



BOARD MINUTES

Nevada County Resource Conservation District
Board of Directors - Special Meeting
113 Presley Way, Suite 1, Grass Valley, CA 95945
Tuesday February 10th, 2026, at 4:00 pm

1. **Call to Order and Roll Call:** Meeting called to order at 4PM. **Board Present:** Jim Drew, Alana Fowler (via Zoom), Reed Hamilton, Robert Ingram **Staff:** Briana Bacon, Amanda Rodgers **NRCS Staff:** Valerie Bullard
2. **Introductions:** Luke Browning, Ellen Van Noy from the District School Ranch, Katie Alling
3. **Approval of Agenda:** *Reed moved to approve agenda. Alana 2nd. Approved 3/0*
4. **Approval of Consent items:**
 - A. Minutes from Tuesday, January 13th, 2026 Regular Board Meeting.
Alana Fowler moved to approve Minutes with changes, Reed Hamilton 2nd. Approved 3/0
5. **Public Comment:** Ellen Van Noy, Ranch Coordinator at the District School Ranch and CTE Director, Luke Browning gave a presentation about the School Ranch, how much they have accomplished and what they are planning for the program's future. Luke Browning noted that this year they have 15 different pathways that are direct pipelines to employment and next year they will have 17. The School Ranch is an 86-acre parcel that was donated to the school district with the purpose of being a teaching ranch with hands-on opportunities for youth as well as preserving this piece of Nevada County's agricultural history. Their model is that students work under adult advisors who run each of the units. They have various community partners including NCRCD who donated the sawmill which has allowed students to mill the wood for various projects on both campuses. They have had their first calves, they have the first hogs for the Nevada County Fair. This program teaches students real life skills in a real working agricultural environment. For the first time, they will hold joint classes for Bear River and NU students. Next year, students from Bear River and Nevada Union will be bussed in for classes - Animal Science class and an Anatomy and Psychology of Animal Science class and the students will be working on the Ranch as part of their classes.

Ellen Van Noy stated that they have a beef unit and the cattle have already calved out. They have a fully functioning swine unit and they will have pigs ready for Fair. They will be holding Listening Sessions by people who can share the progress of the programs and gain the community's input during the month of March. She said their future plans include a pavilion, permanent classrooms, barns to house all the species for the students, potentially a storefront, a recreation component, and a USDA inspected harvest facility. On the land, they plan crops, vineyard, orchard, and grazing for the various species. They are partnering with Sierra Harvest who are helping them fundraise, will be holding summer camp on the Ranch, and will be running some additional programs for junior high and elementary level students. Luke reported that lots of dirt has been moved around for parking. The pond restoration piece is ongoing. NID is working with them on grants for water efficiency. As they develop each area they will do workshops to educate the public in each field. Ellen said that working with Charlie and Haley has been wonderful for her and the students. Luke reported that the ponds will be showcased in April with NID as a way to showcase water storage. Ellen and Luke walked through a proposal that they have from a company that provides mobile (that can be permanent and is scalable) USDA approved harvest facility. They have been working with Environmental Health, have gotten support from local ranchers, and are talking to potential funders. It will provide a way to keep that money in Nevada County. Luke indicated that when the facility is up and running, adults would run the facility with opportunities for students to learn.

Robert Ingram asked about their forest plan. Ellen indicated that she's working with Jim Drew but they haven't taken any official steps regarding forest management though they are working with biochar amendments and RX Fire.

6. **Correspondence:** Amanda distributed an email from Jo Ann Fitets-Kauffman asking for a letter of support around the Support AB 1699 Good Fire Act. It was explained to Briana that it would be beneficial to Prescribed Fire programs. Briana requested the Board's input. They agreed to read and circle back.
7. **NRCS Report:** Valerie Bullard reports that the ranking deadline for CSP and EQUIP on March 27th to submit projects for this fiscal year, including new RPP (Regenerative Pilot Program). The obligation deadline as been moved up to August 14th. The IRA Contracts from 23/24 – they've allowed some modifications – immediate needs for payment or implementation but they are not allowing any transfers or land exchanges or deceased participants. Working on getting everything organized and doing site visits and getting ready to submit in March.
8. **NCRCD Board Reports:** **Reed Hamilton** reported that Haley came out and did a survey of his place to do a prepare to burn workshop. He was a judge for the FFA Speaking Contest that Katie Alling was involved in and had a fun time and would like to do it again next year. **Alana Fowler** reported that they're calving, they're lambing, they're kidding right now. **Katie Alling** reported that she went to the Sierra Cascade Logging Contest. In a couple weeks they will go to Chico State. State finals are at the beginning of May. Personally, the ranch where she takes her cattle in Lassen County has three different wolf packs. The wolf packs are moving around but hovering around the valley. Her sense is that the wolves are closing in on Nevada County. **Robert Ingram** reported that he found a great illustration that showed the growth over a 100-year cycle that he wanted to present for the documentary but SP decided not to allow its inclusion. **Jim Drew** reported that they're lambing on the homefront. Has one more to go. Been doing some surface burning at his place. Had gave a gentleman from the Landmark Commission and Historical Society out to the Ranch and gave them a tour. He shared the history of the Phelan family with them and they are going to scan and return. Jim was also a judge at the FFA Speaking Contest and he had a good time watching some kids do well, and some struggling but making it through. He met with the folks that are interested in doing Biochar workshops at the Ranch.
9. **NCRCD Director and Staff Report:** Briana Bacon reported that she got a call from a contractor who was interested in using local rated timber. There is only one local grader and has limited availability. The contractor was asking if there are any local certifications that we can encourage people to get so that we have more than one person grading lumber in the area. Briana will do some research. Briana reported that Taylor is going through 60 pages of turtle surveying, following F&W protocols. She also said that Ag Tour is looking at a timber focus on the Ridge. Regarding the budget, Briana reported that it looks healthy. Everything is right on schedule with no surprises. Briana related that Becky is about \$15,000 off after the transition from FinPro to WorkDay. Becky has announced her retirement at the end of April. Amanda has already hired a new bookkeeper, Chelci Buehler, whom she previously hired to do the books for the Nevada County Historical Society. Amanda Rodgers reported that working in WorkDay is going well and we're working on creating our reports. Truckee Farm Day is going well and there is a lot of enthusiasm around this program. Amand and Briana are taking a trip up to Truckee to get boots on the ground and further plan the event. Amanda also reported that she spoke to an old co-worker, Mark Vance, the Executive Director of Nevada County Composers Cooperative, who is interested in working with NCRCD in the coming year with this youth program. Amanda has been redesigning out RX Fire Field Guide, and all other marketing materials. She's also in the process of developing the new giveaway for this year which are playing cards with conservation question/answers.
10. **School Ranch Report:** The mill is going great. There has been some scheduling conflict with his partner but there's been quite a bit of output of wood. There is a woman that is interested in helping out in the forest products division. He will report more when he is back in touch with her.

11. New Business:

A. New Contracts Review –

i. Discussion regarding approval to waive the fiscal policy procurement quote guidelines for the PG&E Educations grant.

Alana moved to approve contract. Reed seconded. Approved 3/0 Jim Signed Contract.

ii. Discussions regarding approval of MOU between District Ranch and NCRCD for the upcoming OES grant which included applications of Biochar, targeted grazing, and RX Fire.

Reed moved to approve contract. Alana seconded. Approved 3/0

B. Micro-Grant Review - None

C. Scholarship Request Review – None

D. Staff Requests – None

E. Other Review - None

12. Old Business:

A. None

13. Announcements:

A. Next Regular Board meeting – Tuesday, March 10th, 2026

Respectfully re-submitted by Amanda Rodgers March 25th, 2026.



Approved by Board of Directors on 4/13/26



Jim Drew, Chair

