



**Guadalupe-Coyote
Resource Conservation District (GCRCD)**
An independent special district of the State of California

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Staff Report

**Special Joint GCRCD/SCVWD Board Meeting
June 15, 2017**

DATE: June 12, 2017

TO: GCRCD Board of Directors

FROM: Stephanie Moreno, Executive Director/District Clerk

AGENDA TITLE: Item 4: Presentation and Discussion on the Santa Clara Valley Water District's and Guadalupe-Coyote Resource Conservation District's Missions, Goals, and Primary Functions

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Santa Clara Valley Water District (SCVWD) and Guadalupe-Coyote Resource Conservation District (GCRCD) Boards receive and discuss information on SCVWD's and GCRCD's respective missions, goals, and primary functions.

PRESENTERS:

Stephanie Moreno, GCRCD Executive Director/District Clerk
Norma Camacho, SCVWD Chief Executive Officer

DISCUSSION:

Purpose and Function of Resource Conservation Districts: Resource conservation districts were originally known as soil conservation districts, and were first authorized by federal legislation in 1937 under the Standards Act. They were initially formed in the Midwest to deal with the unparalleled ecological disaster known as the "Dust Bowl", and were created to serve as the local liaisons between the U.S. Soil Conservation Service – now known as the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) – and local landowners. California adopted state provisions authorizing the formation of soil conservation districts in 1938, which are expressed in Division 9 of the California Public Resources Code. Section 9001 currently reads as follows:

(a) The Legislature hereby declares that resource conservation is of fundamental importance to the prosperity and welfare of the people of this state. The Legislature believes that the state must assume leadership in formulating and putting into effect a statewide program of soil and water conservation and related natural resource conservation and hereby declares that this division is enacted to accomplish the following purposes:

(1) To provide the means by which the state may cooperate with the United States and with resource conservation districts organized pursuant to this division in securing the adoption in this

state of conservation practices, including, but not limited to, farm, range, open space, urban development, wildlife, recreation, watershed, water quality, and woodland, best adapted to save the basic resources, soil, water, and air of the state from unreasonable and economically preventable waste and destruction.

(2) To provide for the organization and operation of resource conservation districts for the purposes of soil and water conservation, the control of runoff, the prevention and control of soil erosion, and erosion stabilization, including, but not limited to, these purposes in open areas, agricultural areas, urban development, wildlife areas, recreational developments, watershed management, the protection of water quality and water reclamation, the development of storage and distribution of water, and the treatment of each acre of land according to its needs.

(b) The districts, in addition to any other authority provided by law, may do all of the following:

(1) Ensure consistency with the authorities and policies of the United States, this state, counties, cities, public districts, other resource conservation districts, persons, associations, and corporations.

(2) With the consent of the owner, construct on privately or publicly owned lands any necessary works for the prevention and control of soil erosion and erosion stabilization.

(3) Facilitate coordinated resource management efforts for watershed restoration and enhancement.

(c) The districts shall not conserve water for power purposes or produce or distribute power for their own use or for the use of others.

History of the Guadalupe-Coyote Resource Conservation District (GCRCD): GCRCD is an outgrowth of the Black Mountain and Evergreen Soils Conservation Districts. It is one of two RCDs located in Santa Clara County and covers the northern portion of the county. The Black Mountain Soil Conservation District was organized in 1943 to cover some 5,500 acres of land in the Calabazas Watershed on the west side of Santa Clara Valley, and later was expanded to cover most of the hilly land on the west side of the valley from the San Mateo County line to Loma Prieta Mountain and the boundary of the Loma Prieta Soil Conservation District. The Evergreen Soils Conservation District was formed in 1944 and originally covered about 10,000 acres on the east side of the Santa Clara Valley, largely the Silver Creek Watershed. It later expanded to include most of the land on the east side of the Santa Clara Valley, largely the Coyote Creek Watershed from Morgan Hill to the Alameda County line, excluding the then urban city lands. In 1972, the Evergreen Soil Conservation District changed its name to the Evergreen Resource Conservation District, and in 1977 merged with the Black Mountain Soils Conservation District. The combined districts carried the name of the Evergreen Resource Conservation District until 1995 when the name was changed to the Guadalupe-Coyote Resource Conservation District to better reflect the district's boundary and scope of interests.

REFERENCES:

[California Public Resources Code, Division 9](#)
[Guadalupe-Coyote Resource Conservation District](#)
[California Department of Conservation](#)
[California Association of Resource Conservation Districts](#)
[National Association of Conservation Districts](#)

ATTACHMENTS:

Guadalupe-Coyote Resource Conservation District (PowerPoint Presentation)

Guadalupe-Coyote Resource Conservation District (GCRCD)

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Attachment 2
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Soil and water conservation became a national concern during the Great Depression.



**Over 80 years later,
soil and water conservation issues remain.**

Bakersfield, California, 2015

Attachment 2
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Purpose of California's Resource Conservation Districts

California law provides for the “organization and operation of resource conservation for the purposes of:

- soil and water conservation;
- the control of runoff;
- the prevention and control of soil erosion, and erosion stabilization, including, but not limited to, these purposes in open areas, agricultural areas, urban development, wildlife areas, recreational developments;
- watershed management;
- the protection of water quality and water reclamation;
- the development of storage and distribution of water; and
- the treatment of each acre of land according to its needs.”

Public Resources Code, Division 9, Chapter 1, Article 1, Section 9001



What is a RCD?

Resource Conservation Districts (RCDs) are special districts of the state of California, set up under California law to be locally governed agencies with their own locally appointed or elected, independent boards of directors. California RCDs implement projects on public and private lands and educate landowners and the public about resource conservation. RCDs, authorized under Division 9 of the Public Resources Code, work together to conduct:

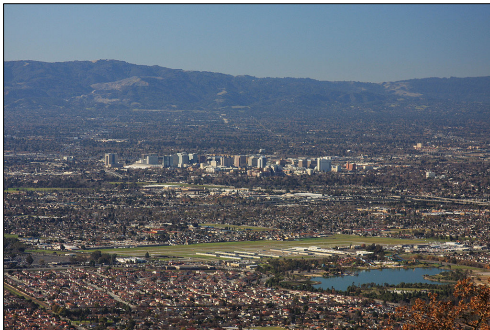
- Watershed planning and management
- Water conservation
- Water quality protection and enhancement
- Agricultural land conservation
- Soil and water management on non-agricultural lands
- Wildlife habitat enhancement
- Wetland conservation
- Recreational land restoration
- Irrigation management
- Conservation education
- Forest stewardship
- Fuels management
- Urban resource conservation



Division of Land Resource Protection

History and Geography

Evergreen Soil Conservation Service District was formed in 1944 and Black Mountain Soil Conservation District was formed in 1943. The districts consolidated in 1977, and the new district was known as the Evergreen Resource Conservation District until 1995, when the name was changed to Guadalupe-Coyote.



GCRCD covers over 362,000 acres in northern Santa Clara County, and extends to San Mateo, Santa Cruz, Alameda and Stanislaus Counties. It represents a wide diversity of climate, vegetation, topography, geology, soils, population density and land use.

Watersheds and Wildlife

GCRCD encompasses at least a portion of ten distinct watersheds that drain to the lower portion of San Francisco Bay. Many of these watersheds once supported large runs of salmon and steelhead trout, and still continue to support a wide variety of other wildlife as well, including Tule elk, beaver, bobcat, mountain lion

(puma), coyote, gray fox, badger, burrowing owls, osprey, California tiger salamander, western pond turtle, and red-legged frog.



Mission & Resource Priorities

Guadalupe-Coyote RCD is dedicated to conserving and enhancing Santa Clara's natural resources, including its soil, water, vegetation and wildlife. In collaboration with agricultural and resource conservation partners, the District identified the following priority issues of concern for the purposes of resource conservation planning (listed alphabetically):

- Agricultural Resources
- Grazing Resources
- Habitat Resources: Conservation and Restoration
- Invasive Plant Control
- Soil Resources: Conservation and Erosion Control
- Urban and Rural Interface
- Water Resources: Conservation and Quality
- Wildfire Hazards: Fuel Loading

Goals

GCRCD works hard on its mission to build a sustainable and resilient organization focused on natural resource conservation and agricultural land protection. To guide this effort, GCRCD has set the following goals:

- Enhance the transparency and accountability of district operations.
- Increase the district's collaborative relationships with governmental agencies, nonprofit organizations, and the agricultural community.
- Expand the district's education and outreach program for natural resource and wildlife conservation issues.
- Secure additional funding sources to expand district programs that provide technical assistance to the environmental and agricultural communities.
- Work with project proponents and local jurisdictions to ensure that projects and activities are protective of the district's natural resources.