



AGENDA

DATE: **Wednesday, April 10th, 2024**

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

REMOTE OPTION: Members of the public may participate remotely by Zoom:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87864206727> or by phone: +16699009128,,87864206727# meeting ID: 878 6420 6727. Please contact Elise Suronen at (415) 663-1170 ext. 314, or sarahs@marinrcd.org if you have concerns about accessibility.

1. Regular meeting opens at **9:00 a.m.** Roll call, introduction of guests.

(Note that we may move agenda items in this meeting to meet time constraints of participants.)

2. **Oath of Office** for newly appointed Board Member, David Sherwood. ~ *Sally Gale, President*

PRESENTATION

- **Expanding RCD Funding** ~ *Jerry Meral, Marin RCD Director*

ACTION ITEMS: 9:45 a.m. - 11 a.m.

3. DISTRICT: 60 min

- A. Board approval of regular Meeting Minutes. ~ *Nancy Scolari, Executive Director*
- B. Board approval of the Financial Report. ~ *Marcus Meggett, Fiscal and Ops Manager*
- C. Board consideration of applications and submission of votes to fill the positions of CA Association of Resource Conservation District Board Vice President and Secretary-Treasurer. ~ *Nancy Scolari, Executive Director*
- D. Board approval of preliminary action plan and timeline to complete a Strategic Plan which will include Board and Staff relations, in addition to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Justice (DEIJ) training and planning. *Nancy Scolari, Executive Director*

4. CARBON FARMING: 15 min

- A. Board approval to execute Agreement #01-2024 with Point Blue Students and Teachers Restoring a Watershed (STRAW) in the amount of \$24,000 to design 3-5 hedgerow/windbreak/shelterbelt projects on carbon farm plan ranches as part of a CA Wildlife Conservation Board block grant with the CA Association of Resource Conservation Districts. ~ *Sarah Skinker, Carbon Farming Program Manager*

5. INFORMATIONAL: 11 a.m.

- **Update on Hedgerow/Windbreak/Shelterbelt selections** ~ *Sarah Skinker, Carbon Farming Program Manager*

Partner Updates: 5 min each

- USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)– Petaluma Field Office Staff
- Marin Agricultural Land Trust/SAP – MALT Stewardship Staff

- Point Blue & Students & Teachers Restoring a Watershed (STRAW)– Point Blue Staff

RCD Program Updates (See staff report for details):

- **Media/Messaging/Outreach:** MRCD sent out its first quarterly newsletter in a decade in March 2024. We started with a contact list of 393 in our listserv (consisting mainly urban streams folks with a few partners and ag producers); note this list was before we started the newsletter. A marketing effort is in place to increase contacts. Our March 2024 had a 67% open rate, 9% click, 47 bounces (had to clean out some users), 5 unsubscribed, 31 new subscribers (8% increase). New subscriber amount 397.

Newsletter Date	Subscribers Sent	Open Rate	Clicks	New Subscribers	Unsubscribed
March 2024	393	66%	9%	31	5

- **Justice Equity Diversity Inclusion (JEDI):** The Graton Rancheria-MRCD/Point Blue Memorandum of Agreement is being reviewed by FIGR. David Escobar was hired as a consultant on JEDI in Carbon Farming and continues to meet with staff. Nancy is proposing to incorporate Escobar’s services into the Strategic Planning process.
- **Biomass Project:** The contracts analysis portion of the Biomass Utilization Study is nearing completion. The economic analysis portion of the Study is nearing completion. A proposal for a third round of funding for the Marin Biomass Project has been submitted to OPR’s Woody Feedstock Aggregation Pilot Program.
- **Conserving Our Watersheds Program (COW):** Two phases of the COW program are in progress. COW MILC (phase VII) has been awarded a grant from the State Water Board and the agreement is in process. The original scope of COW CCAF (phase VI) was completed in 2023 but we are working to implement an additional project with remaining funds before 2025.
- **Permit Coordination Program (PCP):** Green Gulch Farms (GG) is moving through the CEQA and permitting process with Prunuske Chatham Inc. (PCI) guiding the way and keeping MRCD and the Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria (FIGR) in the loop. PCI continues to wait for a letter of support from FIGR. Once they receive that letter, PCI will provide the MRCD Board with an update in May or June of 2024. Black Mountain culvert project is in the PCP and might be constructed this year, MRCD staff is checking the project consultant, Pacific Watershed Associates.
- **Urban Streams Program:** The month of March was the busiest month in a while for the USC Prgm. Many partners and landowners reached out for assistance on a variety of subjects, mostly being woody debris accumulation and restoration opportunities. Sarah coordinated and facilitated the quarterly Lagunitas TAC meeting which focused on upcoming road projects that would impact salmonids. She organized and led a tour of the Lagunitas Creek watershed at the annual Salmonid Restoration Federation Conference. The tour sold out almost immediately and was attended with 50 registrants. She met with Bolinas Fire Chief to review wood jams in Pine Gulch Creek as well as conducted a site assessment in Novato. Finally, the smolt monitoring season is ramping up which will keep Sarah busy in April-May.
- **Carbon Farming Program:** The Carbon Farming Team has begun soil and forage sampling at carbon farm plan ranches. The No-till drill rental program is finished for the season, and 8

producers used it on their working lands. The CF team is currently developing and planning design and implementation projects for the Coastal Conservancy in partnership with Students and Teachers Restoring a Watershed (STRAW). 4 riparian restoration projects are currently underway with STRAW.

- **Walker Creek Watershed:** Sarah prepared the final report with the associated attachments and uploaded it to WebGrants by the deadline. The only remaining task before closing this out is to complete and submit the final invoice then update Project Tracker. We are still waiting to hear back on the implementation funding proposal submitted to NOAA for \$8mil.
- **Funding Opportunities:** Staff applied to the following grants: USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service for one position: Soil Hub Director and the CA State Coastal Conservancy to address fire resiliency with the North Coast RCDs.
- **Finance Committee:** The next FC meeting is scheduled for April 16, 2024. Nancy is investigating COVID relief funding appropriations with Elise.
- **District:** Indirect Cost Rate was completed, task management software investigated, strategic/DEI/board/staff development plan compiled.
- **Landowner Assistance Provided:**
 - Urban Streams: 2 site visits, 5 partners and/or landowners were assisted with information and 108 landowners and/or partners were educated.
 - COW: 1 landowner supported with their USDA NRCS Act Now proposal.
 - CF: 5 landowners assisted

7. ANNOUNCEMENTS & CORRESPONDENCE

- Marin RCD is accepting applications for projects. [Apply here](#) at our website or call Sarah Skinker at (415) 780-2854.
- Marin RCD Letter of Interest to participate in Marin County Emergency and Hazard Mitigation Planning effort
- Letters of support for Coastal Conservancy proposal from the following: Assemblyman Conolly, Marin County Parks, Audubon Canyon Ranch, Marin Wildfire Prevention Authority

6. 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.

7. MEETING ADJOURNED



MINUTES

DATE: **Wednesday, March 13th, 2024**

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

1. A regularly scheduled meeting was called to order by Sally Gale, President, at 9:00 a.m.

Roll call of Directors: Terry Sawyer, Gerald Meral, and Mike Moretti.

Associate Directors: George Clyde, Dave Sherwood, Guido Frosini

Staff: Nancy Scolari, Sarah Skinker, Kelsey Brewer, Marcus Meggett, Sarah Phillips, Preston Duncan, Elise Suronen, Gerhard Epke, Cora Richard

Additional Attendees: Chad White (Marin Biomass), Scott Dunbar (MALT), Isaiah Thalmeyer (STRAW), Jessie Ditmore & Libby Kennedy (STRAW), Paul Ingle (San Rafael resident), Brooke Pippi & Sloane (NRCS)

Sally began by recognizing Margaret Grade (passed away recently) who started the restaurant, Mankas in Inverness, a place that favored local food. She brought culture and vitality to the community. She also gave a shout out to Peter who is scheduled to start chemo this morning.

ACTION ITEMS:

2. DISTRICT:

- A. Board consideration of applications and the appointment of a candidate to fill a vacant director position on the Marin RCD Board. ~ *Nancy Scolari, Executive Director*
MOTION: Jerry; SECOND: Terry; AYES: Unanimous; NOES: None; ABSTENTIONS: None; to appoint David Sherwood to fill the vacant seat on the Marin RCD Board of Directors.

David expressed sadness as to the circumstances by which the seat became available. Peter had an incredible depth of knowledge. His commitment to the group is strong and passionate. David has been an Associate Director for several years volunteering in different capacities. He purchased his ranch in 1996 and though not a commercial scale rancher, he has done what all ranchers do. Has respect for the ranchers and their pressures and is looking forward to the increased responsibilities with the RCD. George remembers his first RCD meeting when he said he enjoyed the RCD meetings because he ran out of things to tell his cattle.

- B. Board approval of regular Meeting Minutes. ~ *Nancy Scolari, Executive Director*
MOTION: Terry; SECOND: Mike; AYES: Unanimous; NOES: None; ABSTENTIONS: None; to approve Minutes.
- C. Board approval of the Financial Report. ~ *Marcus Meggett, Fiscal and Ops Manager*
MOTION: Terry; SECOND: Mike; AYES: Unanimous; NOES: None; ABSTENTIONS: None; to approve Financial Report.
- D. Board approval of the Marin RCD FY22-23 Audit. ~ *Marcus Meggett, Fiscal and Ops Manager*

The following questions were asked/comments made related to the audit:

Is Zero Footprint a Fee for Service or Foundation grant?

How much of state grants comes from bonds?

State money can be more volatile than federal?

Measure A is a single source of funding; therefore we should pay attention to this pot in in the finance committee meetings.

Insert "County Contracts" into the MDA pie chart.

Covid relief money must be spent by the calendar year. Can we pay for a software upgrade or strategic planning?

MOTION: Mike; SECOND: Terry; AYES: Unanimous; NOES: None; ABSTENTIONS: None; to approve Marin RCD FY22-23 Audit.

3. MARIN BIOMASS PROJECT:

- A. Request that the Board authorize the Executive Director to enter into a new agreement with the Governor's Office of Planning and Research, which will fund implementation of findings and recommendations from the Marin Biomass Project's Biomass Utilization Study. ~*Chad White, Marin Biomass Project Manager*

MOTION: Jerry; SECOND: Terry; AYES: Unanimous; NOES: None; ABSTENTIONS: None; to approve authorize the Executive Director to enter into a new agreement with the Governor's Office of Planning and Research, which will fund implementation of findings and recommendations from the Marin Biomass Project's Biomass Utilization Study.

4. CARBON FARMING & NORTH COAST SOIL HUB:

- A. Board approval to execute Agreement with the CA Association of Resource Conservation Districts in the amount of \$228,137 to implement projects that will enhance habitat restoration and implement climate beneficial practices ~*Sarah Skinker, Carbon Farming Program Manager*

MOTION: Mike; SECOND: Terry; AYES: Unanimous; NOES: None; ABSTENTIONS: None; to execute Agreement with the CA Association of Resource Conservation Districts in the amount of \$228,137 to implement projects that will enhance habitat restoration and implement climate beneficial practices

- B. Board approval to execute a \$73,428 contract agreement between the National Association of Conservation Districts and the Marin RCD to support the North Coast Soil Hub Director in the coordination of a region-wide network in the implementation of climate-beneficial practices. ~*Emilie Winfield, North Coast Soil Hub Director*

There was much debate related to the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion statement contained in the contract agreement. The Board requested it be re-drafted. MOTION: Mike; SECOND: Terry; AYES: Unanimous; NOES: None; ABSTENTIONS: None; to execute a \$73,428 contract agreement between the National Association of Conservation Districts and the Marin RCD to support the North Coast Soil Hub Director, provisional to the re-drafting of a new diversity, equity, inclusion statement.

- C. Board approval of Memorandum of Agreement Between Parties of the North Coast Soil Hub and authorize the Executive Director to enter into the agreement. ~*Emilie Winfield, North Coast Soil Hub Director*

MOTION: Terry; SECOND: Jerry; AYES: Unanimous; NOES: None; ABSTENTIONS: None; to approve Memorandum of Agreement Between Parties of the North Coast Soil Hub and authorize the Executive Director to enter into the agreement.

5. INFORMATIONAL:

- A. Carbon Farming application portal ~*Sarah Skinker, Carbon Farming Program Manager*
Sarah reviewed the grant application portal which has already received positive reviews. From now on, applicants may go to our website and apply directly at any time of the year. The application is meant to be very user-friendly.

Partner Updates:

- USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service – Petaluma Field Office Staff
- Marin Agricultural Land Trust/SAP – MALT Stewardship Staff
- Point Blue & Students & Teachers Restoring a Watershed – Point Blue Staff

RCD Program Updates (See staff report for details):

- **Media/Messaging/Outreach:** MRCD sent out its first quarterly newsletter in a decade. We started with a contact list of 392 in our listserv (consisting mainly urban streams folks with a few partners and ag producers); note this list was before we started the newsletter. A marketing effort is in place to increase contacts.
- **Justice Equity Diversity Inclusion (JEDI):** The Graton Rancheria-MRCD/Point Blue Memorandum of Agreement is being drafted with partners. The Ad Hoc JEDI committee will continue to review and the team is planning a landowner panel. David Escobar was hired as a consultant on JEDI in Carbon Farming and continues to meet with staff.
- **Biomass Project:** We are currently folding in feedback from the Marin Biomass Collaborative into review instructions for our consultants on Chapter 3 of the Biomass Utilization Study. Work on the economic analysis in the fourth chapter of our Study remains underway. We are also seeking approval from the Governor's Office of Planning and Research for a third round of funding for the Marin Biomass project.
- **Conserving Our Watersheds Program:** Two phases of the COW program are in progress. COW MILC (phase VII) has been awarded a grant from the State Water Board and the agreement is in process. The original scope of COW CCAF (phase VI) was completed in 2023 but has been extended to implement an additional project with remaining funds. Elise Suronen is handing the program off to new MRCD program manager Gerhard Epke. Suronen and Epke plan to coordinate a COW tour for the SWRCB and EPA staff in 2024.
- **Permit Coordination Program:** Green Gulch Farms (GG) is moving through the CEQA and permitting process with PCI guiding the way and keeping MRCD and FIGR in the loop. PCI is waiting for a letter of support from FIGR. Once they receive that letter, PCI will provide the MRCD Board with an update in 04/2024. Black Mountain culvert project is in the PCP and is on hold until next year.
- **Urban Streams Program:** The month of February was wet and wild! No spawner surveys were conducted as a result of the streams being unsafe to enter and too turbid to see any fish.

Many partners and landowners reached out for assistance on a variety of subjects, mostly being storm-related impacts. Sarah attended the annual Steelhead Festival and has been working with a team to create a fantastic tour of Lagunitas Creek projects through the Salmonid Restoration Federation Conference in March. Sarah met with landowners in San Anselmo that are wanting to host three (3) workshops this year to learn more about soil, plant propagation, and creek stewardship (which will include soil bioengineering). Sarah met with Marinwood CSD to review a headcut in residential area along Miller Creek. Finally, the smolt monitoring season is ramping up which will keep Sarah busy in March-May.

- **Carbon Farming Program:** The Carbon Farming Team completed the second round of meetings for current carbon farm plans and will continue with soil and forage sampling this spring. The No-till drill rental program is finished for the season, and 8 producers used it on their working lands. The CF team is currently developing and planning design and implementation projects for SCC in partnership with STRAW. 4 riparian restoration projects are currently underway with STRAW.
- **Walker Creek Watershed:** This project is wrapping up and closes out this month on 3/31. The Project Design Team continues working quickly toward 100% designs for three complex projects in the lower reach and four low-tech projects in the upper, canyon reach of the overall project area. The design team is also in communications with landowners on placement of spoils excavated. Sarah submitted the draft final report at the end of February.
- **Funding Opportunities:** A few grant opportunities are in the works: USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service for two positions: Forest Health Coordinator and Soil Hub Director. One proposal to address fire resiliency with the North Coast RCDs.
- **Finance Committee:** FC was held on Feb 8th. FC reviewed the FY 22-23 Audit which is presented at this meeting.
- **District:** Published board vacancy in PRLight, Post Office, Grandi Building and RCD website, RCD newsletter.
- **Landowner Assistance Provided:**
 - Urban Streams: 3 site visits, 11 partners and/or landowners were assisted with information and 3 landowners and/or partners were educated.
 - COW: 1 landowner supported with their USDA NRCS Act Now proposal.
 - CF: 4 landowners assisted

6. ANNOUNCEMENTS & CORRESPONDENCE

- Marin RCD is accepting applications for projects. [Apply here](#) at our website or call Sarah Skinker at (415) 780-2854.
- March 20. 12:00-12:45 pm. UCCE Wildfire Preparedness webinar for agricultural operations. [Register here](#)

7. 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.

8. MEETING ADJOURNED at 11:58 a.m.