



*"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 \* bcrcd@carcd.org

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

### **Minutes**

**Date: Thursday, June 15th, 2023**

**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
- 2. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS** – Chair Dave Lee, Vice Chair Allen Harthorn, Director John Christofferson, District Manager Thad Walker, staff Cameron Musser and Wolfy Rougle. Guest Jeff Carter, attorney by profession and resident of Chico who's interested in what the RCD does.
- 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))
- 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 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.*

## 5. CONSENT AGENDA:

- a) Review and approval of the minutes of the BOD meeting held on 5/18/2023. John moved, Allen seconded to approve the consent agenda; motion carried unanimously.

## 6. ACTION ITEMS – Dave Lee, President

- a) **Review and approval of Financials/ Accounts Payable- Thad Walker** – Board reviewed the May report and June interim report and had no questions. Allen moved to accept the financial reports, John seconded; motion carried unanimously.
- b) **Review of 2023/ 2024 Draft Budget (informational item) – Thad Walker** – Board viewed a draft budget that reflects the cost of acquiring an RCD truck and hiring a full time District manager. It reflects only grants and contracts we currently have, and shows an annual gross income of approximately 4.7 million dollars and a net income of \$235,000. John asked can we add an estimate of how much n new grants/contracts we expect to take on during the coming fiscal year? Dave asked how did the budget-to-actual work out for the 22-23 budget: are project income and expenses tracking the way we anticipated? Thad replied some projects are, other projects are delayed for various reasons (reducing the RCD’s income but also reducing our expenses); meanwhile, other unexpected projects came on line because entities approach us all the time with contract work. The 22-23 budget projected \$157,767 in net income for the year, but our actual net income was \$245,302.
- c) **LAFCO Election for Regular Enterprise Member -Thad Walker** – Since the board continued to receive no information about any of the candidates, either from LAFCO or from direct outreach to the candidates, board considered continuing to choose not to vote in this election. However, this has gone on for months and John noted that when LAFCO can’t fill its board seats, it cannot reach a quorum; when they cannot accomplish their business, progress in the county is stalled because LAFCO oversees development. John moved to vote for Bruce Wristen. Allen seconded; motion carried unanimously.
- d) **Letter of support for Butte County Farm Bureau along with the Agriculture Groundwater Users of Butte County for the California Department of Food and Ag State Water Efficiency and Enhancement Program Block Grant -Thad Walker -** Although BCRCDC will not apply for this grant, RCD of Tehama County will apply and so will Butte County Farm Bureau, of which we are a member. (RCDTC’s grant would offer assistance to Butte County farmers as well as in several other counties; BCRCDC would assist with outreach but all technical assistance dollars would stay with RCDTC.) BCFB’s application would be Butte-County specific. John moved to have Dave sign the letter. Allen seconded; motion passed unanimously. BCRCDC wishes both applicants luck. Thad noted there is \$40 million in this grant cycle but an additional \$60 million allocation is expected to be available (whether as bloc grant model or not remains to be seen).
- e) **CEQA Mitigated Negative Declaration for Concow Pyrodiversity Project - Wolfy Rougle** – 30 day comment period ended June 5 and the finished draft has received careful review by CAL FIRE BTU, Konkow Valley Band of Maidu, Central Valley Water Board, and CDFW; their comments have been incorporated into this final draft. Allen moved to have BCRCDC sign the MND document and adopt the MMRP (Appendix A) attached to it, John seconded; motion carried unanimously.
- f) **CEQA Notice of Exemption for Butte Creek House Meadow Restoration utilizing CDFW Statutory Exemption for Restoration Projects (SERP)-Thad Walker** – We’ve been engaged in surveys and planning on this project for the last 2 years. At CDFW’s suggestion, we utilized the new “cutting the green tape” CEQA pathway known as SERP. SERP is a new exemption California is experimenting with; it currently is available to lead agencies until Jan 1, 2025 unless it is extended between now and then. While utilizing a novel permitting pathway always seems to carry a little delay and unexpected challenges, and that’s been the case at times with this project, the hurdles were not too major. John moved to approve the NOE, Allen seconded; motion carried unanimously.

- g) **Amendment No 1 to Grant Agreement WC-2137AD, Wildlife Conservation Board, Butte Creek House Meadow Restoration Planning -Thad Walker** – Item f was one deliverable of this grant, and most other deliverables are also finished or close, however more time is needed to prepare the hydrological engineering memo. Therefore, a 6-month extension is sought. The amendment cover letter does need one typo fixed (the grant start date is listed as Sept 21, 2023). With that change, John moved to sign the amendment; Allen seconded; motion carried unanimously.
- h) Next Board of Directors Meeting Thursday, **July 20, 2023**, at 9:00 AM, Location: Klamath Conference Room 202 Mira Loma Drive, Oroville, CA

## 7. RCD PROJECTS AND PROGRAMS -STAFF REPORTS

- a) **Project Updates – Thad** announced that our Sierra Meadows Partnership grant for Crain Meadow restoration planning for about \$197,000 has been awarded. Board Allen asked for a map. Upper Butte Creek project: **Wolfy** reported that a late-breaking need for a contractor/consultant to write a fisheries report (BE/BA) for this project. Wolfy asked Allen for help circulating the RFP so we can get it in front of as many qualified eyes as possible!
- b) **SFLAP (Small Forest Landowners Assistance Program) Presentation - Cameron Musser** – With NRCS’ EQIP funding source so rarely being awarded to forestry projects at all, and almost never to small landowners, SFLAP is BCRCDC’s move to fill the need for assistance for small forest landowners. Through this program, which functions as a pilot project for other RCDs to potentially emulate across California, BCRCDC:
  1. solicits applications from needy landowners,
  2. ranks the applications according to a transparent process,
  3. visits each landowner and maps their specific treatment need (whether that’s hazard tree removal, mastication, reforestation, whatever)
  4. gives each landowner lots of education and a comprehensive guide to Butte County local programs landowners and their neighbors can access
  5. creates a forest management plan for each landowner (at a level of complexity appropriate for that landowner – it’s not one-size-fits-all),
  6. completes surveys and CEQA compliance including cooperation with the local Tribe(s)
  7. batches landowners together in neighborhoods so the work can be economical for contractors
  8. selects, hires, oversees and pays the contractor who can do the appropriate work.

John asked, what is asked in return from people who receive this help? Cameron stated that when they fill out the SFLAP application, landowners must describe their maintenance plan, and she scores them on its thoughtfulness/feasibility. CAL FIRE unit forester Dave Derby has been very helpful and supportive with the program, as has the Fire Safe Council. We can all see there is plenty of work to do out there!

- c) **Strategic Planning Process Overview -Thad Walker** – Board chose to mostly defer this discussion until next month when more Board members will be present. John observed that our strategy is by necessity guided by which grants are available in a given year/administration and which grants we actually get.

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

- a) Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS)
- b) Butte County departments
- c) Community groups and agencies

## 9. BOARD OF DIRECTORS REPORTS

a) **Butte County RCD Directors and Associate Directors are welcome to report.** Allen mentioned he wished Samantha were here because he heard the Vina grant was awarded for \$5.4 million and he'd love to hear more about it. Allen also reported on the outcome of a radiotagging experiment where a bunch of salmon were found in a duck club. Radiotagging the fish allowed researchers to follow which paths the fish take through the maze of channels; this allows humans to understand which paths are most important and where the barriers/pitfalls are for the fish. At least some of the fish are making it to the Benecia bridge! With duck club cooperation, FOBC is being funded to utilize this data and LiDAR to create a plan for how to best restore migration pathways through the Sutter bypass.

## 10. CLOSED SESSION

Employee Performance Review of staff and approved wage increase.

## 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: [bcrd@carcd.org](mailto: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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