BOARD MEETING MINUTES

August 18, 2026

The regular meeting of the **Contra Costa Resource Conservation District** was held Tuesday, August 18, 2026, at Diablo Valley College, Pleasant Hill, California.

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

ASSOC. DIRECTORS PRESENT: Derene Allen
Remote: Tracey Rogers Brandt & Bob Peoples

RCD STAFF PRESENT: Chris Lim, Marisa Ortiz & Ben Weise
Remote: Adam Gelfand & Evan Green

NRCS STAFF PRESENT: Allen Curry, Luis Rivera-Cruz

DIRECTORS EXCUSED: Soumya Suresh

CALL TO ORDER: Renee Fernandez-Lipp called the meeting to order at 8:30 A.M.

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE: Remote: Michael Miller

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

NRCS REPORT: Alan Curry provided an initial NRCS update, noting that NRCS had recently undergone a reorganization and that staff continued to support offices throughout California while completing final applications and obligating contracts.
Luis Rivera-Cruz later provided the field office's year-end program update. NRCS completed six contracts during the fiscal year, including three Environmental Quality Incentives Program contracts totaling approximately $143,000 and three Conservation Stewardship Program contracts totaling approximately $326,000. The field office is currently managing approximately 15 active contracts totaling $1.012 million.
Upcoming work for the 2026–2027 construction seasons includes three livestock water projects, a pond project, and an irrigation filtration project for a small Brentwood grower is also anticipated, with support from CCRCD staff.
Rivera-Cruz also reported that NRCS has a new Chief, Colton Buckley, whose priorities include expanding wildlife conservation and strengthening partnerships. The agency has adopted the slogan, "Keeping working lands in working hands."
CCRCD staff were thanked for leading the recent local work group/field demonstration and for supporting NRCS conservation planning efforts.

PRESENTATIONS: None

CONSENT CALENDAR:

Item 7.1: Approve July 16, 2026 Board Minutes
Item 7.2: Accept July 2026 Financial Reports

Motion: Walter Pease moved to approve; seconded by Martin Steinpress.
Motion carried: 4-0-0
Ayes: Black, Fernandez-Lipp, Pease, & Steinpress
Nays: None
Abstain: None
Absent: Suresh

DETERMINATION ITEMS:

8.1 Consider approval of contract to bring Civicorps onto Little Franks Tract to address standing dead biomass and prepare for native plant establishment (Gelfand)

Adam Gelfand presented a proposed contract with Civicorps to assist with removal and mulching of standing dead Himalayan blackberry at Little Franks Tract following previous herbicide treatment. The proposed contract provides for up to six days of work at a cost not to exceed **$8,640**, reimbursable under an approximately $40,000 grant agreement.

Motion: Walter Pease moved to approve; seconded by Bethallyn Black
Motion carried: 4-0-0
Ayes: Black, Fernandez-Lipp, Pease & Steinpress
Nays: None
Abstain: None
Absent: Suresh

8.2 Consider approval of contract with Frye Restoration Inc to address Himalayan blackberry bramble at Palm Orwood mitigation site (Gelfand)

Gelfand presented a proposed contract with Frye Restoration Inc. to address large Himalayan blackberry brambles within sensitive dune habitat. Some of the blackberry stands are approximately 10–15 feet tall and are too large for CCRCD staff to treat safely within current application practices.
The proposed work includes targeted treatment of Himalayan blackberry and removal of a layer of peat previously deposited over a portion of the dune habitat. The goal is to expose suitable dune substrate and support establishment of native species, including locally significant dune plants.

Motion: Bethallyn Black moved to approve; seconded by Walter Pease
Motion carried: 4-0-0
Ayes: Black, Fernandez-Lipp, Pease & Steinpress
Nays: None
Abstain: None
Absent: Suresh

8.3 Consider approval of contract for work with Friends of Alhambra Creek to control invasive Arundo in the Alhambra Creek Watershed (Green)

Evan Green presented a proposed contract with Friends of Alhambra Creek for invasive Arundo removal within the Alhambra Creek and Peyton Slough watersheds. Friends of Alhambra Creek has received approximately $50,000 from Martinez Refining Company to support the project.
CCRCD's proposed contract is not to exceed $32,389 and includes approximately 10 days of field work as well as coordination and planning. Work would include cutting Arundo biomass, targeted cut-stem herbicide treatment, and biomass disposal. Any participation in future treatment seasons would require a separate contract.

Motion: Martin Steinpress moved to approve; seconded by Walter Pease
Motion carried: 3-1-0
Ayes: Black, Pease & Steinpress
Nays: Fernandez-Lipp
Abstain: None
Absent: Suresh

8.4 Consider approval of Resolution 2026–05 for project "Bay Point Climate-Resilient Transit Stop Initiative and Workforce Development Project" Round 2 application to the California Natural Resources Agency's Urban Greening grant program (Lim)

Chris Lim presented an update on the proposed Bay Point Climate-Resilient Transit Stop Initiative. CCRCD previously submitted a pre-proposal of slightly more than $4 million and was invited to submit a full proposal.
The project would improve bus stops along Willow Pass Road in Bay Point, many of which currently lack benches or shade structures. Depending on available space, proposed improvements could include benches, shade structures, trees, bioswales, stormwater improvements, and other green infrastructure features.

Motion: Martin Steinpress moved to approve; seconded by Bethallyn Black
Motion carried: 4-0-0
Ayes: Black, Pease, Steinpress & Fernandez-Lipp
Nays: None
Abstain: None
Absent: Suresh

DISCUSSION:

9.1 Current Events:

The following upcoming events were noted:

- **Lower Rodeo Creek Coastal Cleanup Day 2026 -** September 19th, 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. 605 Parker Ave, Rodeo, CA 94572
- **Crockett Waterfront Coastal Cleanup Day 2026 -** September 19th, 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. 1909 Dowrelio Drive, Crockett, CA 94525

9.2 Review of CCRCD pay scales and Field Technician II job description

Updated CCRCD pay scales and the Field Technician I & II job descriptions were presented for Board review.

REPORTS:

10.1 President Report:

President Fernandez-Lipp reported that she would be attending the upcoming CSDA Conference. Registration for the CARCD Annual Conference had also opened. Directors interested in attending were

encouraged to submit requests promptly because the conference has filled quickly in prior years. Fernandez-Lipp indicated that she planned to attend and would bring her travel request to the Board. Staff noted that Lisa, CCRCD's Watershed Conservation Manager, would be presenting during the conference's RCD staff programming on pollinator education projects.

10.2 Director Reports: None

10.3 Staff Reports:
The Board expressed appreciation for continued improvements to the format and presentation of staff reports, including the addition of photographs and increased emphasis on outcomes.

10.4 Executive Director Report / Fundraising Report:
Staff informed the Board of a new fiscal and financial training requirement, SB 827, for Board members. Lim shared that the CCRCD advanced to Round 2 of the California Natural Resources Agency Urban Greening Grant application discussed under Item 8.4.
CCRCD also submitted a pre-proposal to the Governor's Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation for related Bay Point transit-stop planning and demonstration work. If both proposals are funded, the planning grant could support design and initial demonstration sites, while the Urban Greening proposal could support broader implementation.

Three proposals were submitted to the Contra Costa County Fish and Wildlife Committee, including:

- research regarding Azolla and water-quality conditions in local ponds;
- additional river-rock augmentation in Marsh Creek to improve steelhead spawning habitat; and
- a shade house at the Laurel Court Community Garden.

Lim also reported that the CCRCD is pursuing a Strategic Growth Council Transformative Climate Communities planning grant for Rodeo.

President Renee Fernandez-Lipp adjourned the meeting at 10:06 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Marisa Ortiz
Board Clerk, CCRCD