



BOARD MEETING MINUTES
April 21, 2026

The regular meeting of the **Contra Costa Resource Conservation District** was held Tuesday, April 21, 2026, Diablo Valley College, Pleasant Hill, California.

DIRECTORS PRESENT: Renee Fernandez-Lipp, Bethallyn Black & Martin Steinpress

ASSOC. DIRECTORS PRESENT: Igor Skaredoff & Indy Rishi Singh
Remote: Bob Peoples & Tracey Rogers Brandt

RCD STAFF PRESENT: Chris Lim, Marisa Ortiz
Remote: Patty Pell & Ben Weise

NRCS STAFF PRESENT: None

DIRECTORS EXCUSED: None

Call to Order: Renee Fernandez-Lipp called the meeting to order at 8:35 A.M.

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE:
David Linell, Executive Director, Meals on Wheels - Diablo Region
Michelle GT, Presidio Grad School
Tracey Ley

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA: (Gov. Code 54954.2 (b)): None added

NRCS REPORT: Report presented by Ben Weise (CCRCD) on behalf of Luis Rivera-Cruz. Updates were provided on current NRCS activities, including continued coverage of the Solano County office and progress on environmental program applications. Discussion included a livestock water system project in the Morgan Territory area and the use of virtual fencing technology, which allows ranchers to manage cattle remotely using satellite-based collars. While the technology shows promise for improving land management and protecting sensitive areas, cost remains a significant barrier to implementation.

PRESENTATIONS: Doughnut Economics – Indy Rishi Singh, CCRCD Associate Board Member
Indy Rishi Singh presented on the Doughnut Economics framework, which explores balancing social well-being with environmental sustainability to ensure communities can thrive without exceeding ecological limits. The presentation highlighted current challenges in California, including housing, resource use, and environmental impacts, and emphasized the need to identify key indicators for both social and ecological health.

Opportunities for local application in Contra Costa County were discussed, including watershed restoration, biodiversity efforts, and community-based initiatives. CCRCD's role in supporting regional resilience and coordinating partnerships was noted, along with existing funding supporting these efforts.

CONSENT CALENDAR:

Item 7.1: Approve March 17, 2026 Board Minutes

Item 7.2: Accept March 2026 Financial Reports

Motion: Bethallyn Black moved to approve; seconded by Martin Steinpress

Motion carried: 3-0

Ayes: Black, Fernandez-Lipp & Steinpress

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Pease

DETERMINATION ITEMS:

8.1 Approve Unfunded Cooperative Agreement between CCRCO and USDA NRCS

Ben Weise summarized the agreement, which reflects current operations, including NRCS use of office space and shared access to vehicles. No changes were proposed.

Motion: Bethallyn Black moved to approve; seconded by Martin Steinpress

Motion carried: 3-0

Ayes: Black, Fernandez-Lipp & Steinpress

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Pease

8.2 Approve Emergency Action Plan

Ben Weise explained the Emergency Action Plan noting instructions and references for what to do in a variety of emergency situations.

Motion: Martin Steinpress moved to approve; seconded by Bethallyn Black

Motion carried: 3-0

Ayes: Black, Fernandez-Lipp & Steinpress

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Pease

8.3 Approve Hazard Communication Program

Ben Weise explained the Hazard Communication Program noting that it details any and all hazardous substances in our workplace, hazards from those substances, and how those substances are controlled.

Motion: Martin Steinpress moved to approve; seconded by Bethallyn Black

Motion carried: 3-0

Ayes: Black, Fernandez-Lipp & Steinpress

Nayes: None
Abstain: None
Absent: Pease

8.4 Approve Hearing Conservation Program

Ben Weise explained the Hearing Conservation Program noting that this program outlines procedures for minimizing risk of hearing loss as a result of working in areas with noise levels exceeding an 8-hour time weighted average of 85 dBA.

Motion: Bethallyn Black moved to approve; seconded by Martin Steinpress
Motion carried: 3-0

Ayes: Black, Fernandez-Lipp & Steinpress
Nayes: None
Abstain: None
Absent: Pease

8.5 Approve Driver Policy

Ben Weise explained the Driver Policy noting that this policy governs staff use of CCRCDC vehicles as well as personal vehicles used for District business.

Motion: Martin Steinpress moved to approve; seconded by Bethallyn Black
Motion carried: 3-0

Ayes: Black, Fernandez-Lipp & Steinpress
Nayes: None
Abstain: None
Absent: Pease

8.6 Approve signing of letter from California Climate Agriculture Network

Ben Weise reviewed a request to sign onto a support letter to protect funding for the SALC program.

Motion: Bethallyn Black moved to approve; seconded by Martin Steinpress
Motion carried: 3-0

Ayes: Black, Fernandez-Lipp & Steinpress
Nayes: None
Abstain: None
Absent: Pease

8.7 Consider approval to sign letter for AB2184 for funding from the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund

Ben Weise reviewed a request to support AB 2184, which would fund nature-based climate programs CCRCDC is involved in.

Motion: Martin Steinpress moved to approve; seconded by Bethallyn Black
Motion carried: 3-0

Ayes: Black, Fernandez-Lipp & Steinpress
Nays: None
Abstain: None
Absent: Pease

DISCUSSION:

Chris Lim and Renee Fernandez-Lipp shared upcoming events and volunteer opportunities, including Earth Day activities, community cleanups, and outreach events across the county.

Indy Rishi Singh discussed the recent John Muir National Historic Site Earth Day Birthday event.

REPORTS:

10.1 President Reports:

Renee Fernandez-Lipp shared highlights from a recent policy summit, noting concerns around energy, water resources, and development pressures. Emphasis was placed on sustainable growth, increasing policy involvement, and staying engaged in emerging environmental and resource issues.

10.2 Directors' Reports:

Board members shared updates on ongoing environmental and community initiatives, including beaver coexistence efforts, watershed restoration projects, and upcoming events such as the Beaver Festival. CCRCDD's interest in nature-based solutions, including beaver dam analogs, was also noted.

10.3 Staff Reports:

Chris Lim provided updates on recent activities, partnerships, and funding opportunities, including Earth Day events, climate initiatives, and ongoing projects.

10.4 Executive Director Reports/Report on Fundraising:

Chris Lim provided updates on funding opportunities.

Motion: Bethallyn Black moved to adjourn; seconded by Martin Steinpress
President Renee Fernandez-Lipp adjourned the meeting at 11:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted, Marisa Ortiz, Board Clerk, CCRCDD