

ALAMEDA COUNTY RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

*Achieving Natural Resources and Wildlife Preservation Goals
on Alameda County Working Lands and Natural Habitats*

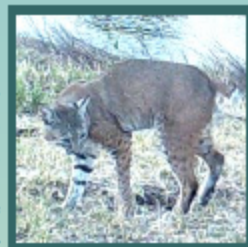
FY19 & FY20 Annual Report



FY2019-FY2020 Project Highlights

Wildlife Crossings & Land Corridor Research

The ACRCD has partnered with the UC Davis Road Ecology Center to install wildlife cameras to research and document species diversity and abundance to determine optimal sites for acquisition of contiguous lands or potential wildlife. Wildlife need the capability to move through their natural ranges to survive. Rapidly increasing human population, fast-paced urban development, new highways and infrastructure, and land-use changes in the Bay Area have resulted in geographic islands with diminishing biodiversity on east and west sides of the surrounding rangelands and woodlands. To date, these cameras have captured almost 12,000 wildlife photos featuring bobcats, owls, eagles, mountain lions, and foxes. The majority of the wildlife research to date has been kindly funded by the Altamont Landfill Open Space Committee.



Monarchs & Milkweeds

The ACRCD is working with private and public landowners, local nurseries, public agencies, and the California Association of Resource Conservation Districts, through grant funds from the Wildlife Conservation Board, to restore and enhance habitat for the critically endangered western monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*) in Alameda County. Our work includes participation in a working group to facilitate information exchange and conservation efforts for critical overwintering habitat, initiation of site assessments at historic overwintering habitat, development of long-term management plans, as well as initiation of local seed collection and propagation efforts, and continuation of work on ranches to establish and enhance pollinator habitat. Importantly, seed of native milkweed species, including the rare California milkweed (*Asclepias californica*) that support the western monarch caterpillars through early life stages, has been collected and propagated by our project partner, The Watershed Nursery, to increase availability of this important host plant in the SF Bay Area.



Carbon Farm Planning

The ACRCD continued to expand its Carbon Farming program with the award of a California Department of Food & Agriculture Healthy Soils Program Demonstration grant in 2019, allowing us to partner with the Ryals Agroecology Lab at UC Merced. Two compost spreading demonstration projects were implemented in December 2019 on rangelands, at StopWaste and Calhoun Ranch. Both demonstration sites are being monitored for changes in soils and vegetation. ACRCD partnered with Point Blue Conservation Science's 'Students and Teachers Restoring a Watershed' (STRAW) program and Livermore schools to educate students in hands-on watershed ecology. This effort included planting more than 200 native riparian plants at Copper Moon Ranch in early 2020. ACRCD continues to develop carbon farm plans, partnerships and demonstration projects, while also planning a series of workshops for 2021 and 2022.



Sunol AgPark & Education Program

Since 2017, the ACRCD has managed the Sunol AgPark, 18 acres of agricultural land owned by the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission adjacent to the Sunol Water Temple and to the future Alameda Creek Watershed Center. Within the AgPark, six small-scale farms produce organically-grown produce, flowers, and seeds for local communities. In partnership with the SFPUC, the ACRCD licenses land and provides technical assistance to the farmers, and offers hands-on environmental education programs for Bay Area school children. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020, AgPark farmers adapted their production and marketing strategies, demonstrating the resilience of sustainable farms and their essential role in the local food system.



Wildlife-Friendly Ponds Program



ACRCD continues its work with NRCS to support local ranchers on public and private lands, and public agencies to restore wildlife-friendly stock pond habitat and provide regulatory permitting assistance of ponds and water-system improvement projects on rangelands, facilitating redistribution of stock animals that provide benefits of fire fuels reduction on the landscape, while maintaining wetland habitats important to breeding and aquatic life stages of listed amphibians and other native plants and animals. In 2020, ACRCD initiated work on a \$450,000 State Coastal Conservancy grant, in partnership with Contra Costa Resource Conservation District (CCRCD), to provide matching funds to NRCS' Environmental Quality Incentives Program Wildlife-Friendly Livestock Pond Initiative to restore breeding habitat for aquatic amphibians at six pond and six other water-system improvement projects on rangelands in both counties through 2023.

Urban Farm Conservation Mini-Grant Program

Since 2015, the ACRCD, in collaboration with NRCS and UC Cooperative Extension, has awarded mini-grants of up to \$3,000 to more than 36 urban farms in Alameda County. Water quality and conservation benefits through this program include native hedgerows, cover cropping, and straw wattles. The vast majority of farms served by this program operate in and engage with underserved and marginalized communities, including unhoused, formerly incarcerated, and low-income populations. In FY2019, 9 mini-grants were awarded, totaling \$23,380. Primary funding for this program is provided by the Alameda County Flood Control & Water Conservation District, with additional funding in FY2019 from the National Association of Conservation Districts' Urban Ag Conservation grant initiative.



Livermore Stream Maintenance Program

The City of Livermore's (City) Stream Maintenance Program (SMP) is a streamlined permitting program designed to allow the City to identify and maintain waterways to prevent flooding, improve overall functioning, and enhance habitat. The ACRCD has assisted the City of Livermore with the management of over 50 maintenance and 11 habitat restoration projects, including planning, design, monitoring, permitting, and reporting. Through the program, the City of Livermore has maintained over 4 miles of arroyos and restored over 10 acres of native habitat.



Looking Forward

[Regional Wildfire Mitigation Priority Plan Grant Program](#) The State Coastal Conservancy awarded ACRCD and Contra Costa RCD a joint grant to write a Regional Priority Plan (RPP). This document identifies areas at-risk to wildfire damage and provides mitigation recommendations through suggested, implementable fuel reduction and other wildfire mitigation projects, as well as public education and outreach.

[Sustainable Agriculture Land Conservation \(SALC\) Grant](#) Alameda County Local Area Formation Commission in partnership with ACRCD was awarded a grant by the Department of Conservation. This grant will form a stakeholder group to identify priority and critical areas for preservation by mapping parcels for conservation acquisitions near urban growth boundaries and review existing agricultural land conservation policies in the county. This planning process will also identify infill development opportunities focused on healthy and resilient communities for disadvantaged and low-income populations through urban greening.

Connect with us and visit www.acrcd.org to learn more about the wide scope of services we provide, the projects we work on, our partners, staff, board members, and much more!

Outreach, Education, & Workshops

Day in the District Symposium The goal for the 2019 'Day in the District' Symposium was to highlight the expertise and diversity of the District's multiple programs and projects. The target audience was key decision makers from local, county, and state agencies as well as private corporations. District 16's newly elected Assemblywoman, Rebecca Bauer-Kahan, provided the opening remarks and David Bunn, the Director of the California Department of Conservation, provided the keynote luncheon address. The ACRCD was pleased to host over eighty attendees from a variety of agencies and organizations.



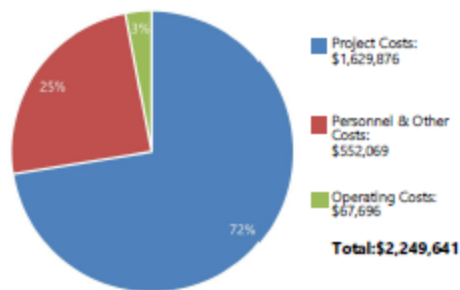
Alameda County Watershed Confluence The Alameda County Watershed Confluence Conference was designed to provide a forum for local groups, community members and representatives from the public and private sectors interested in creek and watershed health to meet, network, share innovative ideas and inspire new partnerships in watershed management in Alameda County. Our staff assisted in the planning and collaborative presentation of this event.

Clean Water Public Information and Outreach ACRCD staff continues to coordinate and participate in events and projects that serve to educate the community on reducing stormwater pollution in county watersheds. In addition, the Alameda County 'Explore Watersheds' Map was expanded to include the eastern portion of the Alameda Creek Watershed and now covers all of the watersheds in Alameda County. Clean Water Volunteers provide opportunities for the public to clean up local creeks and enhance habitat, such as at Coastal Cleanup, Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service, and Earth Day. These activities are implemented by the ACRCD to assist Alameda County and the Alameda County Flood Control and Water Conservation District. Safety measures and protocols were implemented during the spring of 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic to adhere to County health guidelines and all in-person activities were modified to a virtual format.

2019-2020 Workshops The ACRCD's 2019 and 2020 professional workshops included: Urban Agriculture Irrigation Workshop, Carbon Farming & Polyculture Workshop for Urban Food Growers, and the State of the Alameda Creek Watershed 2020.

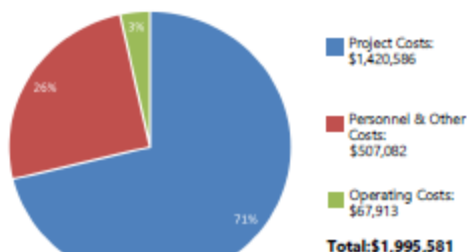
FY 2019 Financial Summary

Expenses (per 2018-2019 audited reports)

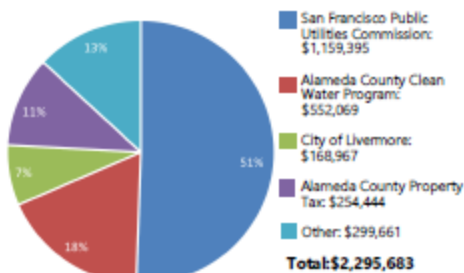


FY 2020 Financial Summary

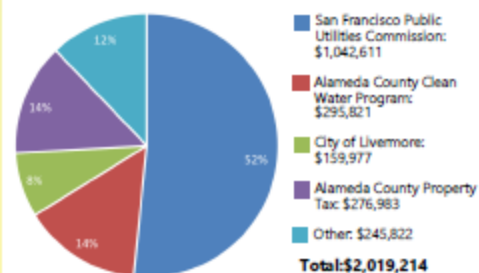
Expenses (per 2019-2020 pending audit)



Income Sources (per 2018-2019 audited reports)



Income Sources (per 2019-2020 pending audit)



Alameda County Resource Conservation District

***Mission:** To provide leadership in the county and region to enhance natural resources conservation, preserve wildlife and habitat, rangeland management and agricultural improvements through partnerships, education, outreach, resource services and technical assistance to clients, and funding support when feasible.*



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Katherine Boxer
Chief Executive
Officer



Marilyn Harvey
Chief Financial Officer



Drew Engstrom
Stream Restoration
Specialist



Ian Howell
Resource Conservationist



Ricka Stoelling
Biologist



Colleen Hotchkiss
Sustainable
Agriculture Specialist



Cynthia Butler
Alameda County Clean
Water Outreach Coordinator



Allison Rodacker
Outreach Project
Assistant



**Barbara Camacho
Garcia**
Project Assistant



Jennifer Trevis
Project Assistant

— Our Services —

Ecosystem Management & Habitat Restoration

- Habitat Assessments
- Wildlife and Botanical Surveys
- Restoration Project Planning, Implementation, and Monitoring
- Streambank Restoration, Protection, and Improvements
- Wildlife Species Research and Planning

Education and Outreach

- Workshops and Field Tours
- Rangelands and Environmental Stewardship
- Agriculture and Food Systems
- Special Status Species Workshops
- Conservation and Stewardship Outreach

Rangeland Ecology & Management

- Development of Grazing Management Plans
- Rangeland Health Surveys
- Residual Dry Matter (RDM) and Plant Composition Monitoring
- Livestock Pond Restoration and other Stockwater Improvements
- Carbon Farm Planning and Implementation

Technical Assistance

- Landowner and Manager Support (Private Landowners, Manager Lessees, Local, State and Federal Agencies and Private Sector)
- Urban Agriculture
- Permitting Assistance
- GIS Mapping

— *Serving Alameda County since 1972!* —



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From the President of the Alameda County Resource Conservation District's Board of Directors and Chief Executive Officer

We are pleased to share with you the accomplishments and progress of the Alameda County Resource Conservation District (District) over the previous two years. This is a time where the earth is experiencing ever-increasing pressures from rapid climate change, declining species, increased urbanization, stressed natural resources, and many more challenges. The District strives to do its best as the county's primary natural resources and wildlife conservation agency to address these multiple concerns locally that will benefit us and the natural values we all care about.

Alameda County is fortunate to feature healthy watersheds and rich agricultural resources that support a wide variety of habitats for diverse species and provide multiple ecosystem services and scenic vistas. Alameda County's bountiful natural resources require diligence to integrate and implement best practices in soils management, sustainable viticulture and other agriculture, and rangeland management; to identify priority conservation areas, develop wildfire mitigation plans, preserve wildlife corridors, and improve habitats that will help ensure the healthy survival of our natural endowments for the generations to come.

The District achieves its goals to protect and enhance the integrity of our local resources primarily through inter-agency agreements and by grants with local, state and federal agencies to secure the funding needed to implement planning, mitigation, restoration, and sustainable practices, as well as stakeholder education. The District is very appreciative for the support and collaboration with our many conservation partners, especially the Natural Resource Conservation Service, Altamont Landfill Open Space Committee, local ranchers, farmers, and viticulturalist. In the pages of our *FY 2019/FY2020 Annual Report*, you will find diverse projects that reflect the technical expertise and enduring commitment of the District's staff and Board of Directors.

As he conclude his tenure on the Board of Directors, we extend sincerest gratitude to rancher Dan Sachau and recently retired Executive Director of Tri Valley Conservancy, Laura Mercier, for their many years of dedication and contributions to the District.

Thank you for your interest in and support of the important work of the Alameda County Resource Conservation District!



Karen Sweet
Board President



Katherine Boxer
Chief Executive Officer

Karen Sweet, President

Katherine Boxer, Chief Executive Officer

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



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Vice President



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