



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



Monthly Board Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, March 19, 2025 – 5:00-6:00PM

I. Call to Order: 5:06PM by Norman Kuhr

A. Director Roll Call

Attendance was in person at the FSA office located at 425 N Gateway Dr, Ste K, Madera, CA. Directors: Norman Kuhr, Mike DeLaGuerra, Matt Angell, Tim Coehlo, Andrew; Staff: Amy Siliznoff, Kevin Reyes

II. Additions/Changes to the Agenda

Amy announced that Shannon Iest has stepped off the Board, we will need to find a replacement for his Board position. Also, an update to the financial report was made. \$59.60 needs to be deducted from Kevin's reimbursement check.

III. Approval of Minutes

A. Approval of February Meeting Minutes – Motion was made by Andrew Carroll to approve the Meeting Minutes, there was a second by Mike DeLaGuerra. Motion passed unanimously by all present directors.

IV. Correspondence & Mail – CSDA magazines, Insider Tips for Transforming Power Struggles and Growing Community by Peter Donovan

V. Public Comments – No public comment.

VI. Reports

A. Madera County SGMA Update/GSAs – Mike DeLaGuerra

- Madera Subbasin GSPs were turned into DWR at the end of January 2025. These will be reviewed by DWR. How long will a review take.
- Chowchilla Subbasin GSPs are revised and being adopted by four GSAs in Chowchilla Subbasin. These will be turned into the State Board for review and action at an upcoming State Board meeting.
- Delta Mendota GSPs were revised and are being reviewed by the State Board.

B. NRCS Report – Amy Siliznoff on behalf of Mira Dick

- The Cooperative Agreement is on hold, RCD will be holding off on work until they get guidance.
- NRCS is having to put all hiring on hold and are trying to see where other staff stand. The application deadline for RCPP San Joaquin Valley Land and Water Conservation Collaborative is April 18. This is a good program for anyone new to program support for land management activities. The Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) application deadline is April 1st. This program is best suited for land managers who have already adopted some conservation measures with or without program support. This involves a five-year contract.

- We have not received any additional information yet about the status of the Inflation Reduction Act funds. Payments for existing contracts that were funded from this pool were temporarily suspended and now have been restored. Obligation of new contracts from these funds is still suspended until further notice.
- For grants and agreements such as the RCPP San Joaquin Valley Land and Water Conservation Collaborative we do not have any additional information at this time about the status of that agreement or many others. However, NRCS is not a named participant in the agreement so it is more likely that information on the status of this agreement will come from American Farmland Trust or CARCD first. Entering into other agreements is subject to additional review and grant applications are not being accepted at this time.
- We have not yet received guidance on if there will or will not be a federal funding lapse on March 14. If there is, we do not know if it will affect NRCS.
- We continue to wait to see what effects, if any, the Reduction In Force (RIF) action will have on NRCS. We will provide updates as they become available.
- News/Other Meeting Reports – Tim Coehlo and Amy Siliznoff
 - Tim Coehlo mentioned the FSA has 10 billion in funding for ECAP (emergency commodity assistance program). This program is to help mitigate costs of increased input costs and falling commodity prices.
 - The RCD and Madera County Farm Bureau are holding an Ag Plastic Recycling Event on April 14-16.
 - The RCD hosted a Cover Crop field day event that covered the benefits of cover crops in orchard systems. It was supposed to be a field day event but because of weather conditions we had to move it to the Madera County Farm Bureau. We collaborated with CAFF on the workshop event. Sustainable Conservation, CAS Solutions, and Andrew presented at the workshop event.

VII. RCD Report: Board Action Items and Discussion Topics

A. CDFA Mobile Irrigation Lab (I) – Kevin Reyes

- Kevin has one evaluation scheduled for the irrigation season.
- We're going to be picking back up irrigation evaluations starting March 1st and ending June of this year. We'll continue providing irrigation evaluations through Almond Board funding.
- Kevin will need assistance on the bigger evaluations, an intern or assistance from another RCD. Amy is hoping once we receive word back on our federal grants we can either hire an intern or conservation planner position.

B. CDFA Agricultural Planning Grant (I) – Kevin Reyes

- Kevin has completed the full 12 plans, so the grant deliverables have been completed.
- Kevin is reaching out to the growers to see if they'd like to move forward with implementation. We will utilize our WCB grant for implementation funds.

C. DOC MLRP (I) – Amy Siliznoff

- The application deadline has been moved to March 31st.
- The RCD is managing the agave and pollinator projects and helping growers who applied from pre-application to submitting their full plans. There's a process they need to follow, which Amy has sent specific instructions through email to all the growers.
- Kevin has been scheduling calls with growers to provide TA for the application process.

D. WCB Pollinator Block Grant (I) – Kevin Reyes

- We're moving forward on the La Vina project. We put the deposit down for plant materials to Mariposa Nursery. We're going to be planning a collaborative plant day on March 28th at the La Vina site with the La Vina community. Kevin will be planning a site visit with Deborah to flag where the plants will be planted. We will be incorporating the La Vina community to assist with the planting day.
- Kevin will be confirming signage for the Hillside school project.
- Amy has placed the deposit for the 3 upcoming pollinator projects.

E. Biochar Workshop (I) (A) – Amy Siliznoff

- Due to the Federal funding freeze, AFT said they will not be reimbursing the RCD for any work completed under this grant, even though it is a State grant through CDFA. There's \$3,317.34 remaining under this grant. The Board advised to hold and to reach out to Paul Lum to see if we would eventually get reimbursed if their federal funding was cut.

F. Federal Grant Freeze (I) – Amy Siliznoff

- The RCDs federal grants are still on hold. Amy is hopeful we will hear back on the status in the next month.

G. Upcoming Workshops (I) – Amy Siliznoff

- The RCD will be hosting the La Vina planting day on March 28th.
- We will be holding on any workshop planning for the Biochar Workshop in April until we receive confirmation from AFT that we will be paid for any work completed under this grant.
- The East Stan RCD and East Merced RCD will be hosting an Earth Day Celebration on April 12th. This workshop will cover environmental and wildlife conservation, native plants, pollination, and hands-on sustainability practices.

H. Upcoming Contracts/Agreements (I) (A)– Amy Siliznoff

- None

I. Upcoming Grant Applications (I) – Amy Siliznoff

- Amy applied for a \$60,000 grant through No Regrets Initiative. We will know by May 1st if we were selected for funding.
- Amy will be reaching out to the Almond Board and PAGG for potential funding.

VIII. Financial Report

- Andrew Carroll made a motion to approve the March Financial Report. There was a second by Matt Angell. Motion passed unanimously by all present directors.
- Andrew Carroll made a motion to approve the March Expense Report. There was a second by Mike DeLaGuerra. Motion passed unanimously by all present directors.

IX. Adjournment: Meeting was adjourned at 6:24PM.

Next Meeting: April 9, 2025, 5:00PM at the FSA office in Madera, CA