

Elsinore-Murrieta-Anza Resource Conservation District
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
Thursday, January 11, 2007 -- 2:00pm
Santa Rosa Plateau Ecological Reserve – Visitor Center
39400 Clinton Keith Road, Murrieta, CA 92562

Members Present:

Pamela Nelson, President
Bob Wheeler, Treasurer
Charolette Fox, Secretary
Del Ross, Associate Director
Dan Matrisciano, Associate Director
Vicki Long, Associate Director
Terri Whittington, Associate Director
Bob Hewitt, NRCS

Members Absent

Gary Watts, Director
Edward Stanton, Associate Director

Staff or Guests Present:

Shea O'Keefe
Carole Bell
Kristin DeAndero
Wenz Hannastran

Sheri Fox
Bill Burney
Richard DeAndero

Additions to the Agenda:

None

1.0 Call to Order and Introductions

President Pam Nelson called the meeting to order at 2:15pm. Self introductions were made.

2.0 Approval of Minutes

Minutes of December 14, 2006 were approved with the change from Skunk's Hollow to Skunk Hollow.

3.0 Treasurer's Report

Bob Wheeler reported no change from last month's balances of \$30,011.97 in Account #1 and \$21,070 in Account #2 (appropriated funds).

4.0 Public Comments

Carole Bell, Santa Rosa Plateau Manager, spoke briefly about weed eradication and fire management in general, then addressed post-fire restoration efforts on Santa Rosa Plateau. She attends regular meetings held for land managers and is willing to provide EMARCD with updates on the MSHCP. Star thistle is a plant being eradicated on the plateau. She mentioned that 10% matching grants are available for weed control from Fish & Game if submitted by February 14, 2007. Allocations will be made sometime this summer. Stream cleanup efforts continue.

Sheri Fox, NRCS Watershed Specialist, is new and available to help EMARCD on watershed issues, mapping and planning.

Shea O'Keefe, NRCS Biologist (Escondido Office), can work with EMARCD on a number of habitat issues including invasive and/or noxious weed control within the Santa Margarita Watershed. She provided two website addresses for more information on invasives: www.smslrwma.org, and <http://endeavor.des.ucdavis.edu/weeds>. Permit coordination planning is another area that Shea is familiar with and offered to help get started.

5.0 Presentations
None

6.0 Action Items - Approval requires a majority vote of directors.

6.1 Mitigation Committee Issues (see Committee Minutes made a part of this record)

- 6.1.1 Oak Springs Creek Development: Vicki Long provided information on the current physical attributes of this creek. The Committee recommended that EMARCD write a letter to the County Planner, Fish & Game, the Regional Water Quality Control Board, and the Riverside County Flood Control District to leave the creek open instead of piped on the south side of Clinton Keith and consider the creek a conservation easement. Comments are due by February 13. **Charolette Fox moved, Bob Wheeler seconded** that EMARCD ask Ray Johnson to write a letter on behalf of EMARCD for Oak Springs development having to do with animal corridors, oak destruction consideration, and a conservation easement. **Motion carried 4-0**, Gary Watts absent.
- 6.1.2 Antelope Hills area: 250 acres of open space is available behind Greer Ranch for a third-party conservation easement. The Committee recommended that EMARCD accept this parcel; Dr. Rick Hopkins to act as our agent to negotiate an endowment fee by the end of January. During discussion, Vicki Long clarified that the permittees are under Section 404 of the Fish & Game code, and the Army Corp of Engineers would be the enforcement agency. A biological monitoring would be required quarterly. EMARCD would monitor to see that the reports are filed. **Pam Nelson moved, Bob Wheeler seconded** that EMARCD pursue this 250 acre open space opportunity, if feasible, and that a special meeting be called (or an alternative) to accept the third-party conservation easement. **Motion carried 4-0**, Gary Watts absent.
- 6.1.3 French Valley development: This project has been explored in depth over the last several months. A \$75,000 endowment is expected for the conservation easement on this parcel. Dr. Hopkins is working out a couple of items related to the easement, and then the endowment funds can be received.
- 6.1.4 DeAndero Conservation Easement: Pamela Nelson provided background on this parcel and introduced Mr. and Mrs. DeAnderos. Maps were introduced to describe and locate the property which loops out of the Cleveland National Forest. Kristin DeAnderos expressed excitement about providing an easement to preserve this area and possibly to restore the willows. She indicated a wish to build a bridge across this pristine streambed. Carole Bell offered help with some details via a software program. **Pam Nelson moved, Bob Wheeler seconded** that EMARCD accept the DeAnderos conservation easement. There was discussion on the motion about monies on hand that can be used for this project and the need for work studies to be done. The project could be as much as \$5,000 and require project monitoring a couple of times per year. Responding to a question from Mrs. DeAnderos, the Committee would be willing to work with neighbors to the north and south of this easement. Vicki Long provided additional clarification on the process and anticipated timelines. **Motion carried 4-0**, Gary Watts absent.
- 6.1.5 Kincaid Conservation Easement: The Committee recommended that the Kincaid Conservation Easement be re-reviewed in light of the new source of funding proposed by Fish & Game. **Motion by Bob Wheeler, second by Terry Whittington** that this easement be reconsidered. **Motion carried 4-0**, Gary Watts absent.
- 6.1.6 Los Alamos Violation in-lieu mitigation funds: The Committee recommended that EMARCD accept \$60,000 from Regional Water Quality Control Board and funds NOT be deposited into the EMARCD Conservation Fund because there is a conservation

easement and the funds must be used on restoration. **Motion by Bob Wheeler, second by Terry Whittington** that the funds be accepted. During discussion, Pam mentioned the need to act quickly or this easement would be offered to SAWA. The easement is a result of a violation. **Motion carried 4-0**, Gary Watts absent.

- 6.1.7** Teracor in-lieu funds: The Committee recommended acceptance of \$56,000 of in-lieu funds resulting from an invasive species violation; funds can be deposited to the General Fund. **Moved by Bob Wheeler, second by Terry Whittington** that the funds be accepted. **Motion carried 4-0**, Gary Watts absent.

Mitigation Committee Items Presented for Information:

- 6.1.8** La Laguna Estates (and the LEAP lift station): Potential in-lieu funds of \$15,000 to \$20,000 for conservation and restoration may result on property in Lake Elsinore as a result of the proposed lift station. The item was presented for information only. The Committee will get more details from Jeff Brandt of Fish & Game and update the board at a future meeting.
- 6.1.9** Report Form: The Committee needs information on use and timeline of \$30,000 in funds that have already been deposited with EMARCD for a 0.5 acre riparian parcel. A periodic progress report needs to be developed for Jeff Brandt so that he is kept aware of any work completed or any concerns associated with this easement.
- 6.1.10** Maps: Several areas of concern need mapped before the next Mitigation Committee meeting. Shea O'Keefe offered to help Dan Matrisciano and Del Ross produce maps at a Watershed Committee meeting.
- 6.1.11** Public education on conservation easements was discussed. A film project for educational purposes is a possibility. Bob Backstrand, a filmmaker, may be available to help.
- 6.1.12** Warm Spring Creek Projects: \$280,000 from the Regional Water Quality could be used for projects along Warm Springs Creek, and to some degree for projects down to Murrieta Creek, either to buy property or easements or to restore. Bill Steele, at the Bureau of Reclamation, is anxious to help and has matching funds available. The Mitigation Committee needs to develop a list of projects for which the funds could be used (perhaps to purchase easements). Specific projects need to be identified. Del Ross indicated that the City of Murrieta is also interested in this money, and that he would be in contact with the City [to learn what projects they propose]. This should be discussed further at a meeting of the Watershed Committee.

6.2 Newsletter/Annual Report

Directors and Associates were requested to forward reports to Charolette Fox by January 31st. The material will be collated and formatted to create an Annual Report. The Report is expected to be completed by February 28. A distribution list is yet to be determined. An update of the goals of the strategic plan, a roster of Directors and Associates, and a list of accomplishments can be included.

6.3 MSHCP Committee

As follow up on the November presentation by Ida Martin, Shea O'Keefe visited the sites where siltation, habitat destruction, and/or road gradings have been reported. Shea concurred that greater code enforcement is needed. A meeting with Code Enforcement and Jay Orr, Director, is scheduled for February 8, 2007 at 10:00am. Jeff Brandt indicated that only a small group should attend this meeting at the site, with others included if another meeting is scheduled. Del Ross pointed out that this situation is a multi-faceted problem with multiple violations involved. For instance, there doesn't appear to be a stormwater permit for this mining operation, there are 404, 401, and 1600 violations, as well. Composted material created on-site is Class A sludge and not suitable for most uses. A containment

barrier may be needed. A letter to Planning to express our concerns regarding the renewal of the conditional use permit for the batch plant was suggested. Pam Nelson will draft a letter as soon as possible.

6.4 NRCS Help on Watershed Tasks

See Items 6.1.1 to 6.1.10.

6.5 Agua Tibia Parcel

Pam Nelson explained the background on this 120 acre inholding parcel for guests who were present. Discussion included Core 2 issues and criteria refinement per the MSHCP. Bob Wheeler suggested support for Larry Ulvestad and his efforts by having EMARCD send a letter to Planning and a letter to the RCA about the error in omitting this property in the MSHCP. RCA meetings are the first (1st) Monday of each month at 1:00pm. No action was taken.

6.6 Earth Day Events

Charolette Fox agreed to look into developing an EMARCD display or project for Earth Day events. As of now, events are proposed for the following dates:

- a) April 13, Cahuilla Reservation (for children)
- b) April 22 EARTH DAY - no commitment
- c) Week of April 22 - ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS DAY
- d) May 19, Idyllwild (for adults)
- e) **May 19 & 20**, Alamos Schoolhouse (in conjunction with Solar Cup Boat Races)
11:00am - 4:00pm

6.7 CARCD-Baja Regional Meeting

EMARCD will host the CARCD Regional Meeting. Pam Nelson suggested that the topic be the Anza Water Study and perhaps the meeting could be held on the Cahuilla Reservation, or the Anza Community Center. No date has been set. Meals and transportation, if needed for tours, need to be determined. The meeting is usually held in April. Pam will check on the availability of a meeting location. Possible locations for lunch are Cahuilla Reservation, Cottonwood Schoolhouse, or the Sundance Campgrounds.

6.8 Accounting Workshop, January 30

An accounting workshop will be held for Directors and Associates at 2:00 pm on January 30 at the RC&D offices in Riverside.

7.0 Committee Reports

7.1 Mitigation Committee - See 6.1.1 to 6.1.12

7.2 Watershed Committee - See 6.3 and 6.4

7.3 Schoolhouse/Office - Pam reported that the county space formerly used as the remote office for Supervisor Buster will not be available. Riverside County EDA has decided to occupy the facility which is located in the Walt Abraham business complex, next to the County Library.

8.0 Other Reports

8.1 Agency Reports

Bob Hewitt reported numerous activities for property owners including the creation of conservation plans for ag grading permits on four properties; contracts for drain lines on two properties, one on the east side and one on the west side of Temecula; completed the irrigation line for the Corona Ranch (for use of reclaimed water). He has an appointment with the new owner of the property formerly owned by Sandy Wilkerson. The County Planning Department has contacted him about reviewing and updating the plant lists per the new water conservation ordinance passed recently. Bob pointed out that nurseries will have to stock these plants or developers will have no stock available.

8.2 Directors Reports

- 8.2.1 Pam Nelson reviewed her written report and mentioned that she had received copies of the policies of Inland Empire RCD. The policies can be used as a guideline for the development of EMARCD policies.
- 8.2.2 Charolette Fox reviewed her written report.
- 8.2.3 Bob Wheeler - No report.
- 8.2.4 Terry Whittington mentioned a meeting regarding the Liberty Quarry would be held tonight (January 11) in Rainbow.

8.3 Associate Directors Reports

- 8.3.1 Ed Stanton - No report.
- 8.3.2 Vicki Long - No report.
- 8.3.3 Dan Matrisciano spoke of continued difficulties with off road vehicles and the need for new strategies. A new wine country team is being formed. Ron Pacheco, the new County District Attorney, wants to work on stronger environmental enforcement.
- 8.3.4 Del Ross provided a written report and updated the board on a number of issues including information on an EPA capacity grant, and Prop 84. Del is developing a "webcast" library from webcasts he downloads and which are excellent resources.

9.0 Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 5:15pm.

Charolette Fox, Secretary

Date Approved