



"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, Aug 18, 2022

Time: 9:00 AM

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

Or Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84342212526?pwd=eTZuQzJSV3IDRlcyYWJkcnhWm1mdz09>

Meeting ID: 843 4221 2526

Passcode: 704514

Join via phone +1 408 638 0968

1. **CALL TO ORDER** – Dave Lee, President – 9:03 am
2. **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS** – Dave Lee, Chair; Allen Harthorn, Vice Chair; Directors Samantha Lewis, Colleen Hatfield, and John Christofferson; District Mgr Thad Walker; staff Wolfy Rogle
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)** -- None

(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 BCRCD 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.

CONSENT AGENDA:

- a) Teleconferencing Requirements of the Brown Act AB 361 BCRCD Resolution 01202022 Extension
- b) Review and approval of the minutes of the BOD meeting held on 7/21/2022

John moved and Allen seconded to approve the consent agenda as written; motion passed unanimously.

5. ACTION ITEMS – Dave Lee, President

- a) Review and approval of Financials/ Accounts Payable- Colleen Hatfield – Board reports now reflect activity over the past 30 days. The new board reports format is more accurate and up-to-the-minute, but is a little more expensive because it takes more of the bookkeeper’s time. Colleen stated our cost for Cheryl’s time will increase somewhat as we prepare for the next audit, but it is money well spent. Invoices we’ve sent to our funders- we still have a number of these outstanding. This problem peaks whenever the State fiscal year turns over. However, we did very recently receive: a payment from State Parks that was outstanding since April; and a 2nd advance on the Colby Mountain project which will allow us to catch up on vendor invoices. Cheryl has the budget we approved at July BOD meeting and is inputting it into QBO now, which will allow an ongoing budget-to-actual comparison. Allen moved, John seconded to accept the financials and approve the payment of vendors; motion passed unanimously.
- b) Contract to Chico State Enterprises for eDNA analysis for Upper Butte Creek - Wolfy Rougle – Tabled til next meeting, due to contract not yet received from CSE.
- c) Agreement with Forest Creek Restoration for meadow survey and plan development for Willow Creek as part of the Upper Butte Creek Project -Thad Walker – This Willow Creek is the one that is cross by Humbug Rd. The crossing has blown out 3 times in the past year and both the meadow and road are in bad need of rehabilitation. This contractor is experienced developing this type of restoration plan and, once written, the final restoration designs will become part of the Upper Butte Creek NEPA. John moved to accept the agreement, Allen seconded; motion passed unanimously.
- d) Request to have Chair sign agreement for extension for WCB project 2020117 (Concow Pyrodiversity) - Wolfy Rougle – Per conversation with Celestial Reysner this morning, an extension won’t be necessary or considered. All funds have been expended and all BCRCD deliverables are complete; however, CAL FIRE as lead agency has not yet signed their CEQA document. CAL FIRE furnished a letter to WCB confirming BCRCD has completed all deliverables that are within our control. The only question still to be resolved is whether WCB will release our 10% retention or not. Reysner shared that WCB has sometimes waited a year for CEQA completion after closing a grant. No action on this item.
- e) Modification (extension) to contract 21-CS-28-031 with Pacific Southwest Research Station for work in Concow Basin - Wolfy Rougle – Would allocate up to about \$63K for RCD to continue to assist PSWRS with monitoring and maintenance of its approx 35 ac of research plots in Concow. John moved to accept the modification; Allen seconded; motion passed unanimously.
- f) Modification of contract with American Forest Foundation NR199104XXXXC013 for Forestry Technical Assistance-Thad Walker – Would shift funds to our staff to allow them to continue delivering technical assistance to local landowners. Allen moved to accept the modification; John seconded; motion passed unanimously.
- g) Agreement with US Department of the Interior- Bureau of Land Management

L22AC00296 -Butte County Forest Health and Hazard Fuels Agreement

-Dallas Koller – Builds on our existing successful projects with BLM to allocate BCRCO \$1,000,000 over 5 years to complete 50 ac/years of fuels reduction, 50 ac/yr weed removal, and 100 ac/yr of invasive weeds monitoring. In the last couple of years of the contract, the focus will shift to NEPA on the Forks of Butte parcels. 10% indirect for RCD. John moved to accept the award; Allen seconded; motion passed unanimously.

- h) Next Board of Directors Meeting Thursday, Sept 15, 2022, at 9:00 AM, Location: Klamath Conference Room 202 Mira Loma Drive, Oroville, CA

6. RCD PROJECTS AND PROGRAMS

- a) Staff Updates – Special thanks was given to Cait Bell, our SNAP member, who was able to complete her AmeriCorps term of service well ahead of schedule and has now transitioned to a staff role as forest technician. She expects to stay with us until spring, when she will leave for travels!

With Cameron leading up our work to develop an RCD-led version of EQIP, SNC has agreed to contribute \$900,000 to our program, supplemented by \$90,000 from NRCS and \$100,000 from CARCD.

Dixie Rd – We have submitted all final reports but are awaiting final close-out and final reimbursement from Water Board, which has historically been our slowest funder.

7. PARTNERS' REPORTS (5 minute limit per group)

- a) Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) – n/a

- b) Butte County departments – n/a

- c) Community groups and agencies – Friends of Butte Creek wrote a NOAA grant for fish passage on anadromous streams. They revised their Bureau of Reclamation proposal to rehabilitate and reshape the lands at the head of Butte Creek Canyon which belongs to CDFW/CSE/Mechoopda. A grant has also been submitted by CalTrout and partners to rehabilitate fish passage at Iron Canyon. Dave Lee asked, has anyone applied to improve fish passage on lower Butte Creek? Allen replied: Agreed, the creek's status in that area is a mess and even finding the creek's rightful path is very difficult. Butte Sink/Sutter Bypass Operations Group was formed, by CDFW, after the last fish kill in spring 2021; everyone is sitting at the table, e.g. duck clubs, irrigation districts, etc; but some stakeholders are in conflict/in court with each other at times (as is the nature of water in California). The illegal dam that caused the fish kill last year was below the Gridley-Colusa highway, below Sanborn Slough bifurcation. The main channel, btwn Wild Goose and White Mallard duck club, kind of disappears and over the last couple dry years the vegetation has clogged it up. White Mallard has tried to get a permit to clear the veg out but had trouble getting the permit from CDFW; this year, they got the permit and have been proceeding, which is a positive development. Between the rice industry and the duck clubs, there's a positive, future-looking process going on. PG&E's sale of DeSabra fell through. This opens the door for another agency or org to potentially come in with a proposal to acquire that project. But, for now, PG&E has indicated to FERC they will continue operating that project. PG&E was ordered to put in a temp control device over 10 years ago, and 2021 is an example (even though fish kill was not caused by PGE actions) of what happens when water gets too warm.

CDFW snorkel count revealed 2500 fish returning this year; actual number is probably 2x that.

8. BOARD OF DIRECTORS REPORTS

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

Director Samantha Lewis reported: Butte County's 3 GSAs have until the end of the year to put in grants to the state (ranging from \$1-20M) to fund the projects in their plans. The Vina subbasin is the one with an overdraft, albeit small (c. 10K af) relative to some SoCal or West Side basins, and has the most pressing need for funded projects. A feasibility study is underway to prioritize the water conservation projects and determine which projects are most worth pursuing groundwater-dedicated funding for. Samantha stated that better collaboration and coordination across agencies would help the subbasin meet its needs because many projects proposed to reduce groundwater overdraft (e.g.,

removing invasive spp) are also really fuels reduction projects. Perhaps SFLAP funding could be used to complete some of those projects that are fuels reduction projects that also have water conservation benefits. Prospective projects need to go before the GSA board before being included in the plan; once approved and in the plan, they can be eligible for the groundwater funding; the final choice of which projects will be going into the funding request happens this fall; application for funding must be complete by the end of the year. Allen offered to speak to the GSA board in the future about how Butte Creek channel reconstruction could benefit groundwater recharge. (Plus, reconnecting the creek to its floodplain can actually cool water, because even though the water spreads out, it gets cooled each time it seeps through a gravel bar and is forced back up to the surface – much like a heat pump in a house.) Samantha noted that dredging sediment from Lindo Channel so the water can spread out more during floods could also increase groundwater recharge by 2,000 acre-feet. Another project is an extended orchard redevelopment project (incentivize farmers to fallow their orchards 2 years between tearing it out and replacing it, normally a 25-year cycle). This would save 8,000 af/yr (at 4 af/ac and about 2,000 ac being fallowed per year). The State has set aside a quarter billion dollars for fallowing. The money will be distributed according to whether your sub-basin is in moderate (maybe \$1200/ac) or severe (maybe \$4000/ac) overdraft. It's not yet clear how the Vina sub-basin will be ranked; if it's not ranked severe enough, Butte County farmers would have less access to that State fund to be paid not to irrigate. If State \$ is not available at a rate that will incentivize farmers to use it, Federal govt might. In that case, RCD could be an appropriate agency to distribute that money. In other regions, some GSAs (or irrigation districts?) are simply increasing the price of groundwater so high that farmers fallow their land, but Director Lewis that this tactic, if applied to Butte County where per-acre yields are lower, would break the economy. Allen mentioned that WCB Streamflow Enhancement program could be a source of some funds for groundwater sustainability projects.

9. Closed session was added at request of Board members. District Manager position was discussed. John moved to increase the advertised salary from to \$90,000 and to continue to advertise the position. Allen seconded; motion passed unanimously.

10. ADJOURNMENT 10:56 am

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: bcrd@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.

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