

Napa County Resource Conservation District



Special Meeting of the Board of Directors

AGENDA

Wednesday, March 18, 2026 at 9:00 A.M.

1731 Community Room, Napa Valley College McCarthy Library, 2277 Napa Vallejo Hwy, Napa, CA

GENERAL INFORMATION

The Napa County Resource Conservation District (“Napa RCD” or “District”) will hold a special meeting of its Board of Directors in-person at the location noted above. All materials relating to the agenda are available for public inspection at the District office Monday through Friday, between the hours of 8:00 A.M. and 5:00 P.M., except for District Holidays. The agenda is available online at: <http://naparcd.org/>

Members of the public may comment on any subject over which the District has jurisdiction that is not on the meeting agenda during the general Public Comment item of the agenda. Under the Brown Act, Directors may not deliberate or take action on items not on the agenda, and generally may only listen to comments made during the general Public Comment. Comments related to a specific item on the agenda must be reserved until the time the agenda item is considered and the Chair invites public comment. Per District policy, each speaker is allotted 3-5 minutes for comment on each agendized item.

Members of the public may submit a public comment in writing by emailing Tatia@NapaRCD.org by 4:00 P.M. on the day prior to the meeting with “Public Comment” as the subject line (for comments related to an agenda item, please include the item number). All written comments should be 500 words or less and will be entered into the record but not read out loud.

Requests for disability related modifications or accommodations, aids, or services must be made to Tatia Wieland, District Secretary, at 707-690-3110 or Tatia@NapaRCD.org during regular business hours at least 24 hours prior to the time of the meeting.

AGENDA

1. CALL TO ORDER

A. Call to Order and Roll Call: The meeting is to be called to order by the Chair at 9:00 A.M.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

Members of the public may comment on any subject over which the District has jurisdiction that is not on the meeting agenda at this time. Comments related to a specific item on the agenda must be reserved until the time the agenda item is considered and the Chair invites public comment. While members of the public are welcome to address the Board of Directors, under the Brown Act, Directors may not deliberate or take action on items not on the agenda, and generally may only listen.

3. REGULAR AGENDA

A. Director & Associate Director Engagement & Advocacy Training

Presenter: Bruce Barge, Board President. **Duration:** 80 Minutes (35 min presentation / 45 min discussion)

Description: This item introduces a new initiative designed to build a confident cohort of Directors and Associate Directors to represent the Napa RCD in donor conversations and civic presentations. Using a consistent, approved engagement framework, participants will be trained to deliver a brief conversational narrative focused on the District's broad mission and impact to audiences such as Rotary clubs, Kiwanis, and potential donors. The training program includes finalizing speaking tools (PowerPoint, scripts, and handouts), practicing responses to challenging questions, and shadowing live meetings before full deployment. During this session, the Board will review the "Working Script", which highlights RCD pillar priorities like watershed health, regenerative agriculture, and forest resiliency, and evaluate current "Presenter Tools" shared in the communication packets. The discussion will focus on identifying potential speaking opportunities, determining key participants for the next training phase, and refining the program's core narrative.

Recommendation: Review the Training initiative goals and materials, and identify the first cohort of Directors or Associate Directors to participate in the upcoming training sessions.

4. ADJOURNMENT

INTRODUCTION

Napa County Resource Conservation District is launching an ambassador program to strengthen how we engage the community, share our work, and build new, lasting relationships.

This program equips board members, staff, and advocates with clear messaging, tools, and information so you can confidently represent Napa RCD in public settings. The goal is to have fun and share all the amazing work we have accomplished together.

Bring these printed assets with you to provide further information about the organization. Distribute by hand or leave a small stack.

Digital Presentation Materials
www.naparcd.org/ambassadors

Printed materials and ambassador packets are available at the Napa RCD office:
1303 Jefferson St #500B,
Napa, CA 94559

Frances Knapczyk, Ph.D.
Program Director, Community
& Agriculture
(707) 690-3124
Frances@NapaRCD.org

THE WHY

Napa RCD Ambassadors share progress, build relationships, and invite more people to take part in our work. Napa RCD has long focused on delivering strong environmental outcomes. Equipping directors, associates, and staff to serve as ambassadors will help build greater awareness and support for the work underway across Napa County.

Engagement Goals:

- Share progress we are making regarding environmental issues in Napa County.
- Generate donations
- Recruit directors
- Grow volunteer pool and event attendance
- Better understand community concerns and interests

CONTACTS

This team supports and mentors board members and advocates to serve as ambassadors on behalf of the organization.

JENNIFER PUTNAM

Jen is a vocal board member and experienced public speaker. She has a solid understanding of how to engage people outside the organization.

Jen is available to co-present, identify opportunities and inspire direction.

(707) 799-2103
JenniferkPutnam@gmail.com
Jenniferputnamconsulting.com

LUCAS PATZEK

Lucas is the Executive Director of Napa RCD. He has extensive knowledge about the organization's operations and partnerships.

Contact Lucas for information about projects, priorities and access to information and assets to support your outreach.

(707) 690-3119
Lucas@NapaRCD.org

BRUCE BARGE

Bruce is the board chair and is knowledgeable and passionate about the organization.

Bruce is available to attend functions and co-present.

(707) 631-2500
BruceBarge@gmail.com

FRANCES KNAPCZYK

Frances is the Program Director at Napa RCD, where she leads the Community & Agriculture programs and brings deep knowledge of the organization's work.

Contact Frances for information about projects, priorities and access to information and assets to support your outreach.

(707) 690-3124
Frances@NapaRCD.org

ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION

Year Founded

1945. We've been operating for 80+ years!

What We Are

A locally governed, non-regulatory public agency focused on natural resource conservation.

What We Do

Napa RCD provides education, technical assistance, planning, and project implementation to improve land, water, and ecosystem health.

We Don't Do

Regulate, enforce, or permit. Participation in our programs is voluntary.

Who We Work With

Farmers, ranchers, landowners, vineyard owners, public agencies, schools, nonprofits, and community partners throughout Napa County.

Funding

Napa RCD is funded through a combination of federal, state, and local grants, service agreements, and philanthropic support from foundations, businesses, and individuals.

Annual Revenue

\$10,627,466

Governing Board

7 Local Leaders/Directors

Board Advisors

10 Associate Directors

Staff Size

18

COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is an RCD?

RCD stands for Resource Conservation District. We are a locally governed public agency that works with landowners, farmers, and partners to protect and improve natural resources. We do the work on the ground. We do not regulate or enforce.

Do you take political positions?

No. We are non-partisan.

How do you work with private landowners?

Napa RCD works with private landowners on a voluntary basis. Landowners sign up for technical assistance when they want to better understand or better steward their property's natural resources. We provide technical assistance, project planning, and connection to cost-share funds to implement projects.

How do you decide which projects to work on?

Napa RCD's work is guided by a Board-adopted Strategic Plan that sets long-term priorities and provides a framework for decision-making. While specific initiatives evolve over time, the District's strategic direction consistently emphasizes:

- Healthy, resilient ecosystems;
- Sustainable agriculture;
- Wildfire-resilient landscapes;
- An engaged and informed public;
- Organizational sustainability.

How does this work actually benefit regular people in Napa County?

Healthy land and water systems benefit everyone. Our work helps reduce flood risk, improve water quality, support agriculture, lower wildfire risk, create shade and cooling in towns, and connect young people to career pathways. Even if someone never sets foot on a project site, they benefit from stronger natural systems.

COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How is Napa RCD different from other environmental nonprofits or government agencies?

Napa RCD is a local, non-regulatory public agency. We do not enforce rules or tell people what they must do. We work voluntarily with landowners, farmers, and communities to plan and carry out conservation projects. Compared to nonprofits, we often act as a technical partner and project implementer. Compared to regulators, we are collaborative, not enforcement-based.

Where does the funding come from, and how stable is it?

Most funding comes from state and federal grants and project-based contracts. That means we have to compete for funding and deliver results. It is not guaranteed year to year, but it keeps us accountable and focused on real measurable outcomes.

How can someone in this room get involved or support Napa RCD?

There are several ways. People can partner with us on projects, volunteer, help connect us to landowners or community groups, or support our work financially. Often the most valuable support is making introductions and helping build trust in the community.

NOTABLE PROJECTS

STEAMS & HABITAT

Huichica Creek

The Huichica Creek Preserve is a 21-acre property we own and manage near the lower Huichica Creek watershed and San Pablo Bay. Originally a dairy and later a demonstration vineyard, the site served for more than two decades as a testing ground for conservation agriculture practices such as reduced tillage, compost application, sheep grazing, and soil health research, while also supporting riparian restoration and community education.

We are transitioning the preserve from agriculture to habitat restoration. After flooding and saltwater intrusion made grape production unsustainable, the vineyard was removed and we began planning a restoration effort to reconnect Huichica Creek with surrounding floodplain and tidal wetlands, restoring marsh and riparian habitat while creating opportunities for education, volunteer engagement, and public access.

Learn more: www.naparcd.org/preserve/

Fish Barrier Removals

The Napa River watershed includes 171 miles of spawning and rearing habitat, but many of Napa's native fish are struggling to survive due to barriers that limit access to these critical areas. Historically, the watershed supported the largest steelhead run of any San Francisco Bay tributary outside the Sacramento–San Joaquin system.

Since 1945, Napa RCD has been a leader in environmental stewardship across Napa County's forests, farms, and watersheds. In 2024, we launched a major initiative to improve miles of creek habitat for salmon and trout, supported by over \$7.6 million from NOAA and the California Wildlife Conservation Board. Addressing these barriers will give native fish a fighting chance at recovery and long-term survival. As part of this initiative, Napa RCD is removing four key barriers, designing and permitting five high priority barrier removals, and building a project pipeline to secure future funding.

Learn more: www.naparcd.org/fish-barrier-removal/

NOTABLE PROJECTS

FOREST HEALTH

North Bay Forest Improvement Program

Napa Resource Conservation District (RCD) works directly with private landowners to advance forest health and wildfire resilience by providing both **technical guidance and access to financial assistance** for fuels reduction and forest stewardship projects. Through programs like the **North Bay Forest Improvement Program**, Napa RCD conducts landowner outreach, offers site-specific technical assistance, and helps landowners navigate funding opportunities and program requirements so they can develop a plan for their forest (a “Forest Management Plan”) or implement projects such as forest thinning, pruning, and tree planting. These efforts help private landowners reduce wildfire risk, improve habitat, and steward healthy forests, while leveraging public cost-share funding that can reimburse a significant portion of project costs. By serving as a trusted local partner and connecting landowners with expertise, planning support, and funding pathways, Napa RCD helps turn plans into on-the-ground action that protects communities, landscapes, and watersheds across Napa County.

Learn more: www.northbayforestimprovementprogram.com/

Napa Prescribed Burn Association

The **Napa Prescribed Burn Association (Napa PBA)** is a community-based network that helps local landowners and volunteers safely use prescribed fire to reduce wildfire risk and restore healthy ecosystems. Coordinated by the **Napa County Resource Conservation District (RCD)** in partnership with the Napa PBA Steering Committee and local partners, the Napa PBA provides education, training, and technical support so community members can plan and carry out safe, effective prescribed burns. By bringing people together to share knowledge, equipment, and experience, the Napa PBA builds local capacity to care for the landscape and reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire. As wildfire threats intensify across our region, the Napa PBA offers a practical, hands-on approach to strengthening forest health, wildfire resilience, and community safety.

Learn more: www.naparcd.org/napapba/

NOTABLE PROJECTS

AGRICULTURE

Soil Health Action Plans

The Soil Health Program led by the Napa County Resource Conservation District helps farmers and land managers improve the health and productivity of working lands by focusing on the living systems beneath our feet. Through collaboration with regional partners in the North Coast Soil Health Hub, the program promotes practices that build healthier soils, strengthen agricultural resilience, and support clean water and thriving ecosystems.

Healthy soil acts as a living ecosystem that supports plant growth, stores carbon, filters water, and cycles essential nutrients. By helping landowners adopt practices that improve soil structure and biological activity, Napa RCD's program supports productive farms and vineyards while improving air and water quality and strengthening the long-term health of the landscape.

Irrigation Evaluation Services

Napa RCD offers free irrigation evaluation services for vineyards. These evaluations focus on measuring uniformity of irrigation water applied throughout the vineyard. Results from the evaluations help growers easily identify opportunities to improve water use efficiency and performance of their irrigation systems and vines. Growers receive confidential, site-specific recommendations for irrigation practices, connection to cost-share programs, and support for tracking soil moisture, vineyard water use, and creating a plan with the data. Importantly, we provide this service in both English and Spanish, as well as hands-on trainings for vineyard managers and farmworkers to make sure the whole vineyard management team understands their role in on-farm water management.

Learn more: www.naparcd.org/irrigation/

NOTABLE PROJECTS

COMMUNITY & YOUTH

Green Futures

Green Futures is a free 9th to 12th grade environmental education program that connects students to nature and conservation careers. Students explore how open spaces are cared for by a community, balancing the needs of diverse residents. Opportunities for students to get involved are especially highlighted. Classes and teachers work with Napa RCD staff who are professionally and culturally relevant to students to engage them in environmental career skills development and beneficial time outdoors.

This program consists of pre-classroom content, a classroom session, and a field trip to a local park. Students are engaged in discussion, experience mindful time in nature, and work alongside environmental professionals.

Teen Conservation Internship

Napa RCD's internship program provides Napa County high school students with hands-on conservation experience, career exploration, and leadership opportunities. We seek interns from a variety of schools in the community, and value participation of students from our local continuation school. Interns help organize volunteer events supporting forest health, water quality, and invasive plant removal. Interns also interview and shadow conservation professionals and get to learn about key stewardship projects of Napa RCD and its partners. The program broadens access to environmental careers while advancing local watershed and forest stewardship.



Napa County Resource Conservation District
1303 Jefferson Street, Suite 500B Napa, CA 94559
NapaRCD.org | (707) 690-3110

5 minute - Napa RCD Introduction

1. Introduce yourself (1 Minute)

- **Personal Introduction**
 - Name, profession and relationship to the Napa RCD
- **Why the RCD is important to you**

2. Introduce Napa RCD (1-2 min)

- **Napa RCD Background**
 - **Founded 80 years ago**
 - **Pillar Priorities**
 - **Youth & Community Engagement** - We are cultivating a culture of stewardship by engaging over 1,400 youth and 700 adults in hands-on education and community-led conservation projects. Our goal is to move beyond the classroom and empower residents of all ages to take direct action in their own backyards.
 - **Watershed Health** - Our team plans and implements large-scale stream and wetland restoration projects, using rigorous data to measure our impact on water quality and habitat health. By supporting sustainable water management, we ensure our waterways are resilient enough to provide for both people and wildlife.
 - **Regenerative Agriculture** - We partner with 50+ vineyards and 300+ farmworkers each year to manage thousands of acres of farmland and rangeland through practices that are ecologically sound and economically viable. This approach strengthens our local agricultural system while improving soil health and carbon sequestration.
 - **Forest Resiliency** - To combat the increasing threat of climate change, we work with the community to actively steward our forests and measurably reduce catastrophic wildfire risk. We are transforming overgrown landscapes into healthy, resilient forests that are better equipped to withstand drought and heat.

3. Why Napa RCD is important to Napa County - PICK 1-2 (2 min)

- **Environmental Challenges**
 - **Climate change impacts:** Increasing stressors such as more frequent and severe wildfires, drought, and ecosystem shifts.
 - **Watershed health threats:** Degraded stream and groundwater quality, reduced flows, and habitat loss affecting both wildlife and people.
- **Agricultural & Land Use Challenges**
 - **Pressure on working lands:** The need for sustainable, regenerative practices to maintain soil health, water efficiency, and habitat value.
 - **Balancing growth with conservation:** Ensuring agricultural vitality while protecting open space and natural habitats.
- **Community & Equity Challenges**
 - **Need for inclusive engagement:** Ensuring diverse and underserved communities have equitable access to conservation opportunities and benefits.
 - **Loss of conservation culture:** Risk that younger generations may be disconnected from the land and nature without targeted programs.

4. Notable Current or Recent Projects (Choose 1)

- **Fish Barrier Removals** - The Napa River watershed includes 171 miles of spawning and rearing habitat, but many of Napa's native fish are struggling to survive due to barriers that limit access to these critical areas. Historically, the watershed supported the largest steelhead run of any San Francisco Bay tributary outside the Sacramento-San Joaquin system.

Since 1945, Napa RCD has been a leader in environmental stewardship across Napa County's forests, farms, and watersheds. In 2024, we launched a major initiative to improve miles of creek habitat for salmon and trout, supported by over \$7.6 million from NOAA and the California Wildlife Conservation Board. Addressing these barriers will give native fish a fighting chance at recovery and long-term survival. As part of this initiative, Napa RCD is removing four key barriers, designing and permitting five high priority barrier removals, and building a project pipeline to secure future funding.

Learn more: www.naparcd.org/fish-barrier-removal

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Learn more: www.naparcd.org/napapba

- **Sustainable Agriculture**
 - **Soil Health Action Plans**

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- **Community & Youth**

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15 minute - Napa RCD Introduction

1. Introduce yourself (0–4 min)

- **Personal Introduction**
 - Professional background
 - Relationship to host organization/audience
- **Relationship to Napa RCD**
 - How long you have been engaged
 - What you do for the RCD
 - Why the RCD is important to you

2. RCD Explanation (4–6 min)

- **An RCD is a Resource Conservation District**
 - Resource Conservation Districts are local, non-regulatory public agencies, primarily funded by state and federal grants and project-based contracts.
 - They work with landowners, organizations, and public partners to conserve and restore natural resources, including water, soil, agriculture, and forests.

3. Introduce Napa RCD (6–9 min)

- **Napa RCD Background**
 - **Founded 80 years ago**
 - **Pillar Priorities**
 - **Youth & Community Engagement** - We are cultivating a culture of stewardship by engaging over 1,400 youth and 700 adults in hands-on education and community-led conservation projects. Our goal is to move beyond the classroom and empower residents of all ages to take direct action in their own backyards.
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4. Why Napa RCD is important to Napa County (9–12 min)

- **Environmental Challenges**
 - **Climate change impacts:** Increasing stressors such as more frequent and severe wildfires, drought, and ecosystem shifts.
 - **Watershed health threats:** Degraded stream and groundwater quality, reduced flows, and habitat loss affecting both wildlife and people.
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5. Notable Current or Recent Projects (Choose 1)

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6. Q/A (12–15 min)

Potential Questions

How is Napa RCD different from other environmental nonprofits or government agencies?

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they must do. We work voluntarily with landowners, farmers, and communities to plan and carry out conservation projects. Compared to nonprofits, we often act as a technical partner and project implementer. Compared to regulators, we are collaborative, not enforcement-based.

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OUTREACH OPPORTUNITIES

Rotary

- Calistoga Rotary
Thursdays
Cropp Bldg. Napa Co. Fairgrounds
- Napa Rotary
Wednesday at 12:15
Napa Elk's Lodge on Soscol Ave.
- Napa Sunrise Rotary
Thursday, 7:15 a.m.
Silverado Country Club,
1600 Atlas Peak Rd.
- North Napa Rotary
Tuesday, 6:30 p.m.
Wine Train Commissary Building,
1190 Airport Blvd., Suite 101
- St. Helena Rotary
Tuesdays at noon
Spring and Oak Sts. St. Helena

Soroptimist

- American Canyon
Tuesdays. 12 pm weekly
Lena's Place, 445 Napa Junction Rd.

Trade Associations

- Napa Chamber of Commerce
2nd Wednesday Salon

Kiwanis

- Napa Noon Kiwanis
Thursday, 12:15 p.m.
Elks Club of Napa, 2840 Soscol Ave.
- Napa Morning Kiwanis
Wednesday, 7:30 am
Downtown Joe's
- Napa Starlight Kiwanis
2nd and 4th Thursday
of each month
Ruffino's Restaurant,
645 1st St. Napa
- Calistoga Kiwanis
- St. Helena Kiwanis
7:30 AM
American Legion Hall, corner of
Madrona and Oak Sts.
- American Canyon Kiwanis
1st and 3rd Thursdays at 12:00
Jonesy's Famous Steak House,
2004 Airport Rd
- Yountville Kiwanis
Wednesday, weekly at noon
Lakeside Grill at Yountville
Golf Course

Real Estate

- Napa Chapter, North Bay Association
of Realtors
Every Thurs. morning at 8:30 am
Masonic Hall at 4125 Solano Ave