



# Tulare County Resource Conservation District

3530 W. Orchard Court ~ Visalia, CA 93277  
Phone: (559) 622-0378 ~ fax (559) 636-3277

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11 May 2016

## **Board Meeting Minutes**

Directors Present: Warren Hutchings, Larry Schwankl, Scott Powell  
Staff: Teri Van Huss, David Witt, Bob Puls  
NRCS: Genett Carstensen  
SNC: Sarah Campe

The meeting was called to order by Warren at 12:25 p.m.

**Review minutes:** The minutes were not available from 4/13 due to technical difficulties.

**Financial Report:** Financial report for 5/10/2016 was reviewed. Scott moved, Larry seconded, to approve the payment of the bills. Aye vote ensued.

## **New Business:**

### **Tree Mortality Task Force**

Bob has attended two of the Tulare County Tree Mortality Task Force meetings. The Park Service and CalFire are dropping trees, CALTRANS is concerned about trees falling across County roads – they figure they have 68,000 trees along the roadways in the foothills. The counties north of us have been working on this longer. The State has some money, the County is concerned that any grant would be an up-front expense and then reimbursement doesn't always happen – they are cautious. Their experience with FEMA has not gone well. According to David there has been no Federal designation (only a State designation) and matches are needed to get funding. The County is collecting information so they know where everyone is working and what everyone is doing. While money is an issue, being able to really get the work done is really hard due to poor, and steep, roads. There are lots of bureaucratic blocks to most of the ideas folks have, i.e., biomass, lumber. Trees are being dropped but little can be done with them after that.

**Irrigated Lands Rangeland Irrigation Project:** All landowners at 3 to 6% slope will have to do a conservation plan according to the State Water Control Board. Erosion control, sediment points, are included and the plans have to be certified. There used to be a self-certification but from now on certification needs to come from PEs, water coalitions, NRCS, or RCDs...however, NRCS cannot do this because they are non-regulatory. It's estimated \$500 to \$1,500 per plan cost. Bob talked to the WCB about RCDs doing this, and they certainly can. Warren suggests that Bob take the NRCS training to be certified in doing conservation plans, and the Board agrees.

### **Range Camp**

Two students from Monache High School were presented and the RCD paid their tuition to this year's Range Camp.

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## Sierra Reforestation

Need contracts up front to start a nursery for Forest Service or Cal-Fire or landowners to produce trees for the replanting process after the dead trees are removed. Seeds have to be collected locally. Is Edison doing this in Auberry? It's worth talking to Cal-Fire about how to go about doing this. Proprietary seeds? Climate change makes this really iffy because it could be that different tree species should be planted. Sarah says there may be grants to do planning.

### Updates:

Senate Bill 88: diversion of surface water will have to be recorded. Warren says it's been in legislation for a couple years. There are ways to do it and we need to help with ways other than metering to get this information. Stock ponds are problematic.

SWEEP Projects: Bob says he has one more in Orosi; while there are two who are in danger of being late.

Chipper Days: David reports we have 9 chipper days left – he'd like to do it on Johnsondale, Sequoia Crest, and Ponderosa. He'll use either Mtn. Home or Shannon crews.

Johnsondale: David would like to have the Shannon Bros and our chipper up there for a week in May or June and do chipper days and clearing.

TCBB: Neil Clipperton says he has two projects he will probably fund this spring.

People's Gardens: Teri reports that GH is in really good shape thanks to Francis. Contact from Self Help Enterprises for Teri to help them start up their new garden in their new housing development in north Visalia.

**NRCS:** Genett reports that Joe wants to work with us on the agreement for the Forester. Genett says their 4<sup>th</sup> funding phase has started. They have funded \$6 million so far this year. NRCS has a lot of staff openings – rangeland, both beginning and advanced positions.

**Public Comment Period:** Sarah Campe commented on tree mortality – saying that it really does have everything to do with the tree mortality and that we can no longer use historic references in how we go forward with reforestation and other activities.

**Correspondence:** Lots of email correspondence is on the table.

Meeting Adjourned at 2:15 p.m. Next meeting is June 8<sup>th</sup>

Respectfully submitted, Teri Van Huss