



## AGENDA

DATE: **Wednesday, June 12th, 2024**

PLACE: **Marin Farm Bureau Conference Room, 520 Mesa Road, Point Reyes Station, CA 94956**

**REMOTE OPTION:** Members of the public may participate remotely by Zoom:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87864206727> or by phone: +16699009128,,87864206727# meeting ID: 878 6420 6727. Please contact Elise Suronen at (415) 663-1170 ext. 314, or [sarahs@marinrcd.org](mailto:sarahs@marinrcd.org) if you have concerns about accessibility.

1. Regular meeting opens at **9:00 a.m.** Roll call, introduction of guests.

*(Note that we may move agenda items in this meeting to meet time constraints of participants.)*

**ACTION ITEMS: 9:15 a.m. - 11 a.m.**

**2. DISTRICT: 45 min**

- A. Board approval of regular Meeting Minutes. ~ *Nancy Scolari, Executive Director*
- B. Board approval of the Financial Report. ~ *Marcus Meggett, Fiscal and Ops Manager*
- C. Board approval of "Authorities of the Executive Director Policy" ~ *Nancy Scolari, Executive Director*
- D. Board approval of Resolution #02-2024 to transfer responsibility for certain district transactions to the District Board of Directors ~ *Marcus Meggett, Fiscal and Ops Manager*

**3. CARBON FARMING: 15 min**

- A. Board approval of Orlena Yee Contract #C02-2024 in the amount of \$57,195 to develop a Strategic Plan for the Regional Carbon Finance Initiative for the Sonoma Marin County Climate Coalition Carbon Project. ~ *Nancy Scolari, Executive Director*

**4. BIOMASS PROJECT: 10 min**

- A. Board approval of Contract #C03-2024 in the amount of \$42,500 with Loamist, Co. for development of carbon registry functionalities and their integration into the "Resilient Sierra" biomass assessment and digital marketplace tool of the Governor's Office of Planning and Research.

**5. INFORMATIONAL: 10:30 a.m.**

Partner Updates: 5 min each

- USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)– Petaluma Field Office Staff
- Marin Agricultural Land Trust/SAP – MALT Stewardship Staff
- Point Blue & Students & Teachers Restoring a Watershed (STRAW)– Point Blue Staff

RCD Program Updates (See staff report for details):

- **Media/Messaging/Outreach:** MRCD sent out another quarterly newsletter.

- **Justice Equity Diversity Inclusion (JEDI):** The Graton Rancheria-MRCD/Point Blue Memorandum of Agreement is being reviewed by FIGR. David Escobar was hired as a consultant on JEDI in Carbon Farming and continues to meet with staff, and will soon meet with the JEDI Committee to review our implementation process.
- **Biomass Project:** The Marin Biomass Project has completed a draft economic analysis of recommended biomass utilization pathways and a draft assessment of existing public agency engagement with biomass utilization in Marin. The Project also submitted a proposal for further funding to OPR's Forest Sector Grant Program.
- **Conserving Our Watersheds Program (COW):** Two phases of the COW program are in progress. COW MILC (phase VII) has been awarded a grant from the State Water Board and the agreement is in process. The grant award amount is being increased by about \$250,000 as a result of excess 319(h) funding at the State level. The original scope of COW CCAF (phase VI) was completed in 2023 with seven management practices implemented. A time extension request has been submitted for December 2024 close-out and staff are conducting post-implementation monitoring. One additional management practice along Chileno Creek was being scoped for remaining money in the grant budget, but is no longer in consideration due to the limited time and funding.
- **Permit Coordination Program (PCP):** Green Gulch Farms (GG) is moving through the design, CEQA and permitting process with Prunuske Chatham Inc. (PCI) guiding the way and keeping MRCD and the Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria (FIGR) in the loop. PCI has received a letter of support from FIGR and plans to provide the MRCD Board with an update in July of 2024. Black Mountain culvert project is in the PCP and might be constructed next year, Staff checked in with the project consultant, Pacific Watershed Associates, and they said that Black Mtn has not expressed interest in building it this year.
- **Urban Streams Program:** The months of April and May included a mix of smolt monitoring with CDFW on Walker Creek and with Marin Water on Lagunitas Creek. Additionally, Sarah attended the North Bay Watershed Association's conference and assisted MALT with their educational communications around Walker Creek (MRCD's efforts in the watershed). She also met with CDFW staff about streamlining permitting with regard to gully repairs. Several site visits were carried out for landowners living along streams in need of assistance with property-scale restoration planning. One site will include a volunteer-based restoration day in mid-June along a tributary to Novato Creek. Finally, Sarah carried out a workshop on urban farming in San Anselmo and wrapped up the final year of regulatory monitoring for the Landowner Assistance Program instream habitat improvement projects.
- **Carbon Farming Program:** The Carbon Farming Team has completed soil and forage sampling at carbon farm plan ranches. The No-till drill rental program is finished for the season, and 8 producers used it on their working lands. The CF team is currently developing and planning design and implementation projects for the Coastal Conservancy in partnership with Students and Teachers Restoring a Watershed (STRAW). STRAW's riparian restoration planting season is complete. The team has finished initial site visits for the 5 hedgerow/windbreak projects to be funded by Wildlife Conservation Board and designed, implemented and maintained by STRAW. The team will welcome a new Soil Conservation Technician at the end of June.
- **Walker Creek Watershed:** Sarah coordinated a site visit to the Colliss Quarry for several regulators, PCI, RCD, and one of the property owners to discuss spoils placement at the site. Sarah prepared the final report with the associated attachments and uploaded it to WebGrants

by the deadline. The Final Invoice was submitted successfully. At this point, the only remaining task is to update Project Tracker. We are still waiting to hear back on the implementation funding proposal submitted to NOAA for \$8mil.

- **Funding Opportunities:** Staff applied to the following grants: USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service for one position: Soil Hub Director and the CA State Coastal Conservancy to address fire resiliency with the North Coast RCDs. The Conservancy proposal was awarded and will generate about \$200k!

- **Finance Committee:** The next FC meeting is scheduled for May 24, 2024.

- **District:** Staff has been deep into the hiring process for two positions: Soil Ecologist/Working Lands Scientist and Conservation Technician.

- **Landowner Assistance Provided:**

Urban Streams: 4 site visits, 18 partners and/or landowners were assisted with information and 25 landowners and/or partners were educated.

COW: 1 landowner supported with stream bank erosion memo, 3 referred to application portal

CE: 5 landowners assisted

#### 6. ANNOUNCEMENTS & CORRESPONDENCE

- Marin RCD is accepting applications for projects. [Apply here](#) at our website or call Sarah Skinker at (415) 780-2854.

#### 7. PUBLIC COMMENT

Public comment for any matter not listed on this agenda, provided that no Board action is to be taken. All statements that require a response will be referred to staff to be placed on the next agenda.

#### 8. MEETING ADJOURNED



## MINUTES

DATE: **Wednesday, April 10th, 2024**

PLACE: **Marin Farm Bureau Conference Room, 520 Mesa Road, Point Reyes Station, CA 94956**

**1. A regularly scheduled meeting was called to order by Sally Gale, President, at 9:05 a.m.**

Roll call of Directors: Terry Sawyer, Gerald Meral, and Mike Moretti.

Associate Directors: George Clyde, Dave Sherwood, Guido Frosini

Staff: Nancy Scolari, Sarah Skinker, Kelsey Brewer, Marcus Meggett, Sarah Phillips, Preston Duncan, Elise Suronen, Gerhard Epke, Cora Richard

Additional Attendees: Chad White (Marin Biomass), Scott Dunbar (MALT), Isaiah Thalmeyer (STRAW), Jessie Ditmore & Libby Kennedy (STRAW), Paul Ingle (San Rafael resident), Sebastian Tsochanos (NRCS)

**2. Oath of Office-** for newly appointed Board Member, David Sherwood. ~ Sally Gale, President

David Sherwood took his oath of office to become MRCD's newest board member and expressed gratitude for his journey that led him to this position.

### **ACTION ITEMS:**

**3. DISTRICT:**

A. Board approval of regular Meeting Minutes. ~ *Nancy Scolari, Executive Director*

B. Board approval of the Financial Report. ~ *Marcus Meggett, Fiscal and Ops Manager*

MOTION: Sally; SECOND: Mike; AYES: Unanimous; NOES: None; ABSTENTIONS: None; to approve Minutes & Financial Report.

C. Board consideration of applications and submission of votes to fill the positions of CA Association of Resource Conservation District Board VP and Secretary-Treasurer. ~ *Nancy Scolari, Executive Director*

Jerry suggested the MRCD board to vote to support Harold Singer for Secretary-Treasurer.

MOTION: Mike; SECOND: Jerry; AYES: Unanimous; NOES: None; ABSTENTIONS: None; to cast MRCD's vote for Peter B and Harold S for CARCD VP and Secretary-Treasurer respectively.

D. Board approval of preliminary action plan and timeline to complete a Strategic Plan which will include Board and Staff relations, in addition to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Justice (DEIJ) training and planning. ~ *Nancy Scolari, Executive Director*

Nancy asked the Board for authorization to enter into an agreement with a consultant. Terry questioned what our goals are specifically. David pointed out that as MRCD grew we haven't adapted and he hopes we are able to adapt quickly.

MOTION: Terry; SECOND: David; AYES: Unanimous; NOES: None; ABSTENTIONS: None; to give Nancy the authority to enter into an agreement with a DEIJ consultant.

#### 4. CARBON FARMING:

- A. Board approval to execute Agreement #01-2024 with Point Blue Students and Teachers Restoring a Watershed (STRAW) in the amount of \$24,000 to design 3-5 hedgerow/windbreak/shelterbelt projects on carbon farm plan ranches as part of a CA Wildlife Conservation Board block grant with the CA Association of Resource Conservation Districts. ~Sarah Skinker, Carbon Farming Project Manager  
Sarah told us that this contract will fund design work with STRAW. The goal is to support CA wildlife. The deliverables are to produce 3-5 hedgerow/windbreak/shelterbelt projects. Jerry did not think a contract this small should fall under board approval, and believed Nancy should have the authority to approve contracts up to a certain amount.

MOTION: Jerry; SECOND: Terry; AYES: Jerry, Terry, Sally, David; NOES: None; ABSTENTIONS: Mike (due to financial conflict); to approve Agreement #01-2024 with Point Blue STRAW.

**\*Sally wanted to take a moment to thank Kelsey Brewer, MRCD Working Lands Scientist, who is moving on from MRCD. Sally wished Kelsey well on all future endeavors.**

#### PRESENTATION

- Expanding RCD Funding ~Jerry Meral, Marin RCD Director (this item was moved from above Action Items (3) to this spot on the agenda at the beginning of the meeting  
Jerry proposed we put a parcel tax on the ballot to receive more general fund money and in the process expand Marin RCD's service area. There was some skepticism expressed by multiple people at the idea of expanding our service area as we are already at max capacity with the projects within our service area we currently have. We would have to hire more staff and secure more funding to explore this as a possibility.

#### 5. INFORMATIONAL:

- Update on Hedgerow/Windbreak/Shelterbelt selections ~Sarah Skinker, Carbon Farming Program Manager  
Sarah reported that announcements were sent by email to producers and partners. MRCD received 5 applicants for windbreak/hedgerow projects which we will pursue- Somar, Moretti, Barinaga, True Grass & Jim Moreda. As Marin RCD board member Mike is one of the applicants for this project he will be recusing from any decisions in this area.

#### Partner Updates:

- **USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service** – Petaluma Field Office Staff  
The Petaluma office has had 63 projects through the EQIP IRA funding preapproved for upwards of 5 million dollars. There are 12 projects that were preapproved for funding under the classic EQIP funding for 1.35 million dollars. There are 14 RCPP applications that they are

currently working and 14 CSP (Conservation Stewardship Program) applications. CSP application deadline was extended to April 27<sup>th</sup>.

- **Marin Agricultural Land Trust/SAP** – MALT Stewardship Staff

MALT closed 2 easements last month and are expecting to close 2 more by the end of June in the Hicks Valley area. Their small grants program which had a theme of biodiversity wrapped up in early April, and they received several applicants. Monitoring started up last week. They are 3 easements in for this year.

- **Point Blue & Students & Teachers Restoring a Watershed** – Point Blue Staff

Point Blue is finished planting at all their project sites earlier than they were last year. They are now in the process of designing irrigation systems at those sites. All the hedgerows being planted will not be longer than 1,000 linear feet.

RCD Program Updates (See staff report for details):

- **Media/Messaging/Outreach:** MRCD sent out its first quarterly newsletter in a decade.

We started with a contact list of 392 in our listserv (consisting mainly urban streams folks with a few partners and ag producers); note this list was before we started the newsletter. The open rate for the newsletter was 66%. A marketing effort is in place to increase contacts.

- **Justice Equity Diversity Inclusion (JEDI):** The Graton Rancheria-MRCD/Point Blue Memorandum of Agreement is being drafted with partners. The Ad Hoc JEDI committee will continue to review and the team is planning a landowner panel. David Escobar was hired as a consultant on JEDI in Carbon Farming and continues to meet with staff.

- **Biomass Project:** We are currently folding in feedback from the Marin Biomass Collaborative into review instructions for our consultants on Chapter 3 of the Biomass Utilization Study. Work on the economic analysis in the fourth chapter of our Study remains underway. We are also seeking approval from the Governor's Office of Planning and Research for a third round of funding for the Marin Biomass project.

- **Conserving Our Watersheds Program:** Two phases of the COW program are in progress. COW MILC (phase VII) has been awarded a grant from the State Water Board and the agreement is in process. The original scope of COW CCAF (phase VI) was completed in 2023 but has been extended to implement an additional project with remaining funds. Elise Suronen is handing the program off to new MRCD program manager Gerhard Epke. Suronen and Epke plan to coordinate a COW tour for the SWRCB and EPA staff in 2024.

- **Permit Coordination Program:** Green Gulch Farms (GG) is moving through the CEQA and permitting process with PCI guiding the way and keeping MRCD and FIGR in the loop. PCI is waiting for a letter of support from FIGR. Once they receive that letter, PCI will provide the MRCD Board with an update in 04/2024. Black Mountain culvert project is in the PCP and is on hold until next year.

- **Urban Streams Program:** The month of February was wet and wild! No spawner surveys were conducted as a result of the streams being unsafe to enter and too turbid to see any fish. Many partners and landowners reached out for assistance on a variety of subjects, mostly being storm-related impacts. Sarah attended the annual Steelhead Festival and has been working with a team to create a fantastic tour of Lagunitas Creek projects through the Salmonid Restoration Federation Conference in March. Sarah met with landowners in San Anselmo that are wanting to host three (3) workshops this year to learn more about soil, plant propagation, and creek stewardship (which will include soil bioengineering). Sarah met with Marinwood CSD

to review a headcut in residential area along Miller Creek. Finally, the smolt monitoring season is ramping up which will keep Sarah busy in March-May.

- **Carbon Farming Program:** The Carbon Farming Team completed the second round of meetings for current carbon farm plans and will continue with soil and forage sampling this spring. The No-till drill rental program is finished for the season, and 8 producers used it on their working lands. The CF team is currently developing and planning design and implementation projects for SCC in partnership with STRAW. 4 riparian restoration projects are currently underway with STRAW.
- **Walker Creek Watershed:** This project is wrapping up and closes out this month on 3/31. The Project Design Team continues working quickly toward 100% designs for three complex projects in the lower reach and four low-tech projects in the upper, canyon reach of the overall project area. The design team is also in communications with landowners on placement of spoils excavated. Sarah submitted the draft final report at the end of February.
- **Funding Opportunities:** A few grant opportunities are in the works: USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service for two positions: Forest Health Coordinator and Soil Hub Director. One proposal to address fire resiliency with the North Coast RCDs.
- **Finance Committee:** FC was held on Feb 8th. FC reviewed the FY 22-23 Audit which is presented at this meeting.
- **District:** Published board vacancy in PRLight, Post Office, Grandi Building and RCD website, RCD newsletter.
- **Landowner Assistance Provided:**
  - Urban Streams: 3 site visits, 11 partners and/or landowners were assisted with information and 3 landowners and/or partners were educated.
  - COW: 1 landowner supported with their USDA NRCS Act Now proposal.
  - CF: 4 landowners assisted

## 6. ANNOUNCEMENTS & CORRESPONDENCE

- Marin RCD is accepting applications for projects. [Apply here](#) at our website or call Sarah Skinker at (415) 780-2854.
- Marin RCD Letter of Interest to participate in Marin County Emergency & Hazard Mitigation Planning effort
- Letters of support for Coastal Conservancy proposal from the following: Assemblyman Conolly, Marin County Parks, Audubon Canyon Ranch, Marin Wildfire Prevention Authority

## 7. PUBLIC COMMENT

Marin RCD Associate Director George Clyde shared that Marin County is combining all sea level rising projects and have gutted the staff.

## 8. MEETING ADJOURNED at 11:30 a.m.