



"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."

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Minutes

Date: Thursday, September 16th, 2021

Time: 9:00 AM

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

Or Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85961204034?pwd=UjNORGpQMmRxTGJENEtV2Z4QzBPZz09>

Meeting ID: 859 6120 4034

Passcode: 555329

Join via phone +1 408 638 0968

- 1. CALL TO ORDER** – Dave Lee, President – 9:03 am
- 2. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS** – Chairman David E. Lee, John, Treasurer Colleen Hatfield, Directors John Christofferson and Allen Harthorn, District Manager Thad, Wolfy, remotely Kimberly, Dan T
- 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 BCRCB 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: Project Updates (see board packet).

6. ACTION ITEMS – Dave Lee, President

- a) Review and approval of the minutes of the BOD meeting held 8/19/2021- DaveLee- John moved, Colleen seconded to approve minutes; motion passed unanimously
- b) Review and approval of financials/ Audit Update - Colleen Hatfield – 4 invoices were added to be paid this cycle since the A/P were emailed, and 2 checks were voided. Staff requested that the contracting forester’s invoice be paid midcycle as soon as payment is received from the grantor. John moved to pay the bills as on the A/P, including midcycle payment to forester if payment is received from grantor; Allen seconded, motion passed unanimously. Colleen and bookkeeper will spend time together next week to clear up numerous small details that accumulate over time. Colleen shared a third-quarter profit-and-loss-by-class spreadsheet, and the Board discussed ways it might more accurately reflect outstanding invoices and staff time allocated to each class (project). Colleen provided an audit update: Auditor notified BCRCO that dozens of files uploaded months ago were not received and requested they be re-uploaded.
- c) Board Resolution #09162021 to support Butte Creek Camp Fire Post-Fire Recover Project (Agreement #D2113514) funded by State Waterboard. This is the Centerville Rd project and most of the funding will pass through to qualified contractors to fix the road and reduce sediment delivery to Butte Creek. John moved, Allen seconded to approve; motion passed unanimously.
- d) Procurement Policy Update- Public Contract Bidding, Vendor and Professional Consultant Selection, and Environmentally Preferable Purchasing Procedures -Thad Walker Following discussion on RCDs’ District Managers forum, it was realized that BCRCO’s procurement processes (originally based on those of Honey Lake Valley RCD, which may not be most similar to BCRCO because HLVRCD functions as a Watermaster) may be unnecessarily restrictive. Revising them could result in faster contractor turnaround. Thad reviewed policies of several RCDs, especially Mendocino RCD, whose forestry-centered programs are more similar to BCRCO’s. That provided a suite of procurement policy updates for the Board to evaluate, including: raising the public bid threshold from \$5K to \$50K; reducing the public bid advertisement window from 30 days to 14; eliminating the requirement to advertise the bids in a newspaper; eliminating the requirement to go out to bid in cases where a specialized subcontractor is a partner in a grant; not needing to register projects under \$25K with DIR (Dept. of Industrial Relations). In Mendocino County, the District Manager has bid acceptance authority up to \$50K. John expressed preference for a 2-person approval process for expenditures, preferably Board chairman and District Manager. To establish thresholds for each category, however, John proposed the Board review the suite of options for an additional month. Clarifying “Internal organizational investments” vs. “grant funded investments”: Internal investments would be things like a new computer, which we wouldn’t bill to a specific grant. Grant funded investments would include most of our expenses, such as paying for project supplies and contractors. Board chair’s ability to declare emergencies: Clarify that an emergency can be declared by the County, by the State, or by the Board (e.g., a local hazard tree removal emergency caused by a small fire or insect outbreak). John moved to table this item until next month’s meeting and noted on p 4, paragraph 4, the term “executive director” (which BCRCO does not use) would be changed to “district manager” (or “board chair” if Board so directs). Allen seconded motion to table; motion passed unanimously.
- e) Wildlife Conservation Board, Butte Creek House Meadow Restoration Planning Grant (2021022) Agreement -Thad Walker Total of about \$196,000 for meadow restoration

planning (project design, NEPA and CEQA, THP/stream permit). Area has burned in Dixie, so tactics will need to be changed but project overall is still needed. A lot of fencing has burned and needs to be replaced too. Project will create expanded meadow, augmenting storage capacity with PALs and BDAs, ultimately resulting in bigger pools (although existing trout may need to be relocated during construction).

John noted BCRCO will be the holder of the 1600/404 permit, which gives BCRCO special responsibility to oversee contractors. BCRCO has experience assuming this type of liability (e.g. on Dixie Rd, where we hold similar permits) and can transfer some of that liability to contractors through the terms of contracts we write, but no project is without some liability to the permitholder. John moved, Allen seconded to approve the grant agreement. Motion passed unanimously.

- f) Agreement with Forest Creek Restoration for technical assistance with the completion of Butte Creek House Meadow Restoration Planning Grant- Thad Walker This is for the project in item (e) and would supply \$ of the WCB grant to a contractor we've worked with before, with a long track record of similar projects. John moved, Colleen seconded, to approve the agreement as soon as WCB signs (e).
- g) Agreement for services of an independent contractor with Deer Creek Resources -Wolfy Rouble – Wolfy asked to make 2 changes: adjust one phone number and reduce overall amount of budget from \$18,900 to \$15,900 (at Zeke Lunder's request and to allow the other \$3,000 to be directed to a different meteorologist who will provide fire weather education services to PBA members/Butte County residents in fall-winter 2021-22). With those changes, Colleen moved to approve the agreement, Allen seconded, motion passed unanimously.
- h) Comments Requested on LAFCo File No. 21-06, Formation of Tuscan Water District- Thad Walker. BCRCO has been asked to provide comments on the formation of this district and asked do we want to be the special district that takes on administration of the Tuscan Water District? Thad remarked this would be considerably outside of BCRCO's existing expertise and capacity. Colleen moved to send a letter to LAFCo saying we're not interested in playing this role, although of course we may be interested in collaboration with TWD partners down the road. John seconded, motion passed unanimously.
- i) MOU with Sierra Nevada Alliance for 2 SNAP 2021-22 members - Wolfy Rouble Applications to the SNAP program have been very light – a big contrast from last year – and no SNAP member who would help us accomplish our goals has been identified yet. However, applications continue to come in every few days. John moved to approve the MOU but not commit to taking on a Member unless one is identified who would be an excellent fit. Colleen seconded, motion passed unanimously. Staff was directed to consider looking into alternative “Corps” programs like Grizzly Corps, Civic Spark. We are already exploring Sierra Corps.
- j) Letter of commitment/support for RAC Grant Cycle 7 - Wolfy Rouble – John moved to approve the letter, Allen seconded; motion passed unanimously.
- k) Advance request for SNC-1312 - Wolfy Rouble – John moved, Colleen seconded, motion passed unanimously. We will need to set up a dedicated account for this 30% advance when it arrives.
- l) Gail Compton NOE for My Sierra Woods - fuels reduction project- Thad Walker – Opportunity for BCRCO to serve as lead agency using state funds on private lands to remove 5 ac of beetle kill.
- m) Next Board of Directors Meeting Thursday, October 21st at 9:00 AM, Location:

7. RCD PROJECTS AND PROGRAMS

a) Staff Updates – Dixie is back on track regarding production schedule, but still a little behind (due to Dixie Fire) with regard to expected start of rainy season. 20 culverts and grading still to go. Forest Health Handbook is finished and being distributed – Wolfy will present on that and Butte Forests Plan at Sept 27 FAC meeting. EFRP continues and we have an agreement extension. We put in a CalRecycle application for Schandoney (30 yds waste cleanup, some gates, post-and-cable fencing) and haven't been approached by any new landowners since then. Lower Wyandotte Rd cleanup went well and is getting compliments. The Brayton Slough walnut orchard removal project is a success, the native trees are growing well, and River Partners is switching to maintenance mode. Butte Fall 2021 Cal-TREX is fully registered and Kimberly and Wolfy are attending planning meetings at least weekly (usually more). A tree giveaway is planned for Nov 6-7, funded by State Farm, Arbor Day Foundation, and American Forests Foundation; That will be the day-of implementer. Cottonwood Easement: A few days ago, CalTrans asked us if we would be open to taking on the invasive weed reduction responsibility on Cottonwood, taking it off the shoulders of the landowner. To do so, RCD would need to tell them what increase in our endowment it would take to perform (or contract out) that maintenance as well as the monitoring to prove we are keeping weeds below 2008 levels. No contractor has been able to give us an estimate in the short time window CalTrans provided, nor are we confident of reaching the landowner in the next 30 hours, so staff was directed to tell CalTrans the BOD was unable to make this decision by the end of the week and needs more time.

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

a) Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) – Dan Taverner – Thanks to RCD and the agreement with AFF, NRCS brought 6 contracts worth \$196,000 into Butte County. Total for this year for Butte County is \$2.9M of conservation work, from Valley floor through the foothills to the mountains. More staffing is expected (new engineer, Marisol Soreno, started this week, and a new biologist and forester are to follow, plus a soil conservationist to replace one who just left). State Conservationist Carlos Suarez has stated that EQIP funding is about to increase 10-fold, nationwide, so NRCS will need to utilize every bit of capacity offered by RCD partnerships. Additionally, latest Farm Bill Assistant has departed which creates a bottleneck.

b) Butte County departments- Kelly Peterson, Butte County Dept of Water and Resource Conservation, reports that 3 draft Groundwater Sub-Basin plans have been published. Upcoming public workshops are scheduled to address these draft plans and the drought, starting on Monday evening 9/20 at 5 pm in the City of **Biggs** (and remotely) for the draft plan whose comment period ends 10/20. **Wyandotte Cr sub-basin:** hybrid public workshop on Oct. 20th for a public comment period closing 10/24; **Vina GSP** public comment ends Oct. 19th and public in-person-only workshop is Oct 4th at 6 pm at Chico Masonic Hall.

Drought-related resources such as finding a well contractor or a licensed water hauler are available on the Department's web page (click the "drought" button") which has a Private Well Owner page and furnishes water monitoring data to the public. Emergency water filling program is almost ready to roll out.

Colleen asked for Kelly's thoughts on the Tuscan Water District. Kelly stated both Butte County and the Vina GSA have been asked to comment on the formation of the district. The Vina GSA decided not to comment. The Butte County response was heard by the Water Commissioners at their last meeting, who sent comment (supporting the formation of the TWD) forward to the BOS. BOS will discuss it at an upcoming meeting soon. Kelly will share the packet with that information with the Board through District Manager. The Board thanked Kelly.

c) Community groups and agencies

9. CLOSED SESSION – Directors only

- a) Personnel- Board approved employment offers for Forester and Project Coordinator, Colleen moved, Allan seconded, motion passed unanimously.

10. BOARD OF DIRECTORS REPORTS

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

11. ADJOURNMENT at 11:09 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.*

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