



Your Local Partner in Conservation & Agriculture

The Coastal San Luis Resource Conservation District is committed to protecting and enhancing natural resources through education, restoration and collaboration with stakeholders.

SPRING 2018

Healthy Soils on Central Coast Ranches Workshop Showcases Soil and Water Benefits



The view the morning of the workshop at the Cal Poly Beef Center.

On March 15th, the Coastal San Luis Resource Conservation District (CSLRCD) co-hosted a workshop, *Healthy Soils on California's Central Coast Ranches*, with the California Climate and Agriculture Network (CalCAN). Nearly 50 people attended including ranchers, academics, staff from nonprofits and elected officials.

Workshop participants heard from speakers from around the state, including Aaron Lazanoff – Cal Poly, Pelayo Alvarez – Carbon Cycle Institute, Jeff Buckingham – Cerro Alto Ranch, Anna Olsen – Cachuma RCD, and Renata Brillinger – California Climate and Agriculture Network, as well as CSLRCD staff. The content of the presentations varied from the science supporting healthy soils practices, to the policy supporting state and federal funding to implement healthy soils practices. CSLRCD staff



Upcoming Events

April 27, 12:30 pm.
Board of Directors Meeting
UCCE Auditorium, SLO

May 25, 12:30 pm.
Board of Directors Meeting
UCCE Auditorium, SLO

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presented an overview and results of practices implemented through the Climate Ready Rangeland Project, funded by the State Coastal Conservancy.

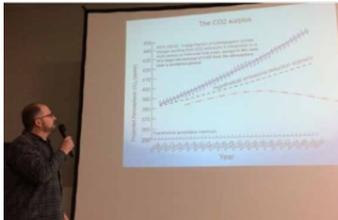
Following the morning's presentations, a tour was hosted at Cerro Alto Ranch by rancher Jeff Buckingham, where healthy soils and climate ready rangeland implementation practices were showcased. Highlights from the ranch tour included visiting high intensity low duration (HILD) sites and checking out forage on fields where compost was applied to the land in previous years. The tour also allowed participants to network and learn from one another's efforts working toward improving the health of soils in our community.

In addition to keyline plowing, HILD grazing and compost application, a riparian enhancement component is included in the Climate Ready Rangeland Project. Construction will begin in late summer to make improvements to the tributary on Cerro Alto Ranch that experiences severe erosion during storm events as a result of several headcuts along the banks.

The Healthy Soils workshop allowed participants to learn from experts in their field on various practices and also to see those practices on a local ranch, which highlighted benefits to Central Coast rangelands such as increased soil organic matter, improved soil water-holding capacity and increased forage yield. The Healthy Soils workshop and ranch tour demonstrated how simple land management practices and applications can yield a range of soil and water benefits in San Luis Obispo County.

If you would like more information on how to implement these types of management practices on your land, please contact us at [\(805\) 772-4391](tel:8057724391).

Healthy Soils on Central Coast Ranches Workshop Thursday, March 15, 2018 Cal Poly and Cerro Alto Ranch



Presenter Pelayo Alvarez, Carbon Cycle Institute, discusses atmospheric CO₂ projections on a slide at the workshop.



The view the morning of the workshop from the Cal Poly Beef Center.



Presenter Jeff Buckingham, Cerro Alto Ranch



Presenter Aaron Lazanoff, Cal Poly



Presenter Renata Brillinger, CA Climate & Ag Network



Larissa Clarke, CSLRCD

To view these and other photos at full size, [click here](#).

2016-2017 Annual Report



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Learn More About CSLRCD at

www.coastalcrd.org

Financial Incentives to Implement Conservation Practices

HSP Incentives Program Applications

Due April 13, 2018

Did you know that implementing conservation practices on California farms and ranches can help sequester carbon dioxide (CO₂) and reduce greenhouse gases (GHG) that contribute to climate change—all while improving soil health? Conservation practices used by growers and ranchers like planting trees or shrubs as windbreaks or applying compost to increase organic matter in the soil have multi-benefits.

Depending on the practice, wildlife habitat, water quality, and soil health can be increased. There are several of these conservation practices described through the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) that are being incentivized through the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) Healthy Soils Program (HSP). The objective of these practices is to increase soil carbon and reduce GHG emissions from agriculture.



The HSP Incentives Program offers financial incentives to California growers and ranchers **up to \$50,000** to put these practices to use on their land. This is where staff from the CSLRCD stepped in. We were awarded an HSP Technical Assistance grant to help eligible growers and ranchers submit competitive applications (**due date April 13, 2018**) to fund their practices through the HSP Incentives Program. We hosted a Monday morning workshop at the SLO County Farm Bureau to walk applicants through the application materials. Participants attended from all over the Coastal San Luis District and left the workshop with a better understanding of the HSP Incentives Program. Following the workshop, staff was available to provide further technical assistance, as needed. [Click here](#) to see workshop photos.

The HSP Incentives Program judges applications based on criteria such as project sustainability and GHG reduction benefits, both considerations that are growing ever more important as the impacts of climate change are seen more on our local working lands. Additional information and resources can be found at CDFA's [website](#).

Congratulations to the CSLRCD 2017 Conservationist of the Year – Cheryl Lenhardt!

Cheryl Lenhardt was presented with the 2017 Conservationist of the Year Award from the Coastal San Luis RCD for her engineering innovation in storm water detention programs that were low-tech and very effective. The presentation took place February 23 at the RCD's Board meeting. The County Board of Supervisors also awarded Cheryl a Certificate of Recognition.

Lenhardt is the CEO of Lenhardt Engineering and has served as a director of CSLRCD for more than a decade. She initially joined the RCD team to get more involved in local environmental opportunities. She was particularly drawn to the RCD's efforts to enhance the health of the district's soils and watersheds. Her breadth of experience in design, construction management,



CSLRCD President Neil Haolik presents Cheryl Lenhardt with the Conservationist of the Year Award.

permitting and working with nonprofits has proven to be instrumental in helping the RCD implement many of its strategic goals. It was, however, her ability to find and retain great talent that truly helped the RCD progress with contemporary issues such as effects of climate change, urban stormwater management and water efficiency programs.

“I appreciate Cheryl’s dedication as an engineer and RCD Director as she went above and beyond,” said RCD President Neil Havlik. “Cheryl assisted the RCD in getting involved in programs that they had ‘only dreamed about.’ She brought a professional approach to technically detailed and challenging programs such as Oso Flaco Lake’s legacy pesticides.”

“I am very honored to receive this award.” said Lenhardt. “Through the years, I have benefited from the exposure and perspectives that the RCD Board and staff exchange in the development and implementing of on-the-ground projects, which have tangible benefits to the community we live in.”

Welcome to New CSLRCD Team Member!

Board Member Kevin L. Piper

A graduate of Cal Poly, Kevin L. Piper earned a B.S. in Natural Resources Management and an Masters in General Agriculture. He worked as ranch supervisor for Cal Poly’s Swanton Pacific Ranch before moving to Nevada, where he worked for 11 years as Dayton Valley conservation district manager and on a family farming operation. After that, he was assistant director for the Nevada Agricultural Experiment Station at the University of Nevada, Reno.

Piper returned to Cal Poly seven years ago to serve as director of Agricultural Operations, managing more than 6,000 acres for Cal Poly and the College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences. He believes his experience gives him an awareness of the agricultural and natural resources management challenges within SLO County.



Staff

Jackie Crabb
District Manager

Jen Nix
Conservation Program Manager

Hallie Richard
Conservation Project Manager

William Arkfeld
District Engineer

Larissa Clarke
Conservation Project Manager

Micaela Mellein
Environmental Resource Specialist

Seamus Land
Restoration Coordinator

Mark Skinner
Restoration Specialist II

Alyssa Bucci
Restoration Specialist I

Katrina Henderson
Restoration Specialist I

Cindy Gonzales
Accounting Manager

Della Barrett
Board Secretary

CSLRCD Staff Set Up Water-Monitoring Equipment at Oso Flaco Creek



Conservation Project Manager Hallie Richard (left) and Environmental Resource Specialist Micaela Mellein install water-quality monitoring equipment at Oso Flaco Creek.



Conservation Clip List is a weekly collection of articles distributed by NACD (National Association of Conservation Districts). This link discusses CDF A's Healthy Soils Program in all 10 California RCD regions:

<http://www.nacdn.net/2017/06/15/california-rcds-cdfas-healthy->

RCD Services

Call us today at [\(805\) 772-4391](tel:8057724391) for help with all of the following:

- Irrigation Evaluations
- Engineer Design
- Alternative Agricultural Grading Review (ARP)
- Erosion & Stormwater Control
- Conservation Easements
- Conservation Planning
- Permit Coordination
- Watershed & Habitat Restoration