



Vol. 2, No. 1

March 2012

## Coming Around the Bend: Annual Report 2010-2011

After a few rough years, it's a pleasure to report on a year of financial easy sailing with old programs continuing and new programs coming on that expand our range of partnerships and work. That said, there's plenty of room for growth and many challenges before us in supporting local natural resource conservation efforts. The following is a summary of the year's highlights, growth opportunities, and challenges.

The **Livestock and Land Program** was reanimated after a two year hiatus and by the end of the 2010-11 Fiscal Year was preparing to expand its water quality project education and assistance services to an additional program focused for Carmel Valley livestock managers. Please see page 3 for the latest news on the program.

RCDMC also started a **Carmel River Watershed Coordinator** program with a grant from the California Department of Conservation. The Watershed Coordinator is charged with providing public and on-site conservation project assistance for Carmel Valley landowners, groups and agencies and to that end is working closely with a number of entities in a region that the RCD has not served in almost a decade.

The RCD continued its **Irrigation Efficiency Program**, coordinating closely with neighboring RCDs, UC Cooperative

Extension Farm Advisors, NRCS, and the Central Coast Agricultural Water Quality Coalition to provide irrigation evaluations to 16 farms. With new grant funding in 2012, this program will expand to better address Monterey County farmers' water quality management needs while enhancing partnerships with parallel efforts throughout the Central Coast. In partnership with these same entities, the RCD is pursuing additional funding to further expand this service to support multi-lingual outreach and technical assistance.

The linked issues of agricultural water quality and on-farm food safety co-management are likely the biggest issues before Monterey County growers that the RCD and NRCS are bound to serve in accordance with our mission and our technical capacities. While the RCD has lined up grant-funding and contracts to begin to address those issues on irrigated lands issues and equestrian facilities, we are still seeking means to support the county's rangeland managers as they respond to new water quality regulations. Relevant grant funding for this work is becoming more scarce and we have yet to line up non-grant funding sources.

In continued partnership with the County Agriculture Department, the RCD has been providing **erosion and weed control** site assessments and assistance. Supplemental funding from the CA Dept of Food and Agriculture also supported treatment of jubata grass near Elkhorn Slough and cape ivy on the Big Sur River.

Under the Coastal Conservancy-funded **Integrated Watershed Restoration Program (IWRP)**, the RCD was able to initiate the design and permitting phases for habitat and channel improvement on a segment of Santa Rita Creek in Salinas and a culvert replacement for improved fish passage on Post Creek in Big Sur. The Santa Rita Creek project will

(see 'Annual Report' continued on Page 4)

### What's Inside:

- 2010-11 Annual Report
- Garden Variety Cheese Nabs National Award
- Annual Speak-Off Competition Resumes
- Changes on the RCD Board of Directors
- Carmel River Watershed Work Day May 20
- Livestock and Land project updates
- 2010-11 Fiscal Year Financial Summary

**The Mission of the Resource Conservation District of Monterey County is to conserve and improve our natural resources, integrating the demand for environmental quality with the needs of agricultural and urban users. We seek to achieve the sustainable management of natural resources including soil, water, vegetation and wildlife throughout Monterey County.**

## News from the District



Rebecca King receiving her 'Good Food Award' for her 'Black-eyed Susan' and 'Hollyhock' cheeses on January 13, 2012. (2nd from the right)

### Director Wins 'Good Food Award'

Rebecca King, appointed to the RCDMC Board of Directors in early 2011, was recognized in January 2012 for the quality of her organic sheep cheese and the quality of her land and operational management at the second-Annual 'Good Food Awards' held in San Francisco. Ms. King produces and ages her Garden Variety Cheese at her home ranch in Royal Oaks, with milk from a herd of approximately 100 sheep. She was recognized especially for her efforts as a young producer who demonstrates a commitment to both high-quality food and high standards of resource conservation on her land.

### Students 'Speak Off' on Co-Management

The RCD held its first 'annual' Speak-Off Competition in many years on September 20, 2011, with four King City High students competing for the honor of representing Monterey County at the Regional and State-level competitions later in the fall. Nicole Hardoy, a senior, won the local contest with her speech on the role of RCDs in supporting co-management of conservation and food safety practices on farms. Ms. Hardoy went on to win the Regional competition in San Luis Obispo and placed third in the state-level contest at the annual California Association of RCDs Conference in Stockton in November.



L-R: King City HS Ag Business teacher Jessica Souza and her 2011 Speak-Off Contestants: Librado Bravo, Nicole Hardoy (champ), Jette Tankersley, and Dominique Nicole Mantel.

## Who's Who

### RCDMC Directors

Paul Binsacca, President  
 Benny Jefferson, Vice-President  
 Steve Cobb, Director  
 Melissa Duflock, Director  
 Rebecca King, Director  
 Joanna Devers, Director  
 Traci Roberts, Associate Director

### RCDMC Staff

Paul Robins, Executive Director  
 Rami Shihadeh, Program Manager  
 Dina Iden, Project Coordinator  
 Bryan Kriete, Weed Warrior  
 Sandra Venegas, Administrative Assistant

### Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

Robert LaFleur, District Conservationist  
 John Warner, Soil Conservationist  
 Beau Schoch, Agricultural Engineer  
 Denis Ruttenberg, Streams Engineer  
 Susan Hoey-Lees, Engineering Technician

### US Fish & Wildlife Service Partners Program

Kathleen Pollett, Biologist

### Director Darington Ends 9 Years of Service

The RCD Board bid a sad farewell to Director Sherwood Darington when he submitted his resignation from the Board in July 2011 after nine years of dedicated service. Mr. Darington consistently provided thoughtful leadership and guidance to the RCD on matters of fiscal management and land conservation. While he is now focusing his efforts on the board of the Monterey County Local Agency Formation Commission, he maintains regular communication with the RCD and ad hoc guidance in his areas of skill. The RCDMC board recognized Mr. Darington's departure from the RCD board during its October 2011 meeting.

### Joanna Devers Joins RCD Board

In September 2011, the Monterey County Board of Supervisors approved the appointment of Joanna Devers of Salinas to fill the board vacancy left by former Director Sherwood Darington. Ms. Devers brings with her 13 years of experience in natural lands protection and resource management working in both the US and Latin America. In her current occupation as Assistant Director for a local land trust, she works closely with area ranchers and land managers for effective management of local range and forestland resources.

## Upcoming Events

### Get Dirty for Good May 20 in Carmel Valley!

The RCD is cooperating with the Monterey Peninsula Regional Park District and the Monterey Peninsula Water Management District to host a first-ever 'Watershed Work Day' at DeDampierre Park near Carmel Valley Village on Sunday, May 20 from 9am-noon. Participants will help restore the natural riverside landscape and habitat by planting native trees and laying out the irrigation system in a bare area adjacent to the Carmel River and then be treated to a river walk that will provide education on river function and health.

Contact Rami Shihadeh at 831-424-1036, ext. 123 for more information

### Slow It, Spread It, Sink It! in Seaside

Poor drainage around urban and rural homes can lead to costly building repairs and can create localized flooding and erosion hazards. The RCD is cooperating with the Monterey Regional Stormwater Management Program to provide an educational workshop for homeowners on how to reduce



Volunteers spreading straw for an erosion control project

runoff from their properties to benefit local water quality. The workshop will be based on the 'Slow It Spread It Sink It!' guide to residential drainage management developed by the RCD of Santa Cruz County. Workshop participants will:

- \*Learn practical and eco-friendly ways to enhance and protect their property, reduce stormwater runoff and protect our natural resources

- \*Hear of opportunities for stormwater evaluations and funding for 'green' stormwater projects on their properties

- \*Receive free runoff management materials from the Monterey Regional Stormwater Management Program.

The free workshop will be held Saturday, August 4 from 10am - noon at the Oldemeyer Center at 986 Hilby Ave, in Seaside. Contact Rami Shihadeh at 831-424-1036, ext. 123 for more information

## Livestock and Land Workshops and Projects

The Monterey County-wide Livestock & Land program has two new demonstration sites with a variety of management practices implemented, including barn roof drainage improvements, a 'rolling dip' for road drainage, gully prevention and planting, field fencing, and a manure composting system. Upcoming projects on two additional sites will include rainwater catchment and manure management. Once all projects are in place we will conduct a Demonstration Site Tour. Keep on the lookout for announcements this summer.

The RCD hosted a Half-Day Hands-On technical training at one demonstration site in October 2011. Participants learned how to properly install a critical area planting (for erosion control) with specific emphasis on preparation for and installation of straw wattles, jute erosion control blankets, and revegetation with native grass seed and straw for cover. (see image)

Livestock and Land ASBS (Area of Special Biological Significance) kicked off the month of November 2011 with the 3-week Educational Workshop Series held at the Carmel

Valley Trail and Saddle Club. The series was well received and well attended. We were fortunate to have the likes of cowboy poet and environmental consultant Kent Reeves to lecture on his grazing expertise and entertain us with his humor and cowboy poetry; Bruce Horttor and Carol Veerbeek from Building the Equestrian Dream walked participants through the site planning process; Richard Smith from UCCE Monterey County provided an overview of noxious weed management for livestock; and John Warner, Rich Casale and Susan Hoey-Lees from NRCS lectured on Best Management Practices, Healthy Pastures and Paddocks, Erosion & Drainage Control and Mud Management.



Completed slope stabilization project with native perennial grass seed, mulch and straw wattles.

RCDMC and NRCS staff are currently processing funding applications for cost-share assistance

for projects on livestock properties in the Carmel Valley ASBS area. Contact Dina Iden, RCDMC Livestock & Land Project Coordinator at 831-424-1036 ext. 126 or [dina.iden@rcdmonterey.org](mailto:dina.iden@rcdmonterey.org) for more information.

be implemented with additional funding from the Department of Water Resources in 2012 and 2013.

Also with IWRP and NRCS support, the RCD conducted two **rural road drainage and erosion assessments**, supported the completion of drainage improvements on Garrapatos Road south of Carmel, and initiated development of an updated *Central Coast Rural Road Maintenance Guide* with the RCDs of Santa Cruz and San Mateo counties.

The RCD is an active participant in the 'Greater Monterey County' Regional Water Management Group as we develop an **Integrated Regional Water Management Plan (IRWMP**, distinct from 'IWRP', above) for most of Monterey County. The plan will aid locally-led organization and prioritization of water resource management projects (including everything from canal improvements to habitat restoration to drinking water supply improvement) so that we can effectively compete for state grant funding. At this point, the RCD has five project proposals included in the plan that support existing programs and enhance range management and erosion assistance.

Because RCDMC has no property tax-based or user-fee income, we work only as funded by contracts or grants. We are working hard to develop longer-term contracts and non-grant funding sources to support income and program stability, for

which the County Ag Department has been a valuable partner. As shown in the financial summary below, this past year was one of recovery (after two hard years of lean funding).

Here's to more good work ahead!



<b>Summary of Financial Statements</b>	
<b>(July 2010-June 2011)</b>	
<b>Income sources:</b>	
Grants	\$336,650
Interest	\$61
Contracts	\$57,987
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$394,698</b>
<b>Expenses</b>	
Personnel	\$236,523
Professional Services & Construction	\$101,584
Office expenses	\$8,252
Insurance, audit and admin fees	\$14,504
Miscellaneous expenses	\$4,488
Depreciation	\$4,276
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$369,627</b>
Change in net assets	+\$ 25,071
<b>Fund balance on July 1, 2011</b>	<b>\$139,962</b>

Watershed Restoration Workday on May 20 at DeDampierre Park in Carmel Valley! Contact the RCD at 831-424-1036, ext. 123 for more info

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