



MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
February 11, 2022

A regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the Yuba County Resource Conservation District (YCRCD) was held on **February 11, 2022**, commencing at **9:34 A.M.** The meeting was conducted by Zoom Video Conference and Audio Teleconference.

The Yuba County Resource Conservation District supports the orders and directives from the California Department of Public Health and the California Governor’s Office in the effort to minimize the spread of the Coronavirus (COVID-19).

The Brown Act, Government Code section 54953(e), makes provisions for remote teleconferencing participation in meetings by members of a legislative body, without compliance with the requirements of Government Code section 54953(b)(3), subject to the existence of certain conditions.

ROLL CALL

Directors	Present	Absent
Alyssa Lindman (President)	X	
Gary Fildes	X	
Deborah Aseltine Neilson	X	

Others Present:

- Gurveen Dhillon, Sutter County RCD
- William Brendecke, Plumas National Forest
- Pa Yang, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

CHANGES TO AGENDA

Director Lindman made a motion to make two additions to the Discussion Items in the current meeting’s agenda: add a presentation by William Brendecke, Plumas National Forest; and add an item to discuss the review of emails that YCRCD is receiving within its email account. Director Fildes seconded the motion, and the motion was unanimously approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comments were provided.

CONSENT ITEMS

- A. Approval of the minutes of the December 10, 2021 Regular Meeting and January 7, 2022 Special Meeting, as written. Upon motion made by Director Fildes, seconded by

Director Aseltine Neilson, and unanimously carried, the Board approved the minutes as written.

ACTION ITEMS

- B. Adoption of Resolution #22-3: A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE YUBA COUNTY RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT PROCLAIMING A LOCAL EMERGENCY PERSISTS, RE-RATIFYING THE PROCLAMATION OF A STATE OF EMERGENCY BY GOVERNOR NEWSOM'S ORDER DATED MARCH 4, 2020, AND RE-AUTHORIZING REMOTE TELECONFERENCE MEETINGS OF THE LEGISLATIVE BODIES OF YUBA COUNTY RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT FOR THE PERIOD FEBRUARY 11, 2022 – MARCH 13, 2022, PURSUANT TO BROWN ACT PROVISIONS. Upon motion made by Director Lindman, seconded by Director Fildes, and unanimously carried, the Board approved the Resolution #22-3.
- C. Approval of modified banking policy. Upon motion made by Director Aseltine Neilson, seconded by Director Lindman, and unanimously carried, the Board approved the modified banking policy.
- D. Approval of the 2022 Work Plan and Budget. Upon motion made by Director Lindman, seconded by Director Fildes, and unanimously carried, the Board approved the 2022 work plan and budget.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

E1. Partner Reports

Pa Yang - NRCS

Pa Yang provided a report that was included in the Board packet. The EQIP-Cover Crop Initiative is finished, and they are now working on the ranking for the Period 3 All EQIP Ranking Pools applications (water conservation, cover crop, forest, range, and pasture). These applications were due December 10, 2021 and NRCS' deadline for submitting the rankings is February 23, 2022. The deadline for the Period 4 All EQIP Ranking Pools applications is April 1, 2022 and NRCS must evaluate and submit the rankings by May 27, 2022. NRCS encourages applicants to submit their proposals to meet the Period 3 deadline since about 80% of the available All EQIP Ranking Pools' funding is awarded to applicants in this batch while only around 20% is awarded to applications within the Period 4 batch. The Period 5 batch is not applicable to the Yuba-Sutter area since Sage Grouse are not found here. Pa Yang indicated that NRCS is particularly promoting the Period 6 All CSP Classic grants as these are beneficial for small farmers and those already doing conservation management (those already with an irrigation system or a water, forest, or nature management plan) but who want to go beyond what they currently are doing. These are 5-year contract with a minimum payout each year of \$1,500 and a maximum of around \$7,000. The final one is the EQIP - CIC which is a hybrid between the regular EQIP and the CSP. The applicants need to already have existing resources in place, but they plan to improve these through additional

conservation stewardship (e.g. currently doing flooding but want to add a microsystem or doing irrigation water management and want to add a weather station).

Pa Yang does not have the dates yet but there is a new RCCP coming for cover crops within rice lands. In addition, they expect an RCCP for waterbirds with a long-term commitment.

Pa Yang also mentioned that the NRCS forester in Red Bluff is helping to train the Yuba-Sutter NRCS staff on forestry issues and also is waiting for the Yuba-Sutter extension to hire their forester so that the NRCS can work with them on forestry issues as well.

Sutter County RCD

The Sutter RCD Project Manager provided an update on joint Sutter County RCD-YCRCD actions. Sutter County RCD had their final hub event on the 27th of January on cover crops. It was a great success with a larger than expected turnout. There will be another Monarch working group meeting in March. The Sutter RCD is still assisting farmers with the Healthy Soils applications and will continue to assist them until the February deadline. Lastly, the Sutter RCD Project Manager notified the Board that the Cal - Recycle project cleanup will be starting in Yuba County soon after the Sutter County Projects are completed.

E2. Presentation by William Brendecke, Plumas National Forest

Will Brendecke indicated his presentation would focus on three items: an introduction to himself, current RCD partnerships, and a potential partnership opportunity related to some fire resilience work in the Challenge area of the Plumas National Forest (PNF). Will Brendecke is the vegetation program manager for the PNF. He oversees mentoring forest and timber management staff and supports various vegetation projects such as fuel reduction and forest restoration projects. He also oversees special forest products programs such as firewood and Christmas trees. He has been working with the RCDs in the Plumas and Butte counties. The PNF has several agreements with these RCDs ranging into millions of dollars where the RCDs provide a variety of services including facilitation of meetings, liaison activities, and contract development for reforestation, thinning, and goat grazing. Some work is related to fire resilience and cleanup efforts near Concow.

Will Brendecke then described a potential partnership opportunity to pursue a fire resilience project in the Challenge area. There are multiple parcels of forest land in the Challenge area that are overgrown and need brush removal. The PNF was working on a grant application to the Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC), but this effort was put aside due to last year's active fire season. This work would also fall under a CCI-CalFire grant (California Climate Investments Urban & Community Forestry Grant Program), but that deadline has just passed. Will Brendecke noted the small capacity of the YCRCD but indicated it would be an opportunity for the YCRCD to become involved in a fire resilience project. He also noted that the material developed for the SNC grant would be available to the YCRCD if there was interest in pursuing this opportunity.

The Board members expressed their interest in this work. While such work would be difficult given the current capacity of the YCRCD, board members noted that it would be

useful to continue discussing this opportunity. Director Fildes will contact Will Brendecke to continue this discussion on this potential partnership.

F. Financial Report

The total balance in the YCRCD accounts is \$13,622.04. This is an increase of \$233.53 due to the refund from QuickBooks after we downgraded to the 3-person option.

G. Audit Update

Director Lindman is working with Larry Bain and will meet with him on March 3rd to go over the information we provided. Director Lindman sent Director Fildes and the YCRCD bookkeeper, Dewaina Edens, a questionnaire regarding the tracking of financial transactions that Director Lindman can reference in her discussions with Mr. Bain.

H. Insurance Coverage for YCRCD office furniture, computer, and related items

As part of the YCRCD agreement with the Yuba Water Protection and Fire Safe Council (YWPFSC) in regard to sharing space at the County office complex, the YCRCD agreed to carry insurance coverage for the YCRCD computer equipment and office furniture. Director Aseltine Neilson shared what she learned from her email correspondence with Brian Edinger at Golden State Risk Management Authority (GSRMA). Since our policy is already in place for this year, the GSRMA would just cover the office computer equipment and furniture for the remaining months of the policy. For the 2022-2023 policy, YCRCD can add \$10,000 worth of office equipment and furniture coverage for around \$25-\$30. YCRCD likely will not need this much coverage. Director Aseltine Neilson is putting together a list of furniture and office equipment with associated purchase prices. Approval for adding this coverage to our insurance will be added as an action item to next month's agenda.

I. Website Update

Director Aseltine Neilson has communicated with Chris Ryan from Streamline. She now needs to upload all the meeting agendas and minutes as well as check to make sure that all the required compliance items are met. She plans to have another meeting with Chris Ryan once this is finished.

J. Virtual Meetings Update

Director Aseltine Neilson indicated that the last virtual meetings resolution adopted by the Board will cover the March meeting. All the current COVID orders provide support for continuing virtual meetings through March 31, 2022. At the March meeting, the Board will need to discuss whether the April meeting should be in person. The Board members then briefly discussed the option of including a virtual connection during the in-person meetings.

K. Update on Forest Health Booklet

Director Aseltine Neilson mentioned that she had a call with Allison Thomson (YWPFSC) to discuss different options for the booklet (Randy Fletcher was unable to make the call). The best option seems to be a smaller booklet than the Butte County Healthy Forest Guidebook, e.g., 12 pages, which would not be as expensive to print as the Butte County guidebook. A smaller booklet with a slightly different design - some fire resilience information for homeowners plus healthy forest information - could go to a different

designer. YCRCDC would still need additional funds for publishing the booklet. Allison Thomson mentioned that the next application deadline for funds from the Yuba Water Agency is in April. Director Aseltine Neilson will be reaching out to other designers as well as talking to Beverly Cameron regarding design and printing options. Director Aseltine Neilson also will be reviewing the Butte County guidebook to determine what information could be used and what information is not necessary for a Yuba County booklet. Director Aseltine Neilson also mentioned that the new YWPFSC staff person will be looking through the booklet, and she asked Director Fildes to review it as well.

L. Project Update

Director Lindman spoke about the Forest Pace funding and her efforts to find a grant writer who could be paid through these funds. The Forest Pace funds cannot be used for the forest booklet and Director Lindman has not had any luck finding a potential grant writer. Trying to find someone and hire them through a contract is problematic given the Forest Pace funding timeline.

M. YCRCDC Emails

After hearing that someone had tried to contact her through email, Director Lindman checked the emails sent to the YCRCDC Gmail account and she found quite a few in the inbox. These included requests and an email from the Grand Jury about attending a meeting. The Board members discussed how best to manage this Gmail account. Director Fildes asked whether the emails from this account could be forwarded to another account. Gurveen indicated that this was indeed possible. Director Lindman will help Director Fildes to set up the emails so that they are forwarded to Director Fildes and he will manage them for the YCRCDC.

Some of the emails were requests from individuals who would like to be included on a list of potential contractors for fire resilience cleanup work such as clearing brush. The YCRCDC currently does not have such a list, but Director Fildes offered to start one.

BOARD PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Director Lindman reported that she has been working with Amy on the Needs Assessment. She has a call later today with Amy to discuss the results from the Focus Group meetings. The first 3-hour Board retreat for the Needs Assessment is coming up on February 16th and the second one is scheduled for March 9th.

DIRECTORS' COMMENTS AND REPORTS

Director Aseltine Neilson mentioned that the "Be Prepared Fair" is on May 19th. She plans to reach out to John Stone of the Yuba County Office of Emergency Services to find out more about this event. If YCRCDC does a booth, Allison Thomson is interested in coordinating with us on our booth locations. Pa Yang indicated that the NRCS could also provide staffing for a booth and information on what NRCS programs are available, as well as help with any printing that the YCRCDC needs done. Director Fildes suggested that a banner and some type of item to hand out would be good. Pa Yang also suggested that this would be a good event for posting a flyer about the need for YCRCDC board members. Director Aseltine Neilson will take the lead on preparing for this event.

Director Aseltine Neilson also mentioned that she completed the Monarch survey that Simar

Bains from Sutter County RCD requested, and she participated in a Monarch Working Lands Technical Assistance working group meeting. The next working group meeting is at the end of March. She also attended the recent Sacramento Valley RCD Durable Collaboration meeting which she found very useful as she was able to connect with other members of RCDs and learn more about what projects they are working on.

Director Aseltine Neilson asked Director Fildes if either of the two individuals he has talked to about the YCRCD have reached out to him about being a Board member. He has not heard back from anyone.

Director Aseltine Neilson also mentioned that during the Sacramento Valley Durable Collaboration (SVDC) meeting information was provided regarding an effort to get consistent state funding for the RCDs. It was suggested that the RCDs reach out to their local legislators to encourage them to support such an effort. Director Aseltine Neilson plans to contact the person who provided this information at the SVDC meeting to request materials that can be used to develop letters for the local legislators. Director Fildes recommended reaching out to Randy Fletcher about this effort as well.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:52 A.M.