



"To protect, enhance, and support Butte County natural resources and agriculture by working with willing landowners and citizens through education, land management, and on-the-ground projects."

150 Chuck Yeager Way, Ste. A, Oroville, CA 95965 * (530) 693-3173 * bcrd@carcd.org

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Minutes

Date: Thursday, January 18, 2024

Time: 9:00 AM

**Location: Klamath Conference Room
202 Mira Loma Drive, Oroville, CA 95965**

Or Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88974119154?pwd=V01CaUpYVEw3VFpNQS84YkFSSmJkQT09>

Meeting ID: 889 7411 9154

Passcode: 575904

Join via phone +1 408 638 0968

- 1. CALL TO ORDER** – Dave Lee, President, 9:03 am
- 2. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS-** Dave Lee, chair, Colleen Hatfield, treasurer, Andrew Sohnrey, Director; Thad Walker, District Manager, Wolfy Rogle, staff; Rafi Silberblatt, guest from Kearns and West, here to present on salmonid recovery news; Allen Harthorn, Friends of Butte Creek.
- 3. REVISIONS TO AGENDA** (only emergency situations requiring the need to take immediate actions may be added as action items pursuant to Gov. code 549954.2(b)) – None.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT (on non-action items)

(1) (3 min. limit per speaker/topic, 15 minutes/person/meeting total) (2) Public comment is encouraged. Any member of the public may address the Board with any comment related to the Resource Conservation District's areas of concern.

*However, no action can be taken by the Board on such items at this current meeting. The Board may direct staff to agendaize such items for consideration at a future meeting. (3) *Please note that all action items will have time set aside for public comment prior to the vote occurring. After a motion*

is made and seconded by two BCRCO Directors, the Chair will first ask for any further discussion from the Directors and Associate Directors and then Chair will open up the item for brief public comment limited to 2 minutes/person. After the public comment period closes a vote will be held.

5. CONSENT AGENDA:

- a) Review and approval of the minutes of the BOD meeting held on 12/21/2023 – Colleen moved, Andrew seconded to approve the minutes as written; motion passed unanimously.

6. ACTION ITEMS – Dave Lee, President

- a) Election of BCRCO Officers for 2024 -Thad Walker – Dave asked for this item to be tabled. He asked the committee working to revise the Policies and Procedures (P&Ps) to revise the (currently unclear) section about elections and bring it back to the board. We haven't had an "election" for the roles of our appointed Board members in some 5 years or so. Colleen moved, Andrew seconded to table the item and send the language to the P&Ps committee; motion passed unanimously.
- b) Review and approval of Financials/ Accounts Payable- Colleen Hatfield – The SNC-929 account still has \$8.53 in it; Wolfy will look back through her emails to see what SNC directed us to do with this.[Update: we transfer it into our general account and keep it.-WR] The Colby Mtn Vibrant Recreation account (also an SNC project) is also ready to be closed out soon.The trailer and vehicle are being considered fixed assets. Profit and Loss: For the last half-year, we spent about \$1.5M, about \$1.2M to subcontractors (because most of our projects are pass-through to local suppliers and practitioners). As part of the audit process, we occasionally make some adjustments to fix small misallocations from years past (e.g. \$1,523 in 2020). Our old -4716 account is now down to about \$20,000 and will be closed out soon when all outstanding checks are paid; the new general account that replaces it has abundant cash (over \$200,000) in it. (This total doesn't include the cash sitting in our many project-specific accounts). Current accounting controversy: Do you record an expense when you are invoiced for it, or do you backdate the expense to the date when the *work* was done? Both are consistent with an accrual framework but the latter can be difficult to ascertain and can increase disparities across fiscal years. No doubt we will still be talking about this in the future. Andrew moved, Colleen seconded to accept the financials; motion passed unanimously.
- c) Status Update for the Reorienting to Recovery for Salmonids Project, Rafi Silberblatt (Kearns & West) – The project began in 2021 with *defining salmon recovery*, then moved on to *engaging stakeholders* throughout the Central Valley (including BCRCO and Friends of Butte Creek). Stakeholder engagement yielded 500 responses that could be sorted into 18 values in 6 values categories. (The 6 categories are: salmon biological (e.g. abundance diversity); habitat and ecological processes; access to land and water; harvest; water and ag; and regulatory/public health/infrastructure.) The RtR project is now in stage 3, "Decision Support". This structured decision-making process will assign scores to various actions and will lead to a list (around Sept 2024) of recommended actions that should lead to recovery "without excessive pain to various interests". The team has developed a model allowing folks to weight different values differently (they call it turning "knobs") in order to see the relative impact of taking various actions at various scales. This results in a wide array of "blended scenarios" to analyze. For example, what if we maximized habitat restoration *and* doubled the number of hatcheries... what if we shut down all the hatcheries but gave salmon back *all* the water ... what if we stopped harvesting salmon altogether but we left everything else the same... and so on. Key takeaways: there's no one thing that will fix the crisis, dry years are bad for fish, humans don't fully understand rivers yet, modeling assumptions actually matter. Upcoming **Forum** on 4/3/24 will discuss the various "blended scenarios" and allow attendees to advocate for their favorites, plus discuss questions like: How can we optimize flow to benefit salmon? How/where can habitat be used most strategically to minimize dry year impacts and leverage existing efforts like SGMA?

Q from Thad: If a consensus is reached among the various stakeholders, what is done with it? A: You can look at the model on our website. Q from Allen: This effort seems focused on hatcheries and maximizing their effectiveness, what about wild salmon? A: By the third generation, hatchery descendants can be functionally wild. However, we also realize that focusing on hatcheries alone doesn't meet objectives because it's not just about salmon abundance, it's also about diversity and spatial arrangement. Allen followed up stating that wild runs are less comparable to hatchery-

spawned runs than the model seems to account for, and the recovery of wild runs needs to be emphasized more. Rafi stated that was exactly the type of input that was needed at the April 3 Forum and encouraged Allen to attend. The Board thanked Rafi for his time.

- d) Opening Credit Card for BCRC- Colleen Hatfield – Colleen proposed we open 2 credit cards, one each for Wolfy and Thad. This might alleviate the issues we sometimes run into with single-day charges exceeding the card's limit. The monthly statements on the cards would go to the Board. Liability from this structure would actually be less than the current structure of a debit card, in Colleen's name, that is linked to our large general account. In the proposed scenario, other staff would have to go through Wolfy or Thad to make purchases (although, in the future, it would be easy to add a sub-user if needed, with their own ending limit). Andrew moved to open a credit card account with 2 cards, combined spending limit of \$5K/month.
- e) Fee for Service Rates Review and Update -Thad Walker – Labor costs have gone up considerably in the last 2.5 years since we last revised the rates, so a revision is appropriate. To prepare the proposed update, DM reviewed prevailing local rates for roles such as archaeologist, botanist, etc. In most (not all) cases, this resulted in our fee-for-service rate being proposed to be increased. We also added a rate for burn plan development by a CARX (state -certified burn boss). Colleen moved, Andy seconded to adopt the new fee schedule; motion passed unanimously.
- f) Operating Reserves Contribution and Schedule -Colleen Hatfield- Per our adopted policy, the target for our operating reserves is 3 months of operating costs. These days, that works out to \$150,000. So far, we've socked away \$12K. While our existing policy says we'll evaluate our net income each quarter and designate part of it to the operating reserves, in practice this doesn't get done, so Dave would like to see us make contributions every month. Andy proposed a regular monthly action item of sending \$5,000 to the operating reserves. (Andy's strategy would fully fund the reserves in 3 years.) If there's a month we can't afford \$5K, the Board can simply reduce the amount that month. Furthermore, the reserves are there so we can withdraw from them if we need to. Andy further proposed moving the operating reserves to an account that bears substantial interest (if not a money-market account yielding 6%, then at least a savings account yielding 4% or so, which is easy to find these days). Andy moved we revise the Operating Reserves policy (adopted Sept 15, 2020) to state we fund the reserves monthly rather than quarterly. This would be done through a standing monthly action item on our BOD agenda of contributing \$5,000/month. Colleen seconded; motion passed unanimously. Text change to our Operating Reserves Policy:

On a ~~quarter~~ monthly basis the BCRC- Board of Directors will evaluate net income and designate ~~an amount twenty-five percent of the annual goal~~ to fund reserves.

- g) Discussion of process and timeline for reviewing policies and procedures (P&Ps) -Thad Walker (no action item) – Dave asked John and Andy to be on the P&Ps revision committee. Andy agreed on the condition John is up for it. Dave will speak to John, who has been deeply involved in such efforts in the past. John will then tie in directly with Andy and they'll get to work, with Dave's support as needed.
- h) Amendment to Agreement, Butte County Public Works, Granite Basin Development Grant in the Plumas National Forest -Thad Walker – Extension of time to Dec 31, 2024. Colleen moved to accept the extension, Andy seconded; motion passed unanimously.
- i) Next Board of Directors Meeting Thursday, February 15, 2024, at 9:00 AM, Location: Klamath Conference Room 202 Mira Loma Drive, Oroville, CA – Colleen said this is fine but reminded the crew she'll need to leave no later than 11:30 am. Recently, meetings haven't been running that long.

7. RCD PROJECTS AND PROGRAMS -STAFF REPORTS

- a) Project Updates – The Sac Valley Soil Hub now has a coordinator, Margo Flynn. (Employed by Colusa RCD, funded by CARCD) This means that she could be available to help us (and other regional RCDs) with grant-writing and strategically increasing our presence in ag. A great way for us to “wade in to healthy soils.” We can also bill our own staff time to this grant (a small amount, like \$5K) to cover our staff hours when we are working with the Coordinator.
- Thad updated the Board on **funding opportunities for Upper Butte Creek**: Wolfy is developing a NFWF proposal that would fund about \$5.3 million in work on Humbug Summit Rd and post-Dixie reforestation; Blue Forest Conservation also want to help fund UBC work through a combination of grants and no-interest revolving loans (the purpose of the latter is to aid cash flow, allowing RCD to pay contractors in as little as 14 days).
- There is also a **new funding opportunity on the horizon for SFLAP**: CAL FIRE’s new Wildfire Resilience Block Grant (WRBG) solicitation contains \$7M earmarked just for RCDs that have an SFLAP-like program. Dallas and Ben can work together to submit an application. Application season opens 1/29/24.

8. PARTNERS’ REPORTS (5-minute limit per group)

- a) Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS)- none
- b) Butte County departments -none
- c) Community groups- Friends of Butte Creek – Allen shared that FOBC’s been invited to submit a second-round proposal to the BOR Central Valley Improvements project – following close on the heels of their current grant they are just beginning to implement -- and he would like to involve the BCRCDC more formally this go-round. Dave asked: What’s the status of the creek? --The creek is clearing up a bit better with recent rains, but Allen thinks the upcoming storms (upcoming Jan 19-21 weekend) will probably mobilize even more sediment. In mid-December, the storms brought the flow up above 1000 cfs, which brought down more orange material from the PG&E blowout. The bank is unstable in that area and Allen doesn’t see any way they can permanently stabilize it. When the flow stays around 500 cfs, the water gets brown but doesn’t turn orange.

9. BOARD OF DIRECTORS REPORTS

- a) Butte County RCD Directors and Associate Directors are welcome to report

10. CLOSED SESSION

Legal and Employee Matters – Board reviewed and approved changes to staff compensation. Board approved to submit a victim impact statement letter concerning the legal matter.

11. ADJOURNMENT

*NOTE: The Butte County Resources Conservation District (BCRCD) distributes its Board meeting agendas electronically at least 24 hours in advance of meetings. If you would like to be added to, or removed from, the email list, please notify the Butte County RCD at (530) 534-0112, ext. 122 or by email to: bcrdc@carcd.org. The BCRCD also publicly posts notice and agenda of meetings 72 hours in advance of meetings at the Butte County RCD office located at 150 Chuck Yeager Way, Suite A, Oroville, CA. **Reasonable Accommodations:** In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the Butte County RCD Manager at (530) 534-0112, ext. 122.*

Please note that all action items will have time set aside for public comment prior to the vote occurring. After a motion is made and seconded by two BCRCD Directors, the Chair will first ask for any further discussion from the Directors and Associate Directors and then the Chair will open up the item for brief public comment limited to 2 minutes per person. After the public comment period closes, a vote will be held