



*"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 19, 2024**

**Time: 9:00 AM**

**Location: 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, Directors Allen Harthorn and Andrew Sohnrey, Treasurer Colleen Hatfield, District Manager Thad Walker; Staff Wolfy Rougle, Ben Converse, Faith Churchill, Dallas Koller; Grizzly Corps Fellow Sam Martinich. Guests: CSDA Chief Finance and Operations Manager Rick Woode, Kamie Loeser of Butte County Dept of Water and Resource Conservation, Dillon Raney (she/her) of Vina GSA.

**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, just that item g was removed because this environmental compliance route is no longer needed, as BOD was notified over email earlier this week.*

**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 BCRC D 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 Regular Meeting held on 8/15/2024 – Consent

agenda passed 3-0-1 with Dave abstaining as he had not had a chance to read the minutes of the August meeting.

## 6. ACTION ITEMS – Dave Lee, President

- a) Review and approval of Financials/ Accounts Payable and Operating Reserves Contribution- Colleen Hatfield – A reminder that for those projects that have an advance, we often pay contractors ASAP even before invoicing the funder, resulting in our bank account sometimes containing less money than QuickBooks “says it should”. We invoice most funders quarterly so these discrepancies also resolve quarterly (the most payments are received in November, February, May, August). Allen moved to accept the financials; Andy seconded; **motion passed unanimously.**

Cash reserves funding target is \$158,000 per year, or \$40,000 per quarter. Since cash reserves can always be transferred back into operations account at any time with no fee or delay, Colleen suggested we move \$40,000 into cash reserves for the next quarter. Allen so moved, Andy seconded; **motion passed unanimously.**

Auditor for 23-24 has started work!

Mechanics Bank – has experienced a lot of attrition, we are experiencing delays, Colleen is exploring (researching) other banking options that might be a good fit and will likely bring a recommendation or range of options before the board at a future meeting.

- b) Opening a California Liquid Assets Securities System (CLASS) account for cash reserves Presentation by Rick Wood, Chief Finance and Operations Officer, CSDA -Colleen Hatfield – Cal CLASS is a way for special districts to hold funds and earn competitive interest rates. The flyer that is in the board packet describes the majority of what this local government investment pool (operated via a JPA built for this purpose) is all about. There are 2 funds: The Prime Fund and the Enhanced Cash Fund. Prime Fund has daily liquidity; Enhanced Cash Fund just has overnight liquidity. For both, interest is paid monthly & compounds daily (was 5.4% as of 9/17, but will decline over the next 60 days to closer to 4.9%, due to recent Fed interest rate reduction). Statements are available by 10 am on 1st business day of each new month. Money is only invested in things California local governments are allowed to invest in. That said, it is an investment fund, not FDIC-insured. (Fun fact: CA Government code section 53652 requires all banking environments to collateralize all *public* money by 105%, whether the account is FDIC-insured or not.) No fees. Several RCDs and CARD, PRPD, Town of Paradise, etc already use CalCLASS and she recommends we invest, for now, just our cash reserves money in this fund. Colleen moved that BCRC establish a CalCLASS account for our Cash Reserves fund; Allen seconded; **motion passed unanimously.**

- c) Presentation by Kamie Loeser, Butte County Water and Resource Conservation (Information Only) – The Dept is working on updating their (currently 20-year-old) Drought Resilience Plan. Planning a daylong workshop to cross-educate stakeholders about all the projects in Butte Creek, which is a linchpin in regional groundwater sustainability. Another example of current Dept project: Palermo Drainage study to optimize flood protection, recharge, and drought mitigation in the Palermo area (through the Wyandotte Creek GSA).

GSA's update: Now that the Vina and Wyandotte Creek GSA's have their own funding, Dillon Raney has been hired as the new GSA's Program Manager. GSA's are the stewards of the groundwater resource. Dillon shared a rundown of the projects Wyandotte Creek and Vina GSA's are implementing to fulfill their GSP. Each GSA received about \$5.5M in funding (needs to be expended by Feb 2026!). Wyandotte Creek will use that funding to update its GSP and implement the Regional Conjunctive Use project to reduce the area's reliance on groundwater by utilizing more Feather R surface water and also installing precision irrigation. Same tactics are also being used in Thermalito area. Vina GSA is using its funding directly to implement the following strategies: demand-reduction (through precision

irrigation, fallowing and education); data improvement; analyzing the feasibility of using Lindo Channel for groundwater recharge; studying a sustainable long-term fee structure. Meanwhile, additional strategies that are being implemented by Butte County on Vina GSA's behalf include: inter-basin modelling, groundwater recharge feasibility study; outreach. Kamie's Dept is collaborating with The Nature Conservancy (funded by DWR) to continue to study interrelationship between GDEs (Groundwater Dependent Ecosystems) and ISW (i.e., Interconnected Surface Waters that are connected to groundwater). Ecosystems vary in how groundwater-dependent they are, from not at all (vernal pools) to completely (springfed seep communities).

- d) Review of Changes to BCRC D Policies and Procedures Section II updates -David Lee – Dave asked Directors to go back and look at the version he sent out that contains everyone's input (There is mostly agreement but some areas where things still need to be worked out). Once everyone works through the comments, Dave can present a final version at the October meeting. If Board of Supervisors does not appoint a Director to a vacant RCD seat within 60 days, Division 9 allows the RCD's Board to appoint one. This provision needs to be added to our P&Ps.

On that note, Dave stated Directors and Staff should be on the lookout for viable, interested prospective Board members (preferably from Todd Kimmelshue's district because while Supervisors can appoint out-of-district Directors as long as they hold a letter of delegation from an in-District landowner, we are not yet 100% sure the BCRC D board can appoint out-of-district Directors in the same situation). Please invite prospective Board members to attend the next BOD meeting (Oct.17) by which time it will have been 60 days.

- e) Agreement with Vina Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) for Process-Based Restoration (PBRs) in the Park-Wolfy Rouble – This agreement would provide \$24,999 to support installation of process-based restoration structures in parts of the severely burned Big Chico Creek Canyon, on those sites where the erosion control structures would yield the cobenefit of improved groundwater recharge. Andy moved to accept the agreement; Colleen seconded; **motion passed unanimously.**
- f) Agreement with Chico State Enterprises for Funding to support Park Fire Watershed Recovery, Process Based Restoration (PBRs) in the Park -Thad Walker – On top of the original \$40,000 agreement with CSE, the above \$24,999 from Vina GSA, and a \$50,000 donation from Sierra Nevada Brewery, this agreement would transfer another \$100,000 of CSE's money to RCD so we can help administer/implement the PBRs in the Park project. This would bring the total budget that RCD is administering (for this particular highly scalable project) to just over \$200,000. Colleen moved to enter into the agreement; Allen seconded; **motion passed unanimously.**
- ~~g) Request to direct Chair to adopt PEIR including its Findings, MMRP, Statement of Overriding Considerations, etc., and submit CEQA documentation and Notice of Determination to Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (CVRWQCB), State Restoration General Order (SRGO process) – Removed, no longer needed~~
- h) Agreement with Northern California Regional Land Trust for Deer Creek planning under RFFCP-1710- Wolfy Rouble- Would set aside \$114,000 (as specified in the grant agreement with SNC) for NCRLT to complete a management plan for their 600-acre Deer Creek property. Colleen moved to enter into the agreement; Allen seconded; **motion passed unanimously.**
- i) Agreement with Point Blue Conservation Science for Biological support on Butte Creek House -Faith Churchill – Would fund our longtime collaborator Carrie Wendt to come out and conduct the immediate pre-implementation clearance surveys, plus contractor education, for Butte Creek House project. Implementation is about to start (we scheduled it for late fall because that is the season of lowest water flow). Allen moved to enter into the agreement; Andy seconded; **motion passed unanimously.**
- j) Agreement with Zeke Lunder, Deer Creek Resources for support at 2024 TREX event -Dallas Koller – Similar to agreements in past years, this would support DCR's involvement in TREX

participant education, mentoring, unit mapping, and potentially videography/outreach/PR. Allen moved to enter into the agreement; Andy seconded; **motion passed unanimously.**

- k) Approval of Sierra Nevada Conservancy-1312 extension- Wolfy Rougle – Would formally extend the deadline for this mostly-finished grant from end of 2024 to end of 2027. Gives us and the Tribe an additional 3 seasons to plant native plants, which will be beneficial for long-term establishment and survival. Colleen moved to enter into the agreement; Andy seconded; **motion passed unanimously.**
- l) Agreement and Change Order with Iron Ridge Enterprises for Feather Small Forest Landowner Assistance Program (SFLAP) implementation in Feather Falls- Ben Converse – Only qualified bid we received was slightly higher than our budget, so Ben worked with the contractor to reduce the bid (which is what the change order is for). Andy moved to enter into the agreement and sign the change order; Allen seconded; **motion passed unanimously.**
- m) Agreement with Fall River Resource Conservation District for the development of a Prescribed Burn Plan -Dallas Koller – Dallas will spend a week on the ground in this Fall River watershed in late October to develop a burn plan for the 2,000-acre beneficial fire project. Plan will be usable by CAL FIRE and will be finished by March. Allen moved to accept the agreement; Andy seconded; **motion passed unanimously.**
- n) Agreement with Rolls, Anderson & Rolls Engineering for USDA NRCS Engineering Technical Assistance - Thad Walker – Would fund a RA&R engineer to review NRCS-generated plans, complete irrigation designs and inspections, etc. RA&R would be paid through BCRCD's agreement with NRCS. This agreement could be supplemented with an additional \$26,250 if necessary. Colleen moved to accept the agreement; Andy seconded; **motion passed unanimously.**
- o) Grant award from Butte County Air Quality Management District -Community Air Protection - Dallas Koller - \$10,000 grant would allow us to purchase a water buffalo to support holding operations on community burns. This would allow us to stop borrowing a water buffalo! Dallas praised PBA Coordinator David Mitchell for taking the initiative, applying for the grant and getting it. Colleen reminded staff to get insurance on the equipment as soon as we purchase it. Andy moved to accept the agreement; Allen seconded; **motion passed unanimously.**
- p) Purchase of vehicle, light duty truck, to support BCRCD field operations- Thad Walker – We are looking at a 4-door Ford Ranger with a WET of 6,000 pounds, which would be able to tow the water buffalo. \$43,000 requested to cover this purchase. BCRCD has adequate unrestricted funds to cover the purchase as well as the resulting increased insurance/maintenance. Colleen moved to approve the purchase; Allen seconded; **motion passed unanimously.**
- q) 2024 Butte County High School Speak Off Contest -Budget and Director support- Thad Walker – This went really well last year and Butte County sent a great speaker to the Sac Valley Regional speak-off. This year's topic is, "What is the role of agriculture in meeting California's climate goals?" Thad asked if a Board member was able to step up and do the outreach (e.g. to FFA, high schools, etc) for this event, which will occur mid-late October this year. Thad and Sam will make the poster/flyer; forms etc are already set up in Google Drive and can be recycled. Andy volunteered to do the outreach, Colleen stated he should call on her fr backup if he needs it. Thad also asked BCRCD authorize \$200 for first place, \$150 for second place, \$100 for third. Colleen moved to go forward with the speak-off and approve these award amounts; Allen seconded; **motion passed unanimously.**
- r) Next Board of Directors Meeting Thursday, October 17, 2024 at 9:00 AM, Location: Klamath Conference Room 202 Mira Loma Drive, Oroville, CA. Many directors expressed that is a travel week for them. If you know you can't be there, please let Thad know ASAP. The meeting can be pushed to 10/24 if needed.

## 7. RCD PROJECTS AND PROGRAMS -STAFF REPORTS

a) Project Updates – PBRs in the Park, SFLAP, and Butte Creek House implementation are the big implementation projects this fall; each has already been discussed. We also have TREX coming up (70 registrants for each weekend: Weekend 1 in Cohasset and weekend 2 burning 130 acres of grassland in Butte Valley w Mechoopda Tribe) and burn season 2024-25! Concow and Rx Support SPAs are now fully executed with Plumas National Forest and staff spent Wednesday touring 6 separate proposed burn units BCRC D could assist PNF with, ranging from 6 acres up to 300 each. Meanwhile, in the past month we reviewed/interviewed quite a few business managers and identified 2 we would have offered the position to, but both took other jobs. Dave asked Thad talk to Dan about moving a shipping container to enlarge our shared storage with NRCS.

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

- a) Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) - none
- b) Butte County departments - none
- c) Community groups – Friends of Butte Creek has their Wild and Scenic Film Festival coming up Oct 5 (Saturday night) at ARC Pavilion on Park Ave. Dinner and the movies = \$60

## 9. BOARD OF DIRECTORS REPORTS

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

## 10. 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: [bcrcd@carcd.org](mailto:bcrcd@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*