

CARCD Business Meeting / General Session

Wednesday, November 9th, 2011

Stockton Hilton – Delta Ballroom

Attendance: Tom Wehri, Sherman Boone, Anne Coates, Patrick Truman, Marty Melvin, Emily Sutherland, Ron Rolleri, Mike Yalow, Dennis Washburn, Paul Williams, Carlan Meyer, Leroy Scolari, Donna Thomas, John James, Ed Chombeau, Gale Dupree, Pete Landsbury, Karen Buhr, Dave Robledo

4:50pm: **Call to Order** – Wehri called meeting to order and reviewed the CARCD Bylaws regarding quota, nominations and quorum. There were 67 RCD's that contributed to Quota this year, 52 of which were eligible to vote. Therefore 27 districts were needed to be present at the Annual Conference for a quorum and at least 28 are attending.

Nominations – Mike Yalow from the Nomination Committee presented the proposed nominations:

- President – Tom Wehri
- Vice President – Sherman Boone
- Secretary/Treasurer – Dennis Washburn
- NACD Representative – Patrick Truman

Yalow opened nominations up to the floor and there were none. The slate will stay as proposed.

Washburn asked for questions/comments of the candidates and there were none from the floor.

Nominee Speeches –

- Wehri gave an overview of the capacity building grant and strategic plan for the next year. Landsbury and Yalow commended Wehri for all his travels and efforts in the past year.
- Boone said he will continue to support Wehri and the Board in the capacity building effort and continue to head up the Policy Committee.
- Washburn talked about the high energy the Board had this past year. They have moved from fixing financial problems of the past and are looking forward to moving into the future.
- Truman talked about the interesting year coming up in DC. There is not a lot of hope for input on the Farm Bill this year, but he plans to keep everyone informed of the NACD happenings this year. Wehri echoed Truman regarding the little input and quick turn around on the Farm Bill, which is very different than years past. Buhr echoed Wehri and also mentioned that is still is an opportunity for RCDs to connect with the legislators and the Policy Committee will release a statement for RCDs to use as a template.

5:12pm: Suspended Meeting – Wehri suspended the Business Meeting until Friday and passed out resolutions for review. Meyer moved the motion and Dupree seconded. All approved.

General Session Minutes

11/11/11

Present: Nadine Scott, Karen Buhr, Emily Sutherland, Igor Skaredoff, Ron Rolleri, Leroy Scolari, Donna Thomas, Ed Burton, Patrick Truman, Mike Yalow, Paul Robbins, Joan Scolari, Nancy Scolari, John James, Dennis Washburn, Paul Williams, Carlan Meyer, Leroy Scolari, Ed Chombeau, Gale Dupree, Pete Landsbury, Karen Buhr, Susan Werner, Dave Robledo

8:20 open- wehri

Officer Elections- Yallow

Yallow presented the full slate of candidates:

President- Tom Wehri

Vice President- Sherman Boone

Treasurer/ Secretary- Dennis Washburn

NACD Represetntative- Patrick Truman

Yallow opened the floor for additional nominations. None came forward.

Scott moved to accept the slate of candidates as proposed. Campbell seconded, the membership unanimously approved

Presidents Report- Wehri

Wehri presented a summary of his capacity building efforts over the past year. He has now visited 49 districts. He has created a written report of each of the districts. The work will continue into the fall culminating in the new strategic plan.

Wehri opened the floor for suggestions for next year and questions

Washburn noted that partners are increasingly engaged and participating with the RCDs. His district has seen a particular increase from NRCS. He thanked Ed Burton.

Wehri agreed that outreach is very important. State government is starting to reach out more which presents a good opportunity for us right now. We can help them meet their budget objectives.

Burton reaffirmed the partnership and said that in spite of changes, NRCS will stay committed to the districts.

Skaredoff asked for the results of all the capacity building effort.

Wehri summarized:

- 1) Local level ability to make decisions and affect their local resource concerns
- 2) Frustration with buracracy- no communication
- 3) We are going to have to step up and do things ourselves
- 4) More communication, better coordination that passes down to the local level- Send our reports out to all districts on a more regular basis

Boone- VP report

Boone summarized the previous year including acknowledging the importance of the growing relationship with NRCS. He thanked Ed Burton for the stronger partnerships.

Boone took particular note of his role as Chair of policy committee. He has been appreciative at how active the committee has been in weighing in on issues- particularly SB 436. He wants to see more activity out of the policy committee next year.

Washburn- Treasurers report

Washburn gave a summary of the progress the financial system has made over the past year bringing greater transparency and accountability to the organization.

The move from a cash to accrual system of accounts has been time consuming but very important. CARCD created a conservative, grounded expense report. The accountant and auditor have been great and we now have clear and transparent books. We can clearly see where we are and what we are doing.

He reported on the 3 day in depth audit. The organization passed with flying colors.

Werner said that CARCD had done a lot of great work, things are now much better- (quickbooks online, new structure, new system). When the auditors talked to her they were pleased with the state of the organization.

Truman NACD

Farm Bill update- Decisions have not been transparent, negotiations are occurring behind closed doors and quickly. Everyone has been frustrated that they have no influence. NACD has been trying but isn't optimistic.

Washburn asked for more information on the likely cuts to Farm Bill programs.

Wehri- no idea because it is being done behind closed doors.

Burton added that while districts feel powerless, the best thing to do is to make sure you are doing a good job, make sure people know what you are doing, tell your story, connect with your local legislature

Districts need to go back to their communities and focus in on reaching their local priorities. NRCS is getting paperwork converted to computer to reduce paperwork and frustration

Districts are being asked to step up to be more effective and useful, bringing in local leadership. Need the local buy in.

Be great despite the challenges.

Back to the basics- every field office back to the resource issues on the ground.

Executive Directors Report- Buhr

Buhr summarized the highlights of the year including CARCD's legislative agenda and formation of a fundraising committee. She spoke of the need to realign the fundraising plan of CARCD and the RCDs given the current and upcoming funding shortfalls in Federal and State Government. She outlined some of the services that CARCD would be providing and asked that the RCDs provide frequent feedback on what they need, how CARCD can help, and what challenges they face.

Upcoming Conferences

2012- san diego

2013- unknown

2014- Santa Monica Mountains

Resolutions

Resolution 001 Creating a legal fund for CARCD

Franklin moved to open 2nded by Truman, unanimously approved

Wehri provided a summary SB 436- the catalyst for this. CARCD needs to be able to respond to legislative issues as they arise when those issues are of statewide significance.

Werner spoke to the procedure for such funds. It a tax deductible fund, that is separate Designated fund. She has set them up for other clients.

Scott explained that it is easier bookkeeping to simply create a reserve amount at the board level in our normal budget.

Wehri furthered that in the quota system, a box could be added to let a district make a donation directly to the legislative efforts, voluntary basis, discretion to the board as to when you use it.

Questions arose as to the legality under lobbying laws- will we become a pac or a lobbyist?

BBK set up the resolution specifically to avoid the districts from having to do lobbying filing
How do we avoid the extra work?

Scott-suggested that the membership give permission to the board and Executive Director to set up a reserve account that can be used for legal matters.

Discussion centered around wanting a legal fund, but not wanting to be lobbyists. CARCD needs to be able to get help when we need it.

Franklin- motion that we table this motion and direct the board to place it as a line item in the budget, board put restrictions/ policy on this.

Unanimously approved

Resolution 002- Local leadership for NRCS Workgroups

Nadine moved, Landsbury seconded to open the resolution

Rolleri explained the resolution- Fear that we are losing our locally led priority setting by moving the local workgroups to a regional level. Don't want a top down ranking, want to maintain a local ranking and request thee NRCS to inform us more fully.

Boone provided the background that Washington DC told Ca to have the ranking done in 30 days, this was the impetus for regional ranking. After consulting the workgroups, the higher ups did a 180 and went away from what the local groups asked for. Don't want to have DC making local requirements.

Burton explained that NRCS is working on this, he understands the RCD viewpoint. CARCD doesn't need to do a resolution to get his cooperation on this issue. It is a bureaucratic decision at the national level that was intended for streamlining, efficiency, politics, and statute. Locally led conservation is still mandated. That will still be a focus. Whatever issue is there will still be funded (air quality, etc.). Assurance from State Conservationist that this still will be locally led and won't change, its just a new bureaucratic charge.

Motion Tabled- 1st Truman, 2nd Boone

Agency Reports

DOC

Di Stefano- Chernow has been replaced by a temporary appointee.

More people would have liked to have been at conference if not for travel restrictions.

Emphasize that now is the most critical time to “tell our story.” DiStefano is starting to see the change. She is excited about it. RCDs scheduling regular meetings with their local agencies.

RCDs are starting to look back to the local level- donations fees for service, local funding programs. We should keep doing this.

Jenny is available for help- trainings, technical assistance, etc. Travel restrictions still in place which makes it difficult. Day trips still ok.

Help Bay Delta set up a database of employees in their region for employee sharing. Wants to eventually do this statewide.

Prop 84 WC grants are underway. She recommended that grantees implement that grants as if there is no more \$\$ coming from the state. We should find ways to support yourselves.

RC&D-

Now individual 501c3s. Several RC&Ds reported on how they are surviving.

Truman VP for state RC&Ds. Most are doing pretty well and finding new funding sources. No annual conference this year, but state is still meeting by phone.

NRCS

Burton- Partnership with both RCDs and RC&Ds is still strong. He is pleased to see how well the RC&Ds are developing and coping with the change.

He opened the floor for questions for the NRCS.

How will the new ranking be done?

Burton- within each area, regionally will be ranked. (air quality, soils, etc) Criteria for ranking is still a local decision within the clusters. We do have a problem when the clusters are 12- 13 counties. We will solve the problems. We need to be noted as providing support and being problem solvers not blockers

New software will allow the submittal of conservation plans online and then the database will automatically process them. Pieces get extracted into contracts which will save countless hours of time. Screening and ranking can be automatically computed from the new system.

Special Presentation- Jodi Cassel. UC Cooperative Extension, Zebra Mussel Prevention

New statewide project to control and stop the spread of zebra mussels and quagga mussels. Will be conducting workshops with irrigation and water districts to prevent and control impacts.

Speak off topic for next year

- 1) How can rcds protect natural resources through community action?
- 2) How can rcds help promote local food movement (slow foods)?
- 3) What is the role of the RCD in addressing storm water runoff?
- 4) What role can rcds play in ground water management?

#1 was selected

Officers were sworn in

11:15 **Meeting adjourned**- motioned by Franklin seconded by Skaredoff.