

North Santa Clara Resource Conservation District

NSCRCD Annual Work Plan: FY 2024-25

PURPOSE: The North Santa Clara Resource Conservation District (“District”) develops an annual work plan (“AWP”) as a planning tool to track activities and inform constituents, partners, public agencies, and other stakeholders as to how the District plans to fulfill its mission and achieve its goals. It is a living document that is updated throughout the fiscal year as the Board proactively, responsively, and adaptively manages programs, projects, activities and policies in the best interests of the District and its constituents.

PLANNING PROCESS: The enabling authorities for California’s resource conservation districts are primarily set forth in Division 9 of the Public Resources Code, which provides for the “organization and operation of resource conservation for the purposes of soil and water conservation; the control of runoff; the prevention and control of soil erosion, and erosion stabilization, including, but not limited to, these purposes in open areas, agricultural areas, urban development, wildlife areas, recreational developments; watershed management; the protection of water quality and water reclamation; the development of storage and distribution of water; and the treatment of each acre of land according to its needs.”¹ Resource conservation districts use long range plans to identify priority natural resource conservation issues for purposes of local, state, and federal conservation planning; to establish long-range goals and identify potential objectives and strategies; and to provide public transparency and accountability. Strategies are listed in the long range plan as potential activities, but are not viewed as all-inclusive or limiting when developing and implementing programs and projects. The District’s current plan was developed for calendar years 2019 through 2024; a new strategic planning process has been initiated that may transition to a fiscal year plan for the next five-year cycle.

The AWP anticipates activities to be implemented during the fiscal year in support of the District’s mission and goals, and are based upon a variety of factors, including but not limited to long range plan goals and identified strategies; adopted District policies; budget allocations; grant opportunities and awards; MOUs, MOAs, and other partnership agreements; service agreements; landowner agreements; regulatory requirements; NRCS-RCD Local Work Group recommendations; and constituent requests and identified needs. Funding sources for activities included in the annual work plan may include property taxes, grants, agreements, sponsorships, fees, donations, designated funds, and other miscellaneous funding sources.

FORMAT: Goals and strategies are as established in the long range plan. Program and project listings identify the relevant strategic focus area(s), resources (funding, partners and/or collaborators), and planned activities for the fiscal year. An acronym table can be found on the last page.

¹ Public Resources Code, Division 9, Chapter 1, Article 1, Section 9001

STRATEGIC FOCUS AREAS (SFA):

A. Agricultural Lands

Goal: Preserve agricultural lands by providing producers and land managers with access to best management practices and technical assistance so they may maintain economically viable enterprises while preserving soil health, enhancing crop diversity, and protecting natural resources.

B. Biodiversity

Goal: Promote biodiversity through the conservation and protection of natural habitats and ecosystems that provide a variety of ecosystem services, such as protection of water resources, maintenance of soil health, appropriate nutrient storage, contributions to climate stability, and improved resiliency after natural disasters.

C. Water Quality

Goal: Contribute to improvements in water quality available for the benefit of agricultural production, wildlife, and aquatic habitat within District watersheds.

D. Fire Risk

Goal: Reduce fire risk and natural resource impacts to communities located within the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) through rural road, vegetation management, and fuel load reduction programs and projects.

E. Climate Change

Goal: Contribute to regional climate change efforts by raising public awareness of the need for individual action, while recognizing and addressing the differences in capacity of individual communities and populations to respond to requests for action.

F. Public Engagement

Goal: Ensure the public is aware of the role watersheds play in maintaining a healthy and resilient community, and the personal importance of preserving agricultural lands and healthy ecosystems.

G. District Operations

Goal: Build and maintain organizational capacity and financial viability to accommodate District mission and goals.

PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS:

Name & Relevant SFA	Purpose & Resources	Planned Activities
<p>Agricultural Producer Technical Assistance</p> <p><i>A, B, C, D, E, F, G</i></p>	<p>Provide education and technical assistance to agricultural producers and landowners to facilitate implementation of conservation practices.</p> <p><i>ACRCD, CAL FIRE, CARCD, FSA, GBACH, LPRCD, NRCS, SBRC, SCCA, SCCFB, SCVHA, UCCE, WSRCD</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-host the NRCS-RCD LWG annual meeting with LPRCD to identify local resource priorities. • Provide technical assistance with carbon farm, grazing management, and other conservation plans. • Coordinate with local food security hubs and programs to promote public awareness of local agriculture’s role in food security and to increase market opportunities for small scale farmers and ranchers. • Develop and deliver a cover cropping workshop. • Provide integrated pest management (IPM) technical assistance. • Build partnerships to provide education and technical assistance opportunities to local agricultural producers and land managers. • Develop grant proposals to expand technical assistance programming in the areas of rural road management, grazing management, riparian restoration, pollinator and wildlife habitat protection, and stock pond rehabilitation.
<p>Cannabis Habitat Restoration Program</p> <p><i>A, B, C, D, E, F, G</i></p>	<p>To clean-up, remediate, and restore watersheds affected by cannabis cultivation, and related activities.</p> <p><i>CDFW; NRCS; ACRCD; WSRCD; Muwekma Ohlone Tribe</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit grant application to CDFW Cannabis Habitat Restoration Program. • Continue planning activities for the Tri-County Land project. • Explore opportunities to work with existing cannabis operators, per CDFW interest.
<p>Community Grant Program</p>	<p>To provide technical and financial assistance to eligible community-based</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide grant writing technical assistance upon request to local community-based organizations to build their capacity

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A, B, C, D, E, F, G	<p>organizations to help build their capacity and ability to contribute to achievement of goals shared by the District.</p> <p><i>Eligible Tribes and community based organizations</i></p>	<p>and ability to contribute to achievement of goals shared by the District.</p>
<p>District Operations</p> <p>A, B, C, D, E, F, G</p>	<p>To build and maintain organizational capacity and financial viability to accommodate District mission and goals.</p> <p><i>SCC; CARCD; RCRCD; SJCRCD; SJBRCD; LPRCD; MRCD; SCC LAFCO</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively seek grants and partnerships to expand District programming and service offerings. • Build capacity and leverage staff resources through collaborations with other RCDs, public agencies, Tribes and community-based organizations. • Identify funding opportunities to facilitate continued research on resource conservation issues. • Monitor proposed policies and legislation that could enhance and/or unintentionally impact District operations or Division 9 authorities. • Enhance public transparency and accountability through the District’s website. • Begin strategic planning process for long range plan update.
<p>Farm & Ranch Resilience Program</p> <p>A, B, C, D, E, F, G</p>	<p>To encourage best management practices to support climate adaptation and post-disaster activities, provide outreach and technical assistance to historically underserved farmers and ranchers, and offer multilingual assistance to USDA and partner RCDs for EQIP, CSP, HSP, SWEEP, and other conservation practices programs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue delivery of bilingual and culturally appropriate outreach program to reach historically underserved agricultural producers. • Offer educational workshops in Chinese, Spanish, and Vietnamese, as needed. • Provide technical assistance to Asian growers and other historically underserved producers. • Respond to NRCS and FSA requests for assistance with farm and ranch outreach and technical assistance.

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	<p><i>NRCS; FSA; UCCE; LPRCD; SBRCD; CDFR</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate development of a grower equipment lending program to increase implementation of conservation practices, such as compost application and cover cropping. • Continue participation in GBACH to identify and develop regional climate adaption and conservation opportunities for agricultural producer technical assistance and financial incentives.
<p>Farm & Ranch Solid Waste Cleanup and Abatement Program</p> <p><i>A, B, C, D, E, G</i></p>	<p>To provide technical and financial assistance to eligible property owners with the clean-up and abatement of illegal dumping on property used, zoned or otherwise authorized for agricultural activities.</p> <p><i>CalRecycle, SCCWPD, NRCS</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respond to requests for assistance from agricultural producers and public/private land managers. • Respond to referrals from public agencies. • Apply for CalRecycle grant funding for eligible properties, as needed.
<p>Hazardous Fuel Reduction Program</p> <p><i>A, B, C, D, E, F, G</i></p>	<p>To reduce fuel loads, increase ecosystem services, and provide public education in the WUI and rural areas of Santa Clara County.</p> <p><i>CAL FIRE; LPRCD; WSRCD; SCCFSC; RCDSCC: SMRCD</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate with the SCCFSC and other partners to identify potential fire risk mitigation projects. • Promote development of grazing opportunities with municipalities and other landowners/managers operating in or near the urban-wildland interface areas. • Continue participation in RPP development for the Santa Cruz Mountains. • Complete the San Antonio CalVTP PSA Project.
<p>Los Gatos Creek Watershed Restoration Project</p> <p><i>B, C, E, F, G</i></p>	<p>To restore, protect, and create habitat and climate refugia in the Los Gatos Creek Watershed for several high-risk special-status amphibians and fish, and support resiliency of broader ecological</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation activities for Hooker Dam sediment management/removal subproject to improve upstream aquatic breeding habitat (pools) and summer CRLF refugia habitat (upper watershed project).

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	<p>processes and populations through targeted, science-based actions.</p> <p><i>CARCD; WCB; SJW; SBCCC; Muwekma Ohlone Tribe</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning activities for gravel augmentation project (lower watershed project). • Contract for prevailing wage services.
<p>Post-Disaster Technical Assistance Program</p> <p><i>A, B, C, D, E, F, G</i></p>	<p>To provide post-disaster assistance to agricultural producers affected by natural disaster.</p> <p><i>NRCS; FSA; UCCE; LPRCD; SBRCD</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upon request, provide survey and site visits assessments to assist NRCS and FSA in the processing of disaster relief applications. • Provide technical and financial assistance to agricultural producers impacted by wildfire and severe weather events.
<p>Public Outreach and Engagement</p> <p><i>A, B, C, D, E, F, G</i></p>	<p>To engage with constituents and stakeholders to solicit feedback on programs and projects; to provide public education opportunities; to increase access by historically underserved community members; and to increase public awareness of natural resource concerns and priorities.</p> <p><i>NRCS; NACD; UCCE; Valley Verde; UCD; SJSU; NRCD; CCRCD; CSU Water; EPIC-N; PAGG; YLI; Self-Help Enterprises; VW, GRPC; Rescue</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue implementation of rebranding and outreach for District name change. • Develop multilingual educational documents and publications to extend the reach of public education and outreach efforts. • Develop and host/co-host public education workshops. • Continue community outreach and engagement on NextDoor platform.
<p>Resilient and Equitable Urban Stream Corridors Research Project</p> <p><i>B, C, D, E, F, G</i></p>	<p>To discover landscape patterns that amplify risks and identify locations where nature-based solutions can be most effective, by using a combination of 1) targeted interdisciplinary data</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serve as committed co-Principal Investigator for the multi-disciplinary team for the project. • Provide logistical support to field crews from UC Davis and SJSU using local knowledge and connections to help them determine accessibility of potential stream survey sites.

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	<p>collection in local communities and their streams; 2) model-predicted future climate condition maps; 3) remote sensing; and 4) Big Data spatial analysis. Resulting risk and opportunity maps and recommendations will be used by local nonprofit and conservation district partners to aid decision-making about where to deploy their resources and expertise for community engagement, master planning, community education, and siting shovel-ready projects.</p> <p><i>UCD; SJSU; NRCO; CCRCD; SBCCC</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collect community and neighborhood data for neighborhoods adjacent to riparian areas, with an emphasis on those located within areas susceptible to natural hazards, such as floods, landslides, and fires. • Provide staff and program support to facilitate San Jose State University’s efforts to survey unhoused populations living within the riparian corridors. • Schedule remaining stream clean-up. • Develop and host a public educational workshops regarding the intersection of social justice and climate change. • Participate in regional and team meetings. • Help develop and participate in the Bay Area symposium.
<p>Silver Creek Linear Park Research Project</p> <p><i>B, C, E, F, G</i></p>	<p>To analyze the existing distribution of flows between the Silver Creek channel and the diversion channel that supports the intermittent wetland, and develop a hydroperiod model to support identification of opportunities, constraints, and site management alternatives.</p> <p><i>CDFW, SFBWQCB, CSJ, VW, PG&E</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convene project management team to review data and observational reports, discuss reporting expectations, and identify next steps. • Access grant opportunities for biological assessment and development of implementation strategies as requested by CDFW.
<p>Ranchers Outreach and Technical Assistance Program</p> <p><i>A, B, C, D, E, F, G</i></p>	<p>To develop and implement a permit coordination program to reduce regulatory burden on agricultural</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate stock pond project meetings to identify priorities and develop grant application(s) with partners and stakeholders.

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	<p>producers while increasing incentives to implement conservation practices.</p> <p><i>LPRCD, SCVHA, UCCE, SCCCA, SCCP, ACRCO; RCDSO</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate with SCVHA to identify habitat protection opportunities for farmers and ranchers. • Seek grant funding to develop permit streamlining program to reduce regulatory burden on ranchers. • Explore interest in developing a countywide ranching coalition group.
<p>Tree Planting and Restoration Program</p> <p><i>A, B, C, D, E, F, G</i></p>	<p>To increase carbon sequestration, advance urban greening activities, and restore wildlife habitat to address climate impacts.</p> <p><i>NRCS; FCMI; CSJ; One Tree Planted; Veggelution; IHE</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate opportunities to implement findings from the Redwood Habitat Suitability Analysis Partnership Project. • Seek alternative funding for the <i>Oak Woodland Conservation in Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) and Non-Urban Areas Of Santa Clara County</i> project proposal (CARCD grant proposal postponed). • Conduct outreach to ranchers to identify oak planting opportunities.
<p>Urban Agriculture Technical Assistance Program</p> <p><i>A, B, C, D, E, F, G</i></p>	<p>To provide public education, technical assistance, and/or financial incentives to farmers and gardeners in urban and suburban areas to improve local food access, support farmer infrastructure, increase production of urban farms or food forests, foster community engagement, educate communities about food and farming, and expand green spaces.</p> <p><i>NRCS; UCCE; ACHI; FCMI; Santee Community Garden Group; FMUSD; CSJ, SJCC; Valley Verde; Veggelution; Garden</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in GBACH grant application to facilitate public education and project implementation for food reduction and composting activities. • Expand the San Jose Community Composting Network to the South Bay. • Coordinate with the NRCS Hollister Service Center to identify needs, with an emphasis on services needed within historically underserved communities. • Coordinate with the proposed NRCS Urban Agriculture Service Center in Oakland to facilitate education and technical assistance offerings for urban farmers in the South Bay. • Provide community education workshops in languages other than English.

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	<i>to Table; Fresh Approach; Earth Foundries.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide technical and financial assistance to nonprofit organizations and public agencies to develop and expand community gardens.
<p>Watershed Education and Technical Assistance</p> <p><i>A, B, C, D, E, F, G</i></p>	<p>Provide natural resource conservation education and technical assistance to residents, businesses, organizations, public agencies, and other watershed stakeholders</p> <p><i>Earth Foundries; FSA; GBACH; NRCS; LPRCD; GRPC; Rescape; SBCCC; SBRCD; SCC; UCCE; Valley Verde; VW; Veggelution.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respond to requests from residents, businesses, organizations, and other constituents and stakeholders seeking assistance with natural resource conservation issues. • Respond to requests and notices from public agencies seeking natural resource comments on projects. • Include climate change impacts and potential mitigations in stakeholder comments (GF). • Review the annual MMR report as a member of the Guadalupe River Adaptive Management Team. • Participate in WMI-LUS meetings and workshop development. • Seek and respond to opportunities to provide watershed education presentations at meetings and events. • Provide comments and participate in stakeholder groups, such as WMI-LUS, GWIWG, AMT, One Water, and PSBWF. • Execute revised MOU with SCC WMA and participate in monthly meetings and training opportunities. • Develop and provide workshops in collaboration with the Guadalupe River Park Conservancy and ReScape. • Continue to seek funding for a backyard conservation program. • Provide technical assistance to the City of Palo Alto upon request.
<p>West Santa Clara County Landscape Resilience Project</p>	<p>To implement fire fuel vegetation treatments, including WUI fuel reduction, ecosystem restoration</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in outreach efforts to agencies and landowners. • Collaborate on implementation projects.

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A, B, C, D, E, F, G	<p>treatments, and fuel breaks, across more than 100,000 acres in western Santa Clara County.</p> <p><i>SCCFSC, SCVHA, SCVOSA, SCCP, MROSD, CAL FIRE, LPRCD</i></p>	
<p>Wildlife Habitat Program</p> <p>A, B, C, D, E, F, G</p>	<p>To advance scientific knowledge through research; provide technical assistance to stakeholders; and develop projects that help restore, enhance and protect wildlife.</p> <p><i>SCU, OU, UWRP, NRCS, CDFW, LTSCV, POST, VW, Muwekma Ohlone Tribe, Amah Mutsun Tribal Band.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete the <i>a-DNA Tule elk</i> collaborative research project. • Participate in agency and stakeholder wildlife corridor and linkages initiatives. • Administer the <i>Chinook Salmon Natal Stream Analysis Partnership Project</i>. • Continue to explore funding opportunities for the Hicks/Pheasant Creek fish passage barrier needs assessment. • Develop resources to install new monarch butterfly and/or pollinator habitat.
<p>Zen Project</p> <p>A, B, C, D, E, F, G</p>	<p>To collaborate with the City of San José on the co-creation of climate smart communities in disadvantaged communities, with a focus on developing and implementing urban greening measures in partnership with the community.</p> <p><i>CSJ; FMCI; FMUSD; Santee Community Garden Association; Valley Verde; VW</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue providing educational workshops in Spanish for the members of the Santee Community Garden Association and FMCI. • Install drip irrigation system at the Santee Community Garden. • Install hedgerow gardens, native plantings and accessible raised beds at the FMCI and other community facilities. • Work with multifamily property owners to install native plantings and tenant community gardens. • Provide educational materials regarding climate smart activities in Vietnamese.

Acronym Table

ACHI	African Community Health Institute	PSA	Project-Specific Analysis
ACRCD	Alameda County Resource Conservation District	PSBWF	Peninsula-South Bay Watershed Forum
AWP	Annual Work Plan	PRC	Public Resources Code (California)
CAL FIRE	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection	RCD	Resource Conservation District
CalVTP	California Vegetation Treatment Program	RCDSCC	Resource Conservation District of Santa Cruz County
CCRCD	Contra Costa Resource Conservation District	RCRCD	Riverside-Corona Resource Conservation District
CDFW	California Department of Fish and Wildlife	SBRCD	San Benito Resource Conservation District
CSJ	City of San José	SCC	County of Santa Clara
CWPP	Community Wildfire Protection Plan	SCCCA	Santa Clara County Cattlemen's Association
EPIC-N	Educational Partnerships for Innovations in Communities Network	SCCP	Santa Clara County Parks
FACTR	Family Alliance for Counseling Tools and Resolution	SCCFB	Santa Clara County Farm Bureau
FMUSD	Franklin McKinley Unified School District	SCCFSC	Santa Clara County FireSafe Council
FMCI	Franklin McKinley Children's Initiative	SCCWPD	Santa Clara County Watershed Protection Division
GBACH	Greater Bay Area Conservation Hub	SCVHA	Santa Clara Valley Habitat Agency
GF	General Fund	SFA	Strategic Focus Area
GWIWG	Guadalupe Watershed Integrated Working Group	SJBRC	San Jacinto Basin Resource Conservation District
HSP	Healthy Soils Program	SJCRCD	San Joaquin County Resource Conservation District
IHE	Institute for Historical Ecology	SJSU	San José State University
LPRCD	Loma Prieta Resource Conservation District	SJW	San José Water Company
LRP	Long Range Plan	SMRCD	San Mateo Resource Conservation District
LTSCV	Land Trust of Santa Clara Valley	SWEEP	State Water & Efficiency Enhancement Program
LWG	Local Work Group	UCCE	University of California Cooperative Extension
MHUSD	Morgan Hill Unified School District	UCD	University of California, Davis
MOA	Memorandum of Agreement	USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding	VW	Valley Water
MRC	Mission Resource Conservation District	WCB	California Wildlife Conservation Board
NACD	National Association of Conservation Districts	WMA	Santa Clara County Weed Management Area
NRCD	Napa Resource Conservation District	WMI	Watershed Management Initiative
NRCS	Natural Resources Conservation Service	WMI-LUS	WMI-Land Use Subcommittee
NSCRCD	North Santa Clara Resource Conservation District	WSRCD	West Stanislaus Resource Conservation District
PAGG	Punjabi American Growers	WUI	Wildland Urban Interface
PG&E	Pacific Gas & Electric	YLI	Youth Leadership Institute