



**Madera/Chowchilla
Resource Conservation District
Post Office Box 531
Chowchilla, CA 93610**



**Monthly Board Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, April 25, 2023 – 5:00PM to 7:00PM**

I. Call to Order: 5:09PM by Norman Kuhr

A. Director Roll Call

Attendance was in person at 425 N Gateway Dr, Suite K, Madera, CA. Directors: Norman Kuhr, Erik Herman, Mike DeLaGuerra, Matt Angell Staff: Amy Siliznoff, Kevin Reyes, Associate Director: Mark Hutson, Partners: Mira Dick (NRCS), Taylor Fridrich (NRCS)

II. Additions/Changes to the Agenda

Update to Financial Report: ESRCDC Final Invoice Groundwater \$6,311

Update to Reports: ITRC Training for Kevin Reyes (Line Item L)

Motion to approve updates: Mike DeLaGuerra made a motion to approve the changes, there was a second by Erik Herman. Motion passed unanimously by all present directors.

III. Approval of Minutes

A. **Approval of March Meeting Minutes** – Motion was made by Mike DeLaGuerra to approve the Meeting Minutes, there was a second by Matt Angell. Motion passed unanimously by all present directors.

IV. Correspondence & Mail – CSDA flyers, EDD mailers, \$407 check for RCPP from ESRCDC, \$13,247.49 check for CDFA WETA from EMRCD

V. Public Comments – No public comments

VI. Reports

A. Madera County SGMA Update/GSAs – Amy Siliznoff

- Madera Subbasin – Madera ID refused to adopt the revised GSP; this means the State Board can intervene.
- There are grant funds for taking irrigated land out of production (County GSA only, Madera Subbasin). Here is the website: landflex.org; deadline is 5/2 to apply
- Chowchilla Subbasin – The GSP is inadequate; there may be a state board hearing to put the subbasin on probation; they are revising as quickly as possible
- Delta-Mendota Subbasin – The GSP is inadequate; there has been an additional consultant hired to redo the water budgets

- B. NRCS Report – Mira Dick
 - IRA money arrived, small amount of money this year available. Money is exclusive and dedicated to air quality (tractor replacement), forestry, tribal applications and CSP. Extended application to apply for CSP conservation stewardship program (April 28th). CSP is a 5-year contract that can be extended to a 10-year contract. Region 9 meeting will be in late May or Early June.
- C. Madera Region IRWM/RWVG – Amy Siliznoff
 - No update
- D. Farm Bureau – Amy Siliznoff
 - Ag Recycling Day was April 17th (34,000 lbs of plastic chipped) very happy with the outcome. Farm Bureau may want to do another event in November. Mailers should go out moving forward.
 - Annual Scholarship Fundraiser, Mimosas at the Mahils Sunday, May 7th from 11AM-2PM
- E. News/Other Meeting Reports – Amy Siliznoff
 - CDFA, NRCS, CARCD, and Sustainable Conservation is hosting a soil-water interface expert convening: cover crops' impact on water budgets on May 18, 2023. This meeting will focus on different approaches to water allocations as they relate to cover crops.

VII. RCD Report: Board Action Items and Discussion Topics

- A. RCPP with American Farmland Trust (I) – Amy Siliznoff
 - Chris is currently working with 23 applications, down from about 31 originally. 3 were funded through EQIP, or another funding pool. 2 scored low on the Data Basin pre-screener that American Farmland Trust requested to run on each piece of property prior to ranking. 3 were dropped at the farmer's request.
 - The deadline to rank the applications was extended from the 7th to the 14th. Chris has about 6 left to rank.
 - It looks like RCPP was given another \$100K this round for a total of \$1 million.
- B. Biochar Trial Project with American Farmland Trust (I) – Amy Siliznoff
 - Amy is waiting to hear from AFT on the next steps moving forward in planning the outreach events.
- C. CDFA Mobile Irrigation Lab (I) – Kevin Reyes
 - Our irrigation season has kicked off. March 20th through November. 18 landowners have already reached out to be scheduled for evaluations. 4 irrigation evaluations in process, 3 are scheduled in the next 2 weeks. 19 growers total on the schedule so far for this year.
- D. CDFA Conservation Agriculture Planning Grant (I)
 - ESRCDC received the SOW, it's dated for start as of June 15th, which means we can have contracts approved at the June board meeting. The scope of work includes completing up to 12 pollinator plans (\$6,700 per plan). This funding is

for planning only, we would be working with ag producers to create a plan for fall 2024 implementation, but it doesn't include implementation funds. Amy will be scheduling a call with Trina and Ursula at the end of April, early May to discuss details and questions about the project.

- E. NRCS Groundwater Project (I) – Kevin Reyes
 - Kevin is currently templating 30 groundwater plans, focused on Section 6 (Groundwater Management Resources). This includes mapping groundwater basin locations, determining GSAs, and referencing management plan actions. The goal is to have 35 plans completed before September.
- F. NRCS Equity Project (I) (A) – Amy Siliznoff
 - Amy will be planning a workshop with Punjabi American Growers Group. A draft agenda has been completed and she is coordinating with Jasbir, president of PAGG on a date to set for the Cover Crop/Healthy Soils Workshop.
- G. DOC MLRP (I) – Amy Siliznoff
 - At the Supervisor's Board meeting on 4/18, the last partner contracts were approved. We will now be able to move forward with the MLRP project.
 - Within the next few weeks, we will have a kickoff meeting for all partners to plan how to move forward. In the meantime – the State meeting for the project was held on Thursday, April 20, from 10:00 to 11:30.
- H. WCB Pollinator Block Grant (I) – Amy Siliznoff
 - \$166,983 is the total award amount, however CARCD issued a contract for Tasks 1, 4 and 6 only. Tasks 2 and 3 will come after the filing of NOE or CEQA documents for each habitat project. We have the option to share a biologist as needed with ESRCD. They will be hosting the biologist position. This project will not require easements, but it will require monitoring and maintenance so we will need to have landowner agreements in place. 2/28/27 is the end date for this grant.
 - Amy discussed her plans to move forward with an outreach event under this project. She recommended a demonstration site where growers can view a hedgerow and ask the grower questions and any benefits they've seen.
- I. Upcoming Workshops (I) – Amy Siliznoff
 - The RCD will be hosting a Healthy Soils Workshop and Field Demonstration Day with Punjabi American Growers Group in the Spring, as well as an Orchard Recycling workshop in the fall with CAFF.
 - There's an upcoming Cover Crop Workshop AFT is hosting on May 11th in Stanislaus County.
- J. Upcoming Contracts/Agreements (I) (A)– Amy Siliznoff
 - Nitricity Agreement – Amy reviewed the Nitricity proposal with the Board. Motion was made by Matt Angell to approve the agreement with Nitricity, there was a second by Mike DeLaGuerra. Motion passed unanimously by all present directors.
 - Almond Board of CA Agreement – Amy reviewed the ABC proposal with the Board. Motion was made by Matt Angell to approve the agreement with Nitricity, there was a second by Erik Herman. Motion passed unanimously by all present directors.

K. Upcoming Grant Applications (I) – Amy Siliznoff

- Amy is exploring the CDFA SWEEP Block Grant to see if the RCD would be a good fit for the funding opportunity. The application period hasn't opened, and she will evaluate what a proposal would look like once the application period becomes available.
- Amy is working with NRCS on a proposal for water and SGMA, healthy soils.
- Amy reviewed a grant opportunity with UC Davis and 3 other RCDs in the San Joaquin Valley, funding is for 50K. The unique focus of the grant is developing climate-smart market infrastructure, training, etc. and connecting growers who are implementing climate-smart management to climate-smart markets and the monitoring, reporting, and verification (MRV) necessary to participate in those markets.

VIII. Financial Report

- Erik Herman made a motion to approve the financial report, there was a second by Matt Angell. Motion passed unanimously by all present directors.
- Erik Herman made a motion to approve the expenses, there was a second by Matt Angell. Motion passed unanimously by all present directors.

IX. Adjournment: Meeting was adjourned at 7:37PM.

Next Meeting: May 15, 2023, 5:00PM