

TECHNICAL SERVICES

Ecosystem Management & Habitat Restoration

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

Education & 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) & Plant Composition Monitoring
- Livestock Pond Restoration and other Stockwater Improvements
- Carbon Farm Planning and Implementation
- Assistance with Compost Application

Technical Assistance

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



*The mission of the **Alameda County Resource Conservation District** (ACRCD) is to provide leadership in the county and region to enhance natural resources conservation, preserve wildlife and habitat, and improve rangeland and agricultural management through partnerships, planning, education, outreach, and technical support resources and assistance to clients.*

ACRCD STAFF

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Message from the President and the Chief Executive Officer

We are pleased and proud to share the accomplishments of the Alameda County Resource Conservation District (ACRCD) in 2021 and 2022. In this Bi-annual Report you will find information on a wide variety of projects that support the ACRCD's vision to support agriculture, protect natural resources, and adapt to and mitigate for climate change in Alameda County. We work to protect and restore biodiversity, sensitive habitats and open space areas for current and future generations.

After the constraints of the pandemic, we were excited to create new stewardship opportunities for the precious natural resources and working lands of Alameda County and in the greater region. Our work during this time was focused on enhancing our technical support for ranchers and farmers and in developing and implementing climate change mitigation programs. At the same time, we continued to encourage more sustainable agricultural practices, promote carbon farming, protect biodiversity and our watersheds, and preserve open spaces. We also prioritized re-engaging with the community and local committees, and started planning new outreach projects.

This work requires collaboration with many who deserve our sincerest appreciation. First, we want to recognize our outstanding Board members for their dedication, original ideas and guidance on policies and programs. We are also very proud of our talented staff for their important achievements in writing and implementing numerous, creative grant proposals and in managing fee-for-service programs. Further, the ACRCD greatly appreciates our valuable partnerships with private landowners and agriculturalists, and with numerous local, regional, and state agencies and organizations, including the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). This report showcases projects with many of these public agency partners.

As an ACRCD constituent we encourage your feedback about any of the material in this report or other specific concerns and opportunities for collaboration that you may have. In addition, we are available to present our project work in group settings.

Thank you for your interest and support of the essential work of the Alameda County Resource Conservation District. We look forward to continuing to serve the agricultural, natural resources, wildlife, and climate change needs and priorities of Alameda County.

Special Appreciation to Outgoing Board Members:

Thank you! Mark Connolly and Bill Hoppes concluded their terms as Board members in March.

Alameda County Resource Conservation District greatly appreciates their dedicated service and special expertise to further ACRCD enhancement and capacity to support the preservation of natural resources in the local area.

Karen Sweet, President

Katherine Boxer, Chief Executive Officer

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Karen Sweet
President



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Mark Connolly
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A special thank you to the Alameda County Board of Supervisors for their ongoing support of the District's programs and projects.
David Haubert - District 1 Richard Valle - District 2 Lena Tam - District 3 Nate Miley - District 4 Keith Carson - District 5

Alameda County Resource Conservation District

FY2021 & FY2022 Combined Annual Reports

www.acrcd.org

PROGRAMS & PROJECTS

Wildlife Crossings

The ACRCO partnered with the UC Davis Road Ecology Center on research funded by the Altamont Landfill Open Space Committee to site and maintain wildlife cameras to document species diversity and activity in Alameda County. The goal is to determine optimal sites for acquisition of contiguous protected lands and potential wildlife crossing locations over or under interstates and local roadways. During FY21-22, the cameras have captured thousands of wildlife photos including bobcats, owls, eagles, mountain lions, coyotes, and foxes.

Pollinators

The ACRCO worked with private and public landowners, local nurseries, and public agencies to restore and enhance habitat for the endangered Western monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus plexippus*) and other pollinator species in Alameda County. Our work during FY21-22 included participation in a monarch-focused working group to facilitate information exchange, initiation of site assessments at overwintering habitat, development of long-term site management plans at critical overwintering habitat, collection of local native seeds and nectar plant propagation, and continued work to establish and enhance pollinator habitat on ranches, private lands, and parks. Much of this work has been funded by California Association of Resource Conservation Districts via grant funds from the Wildlife Conservation Board and from US Fish and Wildlife Services' Partners for Fish and Wildlife.

Carbon Farm Planning

The ACRCO continued to develop carbon farm plans and demonstration projects with grant awards from the California Department of Water Resources, California Department of Food and Agriculture, and the State Coastal Conservancy. ACRCO continued to gather field data from two rangeland compost demonstration projects and implemented a third demonstration project in late 2021. ACRCO anticipates publishing results in early 2023 with Dr. Rebecca Ryals at UC Merced. Carbon farm plans have been completed for two rangeland properties, and plans are in development for one vineyard and one small-acreage row crop farm.

AgPark

Since 2017, the ACRCO has managed the Sunol AgPark, 18 acres of agricultural land owned by the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission. In FY21-22 the AgPark welcomed three new farmers, bringing the total to 8 small-scale farms producing organically-grown produce, flowers, and seeds. The AgPark farmers cultivate everything from tomatoes to Persian leeks to okra, Chinese long beans, Mvskoke Creek flint corn, and medicinal herbs. Farmers sell to restaurants and grocery stores, at farmer's markets, and through subscription boxes. The ACRCO provides educational programming to local Bay Area elementary school students through our field trip program to the AgPark, as well as events and tours for high school and college student groups, and local farmer-to-farmer education programs. In FY21, more than 200 guests were hosted through our educational programs.

Ponds

ACRCO continued its work with the National Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) to support local public agencies, and ranchers on public and private lands to restore wildlife-friendly stock pond habitat and provide regulatory permitting assistance of ponds and water-system improvement projects on rangelands. ACRCO and Contra Costa RCD planned and implemented projects under the Water for Wildlife – East Bay Rangeland Pond and Trough Enhancement Project, with funding from the State Coastal Conservancy, as well as complimentary project funding from East Bay Regional Park District. ACRCO supported partners and grazing operators with the completion of 5 stock pond restorations and 1 off-stream stockwater systems in 2021 and 6 stock pond restorations and 4 off-stream stockwater systems in 2022 with 1 stock pond restoration and 3 off-stream restorations scheduled for 2023.



Urban Farm Mini-Grants

Since 2015, the ACRCO, in partnership with NRCS and UC Cooperative Extension, has awarded mini-grants of up to \$3,000 to 45 urban farms throughout the County to implement projects and practices such as native hedgerows, cover cropping, and rain catchment, to provide water quality and conservation benefits. In FY2021, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, no mini-grants were awarded and farmers who received mini-grants the previous year were granted extensions to complete their projects. In FY2022, we awarded a total of \$7500 in mini-grants to 5 farms in Alameda County, provided over 250 hours of technical assistance, and delivered free compost produced at the Oakland Zoo to more than 30 farms. More than 60% of farms served by this program are located within Disadvantaged Communities, serving marginalized populations. More than 50% of the farms were operated by Socially Disadvantaged Farmers. Ongoing funding for this program is provided by the Alameda County Flood Control & Water Conservation District, and additional funding in FY2022 was provided by the National Association of Conservation Districts.

City of Livermore Stream Maintenance Program

The City of Livermore's Stream Maintenance Program is a streamlined permitting program designed to provide a technical framework to the City in identifying and maintaining waterways to prevent flooding, improve overall functioning, and enhance habitat in Livermore streams. Through the program, the City, with technical support from the ACRCO stream specialist, is supporting the maintenance and restoration of over 4 miles of arroyos and over 10 acres of native habitat.

Regional Priority Plan

During FY2021-2022, Contra Costa and Alameda County RCDs worked with regional stakeholders to write a Regional Priority Plan with grant funding from the Coastal Conservancy. This document identifies areas at-risk to wildfire threat and damage, and provides mitigation recommendations through suggested implementable fuel reduction and other wildfire mitigation projects, as well as public education, outreach and organizing efforts.

Alameda County Agricultural Resiliency Project

Alameda County Local Area Formation Commission (LAFCO) in partnership with the ACRCO was awarded a grant by the Department of Conservation in FY2021, to be completed in FY2024. To implement this grant, we will work with stakeholders to identify priority areas for agricultural preservation at urban growth boundaries as well as identify community garden and urban farm development opportunities in order to promote healthier, more resilient communities. We are also reviewing existing agricultural land conservation policies in the county so that we can make policy recommendations to enhance the viability and resilience of agriculture in Alameda County.

Living Arroyos

In June 2022, the ACRCO became the home of the Living Arroyos program. Living Arroyos is a multi-agency partnership in the Livermore-Amador Valley consisting of the ACRCO, Zone 7 Water Agency, and the cities of Dublin, Livermore, and Pleasanton. Initiated in 2013, the Program seeks to provide education on renewing and enhancing urban streams and associated riparian habitats while broadening awareness about the local watershed. The Program provides volunteer opportunities to individuals, community groups, and businesses to accomplish project goals outlined by the program partners. It also offers professional training opportunities through internships in resource conservation to develop local stewardship leaders. By establishing the connection between people and the arroyos in their own backyards, Living Arroyos interns and volunteers act as ambassadors for the watershed to foster a greater understanding of local water management issues impacting streams in the area.

EDUCATION & OUTREACH

Watershed Conference

The State of the Alameda Creek Watershed Conference is an annual event to provide a forum for local organizations, 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. In 2021 the event was held virtually with on-line webinars, but in 2022 the conference was in-person with over 50 attendees.

Clean Water Program

ACRCO staff implements the Clean Water Program by coordinating public outreach events that serve to educate the community on reducing stormwater pollution in county watersheds with funding from Alameda County and the Flood Control and Water Conservation District. 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. Additionally, a very successful "Litter Hurts" poster contest was held for all 3rd and 4th graders in the Unincorporated Area of Alameda County.

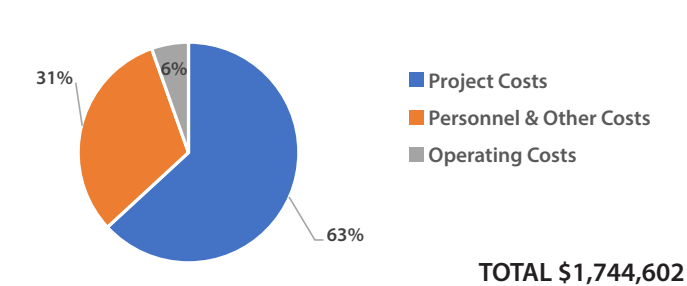


Grassland Butterfly Symposium

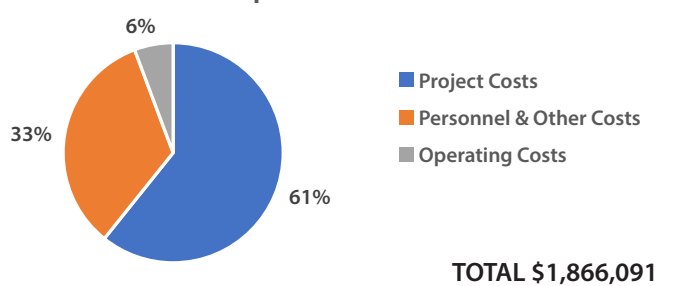
ACRCO, in collaboration with The San Francisco Bay Area Chapter of The Wildlife Society, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, NRCS, and field host - 3 Calhoun Sisters' Ranch - delivered the Grassland Butterfly Workshop in April, 2022. The event included on-line and in-person sessions with 70 registrants for virtual day and 40 field trip attendees. Talks included state and federal regulatory perspectives on grassland butterflies and several talks on specific butterfly species. The event was funded by a grant from the California Association of Resource Conservation Districts, which was awarded a block grant from the Wildlife Conservation Board.



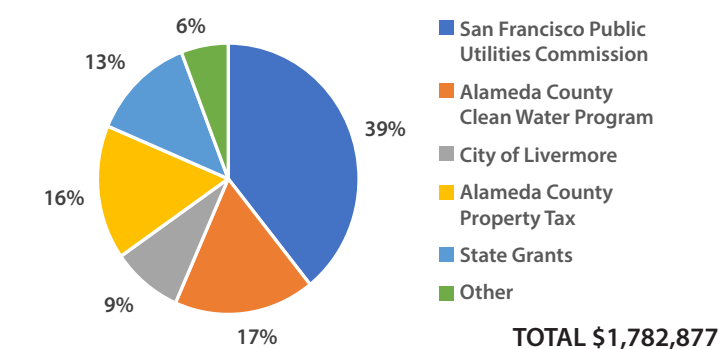
FY 2020-2021 Expenses



FY 2021-2022 Expenses



FY 2020-2021 Income Sources



FY 2021-2022 Income Sources

