



# Tulare County Resource Conservation District

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

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13 May 2015

## Board Meeting Minutes

Directors Present: Warren Hutchings, Walt Bentley, Scott Powell, Stan Noble

Staff: Teri Van Huss

Fire Safe Council: Bob Puls

NRCS: Genett Carstensen, Joe Williams, Bonnie Eyestone

Cal-Fire: David Shy

UCCE: Jeff Mitchell

SNC: Sarah Campe

WMA: Jim Sullins

The meeting was called to order by Warren Hutchings, 12:15 p.m.

**Review minutes:** The minutes were reviewed from 4/8. Scott moved to approve, Walt seconded. Aye vote ensued.

**Financial Report:** Financial report for 5/13 was reviewed. Walt moved and Scott seconded to approve the financials. The accounts payable list is approved for payment.

## New Business:

Jeff Mitchell, UCCE, presented regarding the Farm Soil Health Demonstration Network for California. Members of the network are from NRCS in Tulare, Fresno, San Joaquin counties, and UCCE, and the idea is to identify and model farming practices that address core goals and principles of soil health. Are there indications that soil function, soil quality, or soil health is declining in California? Are there enough water / tillage practices? Food security has escalated to this being a human security issue. There are more and more soil health practitioners (i.e., no-till farming) – costs are less for fertilizer, pesticides, and herbicides. 2015 is the International Year of the Soil. Conservation Cropping Systems Initiative – Indiana. Managing for soil health – minimize disturbance, maximize diversity of rotation / cover crops, keep living roots in the soils, keep soil covered with plants and plant residues at all times. Natural systems harvest the maximum amount of sunlight; leak very few nutrients, including CO<sub>2</sub>, have diversity, tend not to export nutrients, make maximum use of water and nutrients through porosity and movement. Carbon is the key to soil health. The "Turmoil of Tillage" Proposed by UCCE/NRCS is the Conservation Agriculture Systems Innovation Center. California Roundtable on Water and Food Supply (Ag Innovation Network?) Water use is less also. How this works is 1) development of systems, 2) local network. Groups: Sustainable Conservation. Soil and Water Conservation Society.

## CARCD Region 9

Joe Williams report there is a new Treasurer for region 9. CARCD annual conference is in November at Tenaya – they need local RCDs to participate in organizing the conference. CARCD is working on the Tiers (assessment) for funding sources – we need to make sure we're

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up to snuff. Get new info from the website. We need to do our own assessment. Joe talked to Julie Finzel – still looking for Range Camp students.

## **Updates**

CDFA Water Efficiency grants: As of April 30<sup>th</sup> Bob completed all the Round 1 projects we've been given. Out of 80 awards, we were given 40 projects. There have been six Round 2 projects.

California Department of Fish and Wildlife – Neil Clipperton reported to Teri that the contract is still being reviewed, but time is of the essence, so he asked her to watch for the contract and get it signed and back to him ASAP.

Cal-Fire Tulare County Chipper Days – the first one will be at California Hot Springs at Pine Flat. Altogether there are 40 days for county-wide days. David Shy is going to various communities to find out if they want this service.

Johnsondale FB: Chipping left to do, and probably burning.

People's Garden: There has been a question regarding where education about creating community gardens. We will explore using our current Public meeting format and various experts to see if we can do that ourselves. NRCS staff came out to Goathead, along with Bob and the chipper, to chip up the last year's worth of garden leftovers. It was highly successful and the mulch created and piled was out on the garden beds within days.

Meeting updates: Bob said there's nothing to report.

CALFIRE burn: April 21<sup>st</sup> at KOP with water tender.

Weed Management Area – Jim Sullins reports they are drafting up their spray season program. SRT has some money left that Jim is going to use. This year they did 143 properties for about 168 acres of YST. This will be the last year for UCCE to run this program. There are reports of high altitude YST in Kennedy Meadows.

## **NRCS:**

Joe Williams reported that Biologist Bonnie Eyestone has been doing surveys for TCBB. Joe says EQIP coming along with 91 contracts going out, another set of contracts coming in three weeks.

## **Public Comment Period:**

## **Correspondence:**

Meeting Adjourned at 2:14 p.m. Next meeting is June 10th.

Respectfully submitted, Teri Van Huss