultations

Carbon Farming: 6

5. ANNOUNCEMENTS & CORRESPONDANCE

- None

6. PUBLIC COMMENT

Jerry shared that a meeting is happening this evening with all the assembly candidates. The meeting is sponsored by the Point Reyes Village Association & Inverness Association and is happening at 7pm at the Dance Palace.

7. MEETING ADJOURNED at 12:02 p.m.