



Wildlife Conservation Board
January 13, 2023, 12:00 pm Board Meeting
First Floor Auditorium, CNRA Headquarters Building



Item 2. Roll Call





WCB New Application Process

- GUIDELINES RELEASED MARCH 2022
- Preapplication form released April 2022
- Over 220 preapplications received

SIMILAR GRANTS FUNDED BY WCB

Community Wetlands Restoration Grant Program – SCC, February 2022

Reducing Drought Impacts in California – CDFW, August 2021

California Monarch Recovery - Xerces Society, November 2019

Recovering and Sustaining Monarch and Pollinator Populations – CARCD, August 2019

Enhancing Wildlife Habitat and Carbon Sequestration on Working Lands – CARCD, May 2019

Audubon Conservation Ranching Program – Audubon, May 2019

Climate Resilience Planning for Key Sacramento River Watersheds – Pacific Forest Trust, May 2019

Northern California Climate Adaptation – EcoAdapt, March 2019

Truckee River Watershed Forest Enhancement – National Forest Foundation, August 2014

Southern California Coastal Wetland and Riparian Restoration – SCC, May 2012

San Francisco Bay Area Wetlands Protection and Restoration – SCC November 2003

A scenic landscape with rolling hills, trees, and a fence. The hills are covered in dry, yellowish grass. There are several large trees with green leaves in the foreground and middle ground. A wire fence runs across the lower part of the image. The sky is clear and blue.

ACCOUNTABILITY

- Progress Reports
- Biannual Reports
- Annual Reports
 - Final Report

Indemnification

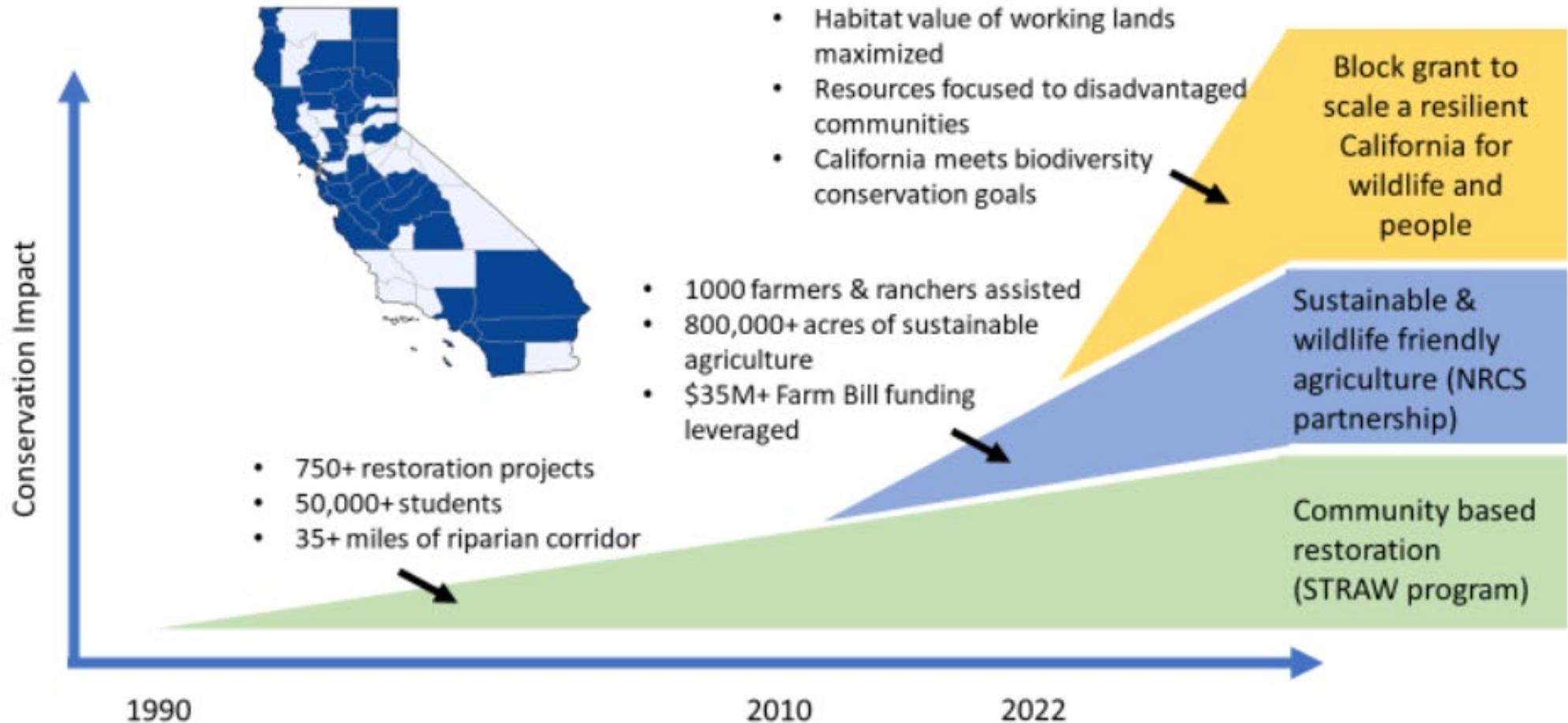
- To the fullest extent permitted by law, Grantee shall indemnify, protect, and hold harmless the Wildlife Conservation Board and the State of California, and their respective members, officers, agents, employees and representatives, from and against any and all claims, including lawsuits under CEQA, demands, damages, losses, costs (including attorneys' fees), expenses, and liability of any nature (Claims) arising out of or incident to the Project, Grantee's entry upon and use of the Property, and the performance of, or failure to observe or perform, any obligations of the Grantee under this Agreement. The obligations of Grantee under this Section 9.4 include, without limitation, Claims resulting from the generation, use, storage, disposal, release or threatened release of any hazardous or toxic substance, material or waste; petroleum or petroleum products and other substances that present a threat to human health or the environment.

Building Wildlife-Friendly Resilience in Working Landscapes Various Counties



Building Wildlife-friendly Resilience and Equity in California's Working Landscapes

Slide 2

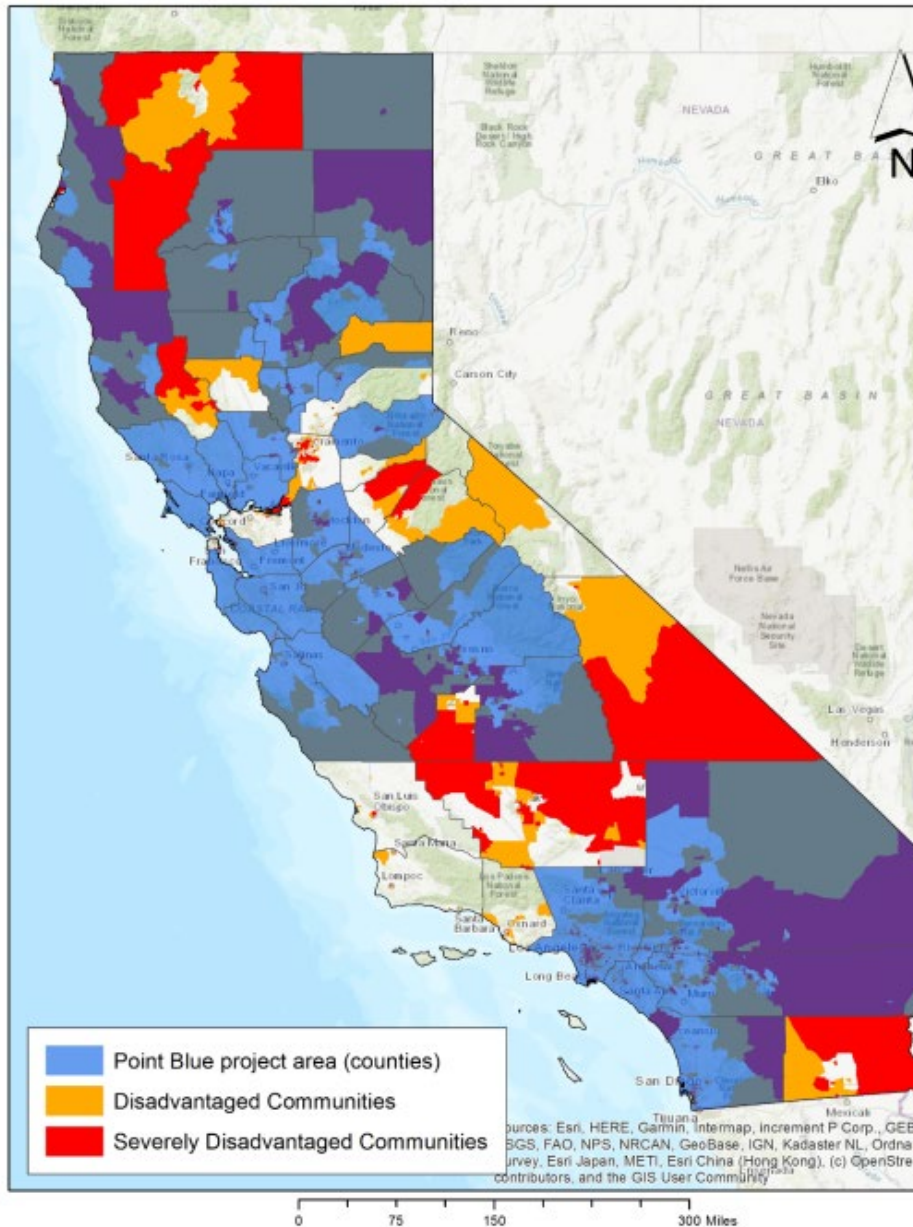


2. Building Wildlife-Friendly Resilience in Working Landscapes

Slide 3

Image courtesy of Point Blue Conservation Science

Point Blue project area and Disadvantaged Communities.



Building Wildlife- friendly Resilience and Equity in California's Working Landscapes

Slide 4

Project milestones:

- Restore 5 mi riparian habitat
- Restore 40,000 ac of upland habitat
- Implement projects in a minimum of 35 counties across California
- Implement at least 50% of restoration projects in disadvantaged communities
- Partner with 200 land managers
- Engage a minimum of 8,000 volunteers in restoration implementation



2. Building Wildlife-Friendly Resilience in Working Landscapes

Slide 5

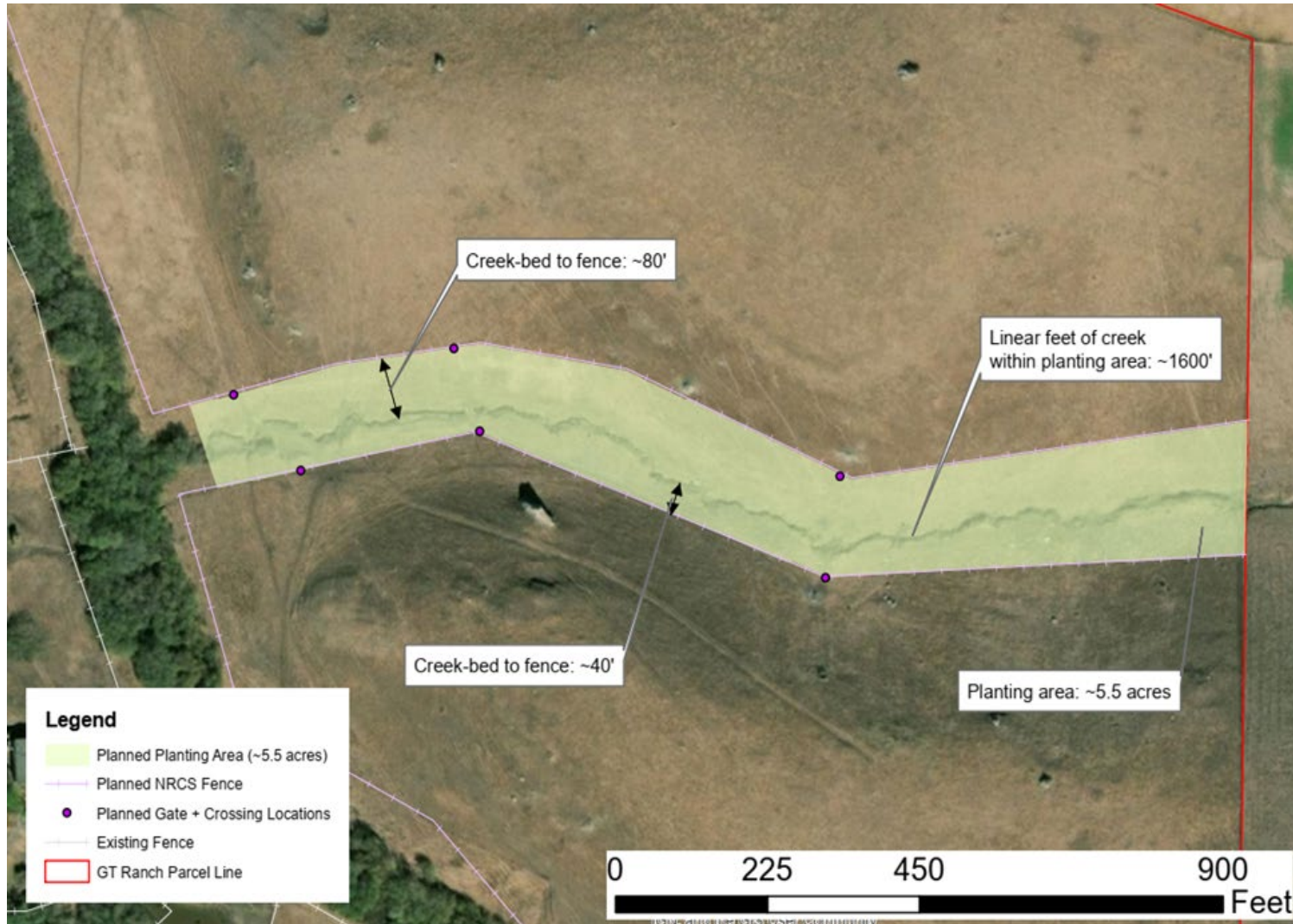
Images courtesy of Point Blue Conservation Science

Students active in restoration through STRAW Program.

2. Building Wildlife-Friendly Resilience in Working Landscapes

Slide 6

Example riparian restoration project (cattle exclusion and planting).





2. Building Wildlife-Friendly Resilience in Working Landscapes

Slide 7

Sample project type:
riparian restoration (16
years).

Images courtesy of Point Blue Conservation Science



November 2020



March 2021



November 2021



2. Building Wildlife-Friendly Resilience in Working Landscapes

Slide 8

Sample project type:
Beaver Dam Analog (1
year).

Images courtesy of Point Blue Conservation Science



2. Building Wildlife-Friendly Resilience in Working Landscapes

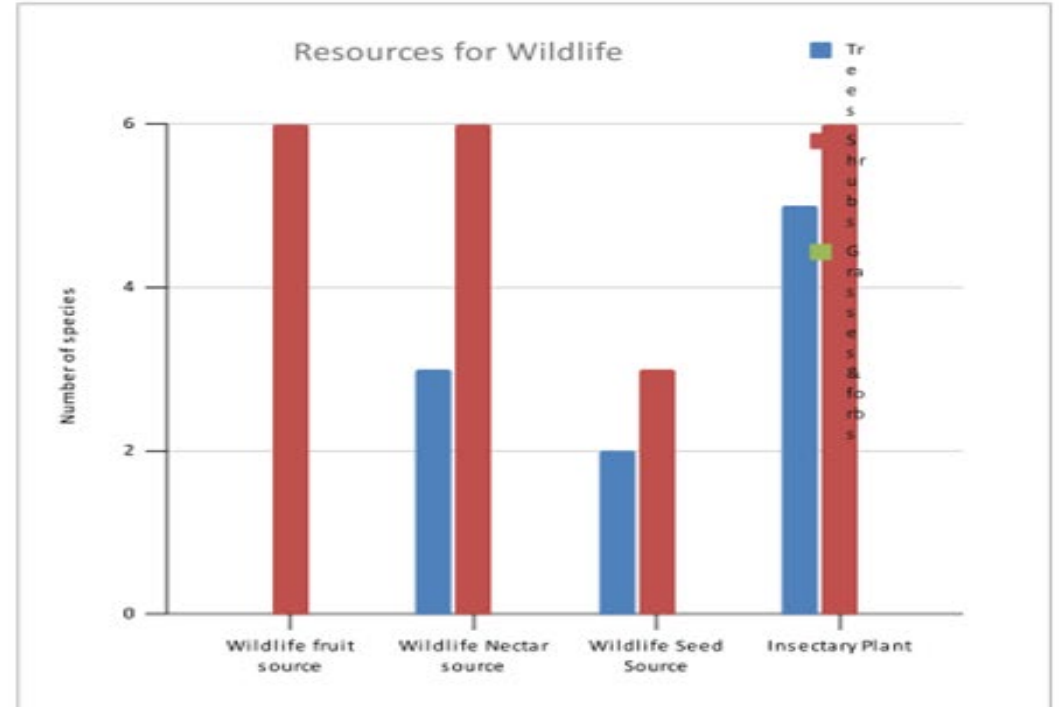
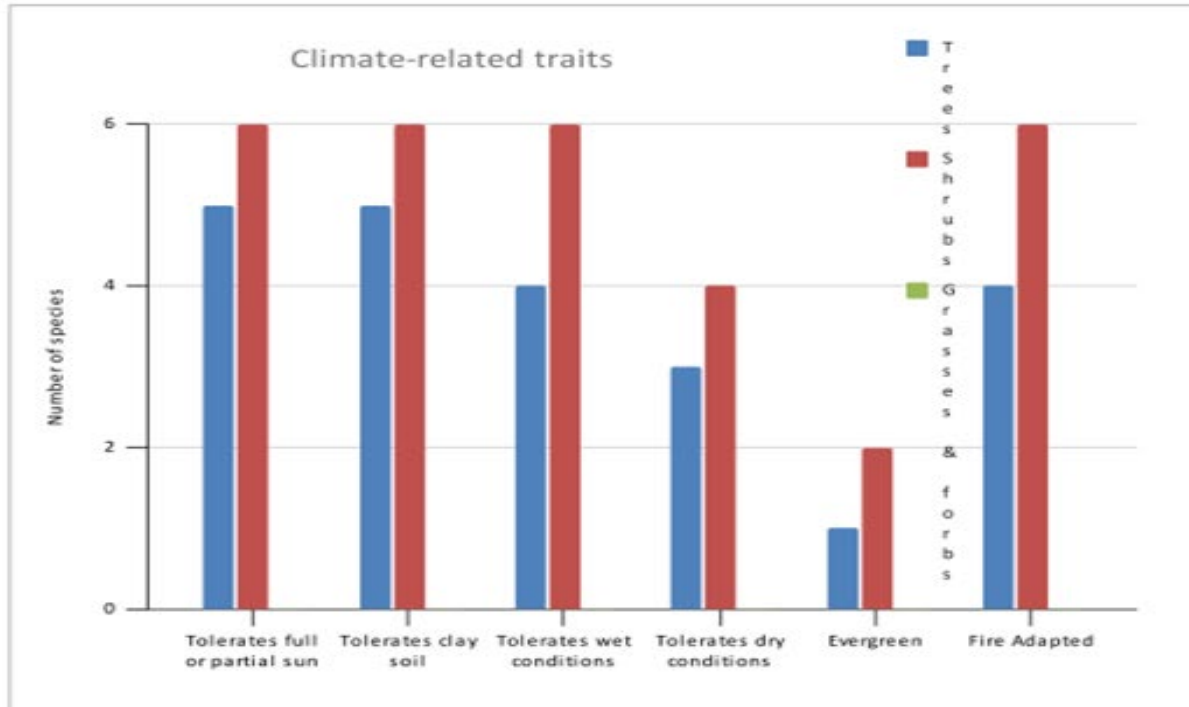
Slide 9

Sample project type:
Zeedyk (“one-rock dam”)
structure (1 year).

Images courtesy of Point Blue Conservation Science

Climate-Smart Performance Analysis

Trees (5 selected)
 Shrubs (6 selected)
 Grasses & Forbs (0 selected)



2. Building Wildlife-Friendly Resilience in Working Landscapes

Slide 10

Performance evaluation tool for plant success.



2. Building Wildlife-Friendly Resilience in Working Landscapes

Slide 11

- Images courtesy of Point Blue Conservation Science and the California Association of Resource Conservation Districts

Building Wildlife-Friendly Resilience and Equity on California's Working Landscapes

Liz Chamberlin, Ph.D.
Point Blue Director of Strategic Innovations
January 13, 2023



Point Blue
Conservation
Science

Point Blue Conservation Science



Our 160 scientists develop nature-based solutions to climate change, habitat loss, and other environmental threats.



Since 1965 we've used a rigorous and collaborative approach to track ecosystem health and inform impactful solutions for wildlife and people.



From the Sierra to the sea, across the Western Hemisphere, and as far as Antarctica, we're planning for the changes ahead.

Core Capabilities: Community-Based Restoration

30 years of STRAW (Students & Teachers Restoring a Watershed)

50,000+ students, teachers & volunteers

40+ miles of riparian corridor restored

>30% qualify for Free and Reduced Lunch Programs



Core Capabilities: Community-Based Land Stewardship



Unique public-private partnership with the Natural Resources Conservation Service since 2011



1000+ farmers, ranchers, land managers



Ecological monitoring on 100+ ranches



Technical assistance, conservation planning and implementation support on 800,000+ acres



\$80 million+ in conservation funding leveraged



Core Capabilities: Public-Private Partnerships



Core Capabilities: Committed to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Justice



2019 Org. Commitment to DEIJ



Training staff & board



Formed DEIJ Working Group



Developed DEIJ Action Plan



Developed Org. Why Statement for DEIJ



Incorporating into Strategic Planning



Revised recruitment & hiring processes



Reducing barriers to BIPOC accessing jobs at Point Blue



Leveraging Core Capabilities to Support 30x30

30x30 Objectives:

Protect and Restore Biodiversity

Expand Access to Nature

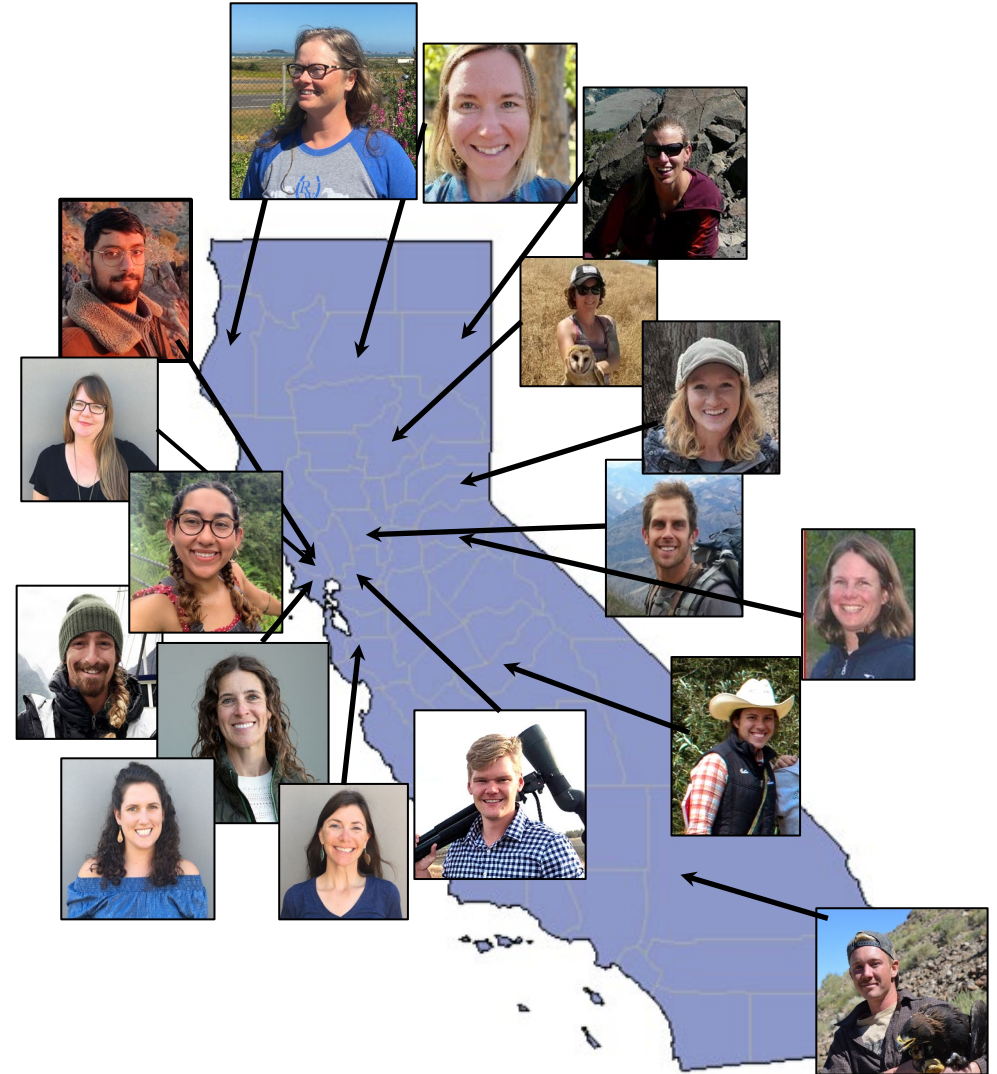
Mitigate and Build Resilience to Climate Change

Point Blue brings:

Statewide presence & networks

Core expertise

Proven track record



California's working lands represent critical value for wildlife habitat, climate resilience and human communities



>50% of California's land base



Working lands = farms and ranches, grazed open spaces, forests, community gardens, urban farms and green spaces



Urgent need to address barriers to current conservation resourcing to maximize that value



Leveraging 30 years of community-based restoration and conservation stewardship expertise

“Point Blue brings important biological expertise to help us achieve our mission—helping farmers and ranchers maintain healthy working lands.”

Carlos Suarez, State Conservationist, USDA NRCS California

30+ staff dedicated across California to this block grant project

185 years of collective experience

Tribal communities engaged in 13+ counties

15,000+ underserved students engaged in restoration

“We feel more confident about meeting our restoration goals on working landscapes more than ever largely due to our over 25-year history with Point Blue’s STRAW Program. Together we are designing climate smart projects ... that are beneficial to a variety of wildlife species.”

Nancy Scolari,
Executive Director
Marin RCD

Block Grant Project Goals

Restore	Restore wildlife habitat on farms and ranches across California.
Direct	Direct > 50% of funding to projects that support projects with California Native American Tribes, disadvantaged communities, and underserved individuals*.
Engage	Engage communities in building ecological resilience.



Key Elements of our Block Grant Model

Multi-Partner Advisory Committee

Community-based restoration and action

Intentional focus on diversity, equity and inclusion

Transparent project selection

Technical assistance available for applicants

Adaptive management approach

Strong track record of fiscal responsibility



Community-Centered Restoration Success Metrics

At least 8,000 community volunteers & 200 producers + partners



> 230 wildlife-beneficial restoration practices:

> 100 riparian restorations

> 30 hedgerow plantings

> 30 oak woodland restorations

> 60 pollinator habitat restorations

> 10 beaver dam analog installations

Additional practices

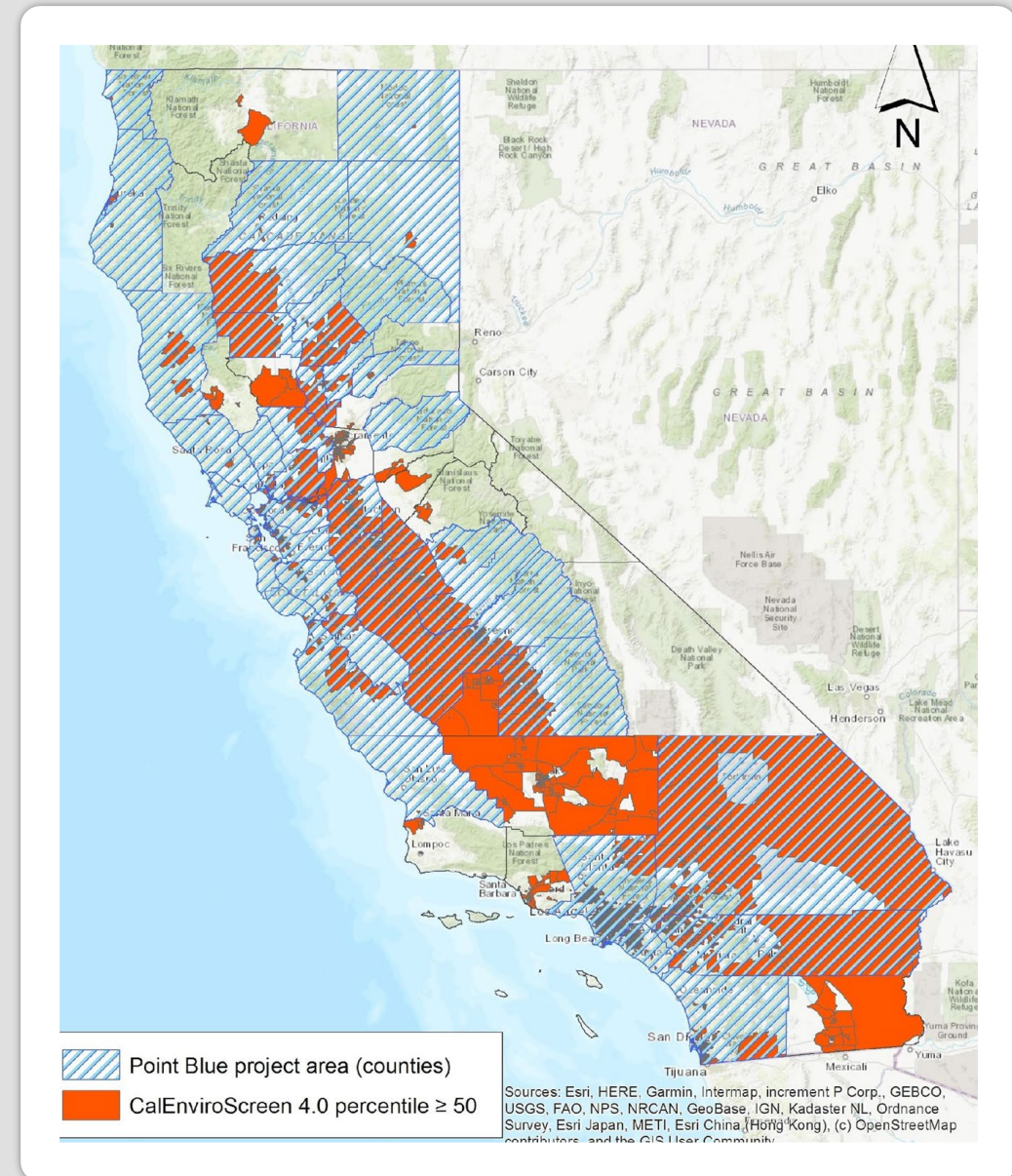
Equity Building Targets and Strategies

>50% of funds to build equity

30% of TAC reserved for representatives from Environmental/Social Justice Groups

Equity-related metrics heavily weighted in project selection process

Technical assistance provided to applicants



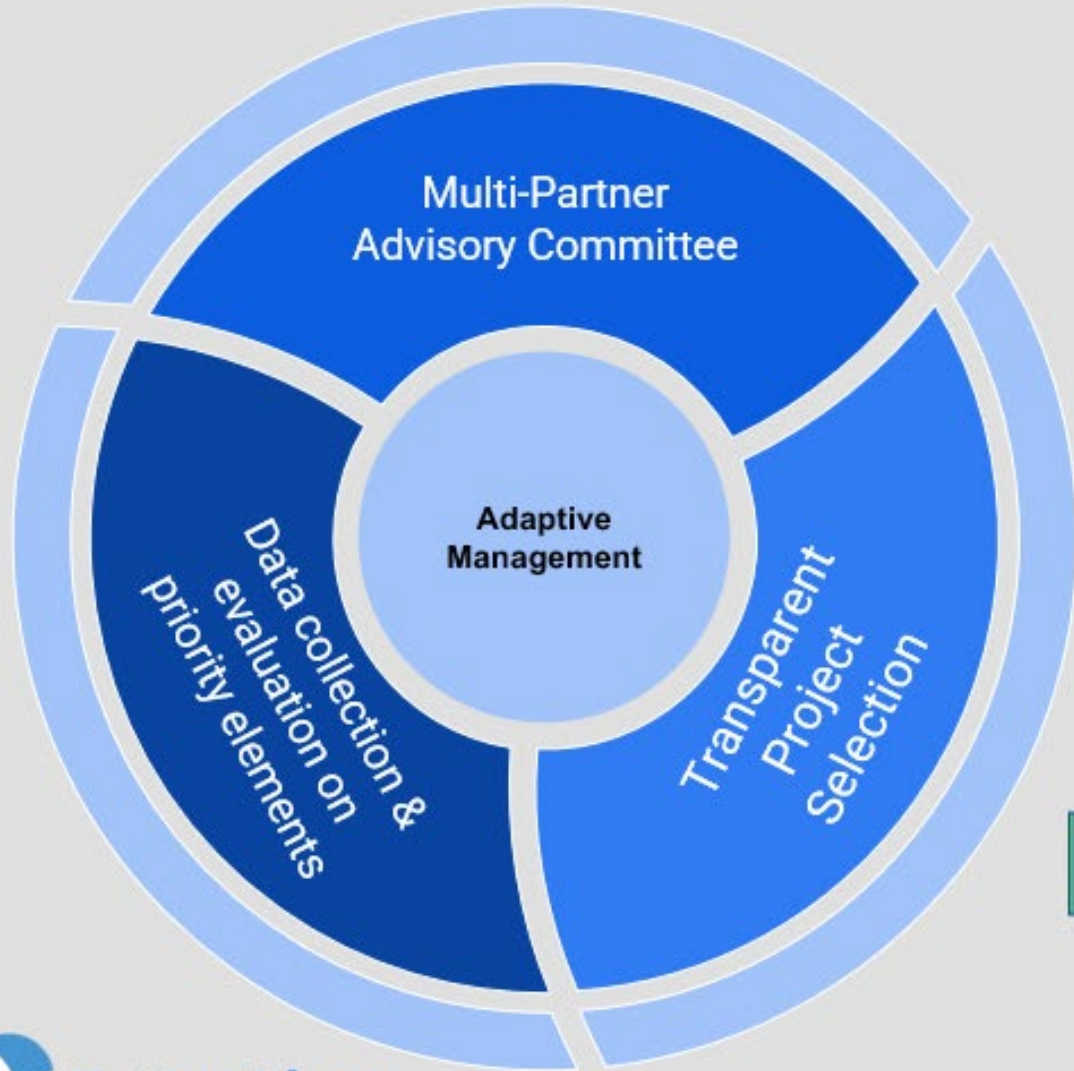
Key Partnerships in Southern California

- More than 60 organizations and individuals support this block grant, including:
 - Compton People’s Garden
 - Watts Rising
 - Dorsey High School (LAUSD)
 - Barrons Microgreens & other small-scale operations
- Demonstrates significant need for this block grant project in Southern California



Point Blue Southern CA Partner Biologist Tracey Rice with community partners. Photo courtesy of Jamie Quarfield, Lancaster NRCS

Project Selection & Evaluation



Rubric Ranking Categories

Wildlife Habitat Quality & Connectivity

Equity & Community Engagement

Climate Resilience & Feasibility

Accountability

- Bi-annual reports and summaries for WCB documenting project progress
- Structures to ensure project durability
- Project success evaluated with our TAC
- Web-based landing page to communicate progress
- Data collected: performance, socioecological data
- Gaps adaptively managed



Project Outcomes: ecological and social benefits of working lands increased



Habitat value of farms and ranches enhanced across all major ecoregions of California



Threatened and endangered species bolstered



Increased recognition of the value of California's farms and ranches for wildlife



New communities engaged in restoration and land stewardship



More than 4000 underserved students will participate in restoration implementation



Partnering across California to advance 30x30

"To conserve 30% of California's lands and coastal waters by 2030, the audacious is not only possible, it is necessary ... Point Blue brings the science that will help us meaningfully protect and restore biodiversity, expand access to nature, and build resilience to climate change. We have to move at a pace and scale like we never have before, and we look forward to working with Point Blue in showing the world that people and nature can thrive together."

- California Natural Resources Secretary Wade Crowfoot, October 2022





Thank You



Climate Smart Meadow Restoration Various Counties





3. Climate Smart Meadow Restoration

Slide 1

Degraded meadows

(Bottom left image credit:
South Yuba River Citizens
League)





3. Climate Smart Meadow Restoration

Slide 2

Restoration examples



3. Climate Smart Meadow Restoration

Slide 3

Students and Teachers Restoring A Watershed (STRAW)

(Image credit: Point Blue)



Increasing the Pace, Scale, and Efficacy of Sierra Meadow Restoration

Ryan Burnett

1/13/2022



**Point Blue
Conservation
Science**



**The Sierra
Meadows
Partnership**

Why Are Healthy Meadows So Important?

Water

- improve water quality
- reduce downstream flooding
- natural reservoirs

Carbon Sinks

Biological Diversity Hotspots

Climate Refugia

Biological Diversity

- Birds, fish, amphibians, pollinators, deer fawning
- Special status species
- Keystone habitat for Sierra birds



>50% (>100,000 ac.) of Meadow are Degraded





Sierra Meadows Partnership

Restore & protect 30,000 acres by 2030 that enhance water, carbon, and biodiversity benefits

3. Climate Smart Meadow
Restoration
Slide 8

Sierra Meadows Partnership

16 Member Management Board

Over 40 participating entities



Sierra Meadows Strategy

An "all-hands, all-lands" approach to increasing the pace, scale and efficacy of meadow restoration and protection throughout the Greater Sierra Nevada.

Double click to zoom in.

by The Sierra Meadows Partnership
November 2016

Red Clover Creek, restored in 2006. Photo: Stefan Lorenzato

3. Climate Smart
Meadow Restoration
Slide 10

Progress Towards 30,000-acre goal

Restoration

- Over 3000 acres restored
- 5400 acres in implementation phase
- 2900 acres in planning phase

Land Protection

- 4,961 acres

Block Grant Will Accelerate Progress

- 6,000 acres of restoration
- 4,000 acres restoration planning
- 2,500 acres of next priorities identified
- Technical assistance to advance restoration/stewardship
- Outreach/community engagement (e.g. STRAW, Tasman Koyom TEK project)

3. Climate Smart Meadow
Restoration

Slide 12

Project Selection Criteria

- Transparent & objective approach
- SMP Management Board developed criteria and will evaluate projects
- Public Solicitation Notice
- Rubric to score projects based on:
 - Impact
 - Durability
 - Wetland-Riparian Area Monitoring Plan (WRAMP) protocols employed
 - Authentic DEIJ elements
 - Community engagement/support
 - Project Readiness
- 10% of funds set aside for tribal groups
- SMP board will work with tribal groups to develop projects

3. Climate Smart
Meadow Restoration

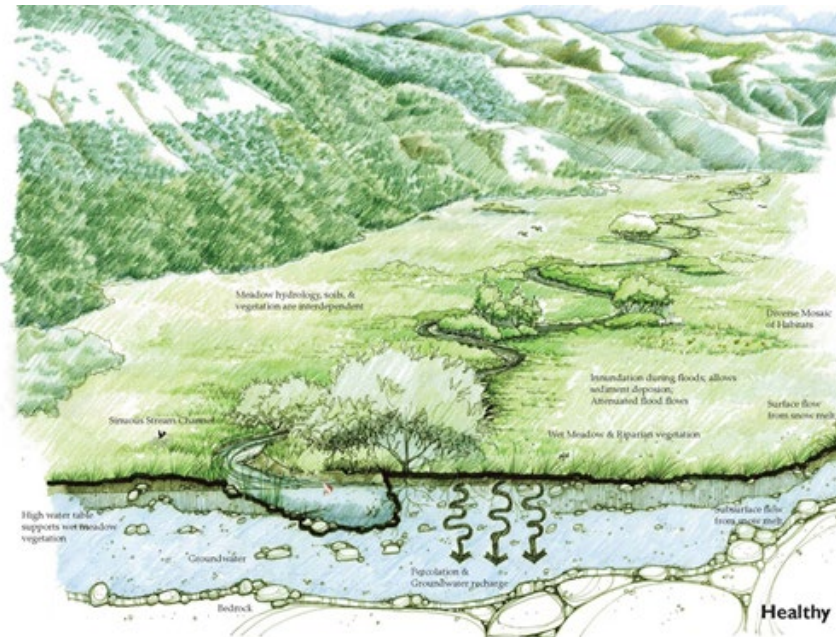
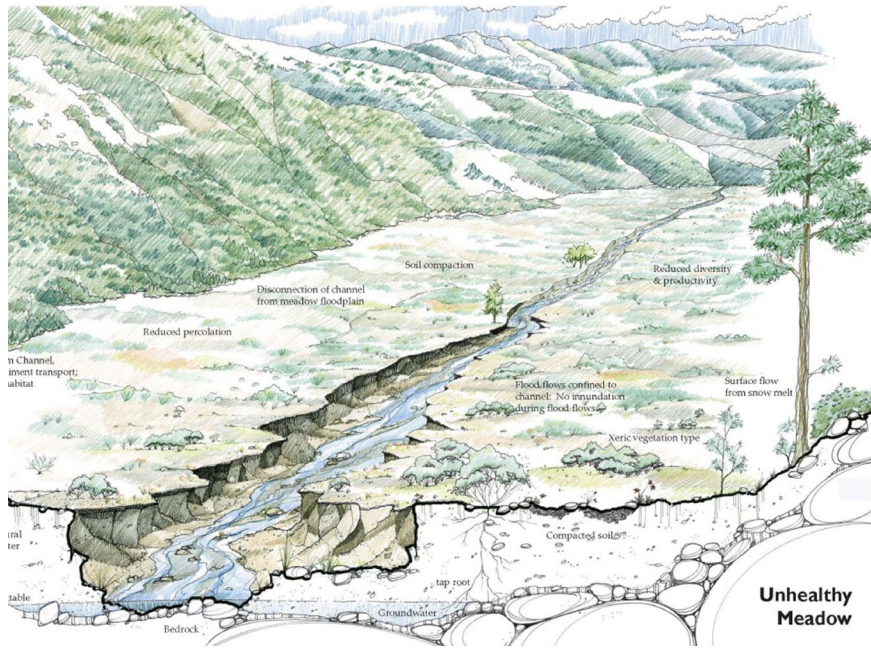
Slide 13

Accountability

- Collaborative project selection process (250+ years of experience)
- Transparent project selection criteria
- Extensive reporting required in grant agreement
- Standardized monitoring protocols to quantify benefits
- 15-year land tenure agreements
- Broad financial support: 7 federal agencies, 13 state entities, 15+ foundations, 100's of private donors

Growing a Strong Partnership

- SMP & Point Blue goals/strategy closely aligned with WCB and broader state strategies
- SMP & Point Blue track record of delivering impactful restoration and land conservation projects
- WCB currently leading funder of Sierra meadow restoration/protection
- Since 2017 WCB has funded 27 SMP restoration projects (\$23M).

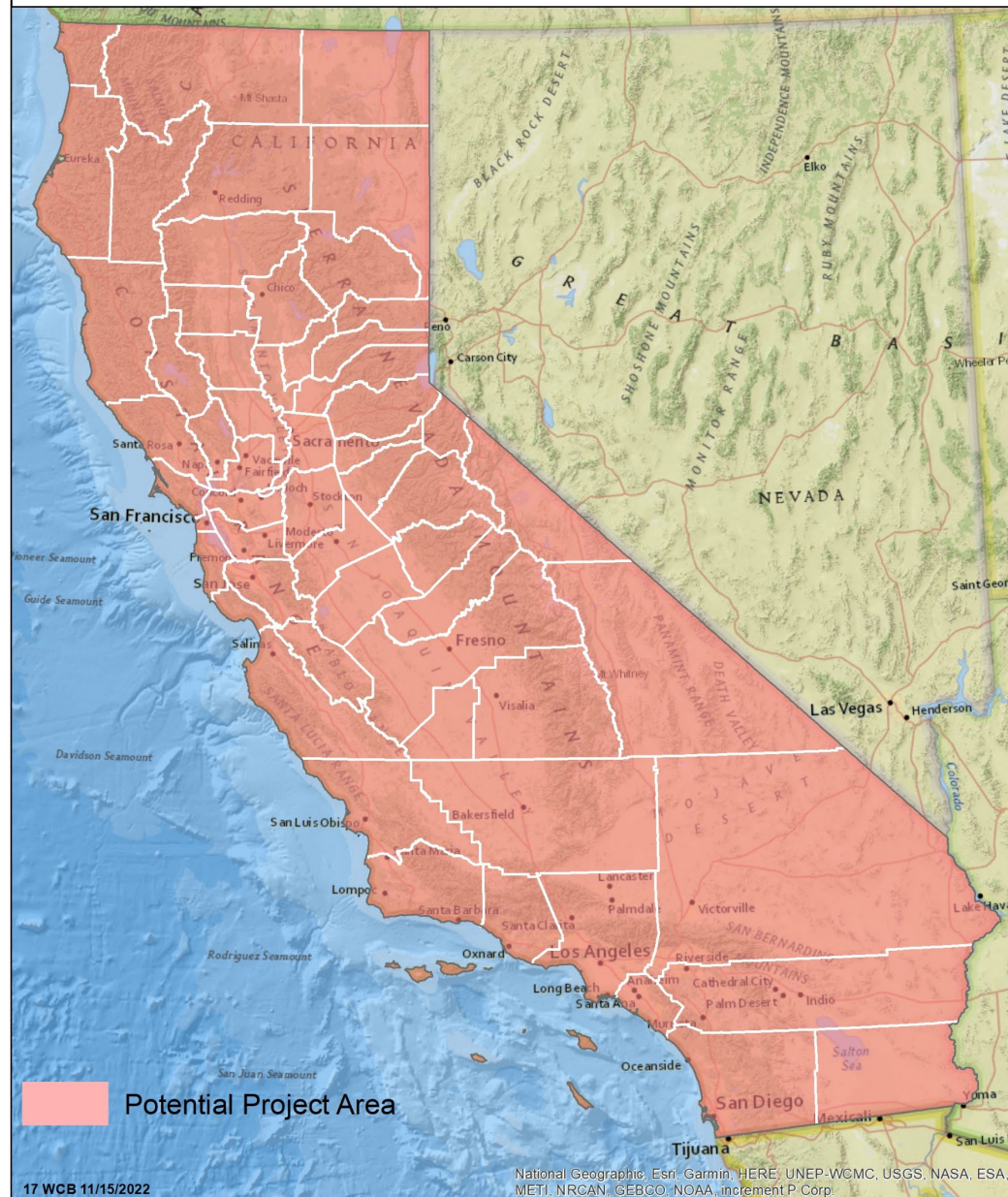


3. Climate Smart Meadow Restoration

Slide 16

Unhealthy meadow (top left) and healthy meadow (bottom left)
 (Image credit: American Rivers)

Climate Resilience Through Habitat Restoration Statewide



4. Climate Resilience Through Habitat Restoration

Slide 2

Block Grant – Context

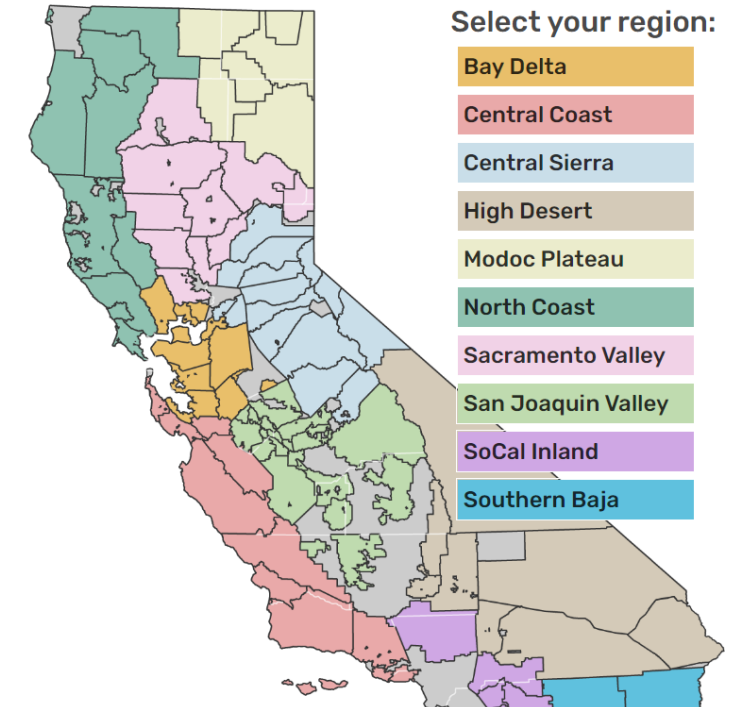
Leveraging resources to expand capacity to realize the state's natural lands conservation goals.

CARCD

- Networking and coordination of RCDs
- Successful management of previous block grants funded by WCB
- JEDI Program Manager

RCDs

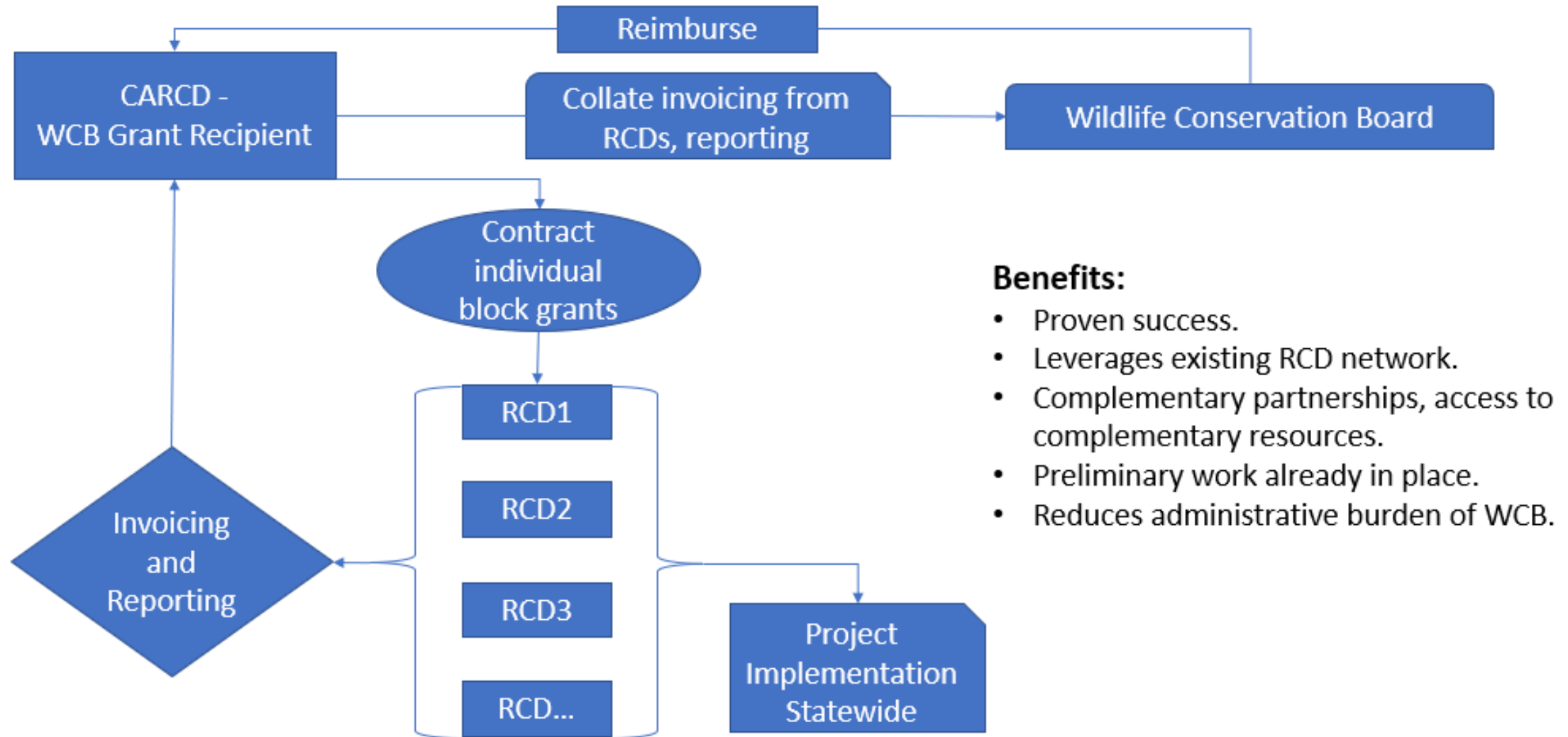
- Existing, longstanding statewide network
- Directly serving communities over multiple generations
- Longstanding and diverse partnerships
- Excellent position to increase pace and scale of conservation



CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF
RESOURCE
CONSERVATION DISTRICTS

4. Climate Resilience Through Habitat Restoration, Slide 3

Block Grant - Workflow



Benefits:

- Proven success.
- Leverages existing RCD network.
- Complementary partnerships, access to complementary resources.
- Preliminary work already in place.
- Reduces administrative burden of WCB.

4. Climate Resilience Through Habitat Restoration

Slide 4

Conservation Goals:

Monarch/Pollinator habitat:

- 30 monarch/pollinator habitat restoration projects on working lands;
- 25 monarch/pollinator habitat restoration projects on public lands;
- Improve at least 5 monarch/pollinator overwintering sites on public lands or private property;

Habitat restoration:

- 19 wildlife habitat restoration projects on public and private (wetlands, oak woodlands, riparian corridors, foothill grasslands, flood plains, desert, and forest);

Working lands:

- Implement carbon farm plans on at least 40 sites.
- Develop additional carbon farm plans and implement additional projects as opportunities arise.

Common Name	Scientific Name	Flag color	Zones				Total by species
			Zone1	Zone2	Zone3	Zone4	
sq ft			18,500	7,991	3,403	5,870	
Percentage area	35764		52%	22%	10%	16%	
Calif. Buckeye	<i>Aesculus californica</i>	red	5	5			10
Big Leaf Maple	<i>Fraxinus latifolia</i>	Green	5	5			10
Coast Live Oak	<i>Quercus agrifolia</i>	light blue		5			5
Valley Oak	<i>Quercus lobata</i>	orange		3			3
CA Wild Rose	<i>Rosa californica</i>	pink		9			9
Red and Arroyo Willow	<i>Salix laevigata, Salix lasiolepis</i>				15		15
Juncus spp	<i>Juncus</i>		25	25		5	55
Sedges	<i>carex, spp.</i>		20	20		3	43
Sword ferns	<i>Polystichum munitum</i>	silver	7	5		12	24
Snowberry	<i>Symphoricarpos</i>	White	15	5	5	7	32
elk clover	<i>Aralia californica</i>	Brown	5	9			14
Ninebark	<i>Physocarpus capitatus</i>	Purple	9	5		3	17
White Alder	<i>Alnus rhombifolia</i>	yellow	9				9
TOTAL BY ZONE			100	96	20	30	246

4. Climate Resilience Through Habitat Restoration

Slide 5

Example candidate riparian area for revegetation, adjacent to cultivated vineyard.

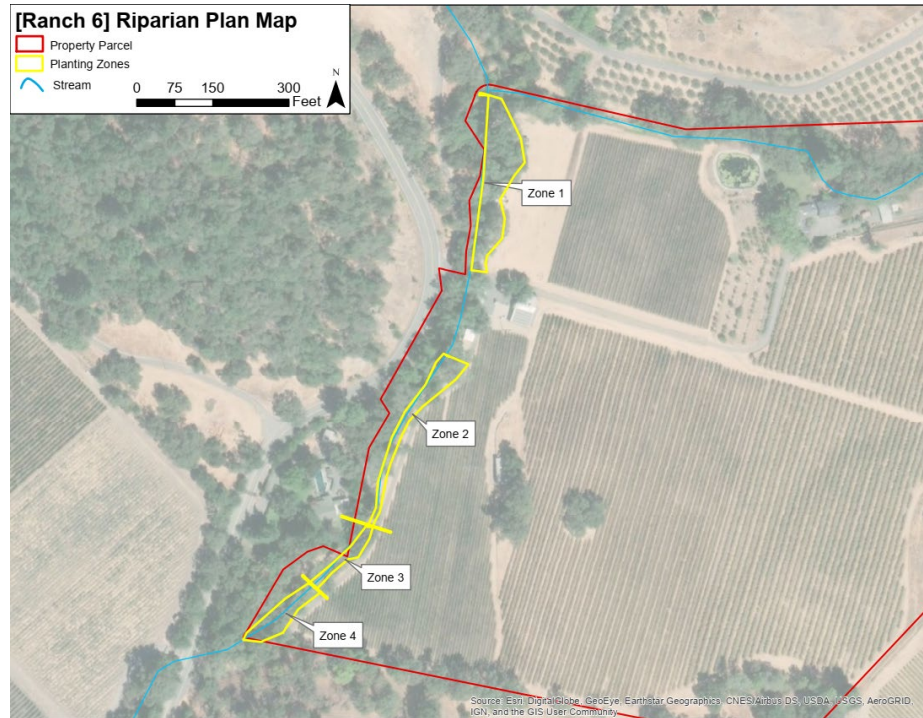
Images courtesy of California Association of Resource Conservation Districts

4. Climate Resilience Through Habitat Restoration

Slide 6

Left: Example riparian plan map

Right: Example soil map to determine available water capacity.



Images courtesy of California Association of Resource Conservation Districts

4. Climate Resilience Through Habitat Restoration

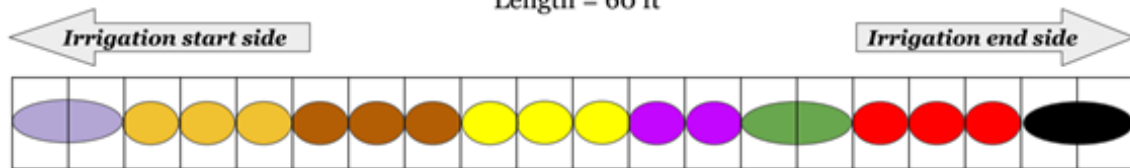
Slide 7

Left: Example hedgerow design

Right: Hedgerow planting

[Ranch 2] Hedgerow Design

Segment #2 of 5
Length = 60 ft



- | | |
|--|---|
|  Yarrow |  Prostrate coyote brush |
|  Black sage |  California fuchsia |
|  Aster "Purple Haze" |  Prostrate Coffeeberry |
|  California Goldenrod |  Salvia "Bee's Bliss" |

Each box
is 3' wide



4. Climate Resilience Through Habitat Restoration

Slide 8

Images courtesy of California Association of Resource Conservation Districts



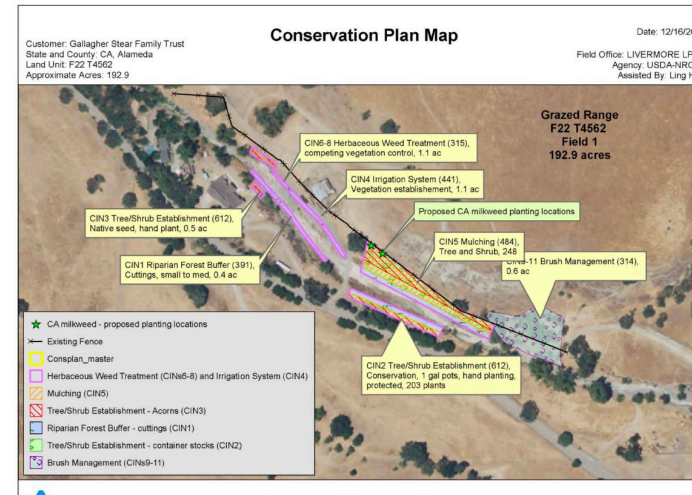
RCDs: Boots on the ground to meet California's 30 x 30 Goals

- **Deep connections and existing relationships with stakeholders**
 - RCDs serve farmers, ranchers, and other community stakeholders like schools, parks, local non-profits, community gardens, and more
- **Local knowledge, conservation project expertise, key partnerships with agencies and NGOs, community connection, and passion for conservation**
- **On-the-ground partners, working with stakeholders to get conservation work done**



RCD Work

- Technical Assistance and Planning
- Project Implementation on the ground
- Monitoring, Maintenance, Reporting
- Outreach & Education



TA Site: Copper Moon Ranch



Pollinators Need Our Help

Pollinators touch our lives in countless ways

Pollinators are responsible for the food we eat, much of the clothing we wear, and they define our seasons — flowering meadows, summer berries, and the pumpkins we carve at Halloween. What do you think a world without pollinators would look like?

Historically, millions of monarchs overwintered along the Pacific coast — The Xerces Society estimates there were 4.5 million in the 1980s. The Xerces Society's Western Monarch Thanksgiving Count in 2020 showed less than 0.01% of the historic population remains. Not only do monarchs face stress, but other invertebrates do too, such as bumble bees, who also play an essential role in our ecosystem.

We are responsible for long term pollinator decline. It is due to stressors like habitat loss and degradation, pesticide use, and climate change.

As different pollinator populations become more at risk, we are facing the responsibility of supporting pollinators by creating habitat, food, water, and shelter for them.

What can you do to help?
Growing a pollinator garden creates a habitat for these amazing creatures. It has other benefits like increasing biodiversity, adding beauty to your space, and allows for wonder and learning (great for kids and adults alike). Creating a pollinator garden is rewarding and fun for everyone who participates.



WCB/CARCD block grant accomplishments... so far

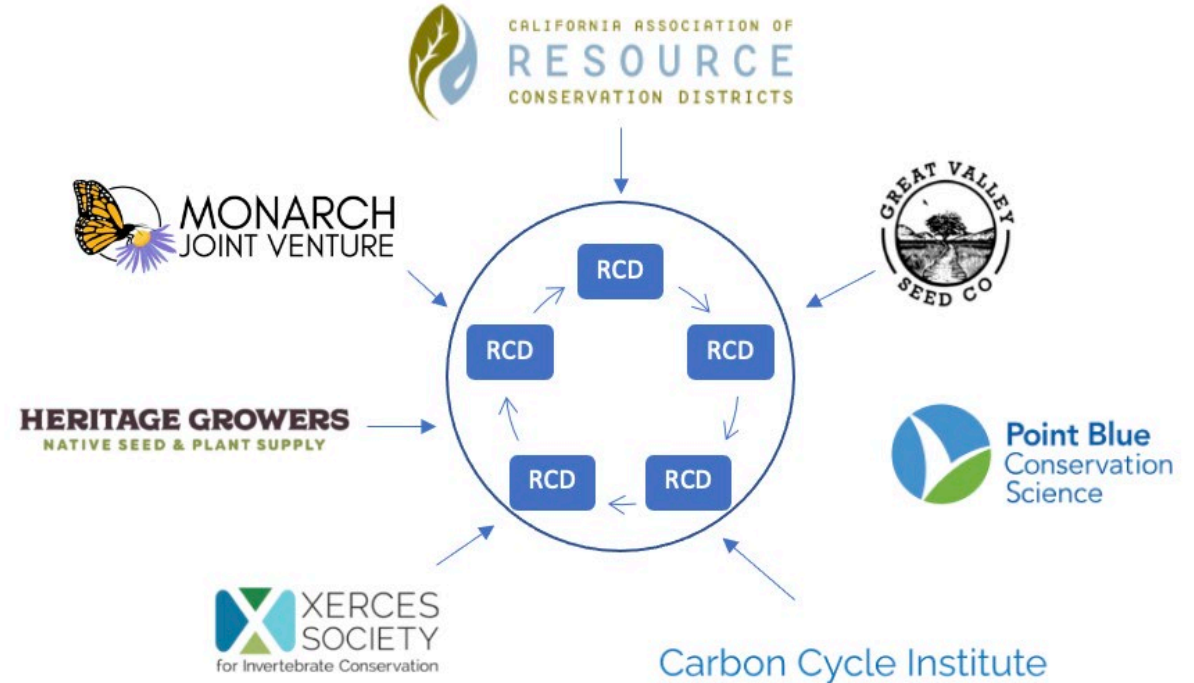
- **“Recovering and Sustaining Monarch and Pollinator Populations”
(Completed March 2022):**
 - Grant enabled 11 RCDs to implement 13 projects which added crucial western monarch breeding, nectar, and overwintering sites
 - RCDs increased community awareness resulting in community involvement in protecting and restoring/creating habitat for monarchs in California.
 - **62 acres of breeding habitat, 58 acres of nectar habitat, and 17 acres of overwintering habitat, 62 acres under improved management**
 - Key Partner – Xerces Society
- **“Enhancing Wildlife Habitat & Carbon Sequestration on Working Lands”
(Closing Dec. 2022):**
 - Grant enabling 10 RCDs to implement multiple CFP and habitat restoration projects
 - Surpassed target of **44 carbon farm plans – will yield 60+**
 - At least **5 streamflow enhancement plans & 5 LandSmart water plans**
 - Outreach: 100+ Site visits; workshops; demonstration days
 - Key partner – Carbon Cycle Institute



SUCCESS AND EXPERIENCE TO BUILD ON!

Proposed block grant – Amplifying impact of RCDs & partnerships

- Leverage existing relationships and partners
- Collaboration among RCDs
- All RCDs benefit from expertise of partners
- Collaboration among partners
- Resource sharing
- Reduced administrative burden frees up RCI resources for project activities



CARCD Block Grant Experience and Capacity

- **CARCD has managed block grants from the following funders:**
 - Wildlife Conservation Board
 - Bechtel Foundation
 - US Forest Service – International Programs
 - National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
 - Monarch Joint Venture
 - Resource Legacy Fund
 - CAL Fire
 - California Department of Food and Agriculture
 - US Forest Service
 - NRCS
- **CARCD is being approached by agencies to collaborate on block grants**
- **Building capacity by adding staff, streamlined systems**





Stay Safe and Healthy, Enjoy the Rest of Your Day!

Next Board meeting – February 16, 2023, 10:00 am – CNRA HQ