

**BOARD OF
DIRECTORS**

Richard C. Brody
President

Laurie Price
Vice President

Nancy Helsley
Treasurer

Beth Burnam
Director

Riki Clark
Director

REGULAR BOARD MEETING

*EIGHT-HUNDRED SEVENTY-FOURTH MEETING
Monday January 26, 2026—6:00 P.M.*

Location: RCD District Office, 4505 Las Virgenes Road, Suite 215, Calabasas

The meeting can also be accessed remotely via Zoom. Members of the public are able to watch/listen to the meeting and provide comment at appropriate times by selecting this link:

<https://rcdsmm-org.zoom.us/j/83062285194?pwd=UG5hViF4Z3NBRjNHR2RyWjNBcIY2UT09>.

You may also join the meeting by dialing the following phone number: (669) 900-6833 and entering the meeting ID and passcode: Meeting ID: 830 6228 5194 Meeting Passcode: 370601

AGENDA

Information about, and copies of, supporting materials for agenda items are available for public review at the RCDSMM office at (818) 597-8627. A fee may be charged for copies.

1. CALL TO ORDER

2. INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS

This is the time set aside for those wishing to address the Board on matters which fall under the Board's jurisdiction. If the matter you address is not on the agenda, Directors may not discuss or take action on comments made here except to put the matter on the agenda, at their discretion, for a future Board meeting. If the matter you address is already on the agenda, the Board will consider your comments when making their decision. Each commenter will have a time limit of three minutes.

4. USDA/NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE REPORT:

5. MINUTES:

A. Approval of minutes for meeting on December 22, 2025

6. FINANCIAL REPORTING: Informational reports on Districts financials through December 2025

7. REGULAR CALENDAR.

A. Resolution No. 2026-01-26 Authorizing entering into a cooperative agreement with CALTRANS to conduct the project approval and engineering document (PA&ED) needed to complete 65% design for the Newhall Wildlife crossing project, funded by the wildlife conservation board.

- B. Discussion on electing to be subject to the Public Employees' Medical and Hospital Care Act at an unequal amount for employees and annuitants
- C. Finalizing CARCD Board resolutions and bylaws vote
- D. Discussion on staff submitted policies and procedures for Board approval of public comments and letters of support.
- E. Discussion on proposed Acting or Interim Appointments of Existing Employees Policy
- F. Update from Personnel Committee on District Manager job search.

8. INFORMATIONAL REPORTS:

A. Staff Reports for December 2025:

- i. Clark Stevens, Director of Resource Design
- ii. Dan Cooper, Principal Conservation Biologist
- iii. Rosi Dagit, Principal Conservation Biologist
- iv. Marilyn Brody French, Director of Education
- v. Shelly Backlar, Director of Community Resilience
- vi. Lisa Rand, Administrative Operation Manager

9. ADJOURNMENT

10. CLOSED SESSION: Staff personnel Matters

Persons with disabilities may contact the Administrative Operations Manager at 818/597-8627 at least 24 hours before the scheduled meeting to request receipt of an agenda in an alternative format or to request disability-related accommodations, including auxiliary aids or services, in order to participate in the public meeting. Later requests will be accommodated to the extent feasible.

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REGULAR BOARD MEETING

EIGHT-HUNDRED SEVENTY-THIRD MEETING

Monday December 22, 2025—6:00 P.M.

Location: RCD District Office, 4505 Las Virgenes Road, Suite 215, Calabasas

Minutes

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** This meeting was called to order by President R.C. Brody at 6:00 PM. A quorum was established with Directors Richard Brody, Nancy Helsley, Riki Clark and Laurie Price, Director Berth Burnam and Associate Director Chris Doran joined virtually.
2. **INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS:**
3. **PUBLIC COMMENTS:** None
4. **USDA/NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE REPORT:** Mr. Engelhardt reported on the NRCS' application deadlines for landowners and farmers to aid in reducing soil erosion, to improve water quality, wildlife habitat management, conservation stewardship projects that offer expert technical assistance and cost-sharing programs.
5. **MINUTES:** Approval of minutes from meetings on November 17, 2025. The Board reviewed the minutes and voted to approve them as presented. President R.C. Brody moved to approve. Ms. Helsley/Ms. Price, approved 4-0
6. **FINANCIAL REPORTING:** The district's financial reports were presented through November 2025. It was noted that \$50K will be moved into reserves this month bringing total to approx. \$271K and half of desired total reserves.
7. **REGULAR CALENDAR.**
 - A. Staff presentation by Isaac Yelchin on current monarch projects and discussion on working with Ventura RCD on joint promotion of monarch projects. There was board consensus to move forward with a joint event.
 - B. Approval of 2026 Board Meeting Dates: President R.C. Brody moved to approve with consensus to "go dark" in December and not hold a board meeting.

Discussion to revisit monthly meetings later in the year. Ms. Helsley/Ms. Clark, approved 4-0

- C. Review of CARCD Board resolutions and bylaws: Consensus to move vote to January board meeting.
- D. Approval of edits to district's Employee Handbook: Discussion to approve Employee handbook edits with the change to make Bilingual policy 2 pay steps. President R.C. Brody moved to approve. Ms. Price/Ms. Helsley, approved 4-0
- E. District expansion update: Administrative Operations Manager gave a presentation on progress made made with LAFCO and noted next steps will be to conduct requests for proposals for expansion mapping.
- F. Discussion on policies and procedures for Board approval on public comments and letters of support: Discussion on recent presentation given by staff to the Board of Forestry and procedures for board approval of presentations and public comments. It was discussed that a policy needs to be put in writing.
- G. Update from Personnel Committee on District Manager job search: Ad hoc staff committee has been formed, and Job Posting is still active through January 15.

8. DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS: Director Helsley brought in a pollinator poster and requested it be used for educational purposes.

9. INFORMATIONAL REPORTS:
A. Staff Reports for November 2025 were presented in the Director's Packets.

10. ADJOURNMENT: 8:07 PM

11. CLOSED SESSION: Adjourned 9:14 PM; discussions centered on Board review of policy on external public presentations and comment issues as well as reimbursement for out-of-class/acting issues.

Submitted By: _____
Lisa Rand, Administrative Operations Manager

Date: _____

Approved By: _____
R.C. Brody, president, Board of Directors

Date: _____

	Jan-26	Feb-26	Mar-26	Apr-26
RCD Cash Flow Forecast 01/2026				
A) Beg Bal 01/22/2026	319,199	419,295	399,142	404,991
Collections				
Pass Through Revenue				
Deposits in Transit	-	-	-	-
Wildlife Conservation Board Top Lagoon	-	426,997	364,686	183,911
CA State Coastal Conservancy	76,338	58,809	57,475	64,077
CA State Parks	-	1,415	1,958	1,687
Ca Dept of Fish and Wildlife	-	14,061	2,755	6,408
National Fish & Wildlife Foundation	446,340	-	-	-
Other Deposits	-	-	-	-
Total Pass Through Revenue	522,678	501,282	426,874	256,083
Non Pass Through Revenue				
Deposits in Transit	-	-	-	-
Wildlife Conservation Board	-	54,975	108,982	81,979
CA Dept of Forestry & Fire Protection	-	16,477	15,585	16,031
Other Non Pass Through Deposits	-	92,763	80,598	86,680
Property Tax Revenue	-	18,645	1,250	117,000
Total Non Pass Through Deposits	-	182,860	206,415	301,690
B) Total Deposits	522,678	684,141	633,289	557,773
Check/Payments				
Pass Through Payments Top Lagoon	-	(430,434)	(399,965)	(91,664)
Other Pass Through	(422,581)	(113,860)	(57,475)	(187,572)
Payroll	-	(130,000)	(140,000)	(140,000)
Other Operating Expenses	-	(30,000)	(30,000)	(30,000)
Total Payments	(422,581)	(704,294)	(627,440)	(449,236)
C) Transfer to Reserve Account	-	-	-	(65,000)
EOM Estimated Balance	419,295	399,142	404,991	448,528

A) Cash Position includes 250k in advance deposits

B) March & April 2026 Forecast based on budget projections & current outstanding receivables.

C) Contingent on receiving pymts prior to month end April

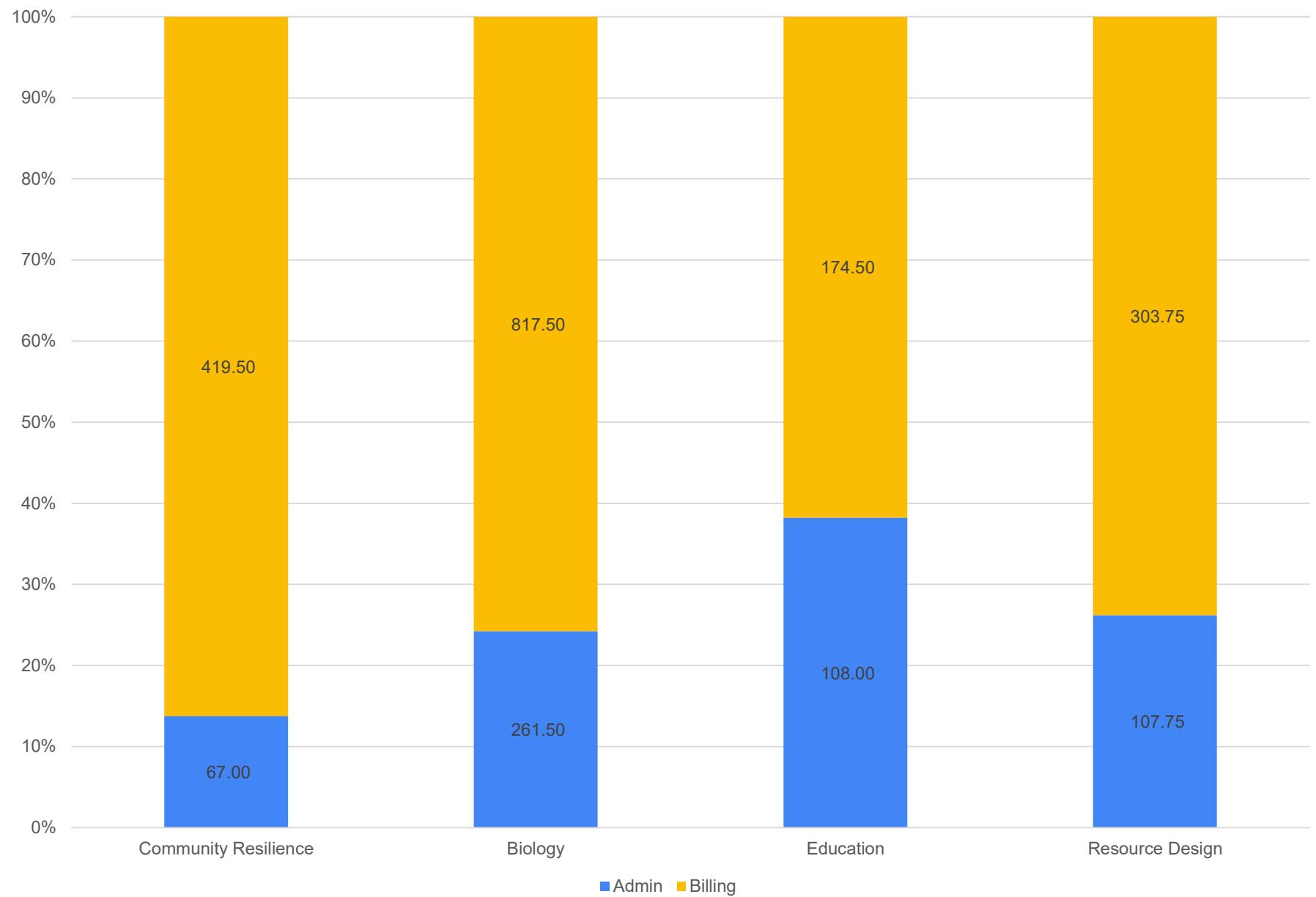
A/R Aging Summary Report

RCDSMM

As of January 22, 2026

Customer	CURRENT	1 - 30	31 - 60	61 - 90	91 AND OVER	Total	Pass Thru	Net	Notes
Architerra Design Group	378.75	996.25				1,375.00	0.00	1,375.00	
Atherwood Elementary School	850.00					850.00	0.00	850.00	
Bruno Naylor					6,376.80	6,376.80	0.00	6,376.80	Continuously reaching out but not getting a response. Will keep trying
CA Dept. of Fish and Wildlife	2,754.86	14,061.02				16,815.88	0.00	16,815.88	
CA Dept. of Forestry & Fire Protection			210.00	31,851.74		32,061.74	0.00	32,061.74	
California State Coastal Conservancy	57,475.28	58,808.86	76,337.97			192,622.11	175,638.67	16,983.44	
California State Parks	1,082.13	1,911.02	380.00			3,373.15	0.00	3,373.15	
Fairburn Ave Elementary				1,700.00		1,700.00	0.00	1,700.00	
Los Angeles County Dept of Regional Planning	32,570.90	22,480.00				55,050.90	55,050.90	0.00	All pass through
Mariposa School of Global Education	350.00					350.00	0.00	350.00	
McMillen, LLC		2,570.00	2,220.00	3,300.00		8,090.00	0.00	8,090.00	
Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority	47,894.82	32,702.92	37,712.13			118,309.87	0.00	118,309.87	
National Fish and Wildlife Foundation - Woolsey		142,405.00	303,934.54			446,339.54	363,226.54	83,113.00	
Wildlife Conservation Board	425,908.00	456,072.03	66,347.77	273,503.35		1,221,831.15	966,938.94	254,892.21	
TOTAL	569,264.74	732,007.10	487,142.41	72,340.28	244,586.61	\$2,105,341.14	1,560,855.05	544,291.09	

Dec 2025 Billing vs Admin (GF) Hours



Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains

Fiscal Year 2025 - 2026 Budget vs Actual

July 1, 2025 thru November 30, 2025

Income	YTD Budget	YTD Actual	Notes
Grant Revenue	\$ 1,396,856	\$ 4,104,662	
Property Tax Revenue	\$ 27,740	\$ 28,258	
Donations	\$ 15,000	\$ 10,261	
Interest Income	\$ 6,000	\$ 10,678	
Total Income	\$ 1,445,596	\$ 4,153,859	
Expenses			
Payroll Expenses	\$ 810,281	\$ 777,334	
Professional Fees	\$ 17,500	\$ 16,116	
Pass Thru Expenses	\$ 627,540	\$ 3,228,659	
General Overhead expenses	\$ 75,766	\$ 106,797	
Total Expenses	\$ 1,531,087	\$ 4,128,906	
Net Operating Income	\$ (85,491)	\$ 24,953	

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RESOLUTION NO. 2026-01-26
JANUARY 26, 2026

RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT OF THE SANTA MONICA MOUNTAINS (RCDSSM) AUTHORIZING ENTERING INTO A COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT WITH CALTRANS TO CONDUCT THE PROJECT APPROVAL AND ENGINEERING DOCUMENT (PA&ED) NEEDED TO COMPLETE 65% DESIGN FOR THE NEWHALL WILDLIFE CROSSING PROJECT, FUNDED BY THE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD.

WHEREAS, the Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains, in concert with Caltrans District Seven, has completed the Project Initiation Document (PID), and the Project Study Report –Project Development Guidance Support (PSR-PDS) document will be signed this month.

WHEREAS, the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) funded the RCDSSM to lead a 65% Design for the Wildlife Crossing Project in the Newhall Pass, entering into a Cooperative Agreement with Caltrans to complete the PA&ED is required to fulfill our grant obligation, we must complete our design deliverable by April 2027 – leaving us a finite period of time to complete the Project Deliverable..

WHEREAS, the RCDSSM is identified as the CEQA Lead Agency in the Cooperative Agreement with Caltrans for the PA&ED, after consultation with the Southern California Representative for the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), we are advised to apply for CEQA Statutory Exemption for Restoration Projects (SERP) under their [Cutting the Green Tape](#) initiative.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Directors of the Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains hereby:

1. Approves entering into a Cooperative Agreement with Caltrans to conduct the Project Approval and Engineering Document (PA&ED) needed to complete 65% design on the Newhall Wildlife Crossing Project
2. Certifies that the RCDSSM will comply with all federal, state and local environmental, public health, and other appropriate laws and regulations applicable to the project and

will obtain or will ensure that the other project partners obtain all appropriate permits applicable to the project; and

3. Further commits to the terms and conditions specified in the Cooperative Agreement; and

4. Appoints Art Renzi, Controller, as representative of RCDSMM to conduct negotiations, execute, submit and sign all documents including but not limited to applications, agreements, amendments, payment requests, and other documents which may be necessary for the completion of the proposed project.

APPROVED AND ADOPTED this 26th day of January 2026 by the Board of Directors of the Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains in the County of Los Angeles in the State of California.

Signature: _____ Date: _____
Richard Brody, President

MOTION TO ADOPT:

Yea:

Nays:

Abstain:

Absent:

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution 2026-01-26 A was duly and regularly adopted by the Board of Directors of the Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains at the meeting held on the 26th day of January 2026.

Lisa Rand, Secretary for the Board

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Beth Burnam
Director

Riki Clark
Director

MEMO

To: Board of Directors

From: Shelly Backlar

Date: 1/23/2026

Subject: Resolution to Enter into a Cooperative Agreement with Caltrans for the PA&ED phase to complete 65% design for the Newhall Wildlife Crossing

We have finished the Project Initiation Document (PID) phase for the Newhall Wildlife Crossing Project. To achieve 65% Design, we must now enter into a Cooperative Agreement with Caltrans to begin the Project Approval and Environmental Document (PA&ED) phase that must be completed by the end of March 2027. Upon execution of the Agreement, the RCDsMM is designated as the CEQA lead, however, we have consulted with California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) and are advised to apply for CEQA Statutory Exemption for Restoration Projects (SERP) under their “Cutting the Green Tape” initiative.

Shelly Backlar
Director of Community Resilience

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JANUARY 26, 2026

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will obtain or will ensure that the other project partners obtain all appropriate permits applicable to the project; and

3. Further commits to the terms and conditions specified in the Cooperative Agreement; and

4. Appoints Art Renzi, Controller, as representative of RCDSMM to conduct negotiations, execute, submit and sign all documents including but not limited to applications, agreements, amendments, payment requests, and other documents which may be necessary for the completion of the proposed project.

APPROVED AND ADOPTED this 26th day of January 2026 by the Board of Directors of the Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains in the County of Los Angeles in the State of California.

Signature: _____ Date: _____
Richard Brody, President

MOTION TO ADOPT:

Yea:

Nays:

Abstain:

Absent:

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution 2026-01-26 A was duly and regularly adopted by the Board of Directors of the Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains at the meeting held on the 26th day of January 2026.

Lisa Rand, Secretary for the Board

CalPERS Health Information

- Employer required monthly payment per enrolled employee: \$162
- No minimum number of enrolled employees
- Retired annuitants are eligible at unequal ratio. (starts at \$1 per month and increases to \$162 per month over 20 years). Currently the RCD has 1 eligible retired annuitant
- Low admin fees, 0.08% applied to total active and retired health premiums. (Ex: \$20,000 monthly premiums, \$16 monthly admin fee)

Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains Public Comment and Support Policy DRAFT

RCDSMM staff are professionals with unique expertise in their fields, and respond to concerns of District residents. As a result, staff are frequently asked to weigh in on a variety of issues, some controversial.

It is difficult to predict which presentations (or parts of presentations) will spark concern, or might result in changes to regulations. Therefore, we propose the following general guidelines, which rely on the discretion of the District Manager (DM).

Staff will be responsible for preparing the following items that will be reviewed by the DM:

- Public comment letters on behalf of the RCDSMM
- Letters of support for other organizations or efforts

The DM will elevate such letters to board for timely review, typically only if deemed of a political or sensitive nature.

General public presentations will be reviewed by the DM for consistency/public sensitivities but will generally not involve the board.

If individual board members have a substantive concern with RCDSMM staff products, they should be discussed at the board level, and if supported by the majority of the board, communicated via the DM.

Board members who have a perceived conflict in a topic are expected to recuse themselves from discussion/approval.

In the absence of a DM, relevant senior staff are collectively responsible for determining the review process (e.g., Community Resilience, Ecological Research, Resource Design for wildfire issues, Biology Staff for Topanga Lagoon issues, etc.).

Resource ConservationDistrict of the Santa Monica Mountains Acting or Interim
Appointments of Existing Employees DRAFT

RCD employees may be temporarily assigned extra and/or different duties on an acting/interim basis as needed by the RCD. When an employee is assigned to perform a significant amount of (or all of) the duties of a higher position on a temporary basis and that assignment lasts for more than four (4) consecutive weeks, the employee is eligible for additional pay in an amount up to \$7 per hour but not to exceed the first step of the pay band for the higher position being performed. The acting appointment can be made for a specified period of time or on an indefinite basis (where consistent with applicable law), to best meet the needs of the RCD. Employee compensation will be reported to CalPERS in accordance with CalPERS requirements based on the employee's membership status and the circumstances of the appointment.

January 2025 Board Meeting

Clark Stevens, RESOURCE DESIGN

Project/Program Highlights

- SoLAC Nature Connectivity Plan- As Project Director:
 - Completed reorganization Stillwater-McMillen
 - No Focus meetings this period
 - Receipt of early ecotope and study area polygons
 - Weekly design meetings in-house and with consulting team
 - Initiated PCH editorial (by others) on coastal burn area future(s)
 - Mapping of Coastal Slope Connectivity areas within PCH burn zone
 - Conceptual design layer development (existing and potentials)
 - LA River Flow workshop on downtown connectivity pilot reach
- Newhall Wildlife Passage Project- as project director:
 - Strategic planning for next level County feedback for viaduct as preferred alternative
 - Caltrans PID review complete; approval by RCDSMM pending tonight
 - Preparation of revised Gavin Canyon Old Road Viaduct connectivity project exhibits (with weldon alternative restoration zone) for use in County interactions
- Manzanita School- as Project Architect/co-Director
 - phase 2 final restoration and management plan under approved agreement- client phase 1 review meeting complete, verbal approval to proceed phase 2
- Topanga Lagoon Restoration
 - Final design phase meetings regarding new programming and relocation of visitor serving elements
 - Communications with RCD project managers and consultant team
- Wildfire Resilience Design and Planning (NFWF grant 11/31) as Project Architect
 - Edited final deliverables .
 - Coordinated with CR Director on final report documents and final invoicing
 - Met with team for final product/data assessment and next steps for Community Resilience department new project development
- Sheriff's Overlook Interpretive Landscape
 - proposal for 90% design completion approved; initiation meeting next week

General Department Highlights

- Staff meetings with interim administrative staff and input sessions with Board Hiring subcommittee
- Edited text of RFP for survey and boundary description services

Dec. 2025 Board Report

Dan Cooper, Principal Conservation Biologist

Jan. 6, 2026

Ecological Research

- Continued work on several major grants (with other RCDSMM staff):
 - **4005**: Update to LA County's Significant Ecological Areas network, which is mapping significant resources throughout the County. Continued field visits, drafted report and maps.
 - **4060**: South Los Angeles Co. Connectivity (SOLACC)
- Continued representing RCDSMM on the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Areas Task Force, meeting on 12/16.
- Continued working on fire/“Zone Zero” issues (managing vegetation around homes for fire). Gave (invited, Zoom) presentation with Clark Stevens to subcommittee of Board of Forestry (“[Zone Zero and Urban Ecology](#)”), followed by Q and A from BoF staff (and board).
- Continued work with small team on developing a land bank in the eastern Santa Monica Mtns.
- Assisted Rosi Dagit with edits to steelhead report/paper.
- Continued advising local artist’s team on developing major art-conservation initiative aimed at preserving and restoring habitat through public art installations (with Clark and Bella).
- Worked on various small projects for clients, mainly ADU permit clearance as well as potential new projects.
- Continued work on Hollywood Bowl bio-survey (repeats work done by CEM, Inc. in 2010, 2015).
- Finished work on the Los Angeles Raptor Study (**3256**; joint project with RCDSMM and Friends of Griffith Park); volunteer appreciation dinner on 9/28.

Misc.

- Working with small group citywide to elevate biodiversity into LA28 (Olympics planning), including “biodiversity hubs” of native pollinator plants, cross-departmental messaging, etc. Developing strategy for meetings with public officials and agency reps. (incl. Sen. Ben Allen, Horvath’s deputies, etc.).
- Met again as part of LaKretz Center’s (UCLA) advisory committee to select new postdoc (with Dr. Brad Shaffer, Seth Riley, Sophie Parker et al.), 12/5.
- Continuing as a University Lecturer, at UCLA (IoES) and CSULB (Ornithology) – not part of RCDSMM billing.

December 2025
Rosi Dagit
Restoration and Monitoring

Dear Friends,

This is my last board report as I am stepping down as Dept head as of January. Jamie King will now be providing leadership for the Restoration and Monitoring team going forward. I am so appreciative for the opportunity to gradually reduce my participation in our many wonderful projects over 2026. I will continue to be working on the Topanga Lagoon Restoration Project one day a week, and coordinate the spring/summer field work with the hope of hiring an Aquatic Program Project Manager sometime in early Spring who will also assist with the Topanga Lagoon work. I will also continue to represent the RCDSMM on several committees including Caltrans Fish Action Leadership, SMBRC TAC, LA County Beach Commission, etc.

Topanga Lagoon Restoration Planning 3226

Assisted Jamie and Danielle on visitor services elements. Lots of meetings regarding parks visitor services.

CDFW Topanga Lagoon CEQA Grant 3238

Worked on spending down to complete this grant spending in January 2026. Final report is due end of February when the contract ends.

WCB Topanga Lagoon Grant 3247 Part 1

Coordinated with MN and Caltrans regarding project report, design, and landowner agreement. Project Team coordination calls. Reviewed invoicing and reporting. Met with Coastal Commission and set up additional focus meetings. Coordinated site visit with Assemblymember Irwin's team and Caltrans team.

CDPR Malibu Snorkel Survey 3244

Prepared invoice and monthly report, reviewed data. Completed HOBO annual report summary. Reviewed 30% design reports and provided comments.

CDFW Genetic Conservation Plan 3243 CDFW

Prepared monthly report. Edison High School holding facility ribbon cutting ceremony was held on 18 Dec. Still need to purchase a few items but this grant will be wrapping up in February as well. LA Times article http://enewspaper.latimes.com/infinity/article_share.aspx?guid=15c1001e-c049-436a-bf64-9678cda832e4

Topanga Elementary School Oak Violation Contract 3246

Coordinated final recommendations with LACO Regional Planning. ERB hearing on 1/26 should wrap up our responsibilities for this project.

WCB Topanga Lagoon Grant 3251 Part 2

Calls with Caltrans, MN and Project team to coordinate next steps. MN conceptual design continued. Focus meetings with Caltrans and MN team regarding various design elements per Coastal direction. 60% submittal is in!!!! Sent thank you note regarding Caltrans site visit.

Topanga Snorkel 3252 CDPR

Continued breach monitoring and lagoon remains open. HOBO graphs completed for permit reports.

Fire Response 3117

Continued to conduct site visits to document Topanga Creek conditions and supervised water quality collection to contribute to SCCWRP project which is collating all WQ data. Still waiting for results from sediment samples. Continued monitoring Topanga Canyon Blvd. conditions.

Horvath Social Program Grant 3257

Completed report preparation and will revise formatting to submit a journal article to Bulletin of Southern CA Academy of Sciences in January.

GENERAL DEPARTMENT HIGHLIGHTS

- Continued conversations about transition of my supervisory work to Danielle and others.
- Worked with Art on budget and invoicing issues
- Met with Lisa re staffing issues
- Assisted with preparation of SMBRC state of the bay update on wetlands conditions.
- Helped coordinate the Board Field Trip to Topanga Lagoon.
- Participated in Wetland Recovery Project working group and SMBRC TAC meetings regarding State of the Bay reports.
- Interviewed for a video being produced by Supervisor Horvath regarding anniversary of the fire.
- Received recognition award from USFWS for goby rescue.
- Prepared all annual permit reports to be submitted in January.

January 5, 2025

Education Department
December Staff Report
Marilyn Brody French

Roles, Projects & Programs

- **Leadership/GF**
 - DM Hiring
 - Appointed to hiring committee
 - Reviewed proposed timeline with BMA
 - Funding Development
 - Submitted for Whale Tail Grant to extend funding on current programs
 - Collaborating cross-departmentally for grant and funding opportunities
 - Utilizing the [COGEO](#) self-guided resource to ID community funding partners
 - CARCD Education Committee
 - Follow up communications sent out statewide following conference
 - RCD Holiday Party
 - Supported coordination and implementation of holiday party
- **Staff & Department Management**
 - Elevated one part-time staff to support in fund and project development
 - Coordinating in person staff training days for january and early spring
 - Set strategic planning mtg for department in january with 4 key staff
- **School Education Programs**
 - 3 field programs (lots of rescheduling to spring)
 - Re-sent communications to teacher/school contacts for program registrations. Receiving high volume for spring, nearly out of SCWP funding.
- **WiLD CiTY**
 - December 12th "City of Stars" in partnership with Santa Monica residential building was well-attended and successful

January 26, 2025

Shelly Backlar, Director of Community Resilience
Community Resilience

Wildfire Education and Prevention

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) Grant ended on 11-30-25.

- Next steps include:
 - Updating our website,
 - Uploading documents/deliverables
 - *From Wildfire to Wind-fire: Understanding Ignition, Propagation, and Structure Loss in the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI)*
 - ARCGis Storymap: Invasive Plant Removal Prioritization for Santa Monica Mountains Protected Land Surveyed (2021-2023)
 - *Fire-wise Garden Design in the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI)*
 - Spanish language version of Sustainable, Defensible Space booklet
 - Receiving NFWF approval on those documents and website text before making the page(s) live.

Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) grant:

- In Partnership with Community Nature Connection we are holding a [Community Fire Resilience Workshop](#) on Saturday, January 10, at their Elyria Canyon office in Cypress



Wildfire Biologist Technician, Eric Sharberg; Wildfire Resilience Specialist, Molly Ross and Senior HIZ Evaluator, Dayana Doroteo at CNC's Elyria Canyon Office.

Newhall Wildlife Crossing

- Caltrans is finishing its final Executive Review of our Project Study Report – Project Development Support (PSR-PDS) documents, to be signed this month.
- Next Step includes entering into a Cooperative Agreement with Caltrans, initiating the Project Approval and Environmental Document (PA&ED) phase. See Agenda Item and Board Resolution
- We continue to work with the LA Department of Public Works to understand the feasibility associated with the Gavin Canyon undercrossing viaduct option – the internally preferred Alternative

South LA County Nature Connectivity Plan

- Our second outreach meeting for Subject Matter Experts will likely take place in February 2026. The meeting will provide an update on our progress and will address comments, questions and suggestions provided by our SMEs
- Outreach, engagement, and webpage development are priorities for February, 2026; the RCD is the lead on these tasks

General Department Highlights

In December we:

- Conducted HIZ Evaluations in Agoura Hills/Oak Park, Westlake Village, Hollywood Hills, La Crescenta, Glendale Burbank

Year End Statistics:

In 2025, with funding from Calfire, NFWF and MRCA,

We conducted **456 HIZ evaluations of individual residential structures**, and conducted wildfire safety reviews for **2 HOA communities**. The next step is to work with those HOAs to promote and conduct individual HIZ evaluations.

December 2025

Lisa Rand **Administrative Operations Manager**

Board Secretary

- District Manager Transition
 - Increased communication with Board President on operational needs in the absence of a District Manager
 - Communication with the Board Personnel Committee and Bob Murray on the hiring process for District Manager.
- Board Secretary Duties
 - Coordinatization with Board Members on agenda items for November Board Meeting
 - Prepare and distribute agenda for Board Meeting
 - Attend monthly board meeting, prepare and distribute meeting minutes

Operations

- Continue work on 2025-26 Operations Workplan
 - Followed up with previously identified potential CRM companies and contacted new company
 - Continued working with employment lawyer at BKK to review existing Employee Handbook, human resource letter templates and additions/modification to polices
- Worked with Community Engagement Manager on Holiday Party planning and execution
- Continue weekly meetings with Controller to ensure smooth internal operations
- Conducted numerous training sessions with all RCD staff to ensure successful transition to the new payroll system.

Human Resources

- Work with Community Engagement Manager on promotion of District Manager job posting
- Conducted various meetings with staff on HR issues

District Manger Duties (In conjunction w/ Controller)

- Conducted weekly/Bi-weekly meetings with key staff to ensure smooth internal operations
- Respond to District Manager incoming emails
- Review and sign contracts
- Work with Director of Resource Design on communication with lafco on district expansion
- Prepare agendas and facilitate weekly staff meetings
- Support district leadership team to ensure continued continuity in absence of District Manager
- Communication with Board President and Board Members on board/staff policy issues