

*Colusa County*  
RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

---

August 21, 2018  
CCRCD Meeting Minutes

**DIRECTORS PRESENT:** Ben Felt, Beth Nall, Jay Dee Garr, Tom Hickok and Kim Gallagher

**DIRECTORS ABSENT:** Bob Alvernaz, Gil Ramos

**ASSOCIATE DIRECTORS PRESENT:** Amy Gibbons, Jim LaGrande

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Patti Turner-CCRCD Executive Director, John Loudon-Colusa County Board of Supervisors, Liz Harper-CCRCD, Emily Harmon-CCRCD, Alyssa Lindman-ED Sutter Buttes Regional Land Trust, Pelayo Alvarez-Carbon Cycle Institute

Ben Felt, CCRCD President called the meeting to order at 5:05 pm at the Colusa Industrial Park Conference Room

**PUBLIC/PARTNERS COMMUNICATIONS:**

John Loudon reported the Sites Reservoir planning is moving into Phase II. The amount of state funding was reduced substantially from the requested amount, so it is still unknown what the impact will be on the price per acre foot.

Harmon gave a report on activities of the Colusa Field Office. She stated the NRCS staff has been busy working on obligation deadlines and Colusa County will be getting additional funding to support local projects.

Lindman stated her board supported the Trust's participation in Colusa County Grown. They feel it is a mechanism to become more connected to Colusa County agriculture.

Pelayo Alvarez from the Carbon Cycle Institute (CCI) gave a presentation about what the institute does and the importance of putting carbon in to the soil. He explained that the common conservation practices that farmers have been doing, such as hedgerows, mulching, and cover crops are great ways to recapture carbon. He also told the board about the Marin Carbon Project where ½ inch per acre of compost was applied to grazing lands resulting in a 40-70% increase in foliage and a 25% increase in water retention. The Institute is currently working with 32 RCDs statewide and feels RCDs are perfect to work with the state on carbon sequester projects. He encouraged the CCRCD to become more involved in carbon farming by working with the County to develop a locally led Carbon Action Plan and for the RCD to become capable of creating Carbon Farm Plans for producers. Staff acknowledged their interest in carbon farming and hoped to work with the CCI more closely in the future.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

The approval of the July 17, 2018 minutes was tabled until the September meeting to give Turner the opportunity to review and correct some errors as identified by Nall.

## **FINANCIAL REPORT:**

The Directors received a balance sheet for the period of July 17-August 20, 2018. The CCRCD's fund balances were as follows: checking account \$1,418.98; petty cash account \$76.24; CCRCD General Fund (03200) \$47,023.84; sales tax (03201) \$0; CCRCD Misc. Projects (032025) \$7,392.84; DOC Fund (032027) has a balance of \$6,820.72 and Clearing Account fund (032001) \$0.

The Board was presented with nine (9) claims to be paid in July. Emily Harmon in the amount of \$28.34 and Liz Harper in the amount of \$52.10 mileage to attend a workshop in Orland; Farm Bureau dues in the amount of \$122; Adventist Health in the amount of \$388 for two new employee physicals; Ben Felt for \$37.71 for the use of his Verizon Hot Spot for Harmon to work online while waiting for computer access; Petty cash in the amount of \$23.76, SiteHatchery payment of \$875. for progress on new website; CARCD Sacramento Valley Region annual dues in the amount of \$100, and Sutter RCD for assistance with the 2017 HSP workshop in Sutter County in the amount of \$568.69. A motion was made by Nall and seconded by Hickok to approve the financial report and nine claims as submitted. The motion passed with 4 ayes (Hickok, Gallagher, Nall, Garr) 0 noes, 2 absent (Ramos, Alvernaz) and one abstaining due to conflict with his personal claim (Felt).

## **CCRCD DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEMS:**

Harper reported on the new application she submitted seeking funding for Technical Assistance to landowners for the California Department of Food and Agriculture SWEEP and HSP. The program will reopen in November. She also stated there will be a listening session on August 30<sup>th</sup> in Oroville to garner landowner input for possible modification to simplify the application process. Harper also reported the NRCS has funding for assistance in reaching underserved producers. Staff has discussed applying for funding to reach women in agriculture which is one of the groups targeted by the NRCS. She stated the Ca Association of Resource Conservation District will apply for all the funding and award sub-contracts to interested RCDs throughout the state.

Turner reported the new NRCS Cooperative Agreement has been completed and submitted to the State NRCS office for review. Since the last meeting the NRCS raised the amount of the contract to \$180,000 and Glenn County RCD requested that Colusa County hire the employee under the agreement to work as needed in Glenn County. Turner stated she signed all the documents to expedite the process to the state level for a possible start date of October 1 and ending July 31, 2021.

Turner, Harper and John Loudon reported the Board of Supervisors are forming an Ad-Hoc committee to possibly modify how Williamson Act contracts are treated in Colusa County. The county has been losing a large amount of property tax revenue since the State stopped their subvention payments in 2010. The committee will look at AB1265 which provides participant landowners with the choice to either increase their property tax by approximately 30% on contracted parcels or opt out of the program entirely over a ten-year period. This method will allow the County to recapture about 10% of the lost subvention funding.

Turner explained the draft 2016/2017 CCRCD Cost Allocation Plan (CAP) she included in the board packets for review. She stated the plan needs to be approved by an agency's cognizant federal agency that provides the most funding for project. Currently the NRCS is the CCRCD's cognizant agency which Turner has asked to approve our plan. Turner also stated the CAP will be recalculated once the 2017/2018 audit is complete. This will give her the opportunity to teach Liz how to determine a CAP in the future. Turner stated the CCRCD's rate is currently very high because the district does not have a lot of direct hours that can be allocated to specific projects. The "in-direct" expenses the CCRCD has related to keeping the doors open

are generally the same no matter how many projects there are to split them up between. A motion was made by Gallagher and seconded by Nall to approve the draft CAP as submitted by Turner. The motion passed with 5 Ayes, 0 Noes and 2 Absent (Ramos, Alvernaz).

Turner and Harper explained the proposal they are writing to facilitate the development of a Community Wildfire Protection Plan for western Colusa County. The proposal will be submitted to the Fire Safe Council by the August 30th due date. The grant requires a 50% match which will contingently be provided by Colusa County Title III funding once the formal award process is complete. The County's CAO will provide a letter of commitment subject to the completion of the Board of Supervisor's approval and public review process.

Turner opened the conversation for input from the Directors on what the Board Succession Planning document should look like. The board stated they approved the concept that the board should continue to be made up of individuals representing a cross section of expertise, interest, experience, age, race and geographic residency throughout the county. Staff was instructed to draft a plan to bring to the board for review and input. It was felt that Nall and Harper could also pick up some valuable information at the upcoming Director Bootcamp they will attend in early September.

The board discussed Harper being appointed to the Board of Directors for the Colusa County Grown program. A motion was made by Gallagher and seconded by Garr to approve Harper as a Director of CCG. The motion passed with 5 Ayes, 0 Noes and 2 Absent (Ramos, Alvernaz). It was mentioned that Gibbons will be going off the board at the end of December and Bright expressed her desire to not have another term as president of CCG.

#### **CCRC D REPORTS:**

Turner, Harmon and Harper provided a written and verbal summary of the activities associated with the CCRC D projects during the past month. They reviewed the tasks not previously discussed during the meeting.

- **Department of Conservation Capacity Building Funding:** Grant manager approved modifications recommended by Turner concerning Scope of Work, quarterly invoicing and reporting was submitted as required. Staff is working with SiteHatchery on new website. Received photographs from Denise Carter for website. Harper will attend Director Bootcamp with Nall.
- **NRCS Cooperative Agreement:** Staff attended the Soil Health Workshop in Orland. Staff is scheduling landowners for project contact reviews and signatures, training with NRCS on soil survey and testing. Harmon has received Homeland Security clearance and completed the initial cultural resources and conservation planning training courses. Harper is helping organize the office and assist with projects.
- **HSP Technical Assistance Program:** Received replacement check from CA Dept of Food and AG on 8/1/2018 for September 2017 invoice.

Harper reported that she reviewed the contact with SiteHatchery to identify what still is left to be done. The three remaining deliverables from site hatchery are: 5 hours editing content, training/communication, and website launch and test. The website will go live by September 18<sup>th</sup>. Harper is working on developing more content. In addition, there will be a few on-going website maintenance requirements for the CCRC D staff which includes: Uploading images, minutes, agendas, media, news, and project information. Harper

also created an account for a newsletter application called "Mail Chimp" which website visitors will be able sign up to receive by entering their email address. PayPal still needs to be connected to the website for donations.

Turner stated that assisting The Nature Conservatory with their wildlife groundwater recharge project is back in their court. She knows that Colusa County Groundwater Commission was considering writing a letter of support to the Department of Water Resources requested that the Arbuckle area of the county be included in the project.

Turner inquired if any directors were interested in attending the CARCD Conference in San Diego this year. She advised the group she applied and received \$1000 towards conference expenses from the Golden State Risk Management Authority. She also stated she would only be attending the free day of training on Wednesday only due to her pending retirement and will furnish her own flight home. Harper will attend the entire event and Harmon depending on the wishes of NRCS.

The impact on Colusa County resources from the Ranch Fire were discussed. The CCRCDC Director Tom Hickok had his property damaged but his cabin was saved. Other landowners along Goat Mountain Road also had property destroyed by what is now called the largest wildfire in California history. A large portion of the district was impacted by the fire both private and public lands.

To assist Community Alliance of Family Farmers with their Cover Crop Project Harper met with a few landowners to go over the project. One is very interested but had questions regarding the cost to the producer. Kim Gallagher was able to share about the project CAFF implemented last year. It was a soil health project in gravel clay loam which the seed mix includes radishes and other vegetation that incorporated high amounts of subsurface biomass. CAFF provided the seeder (a rental that was paid by CAFF) and is supplying seed again this coming winter for reseeding. Overall, the project stays true to its title as being a "trial". Harper will pass along this information to interested party via personal contact and an article in the Pioneer Review. CAFF wants to order the seed by the end of the month so there is limited time for outreach. Note: RCD involvement with this project is only to connect CAFF with producers.

Turner announced the CARCD Sacramento Region Fall Meeting and Regional Speak-Off Contest will be held on October 10<sup>th</sup> the location is not confirmed yet. She also stated our local contest will be held on October 3<sup>rd</sup>.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** None

**ADJOURNMENT:**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:14 pm by President Ben Felt. The next regular monthly meeting will be held at 5:00 on Tuesday, September 18, 2018 at the CIP Conference Room.

Respectfully Submitted,

Patti Turner-Secretary/Treasurer-Colusa Co. RCD