



SIERRA RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT MONTHLY BOARD MEETING

Monday, June 24, 2019 4:00 pm to 6:00 pm

Clovis Memorial Building, 453 Hughes, Room 2, Clovis, Ca. 93612

MEETING MINUTES

I. Call to Order: 4:06 pm

- A. Director Roll Call
- B. Introduction of Guests

Directors: Pete Lassotovitch, Ted Kimbler, Alan Fry (present by phone), Associate Director Gary Temple
Staff Present: Steve Haze, Craig Jones, Kelly Kucharski, Blair Duncan
Guests: Jae Lee, NRCS

II. Approval of Minutes for February and March 2019 Board Meeting

Pete L. made the motion to accept the minutes for April 2019 as presented, Ted K seconded the motion, all voted, and the motion passed unanimously.

III. Public Comment for any item not on the agenda (No action can be taken)

No comments.

IV. SRCD Board Action Items and Discussion Topics:

- A. Personnel and Contractors

Craig Jones put in his official resignation from SRCD for August. Craig said he's planning not to drop the projects completely. Steve said Craig's done a turnaround on the forest program. Steve has been looking at other people to play a role to Craig's departure and wants to look at personnel replacement and contract arrangements. Carbon Cycle Institute has former US Forest individual who will provide consultation services at no cost. Craig suggested Blair could take a bigger role in the fuels reduction and biomass programs. ***Pete L, made the motion to give Steve the latitude to look into other resources and services we needed to fill the gaps with Craig's resignation. Ted K. seconded the motions, all voted, and the motion passed unanimously.***

- B. Annexation Application of District and Sphere of Influence LAFCo/CARD

There is funding for the annexation and Matt Hurley is involved with this as well. SRCD is expanding the west boundary as the 99, for the whole length of Fresno County.

- C. Website development & support Kristina

SRCD paid Kristina for the work that she did. The next phase for the website is happening now, with Craig's advice on the forestry section.

- D. Candidates for directors: Doug Cockrell

Steve is trying to reach Doug to join the SRCD directors.

- E. Caltrans and Sierra Foothill Conservancy Mitigation Agreement & MOU –

The mitigation agreement is continuing onward with SFC and the roundabout improvement. Sierra Foothill Conservancy is looking at working closer with SRCD for rangeland health and working with our partners in an MOU, with some things they might be able to provide. Steve needs approval to draft an MOU to being working with the SFC, that they can provide site control for us to do applied research and its application on rangeland areas. ***Ted K made the motion for Steve to make the MOU with SFC. Pete L. seconded the motion, all voted, and the motion passed unanimously.***

- F. Dinkey Collaborative- Steering Committee, Com Plng & Socioeconomic WG
Steve went to the Dinkey Collaborative meeting last Thursday. They are in an agreement that will carry out until the end of the year. Does the Dinkey collaborative remain the same or branch out is the question that's being asked.
- G. Tree Mortality Crisis and Biomass Resource Management Development
1. CA Forest Management Task Force – Sierra-Eastside Regional Group
Newly appointed director, Jennifer Montgomery, appointed by Governor Newsome met with Steve for DOC training for the watershed coordinator training. Steve wants to continue creating a relationship with the State at a high level in order to apply some of the research and technical assistance to producers.
 2. CFSC - Eastern Fresno County FireSafe & Stewardship Fuels Reduction
The first advance came through after many delays, the second advance was requested. This launched the fuels reduction program for boots on the ground to help implement fuel breaks and fuel reduction. Some forms and pre-meetings were made, forms will be finalized and then outreach will be going on now. It's beginning to move. Meeting with Cal Edison, Cal Fire, and the forest service so that SRCD can fill gaps or complement the partners who are doing the same thing.
SRCD just submitted another grant for \$200K to the CA fire safe council fire for a fuel break for fire prevention. With this grant, the EFCF grant, and EQIP there could be 3 potential sources of funding.
 3. CA Department of Conservation- Forest Health Watershed Coordinator and Tulare Basin
Matt Hurley might be coming to the board meetings as he is involved with many projects.
 4. CALFIRE Forest Health 2017 Award with USFS-SNF & 5 Yr Agreement
Next few weeks Steve wants to work on the agreements.
 5. CAL FIRE CCI Forest Health 2018 award
SRCD grant reductions were approved and they are ready to send in. Start date July 1st. The subcontract agreements have to be put together, with the US Forest Service. SRCD's main agreement is with CALFIRE and there have to be other sub agreements with the other partners. Steve needs to move forward with developing the contracts and sub contracts. **Ted K made the motion for Steve to go forward with creating the contracts needed, Alan F seconded the motion, all voted, and the motion passed unanimously.**
 6. Auberry Mill Site- SNC CUP grant & Yosemite Clean
By July 15th the county issued a notification on needing a decision made about consideration of the land. There was a breach of the millpond damn that has caused an issue with the landowners. The county also wants an air quality analysis for the biodiesel proposal. Steve met with the Air Pollution Control District twice and Provost and Prichard. The attorneys and the landowner on July 8th are supposed to meet to move things forward. Steve thinks he can get the air quality part finished, he hasn't responded to the county yet about the July 15th notification.
 7. Setting up operations at AMS
Craig and Blair will be learning how to fire up the gasifier tomorrow, and fire it up on Wednesday. Thursday there will be 20 NRCS representatives with loads to produce electricity and they can see what SRCD has been putting together on Thursday. Steve is working with John to see how it can produce power for the saw mill and other various applications, and MMR as a potential partner.
 8. Fresno County Tree Mortality/Forest Health Task Force (TRAC)
Steve and Craig didn't go the last meeting, but Craig sent them the SRCD update. Blair will start attending those meetings. Craig talked very positively about what Fresno

County is doing, because some counties are not doing anything, and Fresno is doing a lot. The task force is a great resource for regulatory and technical advice.

9. CARCD/NRCS Regional Conservation Partnership Program
The next batch of funding will be mid-July looking at EQIP projects and active existing RCPP's. Tree mortality fund pool is also becoming available as other funding sources are too. Luis Alvarez is a new hired soil specialist at NRCS. There has been a drop in how much assistance dairies have been asking NRCS for over several years, but currently there is more interest now that their funding is less. With the district increasing it's influence and upper watershed work, all this sort of activity used to be that the Department of Food and Agriculture had dairies to help with waste. Looking at the potential of the gasifier, which is for forest residue, but can be used for any kind of waste.

H. Programs and Projects Status Report

I. NRCS- Diesel Tractor Replacement AQ program

J. NRCS- Conservation Pling & support for SE Asian Specialty Growers/SWEEP

Jae reported in January there was abrupt end to these programs due to lack of funding. NRCS is looking at regrouping to continue the SE Asian programs and looking at TV spots and revitalizing the radio program and workshops.

K. Kings Basin Water Authority/So. Sierra IRWM/SGMA WG/ SGAs

L. Grant Opportunities Tracking List

SRCD's grant management counsel looked at SRCD grants and said it looks excellent. Grants are extremely competitive.

M. Other

V. Financial Reports

A. Codifying of Accounting Practice

Steve sent the accounting practices to everyone, codifying how SRCD has been operating. This procedure is being used by other RCD's and the independent auditor has been involved as well. End of fiscal year is 1 week away. In our case we have an outside CPA, and Kelly will be trained to work more closely with Lis Bundli the CPA.

Ted K made the motion for adoption of the new codified accounting practices.

Alan K seconded the motion, all voted, and the motion passed unanimously.

B. 2019/2020 Budget

Steve passed out the budget and went over some basic highlights. ***Ted K made the motion to approve the 2019/2020 budget, Alan F seconded the motion, all voted, and the motion passed unanimously.***

C. Monthly Reports

Steve H distributed for review the:

- Balance Sheet
- the Profit & Loss
- the Transactions by Account
- Central Valley Bank Summary

D. Line of Credit and Carbonator 500 purchase based upon A/R and grants

John Heywood is involved to help SRCD underwrite, with private and public funding, for a carbonator. As an agency SRCD can qualify for attractive rates. Steve and John have been working to create it as a business line of credit for \$800,000 to fund it. Northern California Community Loan Fund is another lender. Steve has left everything on idle until the agreements are put in place. Steve is looking for board approval to continue moving forward more aggressively. Blue Forest Conservation has some kind of bond with a water utility that pays for work performed, with our DOC agreement, one of our deliverables might be involved. Lots of water agencies are trying to get involved with the source of water protection. The carbonator was at the International Ag Expo,

Craig and Ted went to see it. It also creates biochar. Steve is working on putting the carbonator in the NEPA planning so that it could be used. No chipping is needed for it to be used. It is a large machine that does 20 tons a hour, and creates biochar. Craig said the real value will be in filtration instead of with ag soil. Steve said current air curtain burners creates ash, this machine creates 1 ton of biochar for every 20 tons. SCE has trees they have to pay for the removal, Steve and John are meeting with them tomorrow to have that conversation. SRCD is looking at opening a business line of credit based upon contract agreements. Alan and Steve want to meet with a senior bank executive to discuss. Steve asked for moving forward on the line of credit and receivables in the contracts for the feasibility of purchasing the Carbonator 500. **Ted K made the motion for Steve to go forward as needed, Alan F seconded the motion, all voted, and the motion passed unanimously.**

- E. Potential movement of bank account
- F. Review & Approval of expenses

VI. Reports:

- A. NRCS Report and Field Trip of Area-3 DCs to Auberry Mill Site Thursday, 6/27
- B. RC&D Report
- C. CARCD – Forestry Committee /SJV Region (Area 9)
Steve volunteered to provide work to deliverables tied to what SRCD is doing when he met with the forestry committee. Steve met with Matt Angel to talk about Area 9 as being more and to pull together to work on opportunities together.
- D. Correspondence, Fresno County LAFCO Responses
- E. Other

- VII. Adjournment: Meeting end 5:58 pm**
Next meeting: Monday, July 22nd, 2019; 4:00pm – Room 2
Respectfully Submitted, Kelly Kucharski