

**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-SIXTH MEETING*

***Monday March 2, 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=UG5hVlF4Z3NBRjNHR2RyWjNBcU92UT09>.

*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. CLOSED SESSION:

- A. Consideration of public employment appointment – District Manager position (Cal. Govt. Code section 54957)

### 3. INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

### 4. 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.

### 5. USDA/NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE REPORT:

### 6. MINUTES:

- A. Approval of minutes for meeting on January 26, 2026
- B. Approval of minutes for special meeting on February 17, 2026

### 7. FINANCIAL REPORTING: Informational reports on Districts financials through January 2026

## 8. REGULAR CALENDAR.

- A. Approval of Employment Agreement with District Manager position
- B. Acknowledgment of Associate Director Feldman and notice of resignation
- C. Solicitation request for a Director to participate in staff committee regarding social impact issues.
- D. Request by Director Helsley for the RCDSMM to sponsor the 2026 California Envirothon high school competition program. Presentation by Palisades High teacher, Steve Engelmann and Director Helsley.
- E. Resolution No. 2026-03-3A Authorizing entering into a cooperative agreement with CALTRANS as CEQA lead 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.
- F. Resolution No. 2026-03-03B Authorizing electing to be subject to the Public Employees' Medical and Hospital Care Act at an unequal amount for employees and annuitants
- G. Approval of Acting or Interim Appointments of Existing Employees Policy
- H. Presentation on District Expansion Mapping Proposals

## 9. INFORMATIONAL REPORTS:

### A. Staff Reports for January 2026:

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

## 10. DIRECTORS' COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

## 11. ADJOURNMENT

## 12. 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 January 26, 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 with Associate Director Dennis Washburn also present. Director Beth Burnam and Associate Directors Chris Doran and Esther Feldman joined virtually. Various staff members were also present both virtually and in person.
2. **INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS:** Adi Liebman, Director of Los Angeles County's Safe Clean Water Program gave a presentation on new funding opportunities for science and restoration projects for the Upper LA River Watershed and areas that serve Santa Monica Bay. Additional Guests joined virtually including Glenn Bailey and Brooks Engelhardt (NRCS)
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 December 22, 2025. The Board reviewed the minutes and voted to approve them as presented. President R.C. Brody moved to approve. Ms. Helsley/Ms. Clark, approved 4-0
6. **FINANCIAL REPORTING:** The district's financial reports were presented through December 2025. It was noted that there was a Board Finance Committee meeting held on Friday January 23<sup>rd</sup> to review the mid-year budget. It was also noted that \$60K was moved into reserves this month bringing the total to approx. \$280K.

## 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 was not adopted there was discussion on what becoming the CEQA lead means or the district, while there was consensus to approve the resolution and omit language designating CEQA lead it was later deemed unnecessary. It was discussed that the item will be back on the February agenda once more information is disseminated.
- B. Discussion on electing to be subject to the Public Employees' Medical and Hospital Care Act at an unequal amount for employees and annuitants. The Administrative Operations Manager presented information on the impacts and costs associated with entering into a health care agreement with CalPERS. It was discussed that a resolution will be added onto the February Agenda.
- C. Finalizing CARCD Board resolutions and bylaws, the board voted on the California Association of Resource Conservation District's election of officers, board resolutions, and bylaws upon recommendation and discussion with Director Helsley, RCDSMM delegate, who attended the Association's November 2025 business conference. Ms. Burnam/Ms. Clark, approved 4-0
- D. Discussion on staff submitted policies and procedures for Board approval of public comments and letters of support. The board reviewed a staff draft of policies and procedures, and it was requested to send all comments directly to the Board Secretary to compile notes. Mrs. Burnam also noted a previously signed letter on the district's website that was not brought to the board for approval, and it was voted to be taken down as it did not follow procedures. Mr. Burnam/Ms. Clark, approved 4-0
- E. Discussion on proposed Acting or Interim Appointments of Existing Employees Policy. It was discussed that this item could be moved to the staff leadership team for review.
- F. Update from Personnel Committee on District Manager job search: Discussion to finalize Board availability for Interview dates and times and to change first interviews to staff and personnel committee rather than full board.

8. **DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS:** Director Helsley presented an update on her efforts to encourage CARCD to reinstate sponsorship of the California Envirothon as a career pathway to help fulfill the growing need for conservation science and technical managers.

## 9. INFORMATIONAL REPORTS:

- A. Staff Reports for December 2025 were presented in the Director's Packets.

10. ADJOURNMENT: 8:40 PM Ms. Price/Ms. Helsley

11. CLOSED SESSION: Adjourned 9:42 PM; discussions to conduct a finance committee meeting to address health care concerns.

Submitted By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Lisa Rand, Administrative Operations Manager

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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## REGULAR BOARD MEETING

EIGHT-HUNDRED SEVENTY-F MEETING

**Tuesday February 17, 2025—3:45 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 3:46 PM. A quorum was established with Directors Richard Brody, Nancy Helsley, Riki Clark, Beth Burnam and Laurie Price.
2. **INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS:** None
3. **PUBLIC COMMENTS:** None
4. **REGULAR CALENDAR:** None
5. **CLOSED SESSION:** 4:00 PM Public Employment: District Manager hiring (Government Code Section 54957).
6. **ADJOURNMENT:** 7:06 PM

Submitted By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Lisa Rand, Administrative Operations Manager

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

	Feb-26	Mar-26	Apr-26	May-26
<b>RCD Cash Flow Forecast 02/2026</b>				
<b>A) Beg Bal 02/23/2026</b>	<b>689,516</b>	<b>295,765</b>	<b>367,386</b>	<b>572,882</b>
<b>Collections</b>				
<b>Pass Through Revenue</b>				
Deposits in Transit	-	-	-	-
Wildlife Conservation Board Top Lagoon	-	364,686	-	-
CA State Coastal Conservancy	76,338	69,681	64,921	70,313
CA State Parks	-	380	584	498
Ca Dept of Fish and Wildlife	-	2,396	9,720	6,058
National Fish & Wildlife Foundation	-	446,340	-	-
Other Deposits	-	76,817	47,650	62,233
<b>Total Pass Through Revenue</b>	<b>76,338</b>	<b>960,299</b>	<b>122,875</b>	<b>139,102</b>
<b>Non Pass Through Revenue</b>				
Deposits in Transit	-	-	-	-
Wildlife Conservation Board	-	288,418	87,886	47,269
CA Dept of Forestry & Fire Protection	-	-	33,823	-
Other Non Pass Through Deposits	-	4,790	141,658	-
Property Tax Revenue	-	1,250	145,000	41,500
<b>Total Non Pass Through Deposits</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>294,458</b>	<b>408,367</b>	<b>88,769</b>
<b>B) Total Deposits</b>	<b>76,338</b>	<b>1,254,757</b>	<b>531,242</b>	<b>227,871</b>
<b>Check/Payments</b>				
Pass Through Payments Top Lagoon	(406,234)	(353,711)	(50,622)	(1,446)
Other Pass Through	(59,355)	(639,424)	(105,125)	(58,456)
Payroll	-	(145,000)	(140,000)	(145,000)
Other Operating Expenses	(4,500)	(45,000)	(30,000)	(30,000)
<b>Total Payments</b>	<b>(470,089)</b>	<b>(1,183,136)</b>	<b>(325,747)</b>	<b>(234,902)</b>
<b>C) Transfer to Reserve Account</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(75,000)</b>
<b>EOM Estimated Balance</b>	<b>295,765</b>	<b>367,386</b>	<b>572,882</b>	<b>490,851</b>

**A) Cash Position includes 300k in advance deposits**

**B) May 2026 Forecast based on budget projections & current outstanding receivables.**

**C) Contingent on receiving property tax pymts prior to month end April**

**A/R Aging Summary Report**  
**RCDSMM**  
As of February 23, 2026

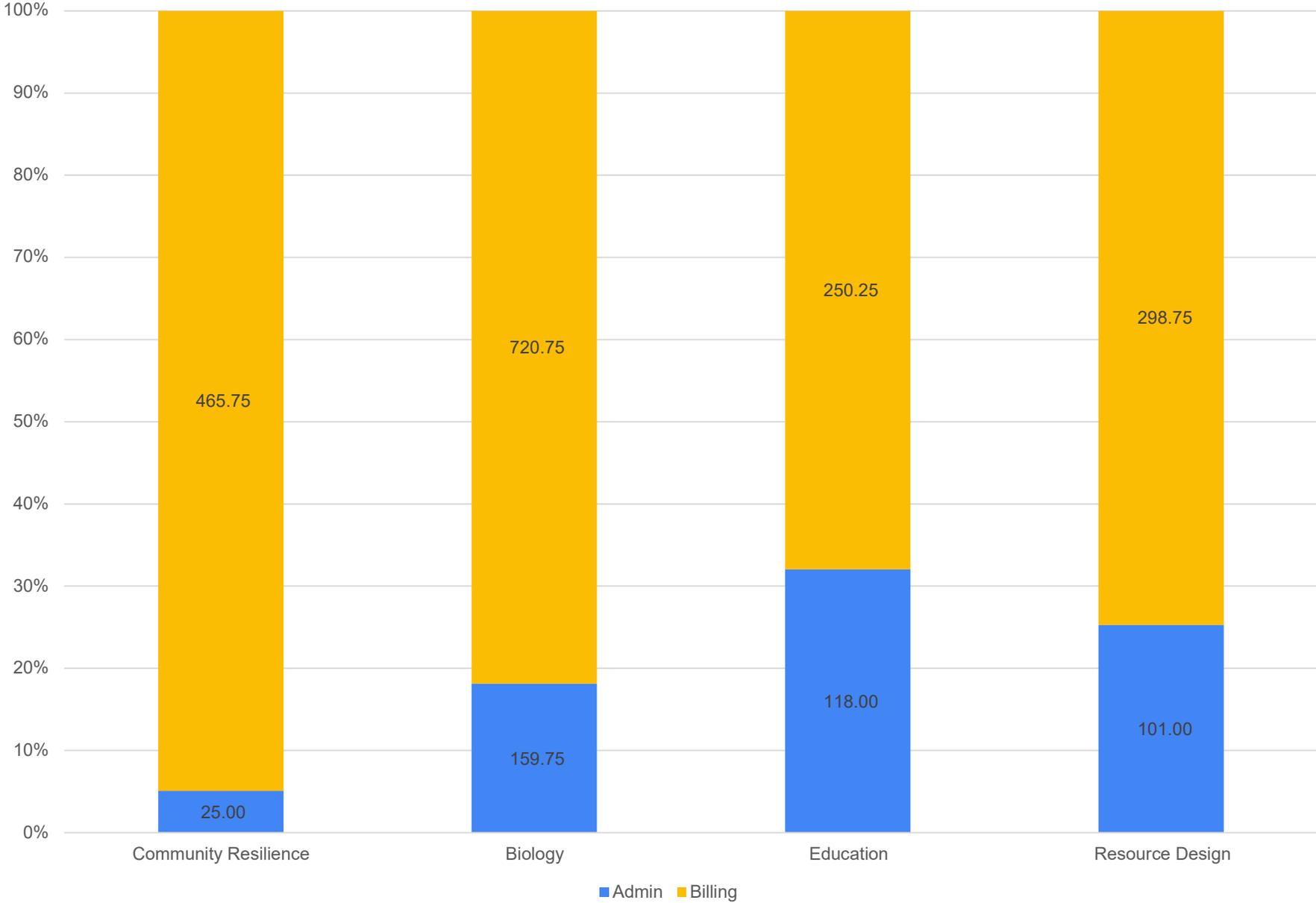
Customer	CURREN T	1 - 30	31 - 60	61 - 90	91 AND OVER	Total	Pass Thru	Net	Notes
Architerra Design Group		378.75	996.25			1,375.00	0.00	1,375.00	
<b>Bruno Naylor</b>					3,383.20	3,383.20	0.00	3,383.20	Partial pymt rec'd.
CA Dept. of Fish and Wildlife	12,115.68					12,115.68	0.00	12,115.68	
CA Dept.of Forestry & Fire Protection		1,390.20	371.00		32,061.74	33,822.94	0.00	33,822.94	
California State Coastal Conservancy		64,921.19	58,808.86		76,420.47	200,150.52	175,638.67	24,511.85	
California State Parks		1,494.79			380.00	1,874.79	0.00	1,874.79	
Cathedral High School	1,000.00					1,000.00	0.00	1,000.00	
LA Philharmonic		893.30				893.30		893.30	
Los Angeles County Dept of Regional Planning	76,817.03					76,817.03	66,244.53	10,572.50	
McMillen, LLC			2,570.00		2,220.00	4,790.00	0.00	4,790.00	
Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority		49,369.82	39,002.92		53,285.70	141,658.44	0.00	141,658.44	
National Fish and Wildlife Foundation - Woolsey			142,405.00		303,934.54	446,339.54	363,226.54	83,113.00	
Seminole Springs MHP., Inc		47,649.67				47,649.67	47,649.67	0.00	
TREE Academy		450.00				450.00	0.00	450.00	
Wildlife Conservation Board	33,320.19	454,083.75	53,968.21		255,321.80	796,693.95	556,923.46	239,770.49	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>123,252.90</b>	<b>620,631.47</b>	<b>298,122.24</b>		<b>723,624.25</b>	<b>3,383.20</b>	<b>\$1,769,014.06</b>	<b>1,209,682.87</b>	<b>\$559,331.19</b>

17,000.00

3,000.00

51,000,000.00

### Jan 2026 Billing vs Admin 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	\$ 5,252,593	Pass thru revenue much higher than projected.
Property Tax Revenue	\$ 27,740	\$ 279,744	
Donations	\$ 15,000	\$ 14,074	
Interest Income	\$ 6,000	\$ 13,996	
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$ 1,445,596</b>	<b>\$ 5,560,407</b>	
<b>Expenses</b>			
Payroll Expenses	\$ 810,281	\$ 1,071,239	Pass thru expenses much higher than projected.
Professional Fees	\$ 17,500	\$ 20,774	
Pass Thru Expenses	\$ 627,540	\$ 4,075,470	
General Overhead expenses	\$ 75,766	\$ 181,382	
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 1,531,087</b>	<b>\$ 5,348,864</b>	
<b>Net Operating Income</b>	<b>\$ (85,491)</b>	<b>\$ 211,544</b>	

## California Envirothon

### Background:

- Began in Pennsylvania 1978 when their RCDs initiated an environmental competition for high school teams. Students studied Soils, Forestry, Wildlife, Aquatics (water ecology) and a 20 minute oral presentation under a theme that required a potential solution for a common resource problem. The national event was sponsored by Canon for a long time. The top 3 winning state teams win scholarship checks and the top 10 teams win prizes.
- The competition grew among east coast states, migrating to the Midwest states. In 1991 I was invited by the National Resource Conservation Service to attend the national Envirothon Competition at St Mary's College, Maryland with the intention of the both the CA NRCS and the national level NRCS to initiate a California Envirothon 'chapter.'
- In 1992 CA Envirothon held its first competition at St Gregory's Lake in the San Bernardino Mountains. CARCD sponsored CA Envirothon and each year gave an insurance rider for the event. CA Envirothon formed large steering committee that arranged event logistics, funding and recruitment. CAE held 1.5-day events at various camp sites up and down CA. It was challenging and exciting for students! Subsequent student attendees often reported later reported they'd found their DREAM career through their experience in Envirothon!
- CA Envirothon competitions have been held every year since 1992, except for 2014 (big committee change) and 2020 (Covid). Have held two National Envirothon events: 1999 (Humboldt State University) and 2010 (Fresno State University).
- When the sub-prime mortgage investment recession hit the nation in 2008, it became much more difficult for RCDs to send their teams to the CA state events. The word 'environment' became a very daunting, scary word to farmers and range manager who thought we were developing environmental zealots. I told them "No, Envirothoners are required to consider in their presentations all the legal, physiological, technological farmers face in order to address a potentially useful outcome. For a community." Yet many remain doubtful to this day. .
- In 2016 the CAE committee achieved non-profit status. We received several \$20 K grants from CA Natural Resources Conservation Service over four years. CAE developed a very effective R.A.P (Resource Advisory Panel) that developed the written tests and often made instructive webinars, some on YouTube.
- CAE held promotional workshops and exhibits at CARCD conference each year. Over the years the steering committee had gradual attrition. After the 2025 event at Riverside Corona RCD, one long-time committee member died and three others retired, leaving me as the sole Steering Committee member. In the meantime, about 5 years ago, CARCD stopped helping to promote CAE due to their own board attrition and other big changes.
- The CAE non-profit status and banking account have been dissolved. A fundraiser like 'GoFundMe' is being explored as a funding source for the 2026 event at Stunt Ranch.

- **Envirothon is a wonderful hands-on experience for students to learn to work together on a solution to a resource problem, the same kind of skills one needs in adult life! They develop leadership and cooperative skills as the learn forestry, soils, wildlife, water ecology science. The instruct each other to keep up with their peers!**

**TO KEEP CA ENVIROTHON EXPERIENCE GOING . . .**

- **Would the RCDSMM consider sponsoring the 2026 California Envirothon? Eleven teams have contacted those of us who have been long involved. Last June I sought to be on the CARCD Education Committee, was successful as was Marilyn. My goal is to spur the continuation of Envirothon as an RCD tool as ONE very worthwhile career pathway program that can enrich their programs and increase visibility within their communities.**
- **I am scheduled to speak at the CARCD March 18 board meeting. This year they've established a goal of helping RCDs develop career pathways for students and seek opportunities for internship positions at different levels. They are foreseeing a nationwide shortage of resource leaders in science remedies and beset practices management. Envirothon can make a substantial contribution to that effort.**

**RCDSMM, please consider . . . .**

- \* **Signing a simple letter or MOU with the National Conservation that the RCDSMM will be a fiscal sponsor of the 2026 California Envirothon through July 2026.**
- **Paying the NCF 2026 dues of \$450 so that the winning team can be eligible to attend the national event in Mississippi in July 2026.**
- **Funding the website manager up to \$1,500 for updating the CAE website.**
- **Consider coming to the event at Stunt Ranch either to proctor, be a judge or to be a panel speaker on your own experience in growing your own resource career . . .**
- **Draft budget included.**

**Thanks for listening!**

**PS: Six Canadian Provinces have been sending teams to Envirothon for about 10 years now! China also has sent two teams but is inconsistent . . . .**

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To: Board of Directors

From: Shelly Backlar

Date: 2/26/2026

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

At our Board Meeting on January 26, 2026, we submitted a Board Resolution that the RCDSMM Enter into a Cooperative Agreement with Caltrans for the PA&ED design phase to complete 65% design for the Newhall Wildlife Crossing.

The resolution also stated:

The RCDSMM 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.

During the meeting we had a productive discussion laying out the pros and cons of the RCDSMM taking on this role:

- The Alameda RCD is the CEQA lead for a wildlife project they are designing with our Engineering Subcontractor, Mark Thomas.
- There are two design alternatives in the completed PID PSR/PDS phase:
  - Weldon North Overcrossing involves building a crossing over a Caltrans facility, the I-5.
  - Gavin Canyon Undercrossing, our preferred alternative, involves lifting the Old Road to create a viaduct that allows for safe passage and riparian habitat restoration. Construction will take place on an LA County road/facility.
- We have two subcontractors, Mark Thomas and Stillwater Sciences, which are experienced in CEQA. Their scopes of work include guidance on the CEQA process.
- After speaking with California Department of Fish and Wildlife, we were advised that this project qualifies for CEQA Statutory Exemption for Restoration Projects (SERP), a less rigorous process.

The Board voted to approve the RCDSMM entering into a Cooperative Agreement with Caltrans for the project but not as the CEQA lead.

On January 27, the morning after the Board meeting Brody called, to let me know that not only had he done extensive research about CEQA, but he had also concluded that the RCDSMM is the appropriate lead. Therefore, the Resolution presented last month will be updated and presented to the Board for approval at our Board meeting on Monday, March 2, 2026.

Shelly Backlar  
Director of Community Resilience

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**RESOLUTION NO. 2026-03-02 A  
March 2, 2026**

RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT OF THE SANTA MONICA MOUNTAINS (RCDSMM) 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 RCDSMM 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 RCDSMM 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 RCDSMM 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 2<sup>nd</sup> day of March 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:**

**Yeas:**

**Nays:**

**Abstain:**

**Absent:**

**CERTIFICATION**

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution 2026-03-2 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 2<sup>nd</sup> day of March 2026.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Lisa Rand, Secretary for the Board

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**RESOLUTION NO. Number 2026-03-02 B ELECTING TO BE SUBJECT TO THE PUBLIC EMPLOYEES' MEDICAL AND HOSPITAL CARE ACT AT AN UNEQUAL AMOUNT FOR EMPLOYEES AND ANNUITANTS**

WHEREAS, (1) A contracting agency meeting the eligibility requirements set forth in Government Code Section 22920, may obtain health benefit plan(s), as defined under Government Code Section 22777, by submitting a resolution to the Board of Administration of the California Public Employees' Retirement System (the "Board"), and upon approval of such resolution by the Board, become subject to the Public Employees' Medical and Hospital Care Act (the "Act"); and

WHEREAS, (2) Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains is a contracting agency eligible to be subject to the Act under Government Code Section 22920; and

WHEREAS, (3) Government Code Section 22892(a) provides that a contracting agency subject to the Act shall fix the amount of the employer contribution by resolution; and

WHEREAS, (4) Government Code Section 22892(b) provides that the employer contribution shall be an equal amount for both employees and annuitants, but may not be less than the amount prescribed by Section 22892(b) of the Act; and

WHEREAS, (5) Government Code Section 22892(c) provides that, notwithstanding Section 22892(b), a contracting agency may establish a lesser monthly employer contribution for annuitants than for employees, provided that the monthly employer contribution for annuitants is annually increased to equal an amount not less than the number of years the contracting agency has been subject to this subdivision multiplied by five percent of the current monthly employer contribution for employees, until the time that the employer contribution for annuitants equals the employer contribution paid for employees; and

WHEREAS, (6) Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains desires to obtain for its employees and annuitants the benefit of the Act and to accept the liabilities and obligations of an employer under the Act; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, (a) Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains elects to be subject to the provisions of the Act; and be it further

RESOLVED, (b) That the employer contribution for each employee shall be the amount necessary to pay the full cost of his/her enrollment, including the enrollment of family members, in a health benefits plan up to a maximum of the PEMHCA Minimum per month, plus administrative fees and Contingency Reserve Fund assessments; and be it further

RESOLVED, (c) That the initial employer contribution for each annuitant shall be the amount necessary to pay the full cost of his/her enrollment, including the enrollment of family members, in a health benefits plan up to a maximum of \$1.00 per month, plus administrative fees and Contingency Reserve Fund assessments; and be it further

RESOLVED, (d) That the monthly employer contribution for annuitants is annually increased to equal an amount not less than the number of years the contracting agency has been subject to this subdivision multiplied by five percent of the current monthly employer contribution for employees, until the time that the employer contribution for annuitants equals the employer contribution paid for employees; and be it further

RESOLVED, (e) That this annual adjustment to the minimum monthly employer contribution for annuitants shall not exceed one hundred dollars (\$100.00); and be it further

RESOLVED, (f) Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains has fully complied with any and all applicable provisions of Government Code Section 7507 in electing the benefits set forth above; and be it further

RESOLVED, (h) That the participation of the employees and annuitants of Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains shall be subject to determination of its status as an "agency or instrumentality of the state or political subdivision of a State" that is eligible to participate in a governmental plan within the meaning of Section 414(d) of the Internal Revenue Code, upon publication of final Regulations pursuant to such Section. If it is determined that Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains would not qualify as an agency or instrumentality of the state or political subdivision of a State under such final

Regulations, CalPERS may be obligated, and reserves the right to terminate the health coverage of all participants of the employer; and be it further

RESOLVED, (i) That the executive body appoint and direct, and it does hereby appoint and direct, Lisa Rand, Administrative Operations Manager to file with the Board a verified copy of this resolution, and to perform on behalf of Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains all functions required of it under the Act; and be it further

RESOLVED, (j) That coverage under the Act be effective on June 1, 2026.

Adopted at a regular meeting of the Board of Directors at 4505 Las Virgenes RD STE 215, this 2nd day of March 2026.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Richard Brody, Board President

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_  
Lisa Rand, Board Secretary

Resource Conservation District 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.

## LAFCO Mapping & Geographic Description Services Consultant Comparison Summary

Category	Sikand Engineering	Thienes Engineering
Experience & Background	Long-standing firm (est. 1959). Extensive annexation and municipal boundary experience. Demonstrates deep familiarity with LAFCO process and agency coordination.	Established 1976. Survey-focused firm with strong boundary and legal description expertise. Recently completed successful LAFCO annexation work.
Process Familiarity	Highly experienced in navigating complex annexations. Identified Malibu Area #4 as potentially more challenging.	Recent hands-on experience with LAFCO submittals. Did not indicate specific concerns regarding Malibu Area #4.
Estimated Timeline	Approximately 3–4 months to complete.	Estimated 1–2 months to complete.
Deliverables & Scope	Complete mapping packages, legal descriptions, SOI updates, and annexation documents. Includes submission to LAFCO and LA County Tax Assessor.	Complete mapping packages, legal descriptions, SOI updates, and annexation documents. Includes submission to LAFCO and LA County Tax Assessor.
Agency Coordination	Fees include all coordination, revisions, and back-and-forth with LAFCO and LA County Tax Assessor until acceptance.	Fees include all coordination, revisions, and back-and-forth with LAFCO and LA County Tax Assessor until acceptance.
Proposed Cost	\$157,090	Approximately \$92,000 would offer 10% discount

### Impression After Interviews:

Confident that both firms can successfully achieve acceptance by LAFCO and the Los Angeles County Tax Assessor. Sikand appears to have deeper institutional experience with complex annexation processes, while Thienes demonstrates recent successful completion of similar LAFCO work with a more accelerated proposed timeline.

## January 2025 Board Meeting

### Clark Stevens, RESOURCE DESIGN

#### Project/Program Highlights

- SoLAC Nature Connectivity Plan- As Project Director:
  - Focus meetings with science lead and team
  - Development of base plan polygons
  - Weekly design meetings in-house and with consulting team
  - Table of potential Early Implementation Connectivity Projects
  - Mapping of Coastal Slope Connectivity areas within PCH burn zone
  - Conceptual design layer development (including “hub and spokes”) identification
  - Coordination of scheduling and team direction with RCD Project Manager
  
- Newhall Wildlife Passage Project- as project director:
  - Engineering team meetings
  - Road alignment adjustment to add connectivity from Gavin to existing/new Weldon Canyon bridge “wildlife sidewalk” and south/west habitat restoration contouring
  - Preparation of revised Gavin Canyon Old Road Viaduct connectivity project exhibits (with weldon alternative restoration zone) for use in presentation to Supervisor Barger
  
- Manzanita School- as Project Architect/co-Director
  - Written approval to proceed with phase 2 received, project to commence this month
  
- Topanga Lagoon Restoration
  - Final design phase meetings regarding new programming and relocation of visitor serving elements
  - Review and revisions to restoration topography and fine-tuning with engineers after hydro model runs
  - Communications with RCD project managers and consultant team
  - Project re-scoping/funding discussions in-house in response to DPR change in programming and design process/schedule
  
- Wildfire Resilience Design and Planning (SMMC grant) as Resource Design collaborator
  - Project team meetings
  -
  
- Sheriff's Overlook Interpretive Landscape- final design phase
  - Initial meetings held and detailed survey scope developed with client project manager

### **General Department Highlights**

- Staff meetings with interim administrative staff and input sessions with Board Hiring subcommittee
- Reviewed proposals from surveyors to complete RCDSMM annexation and boundary documentation for application to LAFCo.

## Jan. 2026 Board Report

### Dan Cooper, Principal Conservation Biologist

Feb. 10, 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 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.).
- Worked on presentation for California Native Plant Society's biennial meeting (Riverside, CA), about bush lupine distribution, incl. a new species in the Santa Monica Mtns./Simi Hills.
- Continuing as a University Lecturer, at UCLA (IoES) and CSULB (Ornithology) – not part of RCDSMM billing.

## RESTORATION AND MONITORING

Jamie King

*Below is an update of key projects and associated key staff. The Topanga Lagoon Restoration Project and CARCD Oak Restoration Project overviews are more extensive than typical due to key updates the board should be aware of. We have also provided an update on Dept highlights and projected needs to better inform the board for the new FY, as well as the incoming District Manager.*

### Project/Program Highlights

- **Topanga Lagoon Restoration Project:** Jamie King is fully transitioned in as Project Manager supported by Danielle LeFer and Rosi Dagit as Asst. PMs and Jelly Kahler as Outreach Lead. Field team Alyssa Morgan (trees), Isaac Yelchin and Hannah Gray (fish, butterflies) are engaged.
  - Design Progress:
    - Lagoon/Bridge Design is progressing and 60% draft design is under review by Caltrans. 90% anticipated 12/26
    - County Visitor Services Design should reach 30% by the end of March. 90% planned 12/26
    - Parks Visitor Services Design stalled at Concept level due to 1/6/26 Governor executive order forcing concessions onsite, Parks post-fire greater revisioning efforts and recent lawsuit against Parks and others for fire issues.
    - Tracking City of Malibu Sewer line progress.
  - Public Outreach:
    - Website in Spanish. Website will be available in a Spanish language version soon, testing translation quality (Jelly)
    - DEIJ: Coordination with SCC, CCC, and Parks teams to ID underrepresented user groups to bring to project table (Jelly)
    - Tribal Intern Position has been shared with SMM tribal groups. Goal is March - December involvement in snorkel and oak restoration projects. One applicant to date. 4/1 start date targeted. (Rosi)
    - Anticipated Public Outreach Meeting in ~ April to share update of lagoon/Co design (Jamie, Jelly)
    - Political Coordination with Horvath, Irwin, Allen, Sherman, Schiff, Padilla offices on utility undergrounding policies, project updates, and funding opportunities (Jamie, Rosi)
    - Topanga Beach Cleanups coordinated with Surfrider ~ quarterly. (Jelly, Rosi)
  - Regulatory Coordination:
    - The 2/26 Technical Advisory Committee was held to get regulatory/partner input on draft lagoon restoration grading plan and conceptual habitat restoration plan. (Danielle)
    - Draft 404/401 Permits are in prep, as are updates to the Conceptual Habitat Restoration Plan. (Danielle)
    - Ongoing Meetings with CCC for feedback on project are occurring (Jamie)
  - Field Work: Monthly lagoon mouth condition, water quality surveys ongoing. Post-fire SWAMP work occurring.
  - Grant Updates: Billing and reporting for all grants is occurring monthly and are up to date.
    - CDFW Grant 3238: is being closed out and is fully spent out. \$ \$1.64M. Final report submitted.
    - WCB Lagoon/Bridge Grant #1 (3247) has an extension request in process to extend past 4/26 to 4/28. ~ \$890K of \$4.65M remains in the grant.
    - WCB Lagoon/Bridge Grant #2 (3251) is in use and has \$5.8M of \$10M remaining.



- **Endangered Fish Monitoring Programs (Rosi)**
  - Snorkel Surveys in Malibu and Topanga Creek to start in March. Multiyear funding in process for Malibu via State Parks through 2027 (3244) and \$92K being processed to extend to 2030). Funding for Topanga in place for 2026 from Parks (3252), and reallocating Topanga Lagoon grants to cover snorkel for 2027-2028 (3247). Additional funding for Topanga snorkel is being sought.
- **Fire Response (3117, Rosi)**
  - Post-Fire Field Assessments. 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 for the Regional Water Quality Control Board. Still waiting for results from sediment samples. Continued monitoring Topanga Canyon Blvd. conditions as well as other burned lagoon areas. (Rosi)
- **Horvath Social Program (3257, Rosi)**
  - Completed report preparation and will revise formatting to submit a journal article to Bulletin of Southern CA Academy of Sciences this spring.(Rosi)
- **Topanga Elementary School Oak Violation (3246, Rosi)**
  - Project Wrapping Up. Coordinated final recommendations with LACO Regional Planning. ERB hearing on 2/23/26 should wrap up our responsibilities for this project. (Alyssa, Rosi)
- **CDFW Genetic Conservation Plan (3243, Rosi)**
  - Project Wrap-Up. Completed all deliverables (Southern Steelhead Short term recovery plan, installation of holding facility for rescued steelhead at Edison High School). Final report submitted. \$340K.
- **Turtle Monitoring (3064, Rosi)**
  - Ongoing Monitoring and Outreach. Continuing monitoring proposed federally listed western pond turtles in the Topanga Creek Watershed. Preparing annual update to present at the Stream Meeting on 9 March with our Partners: NPS, Pepperdine, USGS, USFWS). (Rosi, Stream Team)
  - Future Funding Sought. Cost is \$3-5K/year. Good for donor focus.
- **Oak Woodland Restoration (3116, Rosi, Alyssa)**
  - Proceeds from on-going donations and sale of Grandmother Oak books funds oak associated recovery projects that are not funded elsewhere. For example, we published the results of our oak restoration study in 2025.
    - Morgan, Alyssa; Dagit, Rosi; Cooper, Daniel S. 18 April 2025. "Coast Live Oak, Quercus agrifolia, Planting Success: Lessons from Topanga State Park, Los Angeles County, Santa Monica Mountains". Southern California Academy of Sciences: 124(1), 2025, pp 44-54. <https://rcdsmm.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/TrippetOaks-final-PDF.pdf>*

### **General Department Highlights and Needs**

- Highlights:
  - New Staff Eric Scharberg is integrating well into HIZ and this team!
- Outreach:
  - RCDSMM will be presenters at Malibu Lagoon Celebration day on May 7, 202 (Jamie, Rosi, Clark)
  - Fish for the Future Video has been well received at a variety of film festivals. (Rosi)
  - RCDSMM presenting at NPS Annual Stream Meeting in March (Rosi)
  - 3/7/26: Monarch Film Fundraising Event, Peter Strauss Ranch, 5-8 (Jelly, Isaac)

- Needs:
  - Training Budgeting. Mandatory and requested staff trainings for FY 26-27 are being budgeted for.
  - Additional Mid-level Management Help Needed for all aquatic projects and to assist with grant development for restoration and monitoring projects
  - Planning Lead Needed for RCDSMM for following and commenting on LA County Planning efforts such as the upcoming General Plan revision, Events ordinance, Zone 0 ordinance, Community Wildfire Plan, etc.
  - ERB Replacement Needed. Person to take Dan's place at the LA County Environmental Review Board for the RCDSMM.
  - Staff Salaries/Charge Rates Discussions Needed. There are ongoing concerns about staff salaries and retention for this team as several staff work two jobs. Assessments are occurring so suggestions can be shared with Board for FY 26-27 budget. Related assessment on proposed charge rates warrant discussion with Board/Leadership prior to finalizing for FY 26-27 to address both appropriate salaries throughout organization, being in a position to have competitive proposals, and our related mission as a "not for profit" public entity that is also fiscally sound.

Feb 13, 2025

Education Department  
January Staff Report  
Marilyn Brody French

### Roles, Projects & Programs

- **General Fund**
  - DM Hiring Committee
  - CARCD Education Committee
    - Establishing statewide RCD education initiatives
    - Supporting fellow RCD staff in developing education programs (collaboration with RCRCD)
  - Trainings / Conferences
    - Attended Natural History Museum community science partnership presentation
  - Staff Management
    - Held Site Lead meeting at MLSB
    - Coordinating in person staff training days for February
    - Department strategic planning underway with 4 key
  - Funding Development
    - Submitted for Supervisor Horvath's General Fund
    - Supported Bella with Explore the Coast grant submission
    - Collaborating cross-departmentally for potential spring fundraiser
    - Discussions with community partners on resource sharing
- **Program Management / Development**
  - [School Education Programs](#)
    - 11 Field Programs
    - 2 Virtual Programs
    - 1 Special Program
    - Virtual Programs Series to launch in spring with Rio School District
    - Coordinating with high school group for Roots & Shoots Program
    - Summer program meetings with partner agencies
    - Hiring security support for MLSB and SBWR programs
  - [WILD CITY](#)
    - Spring series to launch in March with 3-4 workshops

**March 2, 2025**

**Shelly Backlar, Director of Community Resilience**

**Project Manager: Newhall Wildlife Crossing + South LA County Nature Connectivity Plan**

**Wildfire Education and Prevention**

**Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA)**

- Quarterly report for October – December was submitted.
- MRCA announced there will be another opportunity to apply for funding in Spring.

**Cal Fire LAC-Home Ignition Zone Evaluation Program (HIZEP)**

- Quarterly report for October – December was submitted.
- Community Wildfire Training is scheduled for Friday, March 6<sup>th</sup>, and Saturday March 7<sup>th</sup>. There are options for Zoom and in-person attendance at the Calabasas Community Center.
- Final report and reimbursement requests are due before March 15.

**Newhall Wildlife Crossing**

- Cooperative Agreement with Caltrans – see the Memo included in the board packet for details.
- Our project team, along with staff from the LA County Department of Public Works will meet with LA County Supervisor Katherine Barger and staff to garner support for the preferred alternative – Gavin Canyon Undercrossing – that will not only provide safe crossing for wildlife but will also restore riparian habitat.

**South LA County Nature Connectivity Plan**

- Our second outreach meeting for Subject Matter Experts will take place in April 2026. The meeting will provide an update on our progress and will address comments, questions and suggestions provided by our SMEs.
- Weekly meetings focus on Science Framework and Connectivity Modeling, Demonstration Project Determination and Design, Policy Integration and Toolkit, plus Outreach Engagement.

**General Department Highlights**

- Molly gave a presentation at Mission College on Saturday, February 7, for Supervisor Horvath's Emergency Preparedness Event. Slides are in English and Spanish; simultaneous Spanish translation was provided during the presentation by the Supervisor's office. Jelly recorded the presentation.
- In February we conducted HIZ evaluations in Agoura Hills, Topanga Canyon, Altadena, and Sierra Madre
- HIZ Evaluators took the examinations for Spanish Language Proficiency and passed, getting us closer to being able to conduct evaluations and generate reports for the Spanish-speaking residents in our district and sphere of influence.

## January 2026

### 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.
  - Coordinated with board, personnel committee and staff committee on District Manager interviews Dates
- Board Secretary Duties
  - Coordinatization with Board Members on agenda items for January 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
- Continue weekly meetings with Controller to ensure smooth internal operations
- Implemented new payroll system, continued with staff trainings and after go live troubleshooting

#### 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
  - Completed and distributed RFP for expansion mapping
- 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