



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

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FY 2020-21 Annual Work Plan

Background:

California law¹ 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.”

To address the full range of soil and related resource concerns that are found to occur within the district, resource conservation districts (RCD) may develop long range plans (LRP). The LRP serves the following functions:

- Identification of resource issues within the district for purposes of local, state, and federal resource conservation planning.
- Establishment of long-range district goals.
- Provision of a framework for directors to identify priorities for annual district activities.
- Provision of information to federal, state, and local governments and the public concerning district programs and goals.
- Setting forth a basis for evaluating annual work plan achievements and allocating available state funding to the district.
- Involvement of other agencies and organizations in the district planning process in order to help ensure support in implementing district plans.

In support of long range planning, RCDs may develop annual work plans (AWP) to prioritize activities for a given fiscal year. GCRCD completes an annual AWP in which it identifies the planned activities for the goals and strategies set forth in the LRP. General funding for planned activities is provided through the District’s property tax base, and is supplemented with funding received through grants, memoranda of agreement or understanding, partnership agreements, scholarships, donations and other miscellaneous funding sources.

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

Acronyms Used in this Document

ACRCD	Alameda County RCD	NRCS	Natural Resources Conservation Service
AWP	Annual work plan	PG&E	Pacific Gas & Electric
CAL FIRE	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection	RCDSC	RCD Santa Cruz
CCI	Carbon Cycle Institute	RWQCB	Regional Water Quality Control Board
CDFW	California Department of Fish and Wildlife	SCC	Santa Clara County
CNPS	California Native Plant Society	SCCFSC	Santa Clara County FireSafe Council
CWIWG	Coyote Watershed Integrated Working Group	SCMSN	Santa Cruz Mountains Stewardship Network
CWPP	Community Wildfire Protection Plan	SCVHA	Santa Clara Valley Habitat Agency
EQIP	Environmental Quality Incentives Program (NRCS)	SCVWD	Santa Clara Valley Water District (now VW)
FERC	Federal Energy Regulatory Commission	SFBRWQCB	San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board
GBACH	Greater Bay Area Carbon Farming Hub	SFPUC	San Francisco Public Utility Commission
GCRC	Guadalupe-Coyote Resource Conservation District	SMRCD	San Mateo RCD
GWIWG	Guadalupe Watershed Integrated Working Group	S SCCFD	South Santa Clara County Fire District
LPRCD	Loma Prieta Resource Conservation District	UCCE	University of California Cooperative Extension
LRP	Long range plan	USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
LWG	Local Work Group	VW	Valley Water (formerly SCVWD)
MOA	Memorandum of Agreement	WMA	Weed Management Area
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding	WMI	Watershed Management Initiative
MROSD	Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District		
NCSAF	Northern California Society of American Foresters		
NGO	Non-governmental organization		
NMFS	National Marine Fisheries Service		

Document Format

The AWP is designed with a separate table for each area of strategic focus that was identified in the LWP. Each table contains the LWP goals and strategies, and the planned activities for the fiscal year. Priority activities are identified with a [purple font](#).

- A. [Agricultural Lands](#)
- B. [Biodiversity](#)
- C. [Water Quality](#)
- D. [Fire Risk](#)
- E. [Climate Change](#)
- F. [Public Engagement](#)
- G. [District Operations](#)

Areas of Strategic Focus

A. Agricultural Lands

<p><i>Goal: Preserve agricultural lands by providing producers and land managers with access to best management practices and technical assistance so they may maintain economically viable enterprises while preserving soil health, enhancing crop diversity, and protecting natural resources.</i></p>	
Strategies	Planned Activities
<p>1. Provide education and technical assistance to agricultural producers to encourage and enable them to develop and implement conservation plans using NRCS conservation practices.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop workshop for 2021 LWG meeting. • Continue participation in GBACH. • Apply for a NRCS cooperative agreement to continue the Ranchers Outreach program. • Develop a post-fire technical assistance program.
<p>2. Provide educational resources to those living and working in urban areas regarding the value of agriculture in contributing to local economies and maintaining healthy ecosystems.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a collaborative outreach program with other organizations engaged with urban residents and workers. • Develop a partnership project with the UCCE Urban Farms program. • Coordinate with the NRCS District Conservationist to expand outreach to urban farms. • Implement the Monarch Butterfly Project with Veggielution Community Farm.
<p>3. Identify opportunities for agricultural producers to develop and implement carbon farm plans.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue participation in GBACH. • Seek outside funding for carbon farm plan development and implementation. • Apply for funding for a Healthy Soils Program Demonstration Project.
<p>4. Provide a venue for agricultural producers and their representative associations to provide input on natural resource concerns and strategies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-host annual NRCS-RCD LWG meeting per the NRCS-GCRCD MOA. • Reach out to West Stanislaus RCD about a joint outreach effort. • Respond to requests for technical assistance from local farmers and ranchers impacted by the recent fires.

<p>5. Partner with other involved agencies on planning and implementation activities identified in the Santa Clara Valley Agricultural Plan.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in stakeholder meetings and opportunities for partnerships with lead agencies for the plan.
<p>6. Identify potential new market opportunities to better connect agricultural producers to consumers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey local producers to determine current gaps and challenges, and research potential market opportunities. • Participate in local efforts to build connections between agricultural producers and consumers.
<p>7. Work with CDFW, CDFA, CALFIRE, UCCE and other state, regional and local agencies to address natural resource issues relevant to agricultural producers, including soil health, vegetation management, crop diversity and water quality.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to build partnerships with other agencies to address natural resource issues. • Apply for a NRCS cooperative agreement to continue the Ranchers Outreach program. • Develop a post-fire technical assistance program.
<p>8. Develop a permit coordination program to assist agricultural producers with project implementation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek proposals and funding for development of a permit coordination program.

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B. Biodiversity

<p><i>Goal: Promote biodiversity through the conservation and protection of natural habitats and ecosystems that provide a variety of ecosystem services, such as protection of water resources, maintenance of soil health, appropriate nutrient storage, contributions to climate stability, and improved resiliency after natural disasters.</i></p>	
Strategies	Planned Activities
<p>1. Provide education and technical assistance to watershed stakeholders to maintain healthy and sustainable native plant and wildlife populations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete Phase 2 of the Pond Hydroperiod Project, including open-sourcing of the Hydroperiod Water Balance Model and workshops for land managers and other stakeholders. • Complete VW permit process for the Silver Creek Linear Park Wetlands Study in collaboration with CDFW, SFBRWQB, VW, and City of San Jose. • Continue participation in the WMI-Land Use Subcommittee's planning for the January 2021 workshop. • Implement the Monarch Butterfly Project with Veggielution Community Farm.
<p>2. Promote the ecosystem service benefits to working landscapes available to producers through NRCS conservation practices, the CDFA Healthy Soils Program and the Greater Bay Area Regional Carbon Farming Hub.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue participation in GBACH. • Seek outside funding for carbon farm plan development and implementation. • Apply for funding for a Healthy Soils Program Demonstration Project.
<p>3. Encourage the maintenance of green infrastructure within urban areas.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue participation in the WMI-Land Use Subgroup. • Seek partnership opportunities to assist with green infrastructure projects.
<p>4. Collaborate with regional partners to develop or improve wildlife linkages and corridors.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue discussions with regional partners regarding the need to consider wildlife crossings for larger animals, such as Tule elk and puma.
<p>5. Provide a clearinghouse of online resources to assist community members with maintaining and improving beneficial bird and bee habitats.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand the online resource links to include a specific beneficial bird and bee habitat section when transitioning to the new website.

<p>6. Collaborate with partners in the Santa Clara County Weed Management Area to provide outreach and education on the importance of removing or controlling invasive species.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooperate in the development of grant proposals to fund local weed management programs. • Work with private landowners to organize noxious weed control or eradication programs. • Promote and implement elements of integrated weed management to prevent the establishment and spread of noxious weeds in Santa Clara County.
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C. Water Quality

<i>Goal: Contribute to improvements in water quality available for the benefit of agricultural production, wildlife, and aquatic habitat within District watersheds</i>	
Strategies	Planned Activities
1. Provide educational outreach and technical assistance to agricultural producers and land managers on water resource issues impacting soil health, plant communities, and wildlife habitats.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue participation in GBACH. • Seek outside funding for carbon farm plan development and implementation. • Apply for funding for a Healthy Soils Program Demonstration Project. • Seek partnership opportunities with VW to address agricultural issues affecting water quality.
2. Provide technical assistance and financial support to projects affecting District watersheds to improve water quality and reduce erosion and sedimentation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make technical assistance available upon request for constituents, jurisdictions and other agencies dealing with erosion and sedimentation issues.
3. Encourage producers and communities to develop and implement practices that benefit soil and water resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop outreach materials regarding best management practices that benefit soil and water resources. • Expand resource links when transitioning to the new website.
4. Collaborate with government entities, public land managers, community organizations, homeowners' associations and other watershed stakeholders to maintain and improve working landscapes and soil health to minimize erosion and sedimentation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek partnership opportunities for projects that will minimize erosion and sedimentation on working landscapes.
5. Provide comments and participate in stakeholder groups addressing existing and proposed programs, projects and designation of land uses that impact District watersheds.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to provide comments and participate in stakeholder groups, such as WMI-LUS, GWIWG, CWIWG, AMT, and the Peninsula Watershed Forum.

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D. Fire Risk

<i>Goal: Reduce fire risk and natural resource impacts to communities located within the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) through rural road, vegetation management, and fuel load reduction programs and projects.</i>	
Strategies	Planned Activities
1. Seek funding for projects identified in the Santa Clara County Community Wildlife Protection Plan (CWPP).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate with the SCCFSC to identify potential projects to assist with facilitation and/or implementation. • Apply for grants to complete projects outlines in the CWPP.
2. Promote the value of using best management practices for rangeland management as a tool for reducing fire risk to agricultural producers and neighboring communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek funding to develop a rangeland management component for the CWPP. • Facilitate development of grazing opportunities with municipalities and other land owner/managers operating in or near the urban-wildland interface areas. • Provide post-fire technical assistance to farmers and ranchers.
3. Expand scope of the District's Rural Road program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply for a NRCS cooperative agreement to continue and expand the scope of the Ranchers Outreach program. • Develop a post-fire technical assistance program.
4. Provide comments and participate in stakeholder groups addressing fire risk.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in SCCFSC meetings. • Include information about reducing fire risk in presentations and outreach programs.

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E. Climate Change

<p><i>Goal: Contribute to regional climate change efforts by raising public awareness of the need for individual action, while recognizing and addressing the differences in capacity of individual communities and populations to respond to requests for action.</i></p>	
Strategies	Planned Activities
1. When developing District programs and projects, consider both the environmental and socio-economic impacts of climate change, and work to develop mitigations that accommodate the capacity of the target populations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek input from and working relationships with environmental justice groups working in the region.
2. Add consideration of climate change impact as a criteria when considering applications to the District's Community Grant Program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amend Community Grant program materials.
3. Promote carbon sequestration through tree planting and re-oaking projects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify potential land areas suitable for tree planting and re-oaking projects and conduct outreach to the owners. • Develop a tree planting and re-oaking program to help fund public and private projects, including the post-fire technical assistance program.
4. Provide public outreach and education on the potential impact of climate change on local wildlife.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host a workshop on the potential impact of climate change on local wildlife, particularly those who will be affected by sea level rise. • Host training workshops on the Hydroperiod Water Balance model for land managers and other stakeholders.
5. Include climate change impacts and potential adaptations when submitting official comments on programs, projects and land use designations impacting District watersheds.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broaden comments to include information and references to impacts of climate change and ways to mitigate.

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F. Public Engagement

<p><i>Goal: Contribute to regional climate change efforts by raising public awareness of the need for individual action, while recognizing and addressing the differences in capacity of individual communities and populations to respond to requests for action.</i></p>	
Strategies	Planned Activities
1. Expand existing outreach and education programs to homeowner associations, community organizations, and educational institutions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct outreach to at least four homeowner associations, community organizations, or educational institutions.
2. Ensure programs and projects provide specific outreach to BIPOC communities and other traditionally-underserved populations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop programs and projects with input from community organizations within or who provide services to BIPOC communities and other traditionally-underserved populations.
3. Make presentations regarding the District’s mission, goals and programs to other government entities and regional organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schedule presentations with at least three municipal, special district or regional organizations.
4. Produce outreach materials that can be distributed at events and workshops.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In conjunction with LPRCD, develop outreach materials for RCD programs offered within Santa Clara County. • Develop outreach materials for the DOC Climate Action Plan grant.
5. Develop a backyard conservation program to provide education and technical assistance to landowners living on small acreages.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek funding to develop the program in partnership with other special districts or community organizations.
6. Consider ways to accommodate differences in community cultures and languages when developing website content.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research best management practices for web design for implementation on the new website.

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G. District Operations

<i>Goal: Build and maintain organizational capacity and financial viability to accommodate District mission and goals.</i>	
Strategies	Planned Activities
1. Seek partnerships and collaborations that will allow the District to leverage available funding to expand scope of projects and programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actively seek grants and partnerships.
2. Add program support staff to allow for expansion of technical assistance and public outreach programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hire or contract with a part-time person to provide technical assistance for post-fire activities.
3. Develop and implement a fee-for-service program that can be offered to agricultural producers, government entities, and other watershed stakeholders to offset costs of providing technical assistance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Solicit proposals for development of a fee-for-service program.
4. Plan for “shovel-ready” projects and programs so as to be prepared for grant opportunities as they arise.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contract for feasibility studies that will assist in the future implementation of projects.
5. Utilize existing MOUs with neighboring RCDs for staff support needed to expand scope of projects and programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set up regular meetings with other RCDs to discuss opportunities to build capacity and leverage staff resources.

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