Lake County Resource Conservation District

Annual Report
July 23, 2019
What is an RCD?

• “Special Districts” of the State of California, with primary authority for local conservation measures
• “Soil Conservation Districts” established in 1937 as local arms of the federal Soil Conservation Service (now NRCS)
• Name change from “Soil” to “Resource” in 1971
• Expanded mandate now includes fish and wildlife
What do we do?

• soil and water conservation programs
• wildlife habitat enhancement and restoration projects
• invasive species management
• watershed restoration
• conservation planning
• Fire Safe Council coordinator
• education
Here in Lake County

• Originally five RCDs
• Consolidated to East Lake and West Lake in 1950’s
• Consolidated as one Lake County RCD on July 1, 2016
• Directors: Harry Lyons (president) Victoria Brandon, Jim Bridges, Bill Lincoln, Shula Shoup, Merry Jo Velasquez, Ron Yoder
2019 activities

- Annual Weed Tour
- Field Days in the Creek
- Frank Meisenbach Scholarship
- Trout in the Classroom
- Native Plant Project
- Goats Rue eradication project
- Eightmile Valley project
- Wildfire recovery: Mendocino Complex Erosion Control
- Wildfire recovery: reforestation
Weed Tour: May 9, 2019
Anderson Marsh SHP

Deputy Ag Commissioner Katherine Vanderwall welcoming Weed Tour participants
Botanist Paul Aigner preparing preparing samples of grasses and forbs growing at AMSHP
Invasive Species Coordinator Angela De Palma-Dow with samples of aquatic natives and invasives
Field Days in the Creek, May 23, 2019
Frank Meisenbach Scholarship

• Abigail Elder, Middletown HS ag & environmental science student who plans to attend the University of Hawaii

• Nash Field, MHS senior interested in environmental science and specifically fire science who is currently taking classes at Santa Rosa JC

• Mike Taliaferro from LLHS, who plans to major in environmental science at Sacramento State
Trout in the Classroom

• raise trout from eggs to fry
• monitor aquarium water quality
• engage in stream habitat study
• learn to appreciate water resources
• begin to develop a conservation ethic
• grow to understand ecosystems
• get a first-hand experience with science
• release their trout in a stream near their school
Native Plant Project

- Department of Conservation funding in 2018
- collaboration with the UCCE Master Gardener program
- Two successful sales at the Ag Center in fall 2018.
- Spring 2019 sales at the Finley Grange Breakfast on May 5 and Ag Center
- More planned for fall 2019, dates TBD
Check out the plant list at https://www.lakercd.org/2019-native-plant-list.html
Goats Rue Eradication Project

Goat’s rue (Galega officinalis) is a federally listed noxious weed. It’s toxic to livestock, especially sheep. A single plant can produce more than 15,000 pods with 1 to 9 seeds per pod. Seeds may remain viable for 10 years.

In 2011, Goat’s rue was discovered at the site of the Eightmile Valley restoration project on Cow Mountain. The Lake County Weed Management Area developed a plan of action, with collaboration from the BLM, Ag Department and RCD.

With funding from the Westside IRWMP Committee, work began in September 2016 and continued through June 2019. An additional grant from CDFA is allowing the mop up to continue
Eightmile Valley Project

- A 16-acre valley in the Upper Scotts Creek Watershed within the BLM South Cow Mountain OHV Recreation Area
- “reclaimed” for agriculture in the early 1900s
- 2005 erosion control project washed out by 250-year storm events of 2005-2006
- In 2012, the Scotts Valley Band of Pomo Indians, BLM and West Lake RCD got Water Board funding from the California State Water Resources Control Board. The Scott’s Valley Band is providing staff, water quality monitoring equipment and water quality monitoring for the project; BLM is providing fiscal sponsorship, staff, reporting and invoicing, and construction oversight; and the RCD is providing project management and technical support.
- Will reduce sedimentation to Clear Lake, stabilize and restore the streambed, and enhance habitat value through realignment and stabilization of existing channels, bank stabilization with bio-control plantings, revegetation, and erosion control management practices.
Mendocino Complex
Fire Recovery Project

From left: Project Manager Greg Dills, Director Jim Bridges, Project Coordinator Larry Ray, Director Victoria Brandon, President Harry Lyons, Director Bill Lincoln, Director Merry Jo Velasquez

LCRCD staff and Directors tour the Mendocino Complex Fire Pollutant Mitigation Project, January 23, 2019
• July 27 to September 18 2018 Ranch and River fires burned more than 450,000 acres in four counties

• habitat loss was immense and the threat of increased sedimentation into Clear Lake is significant.

• Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board awarded $605,000 grant to LCRCD to install and maintain erosion and sediment control structures in high priority areas on Manning, Scotts and Middle Creeks.
Reforestation projects, 2016-9

• 85,000 Ponderosa Pine, 10,000 Douglas Fir, 5,000 Sugar Pines in 2017; another 100,000 mixed conifer seedlings in 2018 and 40,000 in 2019

• funding primarily from LakeCountyRising#, Lake Area Rotary Club Association

• Assistance from Lake County NRCS, El Dorado and Mendocino RCDs, UCCE advisor Greg Giusti, and Scully Packing
100,000 Seedlings Arrive in Lake County:
February 17, 2017
Reforesting Trailside Park
March 25, 2017 and March 23, 2019

Photo © Joe Dacanay
20,000 Ponderosa Seedlings
What’s Next?

• Another 18,000 seedling conifers ordered for 2020
• Goats Rue project continues
• Eightmile Valley: this is the year it’s going to happen
• Native Plant project continues
Please Pay Us a Visit

Lake County
Resource Conservation District

Dedicated to the locally-led long term sustainable conservation and stewardship of natural resources and agriculture in Lake County, California.

www.lakercd.org
Questions?

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