

Resource Conservation District of Monterey County

Annual Work Plan 2022-2023

Approved 6/23/2022

The Annual Work Plan is a summary of both proposed work and aspirations for completion during the Fiscal Year of July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023, as supported by the associated Fiscal Year Budget and contributions of time from the RCD Board of Directors and cooperating land managers, owners, partner organizations and community members. We endeavor to work and plan our work in a manner supportive of our mission and consistent with the Guiding Principles, Goals and Strategies summarized in the RCDMC Strategic Plan. The work below is organized by the Strategic Plan Goal that it supports.

Goal 1: Salinas River programs continue to grow, and their collaborative model is expanded to other Monterey County Watersheds

2022-23 Actions	Staff lead(s)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Treat 115 acres of arundo as mitigation and manage 215 acres of secondary channels (11 mitigation sites and 29 channels/management areas) under the Stream Maintenance Program (SMP) on the Salinas River in summer and fall 2022.</i>	BB
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Oversee treatment of 4 new secondary channels (~40 ac) in 2022 and conduct outreach to engage new participants in SMP to initiate work on up to 6 additional new secondary channels in 2023.</i>	BB
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Engage landowners to enact new projects using RCPP funding to increase acreage treated and match available to 2019 WCB grant.</i>	EZ, PR
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Collaborate with Salinas Valley Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency and Salinas River SMP River Management Unit (RMU) Association to support fund-raising for both SMP and Arundo Program, and continue to seek grant opportunities with Wildlife Conservation Board and other entities for the Arundo Program.</i>	EZ, PR
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Coordinate with Monterey County Water Resources Agency, the Salinas River SMP RMU Association, and federal and state regulatory agencies to assume management of Salinas River SMP permits from Army Corps and Water Board.</i>	BB, PR
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Initiate new two-year agreement with Monterey County Agriculture Department for Arundo Program and farmer erosion control assistance.</i>	PR, EZ

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Goal 2: Monterey County farmers and land managers/stewards work with the RCD to conserve water, soil, wildlife and other natural resources

2022-23 Actions	Staff Lead(s)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Depending on drought conditions, initially treat ~50 acres and re-treat ~350 former acres of arundo on Salinas River riparian land under the RCD's Arundo Control Program. 	EZ
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversee and troubleshoot operation of two new bioreactors in the lower Salinas Watershed with 319 Grant funding; track irrigation and nutrient applications with Blanco Drain project farmer; create operations and maintenance manual for each bioreactor with contractor support. 	AC, AP
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support local efforts to develop and test watershed-based water quality cooperatives for efficient compliance with Regional Water Quality Control Board's Ag Order 4.0. 	PR, AC, AP?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (IF FUNDED) Develop NRCS 'National Water Quality Initiative' watershed plan for a subset of Lower Salinas watersheds to attract dedicated cost-share funding for local on-farm water quality management efforts. 	AC, PR
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assist 15 or more Kitchen Table Advisor client producers with compost implementation and connect as many farmers as possible with the Compost Connector program. 	AP, LM
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide bilingual, small farmer irrigation system evaluations and technical assistance for at least 20 farmers. 	AP LM
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate pump efficiency testing for 7 or more small farmers. 	AP, LM
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initiate work with UC Santa Cruz to create informational videos in Spanish on on-farm water efficiency methods. 	AP, LM
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assist at least 6 farmers with implementation of mustard winter cover crop in strawberry furrows for erosion control. 	AP, LM
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Host bilingual farm soil & water management workshops: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5 workshops on irrigation management topics 1 workshop on soil health 1 or more workshops on soil & water sampling. 	AP, LM
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborate with RCD Santa Cruz on data analysis and communicating co-composted biochar field study results in Central Coast specialty crops. 	LM
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assist NRCS with bilingual technical assistance and 6 engineered project designs 	AC, AP

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- *Collaborate with California FarmLink, ALBA, Kitchen Table Advisors, RCD Santa Cruz and others to provide technical assistance to disadvantaged farmers in Spanish and English.* LM, AP
- *Finalize permits for runoff detention pond in Elkhorn Slough watershed and prepare for implementation in fall 2022 or summer 2023; and complete designs and pursue permits for runoff detention ponds near Aromas in partnership with RCD Santa Cruz.* MC, AC
- *Through the Integrated Watershed Restoration Program: collaborate with neighboring RCDs, local conservation entities, and permitting and funding agencies for prioritization and funding of future restoration projects; and develop designs and initiate permit applications for water quality and habitat improvement projects along Santa Rita Creek and Elkhorn Slough.* AC, MB, PR
- *Provide permit assistance for 3 voluntary fish passage projects with private landowners, Trout Unlimited and UC Hastings Reserve on Cachagua Creek, Potrero Creek, and Finch Creek, all to be constructed in fall 2023.* MB, BB
- *Develop and initiate Master Permit program for conservation projects in Monterey County* MB, AC, PR
- *Manage and assist 12-15 new clients with Joint Chief's Landscape Restoration Partnership grant in coordination with the NRCS* JTL
- *Complete draft Regional Priority Plan for Forest Health and Fire Resiliency Program.* JTL
- *Conduct 3 forest health and wildfire resilience trainings.* JTL
- *Help facilitate and manage a Central Coast 'TRES' (prescribed fire training exchange).* JTL
- *Facilitate approximately 218 acres of fuels reduction and forest health work to be conducted by the USFS Monterey Ranger District of the Los Padres National Forest, California State Parks, San Clemente Rancho, Santa Lucia Conservancy and Pico Blanco Boy Scout Camp.* JTL, JR, BB
- *Support development of an integrated pre-fire mapping GIS for the region that will be shared by the community and fire personnel, including CALFIRE.* JTL
- *Develop Public Works Program to facilitate fire fuels & forest health Vegetation Treatment Projects in the Coastal Zone* BB, JTL, MB

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- *Complete CEQA and environmental resource documentation and permitting for Rancho Rico portion of Los Padres Strategic Community Fuelbreak Collaborative* MB, JTL
- *Start CEQA process for North County Wildfire Prevention Project* JTL, BB, MB
- *Facilitate the Monterey Regional Monarch Alliance to advance monarch butterfly population recovery; and support maintenance of 10 on-farm monarch butterfly planting projects in Monterey County and neighboring counties.* EZ, JR
- *Participate in Groundwater Sustainability Agency meetings to provide input and maintain visibility of RCD as a local partner.* PR
- *As time and funding allows, respond to new requests for erosion and runoff management projects assistance, including fee-for-service contracting* AC

Goal 3: Monterey County growers are known as proactive, engaged, and efficient.

- | 2022-23 Actions | Staff Lead(s) |
|---|----------------------|
| • <i>Conduct at least 1 tour of woodchip bioreactor sites and create web page for Lower Salinas Water Quality projects</i> | AC, MB, PR |
| • <i>Generate weekly social media posts and articles highlighting growers' conservation and stewardship efforts.</i> | MB → PA |
| • <i>Communicate regularly with agencies and state elected officials to showcase growers' conservation and stewardship practices.</i> | PR |
| • <i>Plan quarterly board meetings with mini-tours in different supervisorial districts with individual Supervisors and/or staff participating in each.</i> | PR |

Goal 4: Members of the community understand what the RCD does, what they can do to further conservation, and are inspired to help achieve our goals.

- | 2022-23 Actions | Staff Lead(s) |
|--|----------------------|
| • <i>Digitally publish and distribute quarterly email newsletters, annual report, and press releases for events, awards and project results.</i> | MB → PA |
| • <i>Host a soil science-focused field day for the Center for Land-based Learning's Monterey County FARMS Leadership Program</i> | PA? |

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- *Assist NRCS with hosting a display at Monterey County Farm Day (if they host)* PA?
- *Sponsor 1-2 high school students for CA Natural Resources and Range Camp* PR
- *Host a Speak Off contest with four schools and at least 6 participants.* PR, PA
- *Communicate the impacts and results of the Salinas River projects to at least 2 groups in the Salinas Valley communities benefiting from the program.* BB, EZ, PR
- *Regularly inform public officials about RCD projects and growers' efforts through tasks under Goal 3.* PR & staff
- *Develop Urban Agriculture Technical Assistance Plan in partnership with Blue Zones Project and others.* LM, PR
- *Provide community pollinator planting project assistance in Seaside and neighboring communities in partnership with Friends of Seaside Parks.* LM, GCF
 - *Weekly pollinator garden maintenance & monthly educational event*
 - *Regular participation in city and community meetings to support pollinator planting efforts*
 - *Support network-building between community groups and city departments*
- *Promote other entities' participation via Zoom in Board Meetings through targeted announcements for meetings by subject matter in addition to regular public postings.* PR, MAE, PA
- *Meet with local Tribal and underrepresented community groups to better understand their conservation needs and promote opportunities for collaboration.* PR, JTL, EZ, BB, MB

Goal 5: The RCD has robust and diverse sources of revenue

- | 2022-23 Actions | Staff Lead(s) |
|--|----------------------|
| • <i>Revisit RCD business plan with ad hoc committee to strategize next steps for messaging and fundraising</i> | PR |
| • <i>Acquire \$400k Dry Period Loan from County and pursue supplemental gap-period loan or other support options.</i> | PR, MAE |

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- *Raise \$10k in Community Foundation of Monterey County mini-grant, private individual and corporate donations to support RCD general operations and expenses for conservation education* PR, EZ
- *Explore alternative fund-raising mechanisms (GoFundMe, etc) for special projects or operational funding.* PR, EZ
- *Communicate 'Donations of Stock' opportunity for potential RCDMC donors* PR, board
- *Meet with at least 3 private foundations (e.g., Monterey Pen., Moore, Packard, and Harden) regarding potential organizational and project funding.* PR, EZ, JTL?
- *Develop 2 new or extended contracts for fee-for-service evaluation and design services.* AC, LM
- *Coordinate with CLBL FARMS Leadership Program and continue to reach out to potential educational partners.* PR, PA?
- *Contract with private firm to develop Cost Allocation Plan for future fiscal years and apply to new contracts* MAE, PR
- *Develop balanced FY 23-24 budget with fund development incorporated* MAE, PR
- *Negotiate Indirect Cost Rate Agreement with USDA for 22-23 & 23-24* MAE, PR
- *Contract and oversee clean audit of FY 21-22 Financial records* MAE, PR

Goal 6: RCDMC functions as a model organization and workplace that maintains high-quality staff and provides expertise with a Board of Directors that is committed, effective & engaged.

2022-23 Actions

Staff Lead(s)

- *Expand community outreach in preparation for development of new 5-year Strategic Plan in 2023 or 2024 to better incorporate underrepresented groups and better incorporate equity, diversity & inclusion considerations in objectives development.* PR, board
- *Assure and enact roles or portfolios for each board member with milestones, fill vacant Director seat, and recruit new associate or future directors based on identified leadership gaps* PR
- *Host GrizzlyCorps Fellow to assist Community Pollinator work and Forest Health program*

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- *Hire part-time Program Assistant to support office administration* PR, MAE, MB
- *Complete Position Descriptions and Pay Scales according to RCDMC Compensation Policy June 2022 update.* PR, EZ, MAE
- *Implement new retirement plan program according to June 2022 RCDMC retirement and savings plan policy.* PR, MAE
- *Review office and equipment resources to identify and resolve gaps affecting productivity and quality of work environment* PR, MAE
- *Ensure all staff receive effective guidance and support through regular communications and annual performance reviews.* PR
- *Review and modify staff organization if needed to promote staff development and satisfaction.* PR, EZ
- *Develop RCDMC Project Management Guide and provide associated Program Management training for relevant staff* PR

Personnel:

- AC=Adrienne Carter, Civil Engineer
- AP=Aysha Peterson, Ag Technical Specialist
- BB=Brandt Bates, Stream Maintenance Program Manager
- EZ=Emily Zefferman, Ecologist
- GCF=GrizzlyCorps Fellow
- JR=Jasmine Ruvalcaba, Field Manager
- JTL=Jamie Tuitele-Lewis, Forest Health and Fire Fuels Program Manager
- LM=Laura Murphy, Soil Scientist
- MAE=Maggie Errea, Finance Manager
- MB=Megan Barker, Environmental Scientist
- PA=Program Assistant (to be hired mid-year)
- PR=Paul Robins, Executive Director