



MINUTES

DATE: **Wednesday, June 10, 2020**

PLACE: Due to COVID-19 the Marin RCD Board Meeting was held using remote meeting technology. The MRCD Office was accessible to the public during the meeting at: 80 Fourth St, Suite #202, Point Reyes Station, CA 94956

This meeting is dedicated to all of those who are suffering or have suffered from racial injustice, also to those who are working to ensure racial equality. It is our hope that we can participate in that conversation and find a way to be part of the solution.

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

Roll call of directors: Robert Giacomini, Mike Moretti, Terry Sawyer and Peter Martinelli.
Associate Directors: George Clyde & Richard Plant. Staff: Nancy Scolari, Michelle Katuna, Sarah Phillips, Elise Suronen, Erica Mikesh & Darrylin Mollath. Additional Attendees: Isaiah Thalmayer (STRAW), Kristen Guy (MALT), Nick Goodman (NRCS), David Sherwood (Local Rancher), Jim Jensen (MALT), Dylan Voeller (PRNS), Jenna Merrilees (NRCS), Chris Howington (NRCS), & Darren Holguin (NRCS).

ACTION ITEMS:

2. DISTRICT, MINUTES, FINANCIALS

- A. Board approval of regular meeting Minutes and RCD Financial Report and bills to be paid.
MOTION: Peter; SECOND: Terry; AYES: Unanimous; NOES: None; ABSTENSIONS: None to approve the Minutes and Financial Report and bills to be paid.
- B. Board approval of Marin RCD COVID-19 Policies and Guidance: Site Protection Plan (SPP), COVID Training and Education Policy, COVID Guidance for Field Operations, COVID Guidance for Office Operations.
MOTION: Terry; SECOND: Mike; AYES: Unanimous; NOES: None; ABSTENTIONS: None, to approve the Marin RCD COVID-19 Policies and Guidance: Site Protection Plan (SPP), COVID Training and Education Policy, COVID Guidance for Field Operations, COVID Guidance for Office Operations. Noted, this is a work in progress.
- C. Board approval of Marin RCD Budget Contingency Plans. MOTION: On hold until reviewed by Finance Committee.
- D. Board approval of Resolution to Borrow up to \$350,000 in the 20/21 Fiscal Year to make full and timely payments for work completed by improved ranch practices. MOTION: Mike; SECOND: Terry; AYES: Unanimous; NOES: None; ABSTENTIONS: None, to approve the Resolution to Borrow up to \$350,000 in the 20/21 Fiscal Year to make full and timely payments for work completed by improved ranch practices.
- E. Board approval of Resolution 02-2020 proposing an election be held requesting the Board of Supervisors to consolidate with any other election conducted on said date and requesting election services by the Marin County Elections Department. MOTION: Mike; SECOND: Terry;

AYES: Unanimous; NOES: None; ABSTENTIONS: None, to approve the Resolution 02-2020 proposing an election be held requesting the Board of Supervisors to consolidate with any other election conducted on said date and requesting election services by the Marin County Elections Department.

3. CONSERVING OUR WATERSHEDS

- A. Board approval of design and cost estimate for Site #2020-01: Dairy Catchment Basin improvement.

MOTION: Mike; SECOND: Terry; AYES: Unanimous; NOES: None; ABSTENTIONS: Bob, to approve design and cost estimate for Site #2020-01: Dairy Catchment Basin improvement.

- B. Board approval to fence and water facility design, cost estimate and Landowner/Lessee Maintenance & Monitoring Responsibilities for Fence, Lessee Livestock Management Plan, and Fence Contingency Plan for Site #2020-03. MOTION to approve the fence component only. With Elsie coming back with an update on the design for the road and pipeline: Terry; SECOND: Peter; AYES: Unanimous; NOES: None; ABSTENTIONS: Bob, to approve of fence and Landowner/Lessee Maintenance & Monitoring Responsibilities for Fence, Lessee Livestock Management Plan, and Fence Contingency Plan for Site #2020-03.

- C. Board approval of Maintenance & Monitoring Measures for Site #2020-01: Ranch Headcut Repair. MOTION: Terry; SECOND: Peter; AYES: Unanimous; NOES: None; ABSTENTIONS: Bob, to approve the Maintenance & Monitoring Measures for Site #2020-01: Ranch Headcut Repair.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS –

6. Presentations & Highlights:

Partner Updates –

- **NRCS – Nick Goodman** introduces the four new staff members at NRCS (two in this meeting): Chris Howington, Jenna Merrilees, Sebastian Tsocanos and Natale Urquhart. In addition, NRCS will have a Point Blue Biologist starting soon. Regarding EQIP, their first batching period received 20 applications for both Marin and Sonoma. In that batching period NRCS funded \$900,000 for projects mainly in Sonoma. The CSP update deadline was June 19th which will allocate \$10M statewide to applicants. The Petaluma NRCS office does have some applications from landowners, mostly in Marin County. Nick also shared with the Board the California NRCS Strategic Plan 2020-2025 Mission is “Helping People Help the Land”. Their vision is personalizing proven and cutting-edge conservation solutions to improve California’s natural resources. He also states their priorities are (more likely to be funded) improve plant and forest health/productivity, improve air quality associated with agriculture operations, protect surface and groundwater quality, enhance surface and groundwater quantity, improve soil health, and enhance habitat for terrestrial and aquatic species.
- **Marin Agricultural Land Trust/SAP – Kristen Guy, Stewardship Project Mgr and Jim Jensen, Stewardship Mgr** Jim shared that MALT is losing Kristen to NRCS in Willows, Glenn County. MALT is jumping into diversity and inclusion agreements. They both share that MALT is continuing to work on finalizing the new SAP agreement and various easement projects.
- **Students & Teachers Restoring a Watershed – Isaiah Thalmayer, Restoration Mgr** –Isaiah reports Point Blue has had an on-going conversation on how to incorporate diversity for quite some time. Point Blue will be putting out a statement by the end of the week. In addition, STRAW is taking strides towards providing their interns a living wage which will result in a cost increase in their billing.

RCD Program Updates:

- **Urban Streams Program:** The USC has continued to attend regularly scheduled meetings, virtually. USC assisted in a control burn and has been focused on the Landowner Assist Program project funded by Coastal Conservancy. Finally, USC attended the Sonoma-Marine Weed Management Area meeting (virtually) and has been in communication with partners interested in future projects in Marin.
- **Conserving Our Watersheds Program:** Two projects completed. Four projects are in the CEQA/permitting phase and designs are wrapping up. Staff expect construction season to begin in September 2020. One project is cancelled. Elise also shares that the Bivalve project is \$50,000 over budget and is requesting an extension in the Grant until December 2021.
- **Carbon Farming Program:** RCD and MALT staff assisted 3 producers with Healthy Soils applications. Staff preparing presentation which summarizes CFP practice data for County (will inform Climate Action Plan). Coordinating WCB Carbon Design Grant launch.
- **Walker Creek Watershed:** Sarah is communicating with the CA Dept of Fish & Wildlife staff on ensuring she has permit coverage to support/carry out smolt monitoring efforts in 2021.
- **Pine Gulch Creek Project:** No activity
- **Media/Outreach:** "Ranchers Find Allies in Conservationists" PR Light
- **Grant Opportunities:** Staff will need to brainstorm ideas for shovel-ready projects. Let us know if you have ideas! Staff are compiling project information now and will likely apply for a Department of Conservation Riparian grant.
 - \$109,000. National Association of RCDs. North Coast Soil Health Coordinator. *Pending*
 - \$25,000. USDA Conservation Innovation Grant for training and education. *Pending*
 - \$55,000. CA Wildlife Conservation Board for technical assistance. *Pending*
 - \$7,000. County of Marin for Hwy 1 Gully Planting. *Awarded!*
- **Finance Committee:** No activity.
- **District:**
 - 60th Anniversary Tour for Board of Supervisors and RCD Board- Oh hold
- **Landowners assisted:** 3 agricultural (Healthy Soils Program) and 14 urban landowners requesting assistance. 40 people attended the May 11 Compost Webinar.

7. ANNOUNCEMENTS & CORRESPONDENCE

- Tomales Bay Conference to be held September 18th, 2020.
- CDFA Healthy Soils Program is CLOSED
- Art Show at Toby's in January.

8. PUBLIC COMMENT

Public comment for any matter not listed on this agenda, provided that no Board action is to be taken. All statements that require a response will be referred to staff to be placed on the next agenda.

Public Comment on how MRCD might join the conversation on racial diversity

- Sally states the MRCD has been considering how to join the conversation regarding racial equality through a statement on our website, getting more information by engaging an expert who would speak to the Board, and possibly a project for low income children. Sally's

focus is on the black or low-income community in the Bay Area. Welcoming school groups out to the farms and ranches to highlight climate change and food production.

- Nancy goes on to share that most diversity statements mention listening, learning, and partnering which is probably a good place for us to start. She states she believes we are providing equity presently in delivering our programs, but we have not been playing with a full deck.
- Bob shares he believes Nancy and Sally can come up with statement we can all agree with, but it will be an ongoing process to see change.
- Terry suggests locating a partnering organization that shows a degree of success and learning/partnering with them.
- Isaiah emphasizes that each of us, as individuals need to understand and listen before we can make changes as an organization. That STRAW has been working with the Center for Diversity and the Environment and their facilitators have a diverse background. He adds that Marin has an opportunity to work with the Latinx community.
- Bob suggests working with the Hispanic community as they are a large percentage of the Marin Agriculture world.
- Peter mentions he had a request from an individual desiring to help fund a farmer of color and Peter could not think of one.
- David Sherwood mentions that access to farming is exceedingly difficult. He also mentions how he grew up working in a small urban farming plot and how it brought the community together and taught him to value where food comes from. (not from the grocery store)
- Sarah agrees she sees the benefit of a creek clean-up event and programs in the schools where they grow their own food.
- Isaiah mentions a lack of funding for the community garden coordinators has dropped off and possibly there is an opportunity for funding that role.
- Michelle thinks we should be thinking about the Latinx communities and the Indigenous people.
- Nancy adds education needs to be focused on. She shares the story of her sister bringing urban children out to farms in Salinas Valley, Monterey Bay Aquarium and Walker Ranch. Through that trip the students realized there was a vast array of occupations open to them.
- Terry included his story of introducing urban children to the ocean, the bay, and the food from that area.
- Mike mentions the California Farm Bureau has a portable classroom that goes all around the state. Through Ag in the classroom we can educate the teachers as well. He also mentions there are poor white kids that need help and to not forget them. Farm Days at the Civic Center could also be an avenue for education.

Public Comment about Newts

Dave Sherwood shares research he has done on Newts in Britain and the efforts they have done towards protecting them. One highlight is how the Newts protect livestock from Blue tongue. Dave's point is we really do not understand nature in its full spectrum and there is truly a valuable reason to protect the Newts.

MEETING ADJOURNED 11:59 a.m.