

# North Santa Clara Resource Conservation District (NSCRCD)

## Associate Director Policy

### **I. GENERAL PROVISIONS**

Governance. The Board of Directors (“Board”) for the North Santa Clara Resource Conservation District (“District”) consists of five members (“Director”) of the Board. As the governing body of the District, the Board reviews and approves District policies, including the Associate Director policy. 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. Division 9 of the California Public Resources Code allows resource conservation districts to appoint associate directors (“Associate”). Associates provide value to the District by providing additional expertise to the Board, including but not limited to the areas of: natural resources conservation and management; agricultural and grazing management practices; environmental health; land use; engineering; physical and life sciences; public outreach and education; and local government policy and procedures.

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, gender identity or gender expression, 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 District Environmental and Social Justice Policy to ensure diversity and environmental justice are key components of the District’s strategic planning and programmatic work.

### **II. TERM AND POSITIONS**

Term. Associates are appointed for four-year terms, which may be renewed by the Board of Directors upon request of the Associate. There are no term limits. An Associate may be removed at any time without cause by a majority vote of the Board of Directors.

### **III. QUALIFICATIONS AND APPOINTMENT**

District Constituency. An Associate should be a registered voter, landowner, or employee within District boundaries. If an exceptionally qualified applicant for associate director meets all other qualifications, the Board may waive the constituency requirement if it

finds it is in the best interests of the District to do so. Former District Directors who request appointment as Associates are exempted from the constituency requirement.

Other Qualifications. Associates must possess expertise in an area of interest to the District, including but not limited to those areas listed under “Purpose of the Policy”. Associates are expected to make sufficient time available to meet the responsibilities of the position, including regular attendance at Board meetings and participation in mandatory trainings.

Recruitment. The District shall maintain a notice on its website for those interested in the position of Associate. Qualified parties interested in an Associate position may apply at any time.

Application. The Associate application shall consist of a letter of interest stating qualifications and background in at least one of the areas of interest to the District, two letters of recommendation by individuals familiar with the applicant’s work or qualifications, and a signed waiver authorizing the District to conduct a background check. Former District Directors requesting appointment as Associates need only to provide a letter of interest for application.

Selection. The ED shall be responsible for reviewing applications to determine eligibility, performing reference checks, and making formal recommendations to the Board regarding Associate appointments. Ineligible or incomplete applications may be returned to the applicant by the ED. The ED shall submit applications for eligible applicants to the Board for consideration, along with a formal recommendation as to their appointment. However, if the ED believes it is in the best interest of the District to recommend against an appointment, s/he shall attempt to notify the applicant in order to allow him or her to withdraw the application in lieu of having it posted on the formal agenda for the Board of Directors.

Appointment. Consideration of Associate appointments will be discussed in open session. Appointments require a majority vote of the Board of Directors. The Board shall establish the effective date at the time of the appointment.

#### **IV. RESPONSIBILITIES**

Participation in Board Meetings. Associates are encouraged to attend and participate in the discussion of open session items at Board meetings but may not vote. The ability for Associates to participate in closed session items shall be governed by the Ralph M. Brown Act.

Participation in Other Activities. Associates are encouraged to attend and participate in District-hosted meetings and workshops, and the Board has the discretion to appoint them as voting members of District committees. Associates may be designated by the Board or the ED to represent the District at specific meetings or events on a case-by-case basis, and may be required to attend mandatory training to comply with laws and regulations applying to their position

Conduct. Associates’ activities are to be conducted in consistency with District policy, purpose, and direction. Volunteers should perform their duties in an impartial manner, free from bias caused by their own financial interests or the financial interests of persons who have supported them.

Authority. Associates are not authorized to make agreements, contracts, or representations to any party, other organizations, or government agencies on behalf of the District.

Working for the District: The District may enter into agreements with Associates without causing a conflict of interest since Associates do not have any voting or other District authority (see “Authority,” *supra*). However, Associates may not participate in any non-public District Board or committee discussions regarding such an agreement.

If an Associate becomes an employee of the District, either as a direct hire or through a consulting agreement, their resignation as an Associate will automatically take effect on their first day of employment to avoid any potential conflicts of interest. Post-employment, they may be reinstated as an Associate without further action of the Board for the remainder of their prior term, provided that the ED has determined they have remained eligible for that position.

**V. ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS**

Insurance. Associates are covered by the District’s general liability policy while performing activities authorized by the Board or the ED. At the Board’s discretion, Associates may be added to the District’s policies for workers compensation insurance.

Expense Reimbursement. Associate Directors may be eligible for expense reimbursements, subject to the provisions of the adopted District Financial Policy.

Policy Change Log:

Date	Action
07/13/2015	Board adopted policy.
04/13/2017	Board amended policy.
08/11/2020	Board amended policy.
02/03/2022	Board amended policy.
07/20/2023	The Executive Director updated the policy to reflect the District’s name change from Guadalupe-Coyote RCD to North Santa Clara RCD.