



MINUTES

DATE: **Wednesday, September 9, 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

1. **A regularly scheduled meeting was called to order by Sally Gale, President, at 8:50 a.m.**

Roll call of directors: Terry Sawyer, Mike Moretti and Peter Martinelli.

Board Member not present: Bob Giacomini

Associate Directors: George Clyde, Richard Plant, David Sherwood & Guido Frosini.

Staff: Nancy Scolari, Michelle Katuna, Sarah Phillips, Erica Mikesch & Elise Suronen.

Additional Attendees: Isaiah Thalmayer (STRAW), Eric Rubenstahl (MALT), Sebastian Tsochanos (NRCS), David Sherwood (Local Rancher), Jim Jensen (MALT), Vince Trotter (UCCE), David Lewis (UCCE), Brian Dolcini (Farm Bureau), Taj Hittenburger (Point Blue-NRCS), Sam Dolcini (Farm Bureau), Regina Pozzi (Farm Bureau), Gordon Bennett (Save Our Seashores) & Dennis Rodoni (Marin County Supervisor).

2.

A. **Coastal Permitting & Incentivizing Stewardship:** RCD and Supervisor Dennis Rodoni. Elise presented challenges with the permitting process. They are related to:

1) County policy – When we submit an application for a permit, we are to attach a site map. The county passes this around other county departments for review and if there are any questions around code compliance, they are to be addressed whether or not they are a part of the proposed project. This year our projects are scrutinized heavily, possibly because we are doing dairy infrastructure work which flags a greater level of review by CDA.

2) Coastal exclusion vs non exclusion mapping – The Coastal Zone has Categorical Exclusion Areas. All ag parcels that touch tidal waters are considered non-exempt. The facility infrastructure does not touch tidal waters but the parcel does and that prompts a coastal permit and an added \$9,000 worth of fees.

3) Restoration is considered development - We are concerned that restoration projects located on excludable parcels are not exempt from Coastal Act exclusion. The permitting process can be streamlined only if they fit under NOAA's consistency determination for salmonids but all other wildlife and natural resource projects are not.

Dennis suggests that item 2 could be solved with updated mapping. Item #3 should be taken up with Supervisor Rice who is on the Coastal Commission.

B. **Marin Climate Action Plan Ag Chapter:** Nancy Scolari (RCD), David Lewis (UCCE) and Jonathan Wachter (MALT) presented on the Ag Chapter of the plan. Mapping, modeling and scaling is used to create climate action plan measures. The County is accepting comments from the ag

community. The Draft plan will be out in October. The final plan will be approved by the Board of Supervisors in December.

ACTION ITEMS

3. DISTRICT, MINUTES, FINANCIALS
 - A. Board approval of regular meeting Minutes.
MOTION: Peter; SECOND: Terry; AYES: Unanimous; NOES: None; ABSTENTIONS: None, to approve regular meeting Minutes.
 - B. Board approval of Financial Report and bills to be paid.
MOTION: Peter; SECOND: Terry; AYES: Unanimous; NOES: None; ABSTENTIONS: None, to approve Financial Report and bills to be paid.
 - C. Board approval of Marin RCD Associate Directors.
MOTION: Mike; SECOND: Peter; AYES: Unanimous; NOES: None; ABSTENTIONS: None, to approve Marin RCD Associate Directors.
 - D. Board approval of Marin RCD “Representative” and “Alternate” on the Tomales Bay Watershed Council.
MOTION: Terry; SECOND: Peter; AYES: Unanimous; NOES: None; ABSTENTIONS: Mike, to approve the Marin RCD “Representative” and “Alternate” on the Tomales Bay Watershed Council.

4. HWY 1 SEDIMENT CONTROL PROJECT
 - A. Board approval to execute \$7,148 contract #C12-2020 with Point Blue Students and Teachers Restoring a Watershed to plant gully sediment control project.
MOTION: Mike; SECOND: Peter; AYES: Unanimous; NOES: None; ABSTENTIONS: NONE, to approve to execute \$7,148 contract #C12-2020 with Point Blue Students and Teachers Restoring a Watershed to plant gully sediment control project.

5. WALKER CREEK ESTUARY
 - A. Board approval to execute \$309,273 contract #C08-2020 with Prunuske Chatham Inc. for geomorphic services related to the assessment of the Walker Creek estuary and development of designs for three high-priority restoration sites.
MOTION: Mike; SECOND: Terry; AYES: Unanimous; NOES: None; ABSTENTIONS: To approve to execute \$309,273 contract #C08-2020 with Prunuske Chatham Inc. for geomorphic services related to the assessment of the Walker Creek estuary and development of designs for three high-priority restoration sites.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS –

6. Presentations & Highlights:
Partner Updates –
 - **USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service – Drew Loganbill** – Introduces Taj Hittenburger who is a new partner biologist working with Point Blue and NRCS in the Petaluma office. Taj will be helping with conservation planning, practice implementation, monitoring rangeland, soil testing, water quality and bird monitoring. Following Taj Drew goes on the explain the NRCS office is busy with their programs and finishing up the Fiscal Year. He states NRCS has been a little low on funding projects in Marin County for this Fiscal Year. He

elaborates that NRCS will now be focusing on fire recovery and training as we approach fire season.

- **Marin Agricultural Land Trust/SAP –Jim Jensen, Stewardship Mgr and Eric Rubenstahl, Stewardship Project Manager**– Eric states that MALT has started virtual monitoring and the SAP program is full steam ahead until the rain comes. Jim mentions MALT is continuing to get easement applications and stewardship assistance applications. He also mentions that in light of some staff changes at MALT they have had the opportunity to take time and reexamine some policies.
- **Students & Teachers Restoring a Watershed – Isaiah Thalmayer, Restoration Mgr** -Isaiah reports Point Blue is in a slow season while actively doing photo-monitoring. He states they are ramping up planning for next season, while looking at plans and plants that they can grow. Isaiah shares it has been an odd year with STRAW not working with students until 2021. Also, because they are not able to offer housing, they have no internships this year. He shares their programs are slightly reducing with postponing projects until kids can get back in the mix. Isaiah explains it is mostly staff in the field doing the projects which he is excited about as it will mean less typing and more dirt on his hands. He also regrets to share that Melissa Pitkin, a staff member, has lost her family home in Healdsburg to the fires.

RCD Program Updates:

- **COVID grant:** Sally and Nancy evaluated six proposals and decided to award each applicant 75% of their proposed requests to protect workers and customers.
- **Urban Streams Program:** USC is supporting Marin County and the Stream Conservation Area Ordinance, coordinating efforts between departments that regulate streamside development. Novato Police Department was referred to USC by CA Dept of Fish & Wildlife for regulatory and stewardship assistance. USC met with Sergeant Bates on site to review the area and will continue to assist and meet with the department to help resolve streamside issues with homeless encampments impacting the watershed. USC worked with a team to develop a project description for a groundwater recharge-instream flow augmentation project in San Antonio Creek watershed. Finally, USC met with Supervisor Rodoni to discuss joining the Measure C (Wildlife Prevention) Technical Advisory Group to assist and support the effective allocation of those funds.
- **Conserving Our Watersheds Program:** Two sites completed. One site is under construction, and construction at another site is held up by the Marin County Building Permit review process. One site is scheduled for a County hearing on Sept 17th for its Coastal Permit. The last site is awaiting NRCS designs.
- **Carbon Farming Program:** Staff worked with partners to develop a presentation to inform the ag community about the Marin Climate Action Plan. Staff has set up the Carbon Farm Design Committee Meeting set for Sept 24, from 12:30-2:30 to develop selection criteria for allocating WCB Carbon Design funds. Working on budget and workplan with STRAW for Blakes Landing Hedgerow; planting delayed to Fall 2021.
- **Walker Creek Watershed:** Road surveys are continuing in this watershed.
- **Pine Gulch Creek Project:** No activity
- **Media/Outreach:** No activity
- **Grant Opportunities:** Sarah is working on a potential grant proposal to remove pyrophytic plants. Staff is working on a shovel-ready project list.

- \$25,000 USDA Conservation Innovation Grant for training and education. *Pending*
 - \$55,000 CA Wildlife Conservation Board for technical assistance. *Pending*
 - \$430,000 DOC Stemple Creek Riparian Corridor Restoration. *Pending*
 - **Finance Committee:** FC did not meet.
 - **District:**
 - GrizzlyCorps person starts September 14th.
 - Darrylin is working on a Federal Indirect Cost Rate and closing out the FY.
 - **Landowners assisted:** 3 agricultural and 8 urban landowners requesting assistance.
7. ANNOUNCEMENTS & CORRESPONDENCE
- Tomales Bay Conference to be held September 18th, 2020.
 - Marin Conservation League: Ag and Land Use Mtg -
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.
9. MEETING ADJOURNED at 12:00 p.m.