

Guadalupe-Coyote Resource Conservation District (GCRCD)

Environmental Justice Policy

I. GENERAL PROVISIONS

Governance. The Board of Directors (“Board”) for Guadalupe-Coyote Resource Conservation District (“District”) consists of five members (“Directors”) of the Board. As the governing body of the District, the Board reviews and approves District policies. The Board has delegated responsibility for policy administration to the District’s Executive Director (“ED”), including but not limited to the development of procedures and internal controls to implement the policies.

Purpose of the Policy. It is the policy of the District to recognize, apply, and uphold environmental and social justice within GCRCD’s purview and provide the same support for our partner organizations. Within this policy, the context of Environmental Justice is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to development, implementation and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations and policies. It also seeks to provide equal opportunity for everyone, particularly those with the greatest need. This includes equity pertaining to participation in GCRCD efforts, outreach and public comments for stakeholders and members of the public and GCRCD’s commitment to issues such as public outreach and public participation for marginalized communities/areas.

Policy Revisions. The Board reviews District policies annually. Any Director or the ED may make recommendations for changes to a policy at any time, but all policy changes require approval by the Board.

Statement of Non-Discrimination. The District conducts its business on a non-discriminatory basis, without regard to race, creed, color, national origin, ancestry, sexual orientation, political affiliation or beliefs, religion, gender, age, physical and invisible disability, medical condition, marital status or pregnancy (as those terms are defined by the California Fair Employment and Housing Act – Government Code Section 12900-12996). Additionally, the Board has adopted a Statement of Diversity and Inclusion to ensure diversity and environmental justice are key components of the District’s strategic planning and programmatic work.

II. SCOPE

GCRCD will consider the impact of environmental justice against RCDs’ primary focuses within its own jurisdiction: farm, range, open space, urban development wildlife,

recreation, watershed, water quality, and woodlands. GCRCD will place particular consideration to low income communities and communities of color within Santa Clara County, as defined by the State of California (<https://gis.water.ca.gov/app/dacs/>) and areas with the greatest risk such as areas near freeways and railroads.

III. PRINCIPLES

GCRCD is committed to 1) dissolving existing environmental justice barriers; 2) rectifying any previous imbalances among at-risk communities; 3) transparency in how this Board governs environmental justice in our decision-making and actions. We intend to do this by applying the following principles:

- Consideration of any new or expanding sources of environmental burdens in low-income communities and communities of color.
- Ensure the programs, grants, and investments GCRCD supports does not negatively impact low-income and communities of color.
- Encourage investment in responsible economic growth in neighborhoods where there is existing infrastructure, in particular where an opportunity exists to restore a degraded or contaminated site and encourage its clean, productive and sustainable use.
- Encourage investment in economic redevelopment in areas where there is no infrastructure to build on.
- Support land uses and industries which are determined not to be harmful to public health and the environment.
- Promote projects that mitigate climate change impacts on vulnerable populations.
- Adopt sustainable strategies to protect the soil, wildlife, water and community from potential health hazards.
- Doing the work as an organization to learn about justice, equity, diversity and inclusion, and how they relate to our mission.
- Ensure diversity and environmental justice are key components of our strategic planning and programmatic work.
- Use our positions as conservation leaders to amplify diverse voices in the conservation movement.

IV. OBJECTIVES

GCRCD supports the facilitation and collaboration between our organization, our partners and the community. We want to ensure a positive impact as a result of any decisions made by our Board. Before initiatives are implemented, GCRCD will ensure the following areas are addressed:

- Provide proper translation of any project plans and updates to the community which it impacts.
- Work with local agencies/community organizations to assist with outreach to establish additional channels of communication.
- Provide a variety of opportunities for the public to receive information, addressing the varying levels of information accessibility within underserved communities using different types of communication/mediums.
- Establish clear and attainable ways for the public to engage in discussions.
- Provide resources to the community to educate on projects that may have a direct impact on their environment (ex: how to read an Environmental Impact Report (EIR))
- Enable residents to participate in environmental decision making
- Encourage community engagement with underrepresented stakeholders and community members via our tailored outreach plans.
- Advocate on behalf of underrepresented or socially disadvantaged community members on local projects
- Seek to expand the diversity of our Board of Directors and Associate Directors.
- Recruiting employees and consultants whose background and experience show a commitment to diversity and environmental justice.

Policy Log:

Date	Action
	Board adopted policy.