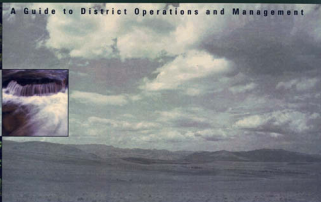


THE RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT GUIDEBOOK

A Guide to District Operations and Management



Produced by the California Conservation Partnership

with Generous Assistance from the California

Department of Conservation, November 8, 1999

**THE RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT
GUIDEBOOK:
A GUIDE TO DISTRICT
OPERATIONS AND MANAGEMENT**

**PRODUCED BY THE CALIFORNIA CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP
AND THE
CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION**

NOVEMBER 1999

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APPENDIX TITLE

- A. Introduction to Division 9 and Other State Codes Applicable to RCDs
- B. Division 9 of the California Public Resources Code
- C. Changes to Districts: Names, Boundaries, Consolidations, Associations
- D. Partnership Agreements
- E. Conflict of Interest Disclosure
- F. A Summary of the Major Provisions of the Brown Act
- G. The Ralph M. Brown Act
- H. Freedom of Information and Privacy Act
- I. Sample Meeting Agendas
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VOLUME II
MATERIALS FOR WORKSHOPS

INTRODUCTION : MATERIALS FOR WORKSHOPS

Volume II of the *RCD Guidebook* is intended to provide you with the tools you will need to present workshops on the topics covered under Volume I. The materials in Volume II assume that workshop presenters on these topics have a good background in the contents of Volume I: Volume I presents the ideas; Volume II presents the materials you might need to present those ideas to others.

Volume II is divided into sections corresponding to those in volume I. Thus, there are workshop materials for Steps 1, 2, 4, 5, and 6 though not all of the contents of Volume I are embodied in workshops in Volume II. Because of the sheer quantity of material, training topics needed to be prioritized so that the most weight was given to subjects of greatest concern.¹

Finally, in order to prevent elaborate cross-referencing in the *Guidebook* in general, and in Volume II especially, some duplication of workshop materials occurs here in Volume II. For instance, materials on RCD powers and authorities are presented in two places: under Step 1, RCDs 101, and under Step 4, Strategic Planning. Since this subject forms the foundation of what RCDs are and can do, it is appropriate that it appear in both places in the context of both workshops. Such instances of duplication, however, are kept to a minimum, and when they occur result in the addition of a few pages at most.

Each of the steps included in this volume corresponds to one in Volume I. One exception is the combination of Steps 5 and 6—matching programs to plans and grant writing—since these two closely related subjects lend themselves to combination in one workshop. Workshop materials for each step are divided into two parts. The first part presents a plan for the entire workshop, with enough of the content from Volume I included to be clear. The second part presents all of the handout materials called for in the workshop outline. In theory, you should be able to quickly organize and present workshops on topics covered in the *Guidebook* with a minimum of additional planning and preparation. You may, of course, tailor each workshop to your needs and add and remove supporting materials as you like. Every effort will be made, through piloting these workshop materials and soliciting feedback from workshop participants and presenters, to improve the design of the workshops and provide revisions to you as necessary.

¹ Workshop materials are still being developed for steps 3, 7, 8, and 9 at the time of first printing of the *Guidebook*.

**MATERIALS TO ACCOMPANY STEP 1:
RCDs 101: HOW TO BE AN EFFECTIVE RCD LEADER**

RCDs 101: WORKSHOP OVERVIEW

- I. Opening: Introductions and Expectations
(10 Minutes)**
- II. Warm-up Activity: Baseline Data
(20 Minutes)**
- III. What is an RCD?
(15 Minutes)**
- IV. Powers, Authorities, Roles, Responsibilities of Districts
(40 Minutes)**
- V. Many Hands: Common Board Structures
(30 Minutes)**
- VI. Closure: Future Training Assistance
(5 Minutes)**

Total Workshop Time: Approximately 2 Hours

RCDs 101 Workshop Outline

Objectives:

At the close of this workshop, participants will be able to:

- Explain what an RCD is and what its purpose is
- State the major powers and authorities districts have under Division 9
- Use the Powers and Authorities to address resource issues
- Create a plan in response to a resource issue
- Discuss the roles of board officers, committees, employees, and contractors
- Identify resources and contacts for further information on RCD operations

I. Opening: *Introduction of Participants and Expectations for the Workshop*

(10 Minutes)

Major Ideas: In order for districts to gain a clearer idea of what they can do to conserve resources under state law, the workshop will provide participants with a brief overview of Division 9 and give them an opportunity to explore the role districts can play in their communities.

Activity (Whole Group): Introductions

During the opening segment, participants are provided a chance to introduce themselves to the group and tell whom they represent and what their expectations, if any, for the session might be. Facilitator records individual expectations on a flip chart for the group. At the end of the session these expectations will be reviewed to determine if they have been met by the workshop.

II. Warm-Up Activity: *Baseline Data*

(20 Minutes)

Major ideas: During the course of this short workshop participants will be working closely together in a problem-solving situation. In order to get them comfortable with actively participating and working collaboratively, a warm-up activity will be undertaken. This activity seeks to discover current knowledge, beliefs, and questions about districts and Division 9.

Activity #1 (Small Group): Knowledge, Beliefs, Questions

Divide the whole group into teams of three or four. Team members will discuss what they know (knowledge) about district roles, responsibilities, and functions; what they believe is likely to be true (beliefs) or questions they might have (questions). Ideas are shared. Teams are given the handout, Knowledge, Beliefs, Questions, on which to record their ideas. Teams are asked to share with the whole group at least one each of the following:

- a. Things the team is certain to be true about districts and Division 9 (knowledge)
- b. Things that they think *might* be true about districts and Division 9 (beliefs)
- c. Questions or uncertainties about districts and Division 9 (questions)

Activity #2 (Whole Group): Baseline Data

The facilitator leads a whole group discussion of team findings. Each team is asked to share their knowledge, beliefs, and questions recorded in the previous activity. The facilitator records items in each of these categories on a separate flip chart or butcher paper sheet. As new ideas come forth, the facilitator may move items from one category to another.

For example, a team may have stated they are unsure whether a director can receive financial compensation for his or her work with a district (and this was stated as a question). After discussion, group consensus suggests that a director may *not* receive any payment for any reason. However, the idea that directors may be reimbursed for travel expenses may arise. This puts the question in the “maybe” category; The facilitator records this and moves on. Later in the session these issues will be revisited and final answers sought, with the aim of moving all issues into the “knowledge” category.

C. What is an RCD?

(15 Minutes)

Major Ideas: The seemingly simple question, “What is an RCD?” may actually reveal complex issues. RCDs are special districts, political subdivisions of the state. Nationally, the soil conservation movement got underway because of the Dust Bowl years during the Great Depression. The Congress of the United States established the Soil Conservation Service and shortly thereafter local conservation districts were established. The work of districts has expanded and diversified since then, so that now districts are many things to many people. Some people perceive districts as delivering primarily agricultural assistance to farmers and ranchers; other see districts as watershed restoration groups; while others see districts as educationally oriented; still others might see them as all of the above.

Activity (Whole Group): Characteristics of an RCD

The facilitator asks the group to name some characteristics of RCDs and s/he records answers on a flip chart. This is a brainstorming activity and all answers are valid. Guidelines for brainstorming can be introduced using the handout, “Ground Rules for Brainstorming.” Once answers are recorded the facilitator displays the information sheets, “The Role of a Resource Conservation District” and “The Overall Function of an RCD,” and the group responses are discussed in light of this: Do all the responses fit within the framework of the definition of RCD’s role as presented on the information sheets?

IV. Powers, Authorities, Roles, and Responsibilities of Districts (40 Minutes)

Major Ideas: Division 9 gives specific powers, authorities, roles, and responsibilities to districts.

Activity #1 (Whole Group): Powers, Authorities, Roles, and Responsibilities of Districts

The facilitator distributes the handout, "Powers, Authorities, Roles, and Responsibilities of Districts," which summarizes the major points in Division 9. Very briefly, the facilitator discusses each item on the overhead, keeping overall discussion time to about 10 minutes. Another effective way to present this information is to have each participant read a portion of the handout, followed by a brief discussion of each item.

Activity #2 (Whole Group): The Best Kept Secret

The group views this video on California RCDs and identifies which powers and authorities have been utilized by each district in the video (or from amongst the ones chosen for the segment). They record their ideas on the handout provided, "The Best Kept Secret." Teams put the name of each district after each power or authority it drew on in its work. After the video, the facilitator leads a discussion, moving from one Power/Authority listed to the next and teams state which districts utilized this authority. A follow up question could be this: Are there any powers/authorities not drawn on by districts in the video? Can you envision a situation where these might come into play?

Activity #2 (Small Group): A Natural Balance : Teams view the first example (North Dakota) in the video, *A Natural Balance*. A resource problem involving invasive plants is given. Teams are told before they watch the video that they will have to do the following:

1. Summarize the situation depicted
2. State the problem
3. Brainstorm ways to solve the problem
4. Identify which powers and authorities they might draw on to execute their solution(s)
5. Create a list of steps a district might undertake to address the situation

After the small groups accomplish these five tasks, their answers are shared with the whole group and discussed.

V. Many Hands: Commonly Used Board Structures (15 Minutes)

Major Ideas: The strength of locally led conservation is in its partnerships. Partnerships mean work is shared by many. The functions and role of an RCD board were previously defined, but the roles of various individuals in districts has not yet been discussed. RCD boards often divide up the work of directors by defining roles within the board.

Activity (Whole Group): A Touchy Situation

A copy of a difficult situation scenario is distributed to each member of the group and the facilitator (or a volunteer) reads it aloud. After reading the scenario (see “A Touchy Situation” handout) the group is asked the following questions:

1. Did the district director behave appropriately?
2. Did the project manager behave appropriately?
3. What might have the actors done to avoid conflict?
4. Was the landowner out of line in his request?

Once the discussion is underway the facilitator presents the most common board structures to the group, using the handout, “Commonly Used Board Structures.” The roles of the chair, officers, committees, employees, and contractors are briefly presented and discussed in light of the scenario.

VI. Closure: Future Training Assistance (15 Minutes)

Major Ideas: This workshop has been a brief introduction to districts and Division 9. This “RCDs 101” workshop is just the beginning of a conservation leader’s training. Further trainings in other board functions and district operations are available, and the *RCD Guidebook* itself is designed as a tool for board members and others to consult and use to develop their understanding of districts.

Closing Activity #1 (Whole Group): Getting to Knowledge

The facilitator posts the sheets created earlier that showed what participants were certain they knew about districts, were fairly certain they knew, and questions to which they wanted answers (“knowledge, beliefs, questions”). The items participants listed are discussed, with the goal of moving all of the items to the “knowledge” category. Any lingering doubts or questions will have to be followed up on and solved outside the workshop.

One way to do this is to receive further training in issues covered in the *RCD Guidebook* and to use the *Guidebook* itself as a training tool. The handout, “*RCD Guidebook* Outline” is distributed and participants are directed to contact information for scheduling trainings or getting technical assistance included on the outline.

Closing Activity #2: Expectations Revisited

The final activity is a review of the expectations of the group present in the opening sequence. Were all of the group’s expectations met? Which expectations were not met? Why? What can be done about it?

RCDs 101: WORKSHOP MATERIALS

1. RCDs 101 Workshop Agenda Design
2. Knowledge, Beliefs, Questions
3. The Role of the Resource Conservation District
4. The Overall function of an RCD Board
5. Ground Rules for Brainstorming
6. Powers, Authorities, Roles, and Responsibilities of Districts
7. Powers, Authorities, Roles, and Responsibilities of Districts (Overhead)
8. The Best Kept Secret
9. What Can a District Do?
10. A Touchy Situation
11. Common Board Structures

RCDs 101: WORKSHOP DESIGN

- 1. Opening: Introductions and Expectations
(10 Minutes)**
- 2. Warm-up Activity: Base Line Data
(20 Minutes)**
- 3. What is an RCD?
(15 Minutes)**
- 4. Powers, Authorities, Roles, Responsibilities of
Districts
(40 Minutes)**
- 5. Many Hands: Common Board Structures
(30 Minutes)**
- 6. Closure: Future Training Assistance
(5 Minutes)**

Total Workshop Time: Approximately 2 Hours

Knowledge

Beliefs

Questions

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THE ROLE OF A RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

To take available technical, financial, and educational resources, whatever their source, and focus or coordinate them so that they meet the needs of the local land user and local communities for conservation of soil, water, and related resources.

THE OVERALL FUNCTION OF AN RCD BOARD

To provide resource conservation leadership to people and communities within a district. The primary role of an RCD board is that of a decision-making body to set policy, create and implement plans, and educate the public about resource conservation issues.

RULES FOR BRAINSTORMING

- 1. ALL IDEAS ARE GOOD**
- 2. SAVE CRITICISM FOR LATER**
- 3. KEEP IDEAS FLOWING**
- 4. GENERATE IDEAS RAPIDLY**
- 5. WRITE IDEAS DOWN AS THEY COME TO MIND**
- 6. AIM FOR QUANTITY OF IDEAS WITHOUT OVER CONCERN FOR QUALITY**
- 7. MAKE SURE ALL MEMBERS CONTRIBUTE**
- 8. FOLLOW UP INTERESTING IDEAS WITH VARIATIONS**
- 9. CONTINUE UNTIL NO NEW IDEAS ARE GENERATED**

Powers and Authorities of RCDs Under Division 9

Managing

Under the authority granted it by Division 9 an RCD may:

- *Manage District Operations.* This includes managing the day-to-day business of an RCD, including its budget and other financial matters.
- *Manage Projects Within Districts On Public And Private Lands.* Division 9 gives RCDs authority to oversee and manage soil, water, and other natural resource conservation projects on both public and private lands. RCDs are not regulatory agencies, they build cooperative, voluntary partnerships with landowners and land managers and enter into agreements to provide resource conservation services to the landowner or land manager. RCDs offer a valuable service to landowners and land managers by providing leadership and know-how to help them conserve resources.
- *Make Improvements on Private and Public Lands.* With consent of landowners and land managers RCDs are granted authority to alter the landscape in order to conserve soil, water, and other valuable natural resources on both private and public lands.
- *Acquire Lands, Easements, and Property.* RCDs are also given authority under Division 9 to purchase and hold lands, easements, and property. An RCD can purchase land in need of extensive conservation treatments, especially when ownership of the land will help in managing it. An RCD can also purchase easements, such as riparian zones, to manage for the purposes of conserving resources. An RCD may also purchase and own structures, equipment, and tools in order to undertake resource conservation work.

Cooperating to Plan, Receive Funding, and Deliver Services

One of the primary ways an RCD broadens its ability to conserve resources is by forming partnerships with other districts, with the California Association of Resource Conservation Districts (CARCD); CARCD Area members; federal, state, and local governments; and Indian Tribes.

- *Partner with other Districts, CARCD, CARCD Areas.* Forming partnerships strengthens district operations by giving an RCD access to information, knowledge, and skills. In addition, partnerships for the purposes of resource conservation planning can identify common interests between partners to facilitate sharing of expertise and resources. Often, funding agencies make grants to entities working in partnership with other agencies and organizations because they see this as a way of stretching limited grant dollars and achieving the most with limited funds.
- *Cooperate with Federal, State, and Local Governments and Tribes.* Division 9 gives RCDs the authority to enter into agreements with federal, state and local governments as well as Indian Tribes to collaborate on resource conservation

projects within districts. In addition, RCDs are empowered to receive grants and other funding from government agencies.

Coordinate Representation to Federal, State, and Local Governments

RCDs are given latitude to form partnerships with other districts, CARCD, and CARCD Areas to educate and inform government decision makers, such as legislators, about the strengths of RCD for local conservation efforts. With the frequent turnover in legislative office holders, educating elected officials about RCDs is an ongoing effort. Important also is keeping government apprised of the latest developments in resource conservation programs, as well as the basic strengths of districts to promote sound conservation practices. RCDs are frequently spoken of as “America’s Best Kept Secret,” yet the full potential of what an RCD can achieve will only be reached when elected officials become aware of what districts can do. A constant effort to keep RCDs in the minds of decision makers has been and will be an ongoing need both by districts and district associations.

Perform Education and Outreach

- *Conduct Surveys and Research, Disseminate Information.* Division 9 empowers RCDs to act as clearinghouses of conservation education and to disseminate this information to local government, schools, and the public. Part of this effort may be to conduct basic research, including scientific research and surveys of public knowledge and opinion, and to relay this information to the public.
- *Perform Education, Outreach, and Demonstration Projects.* In order to educate the public, RCDs are given the power to directly educate the public through any number of means, including media, publications, or public events such as demonstration projects.

Accept Funding

In order to accomplish valuable resource conservation work RCDs need money to do so. Division 9 has given RCDs authority to receive moneys from various sources and to spend it on resource conservation within districts. Under Division 9 RCDs are allowed to:

- *Accept Grants and Gifts.* Grants come in many forms from many sources, but all provide districts with funding to execute resource conservation work within districts, either directly through funding for projects, or indirectly through capacity building funding or educational grants. RCDs may also receive gifts of money to undertake conservation work within districts.
- *Receive Funding through Federal, State, and Private Sources.* RCDs may receive Federal and state funding through various governmental agencies and from private foundations who wish to support the work of RCDs.
- *Establish Fees for Services.* RCDs may charge reasonable fees for performing services, such as providing labor or equipment to assist with conservation projects.

- *Accept and Use Contributions.* RCDs may receive and use monetary contributions from individuals, charitable organizations, or other groups. Such contributions are usually made without connections to specific projects and an RCD may use such money to cover basic operations to purchase equipment.

Act as an Employer

RCDs can hire employees and others to perform district work. Under Division 9, an RCD may:

- *Employ Agents, Officers, and Employees.* RCDs may hire agents, officers, and employees to carry out the goals and objectives of the district. An RCD can hire permanent and temporary employees, and delegate some of the duties associated with board members to paid staff (see also below under Employees and Contractors).
- *Employ Contractors.* An RCD may employ contractors to accomplish specific tasks associated with projects or district operations. Frequently utilized contractors include equipment contractors, registered professional foresters, and computer specialists (see also below under Employees and Contractors).

Exercise Legal Powers

An RCD is a type of special district, organized under authority of the state and as such is subject to legal powers and conditions similar to other state entities. This means that an RCD may:

- *Sue and be Sued.* As a special district of the state, an RCD is not exempt from legal action. An RCD may be sued for its actions or the actions of individual board members. It may also bring lawsuits against individuals or entities.
- *Call upon District Attorney or County Council for Legal Advice.* Under Division 9 RCDs are given a right to have legal guidance, either from a local District Attorney or County Council.

Create and Execute Conservation Plans

Planning is an important part of resource conservation, and Division 9 recommends that RCDs survey the conservation needs in their districts and devise plans to address them.

- *Develop Long-Range and Annual Plans.* Division 9 gives RCDs authority to survey resource conservation needs within a district and to create long-range plans to address them. They are further empowered to form partnerships with other government entities and other groups for the purposes of planning. The California legislature has worked to encourage RCDs to create short- and long-range plans, and recently passed legislation to require that districts do so by January 1, 2000 in order to qualify for state funding through the Department of Conservation.

Powers and Authorities of RCDs Under Division 9

Managing

- Manage District Operations
- Manage Projects Within Districts On Public And Private Lands
- Make Improvements on Private and Public Lands
- Acquire Lands, Easements, and Property

Cooperating to Plan, Receive Funding, and Deliver Services

- Partner with other Districts, CARCD, CARCD Areas
- Cooperate with Federal, State, and Local Governments and Tribes

Coordinate Representation to Federal, State, and Local Governments

Perform Education and Outreach

- Conduct Surveys and Research, Disseminate Information
- Perform Education, Outreach, and Demonstration Projects

Accept Funding

- Accept Grants and Gifts
- Receive Funding through Federal, State, and Private Sources
- Establish Fees for Services
- Accept and Use Contributions

Act as an Employer

- Employ Agents, Officers, and Employees
- Employ Contractors

Exercise Legal Powers

- Sue and be Sued.
- Call upon District Attorney or County Council for Legal Advice

Create and Execute Conservation Plans

- Develop Long-Range and Annual Plans

The Best Kept Secret

CATEGORY	AUTHORITY/POWER	TRINITY CO.	MENDOCINO	TAHOE
Managing	Managing Operations			
	Managing Projects			
	Making Improvements			
	Acquiring Lands etc.			
Cooperating	Partnering With Other Districts, CARCD, etc.			
	Cooperate with Governments and Tribes			
Coordinate Representation To Governments	Educate and Inform Government Decision Makers			
Perform Education And Outreach	Surveys and Research			
	Education, Outreach, Demo Projs			
Accept Funding	Accepts Grants and Gifts			
	Federal, State, Private Sources			
	Accept Contributions			
Act as Employer	Agents, Officers, Employees			
	Contractors			
Exercise Legal Powers	Sue and Be Sued			
	County Council/Dist. Attorney Advice			
Create and Execute Conservation Plans	Develop Long-Range/Annual Plans			

WHAT CAN THE DISTRICT DO?

1. Summarize the resource situation:

2. What is the problem? Do you have enough information?

3. With whom might you work to solve this problem? What resources are available to assist you?

4. What powers/authorities might be involved in solution(s)

Common Board Structures

Board Structures and Division 9

Division 9 does not require that districts conform to the board structures outlined below, although it permits district boards to utilize them. These structures are common ways of organizing board member responsibilities for public and private entities. The roles outlined below are tools your district can utilize to divide responsibilities among directors, employees, and contractors.

Size of the Board

Division 9 of the California State Public Resources Code requires that an RCD Board consist of either 5, 7, or 9 members.

Officers

President

1. *Develop and distribute meeting agendas.*
2. *Preside at all meetings.*
3. *During meetings, to act as facilitator for orderly discussion.*
4. *Suggest or ask for motions.*
5. *Re-state motions, ask for votes on motions, and announce the outcomes of votes.*
6. *Appoint committees, assign responsibilities, and ask for reports when due.*
7. *Train and inform new board members.*
8. *Provide direct supervision to district employees or to the district manager.*

Vice President

1. *Preside at board meetings when the president is absent.*
2. *Assume the other duties of the president when asked by the president.*

Secretary

1. *Oversee the preparation and distribution of meeting agendas under direction of the president;*
2. *Keep a list of suggested agenda items for the president to use when developing the agenda;*
3. *Keep minutes for each meeting;*
4. *Record committee activities.*
5. *Initiate correspondence on behalf of the board as needed.*

Board Treasurer

1. *Maintain complete and accurate records of receipts and expenditures for the district,*

2. *Issue receipts for all monies received and pay bills when authorized and approved by the board;*
3. *Make sure all authorized payments are recorded in the minutes;*
4. *Make a monthly financial report to the board;*
5. *Make an annual financial statement in the Annual Report to the public of all district funds;*
6. *Deposit checks in the district account.*

Directors

1. *Attend regular board meetings;*
2. *Listen to, discuss, and vote on board motions to make decisions and take actions;*
3. *Assume duties and carry out tasks assigned by the president, including duties associated with membership in committees;*
4. *Assist other board members as required;*
5. *Be familiar with all board programs;*
6. *Be prepared to serve in one of the board officer positions.*

Associate Directors

1. *Assist with field days, field tours, annual meetings, contests, educational activities, and other special events;*
2. *Serve in advisory capacity to the board. Associate directors may not vote on district business or assume the responsibilities of board members.*

Committees

Committees are a useful way to divide up work among board members. Your district is not required to make use of committees in managing the district. They are tools that your district can utilize if desired.

Standing Committees: Committees to address ongoing issues:

- Education
- Strategic Planning
- Budget
- Fundraising
- Public Relations
- Legislative

Ad Hoc Committees: Committees to address specific short-term issues

Employees and Contractors

Under Division 9 a district board is empowered to hire *employees* and to contract with others on a limited basis to complete certain tasks. Employees may undertake certain functions of a district on behalf of the board, though employees may not perform the

official duties of a board member such as make or vote on motions, preside over board meetings, call special meetings, or create agendas.

Contractors differ from employees in the way that standing committees differ from *ad hoc* committees: while employees are hired to perform ongoing functions of a district such as record keeping or education, contractors are hired for a limited time in order to complete *specific* tasks; once those tasks are completed, the contractor is no longer employed by the district, at least until such time as they enter into another contract with the district.

A TOUCHY SITUATION

A district director, who is vice president, is serving as president while the board president is away on vacation. A local landowner, a friend of his, asks him if the RCD could do some work to prevent Friendly Creek from continuing to erode its banks on his property, which is jeopardizing his garden. The director says he'd be glad to help and says he'll send a crew out the next day to get started.

The director phones the project manager, explains the project, and asks him to get started right away. The project manager angrily responds that he is deeply involved in another project and cannot do it. The director explains that the landowner is a friend of his and that he owes him a favor. He insists that the project manager drop what he is doing and get started the next morning. The project manager angrily tells him he is not going to be "jerked around like that" and hangs up the phone.

Discussion:

- Did the district director behave appropriately?
- Did the project manager behave appropriately?
- What might have the actors done to avoid conflict?
- Was the landowner out of line in his request?

**MATERIALS TO ACCOMPANY STEP 2:
HOW TO
HOLD LEGAL AND EFFECTIVE MEETINGS**

LIST OF WORKSHOPS FOR STEP 2:

1. How to Hold Legal Meetings

Workshop Agenda
Workshop Outline
Workshop Materials

2. How to Hold Effective Meetings

Workshop Agenda
Workshop Outline
Workshop Materials

HOW TO HOLD LEGAL MEETINGS: WORKSHOP AGENDA

I. INTRODUCTION: THE FORMAT OF THE WORKSHOP

II. MEETING PART I

- 1.0 Call to Order/Review Agenda/Public Input on Agenda Items
- 2.0 Review Minutes of Previous Meeting
- 3.0 Treasurer's Report
- 4.0 "Committee" Reports:
 - 4.1 Directors' Roles and Responsibilities
 - 4.2 Division 9 of the Public Resources Code
 - 4.3 What is a Quorum?
 - 4.3 Order of Business In a Meeting
 - 4.4 Duties of a Chair and Other Officials
 - 4.5 Principle Motions (Robert's Rules of Order)
 - 4.6 Rules for Voting
 - 4.7 Secretary's Report: How to Take and Write Minutes

III. RECESS/DISCUSSION OF PART I

IV. MEETING PART II

- 5.0 Program: The Ralph M. Brown Act: California's Open Meeting Law
- 6.0 Open Agenda/Public Input
- 7.0 Adjournment

V. CLOSURE/DISCUSSION

HOW TO HOLD LEGAL MEETINGS: WORKSHOP OUTLINE

Objectives:

At the close of this workshop, participants will be able to:

- Create a regular Board Meeting Agenda
- Identify several Powers/Authorities/Roles of an RCD
- Execute the duties of a meeting chair
- Use Robert's Rules of Order effectively
- Define a quorum
- Take and write meeting minutes
- Summarize the major points of the Brown Act

Note: The following workshop outline is based on a regular RCD board meeting format, which is itself based on parliamentary procedure.¹ The purpose of this design is to familiarize workshop participants with the standard procedures of public meetings by modeling these practices. The entire workshop, therefore, is staged as a an RCD board meeting, but the content of the meeting pertains to running legal meetings. Several of the participants in the workshop play the roles of district chairperson, secretary, committee member(s) and guest speaker(s). During the course of the workshop participants are (strongly) encouraged to assume some of these roles as the workshop progresses. Other workshop participants will "attend the meeting" and participate as if they were members of the public attending a district meeting.

¹ Much of the information in this outline is based on a National Association of Conservation Districts' brochure, "Simplified Parliamentary Procedure." League City, Texas: National Association of Conservation Districts, 1998.

I. INTRODUCTION: THE FORMAT OF THE WORKSHOP

Main Ideas: This workshop on legal meetings is presented in the format of a typical RCD board meeting. It was decided to present this information on holding legal meetings in this way because so much of what you might need to know about holding a legal meeting is best learned by seeing the information in action and having a chance to practice it.

The design of this workshop, thus, resembles a script for a play: certain roles are assigned to “actors” in advance, who present the workshop information within the context of a simulated board meeting. It is hoped that by using this somewhat elaborate approach that workshop participants will have a chance to see the rules governing legal meetings in action and have a chance to practice them.

To present this workshop as written, at least three presenters are needed. The roles needed for this workshop are:

1. Facilitator/Board Chair
2. Board Member/Committee Member
3. Secretary/Treasurer

Activity: The facilitator introduces him/herself and explains that this workshop on legal meetings will take the form of a typical regular district board meeting. In this meeting simulation, several people, including the facilitator him/herself, will be playing the roles of an RCD board in order to demonstrate the very subjects the workshop will present. The facilitator introduces the other two (or more) “board members” who will take part in the meeting, and tells participants that s/he herself will serve as both facilitator of the workshop and chair of the meeting about to take place. His/her role as facilitator will involve interacting directly with workshop participants but as chair of the meeting s/he will serve in a different capacity.

The facilitator further explains that the meeting will have two parts and that between these two parts the group will take time to reflect on the proceedings of the first part. Workshop participants are encouraged to participate in the meeting as much as they feel comfortable and that at some points in the meeting they may even be invited to take over the roles of others presenting the workshop.

II. MEETING: PART I

The facilitator assumes the role of board chair and brings the meeting to order.

1.0 Call to Order/Review Agenda

Activity: The chairperson calls the meeting to order. S/he introduces him/herself and invites others to do so. S/he briefly explains that the present workshop on holding legal and effective meetings will be presented in the format of an RCD board meeting in order to demonstrate procedures for meetings and give participants a chance to practice these procedures. S/he then distributes the agenda for the meeting. Participants review and amend or accept the meeting agenda. A motion is made to amend the agenda to eliminate one item (see Initial Agenda handout). The motion is made by the board

member and seconded by the secretary. Another motion is made to approve the agenda as amended; this is seconded and a vote is taken. The chair announces that the agenda has been approved and seconded as amended (see Revised Agenda handout). The chair then invites public comment on the agenda. A time limit is set for public input—15 minutes. Once public input is received, the chair moves the meeting on to the next agenda item.

2.0 Review of Minutes of Previous Meeting

The chair explains that at a regular board meeting this portion of the meeting is usually devoted to reviewing minutes of the previous meeting. Since the present meeting is not a regular meeting, there are no minutes of previous meetings. The chair, however, asks the secretary to distribute the handout, “How to Take and Write Minutes” and to present the information on the handout. A motion is immediately made to postpone this presentation until later in the meeting, during the committee reports when the secretary already has time allotted to him/her for a report. The chair repeats the motion and asks if there is any discussion. A member indicates that s/he would like to speak. The chair gives them the floor. The member states that it would make sense for the secretary to take minutes during the present meeting and present minutes taken so far during his/her report as scheduled on the agenda. Participants might be able to understand better the purpose of taking minutes if they are familiar with the events these minutes might document. The chair asks if there is any further discussion. The chair repeats the motion and asks if there is a second. The motion is seconded and the chair asks for a vote. The motion is passed and the chair repeats the motion as passed and announces the meeting will move on to the next agenda item.

3.0 Treasurer’s Report

The chair calls on the treasurer to read the treasurer’s report. The treasurer explains that during this portion of a regular board meeting the treasurer would submit copies of the budget and treasurer’s report to board members for review. Since this is not a regular board meeting, there is no treasurer’s report, though a model or sample may be submitted to participants for review. A motion can be made and carried at this point to adopt the sample budget as submitted, a vote can be made, and the motion to approve the budget as submitted.

4.0 “Committee” Reports

The chair explains that during this portion of the meeting the chair would usually call on committee leaders (committees might have been formed, for instance, to implement district education programs, hiring efforts, etc.) Committees would report on progress. During this workshop, however, the committees will be reporting on various aspects of the meeting process itself. The chair will call on various designated committee members to present this information.

4.1 Directors’ Roles and Responsibilities

Activity: The chair calls on the district’s roles and responsibilities committee to report.

The committee member presents the information using two handouts: “Powers/Authorities/Duties of California Resource Conservation Districts” and “Conservation District Officials Job Description.”

One important point that this committee member can make is that individual board members are not themselves empowered through Division 9, but RCD *boards* are. Boards make decisions, not directors. Individual directors, however, can act on behalf of the board in order to implement programs or policies of the board such as carrying out education programs or other activities. Employees may play similar roles as agents of the board. The “district,” however, is the board, and never individual board members.

4.2 Division 9 of the California Public Resources Code

Activity: The chair calls on a committee member to present information on Division 9.

The committee member explains that Division 9 of the Public Resources Code is the document that gives RCDs the authority to conserve resources within a district and provides operating guidelines for doing so. The committee member states that Division 9 is a long, complex document and difficult to explain in its entirety. The present meeting addresses some of the issues in Division 9, but there is much more to it.

Because of this, the committee member recommends that an effort be made to explore how Division 9 might be presented to such a gathering by making a motion to commit the issue to a committee for further consideration. The chair restates the motion and asks if there is any discussion.

Discussion ensues to the effect that: a committee had *already* been formed to explore the issue and the present committee member *is* the one responsible for resolving the question. The committee member responds that one way s/he could solve the question is by reading Division 9 in its entirety, which s/he then proceeds to do. A motion is immediately made to table the issue. The motion to table is quickly seconded. The chair asks for a vote on the motion to table the issue, and a majority assents.

4.3 What is a Quorum?

Activity: The chair calls on a designated committee member, who defines the term, “Quorum,” using the handout, “What is a Quorum?” The committee member explains the idea and returns the floor to the chair, who asks for any questions from participants.

4.4 Order of Business in a Parliamentary Proceeding

Activity: The chair next calls on a committee member, who distributes the handout, “Order of Business in a Parliamentary Proceeding” and notes that the present meeting is based on this order. Modifications are made when needed, but it is usual to follow this format in public meetings as much as the content of

the proceedings will allow. The committee member explains each item in the handout and returns the floor to the chair, who asks if there are any questions.

4.5 Duties of a Chair and Other Officials

Activity: The chair calls on a committee member to present the roles of the chair and other officials in a board meeting. The committee member uses the handout, "Duties of the chair and Other District Officials" to explain the various roles during a board meeting.

4.6 Principle Motions (Robert's Rules of Order)

Activity 1: The chair calls on a committee member to report on Robert's Rules of Order.

The committee member presents the order of events in a motion to the assembly using the handout, "Order of Motions, Discussion, and Voting."

The committee member then presents the principle motions using the handout, Principle Meeting Motions and points out that many have been used already in the day's proceedings. The committee member (violating protocol by addressing attendees rather than the chair) asks if participants can identify which motions had been implemented thus far, and which had not.

A member immediately signals the chair to speak and raises a point of order:

"Mr./Ms. chair, I rise to a point of order."

The chair replies, "Please state your point of order."

Member replies, "I would like to remind the assembly that all discussion should be addressed to the chair of the assembly and not to the public. This is usual with proceedings such as ours."

The chair answers: "Your Point of Order is sustained."

Another member appeals the decision, and a discussion ensues about the advantages of speakers being able to address the assembly directly in a meeting such as this one wherein the main point is to educate the assembly. Effective education can only happen if speakers and members of the assembly are allowed to interact directly. The chair, however, reminds the assembly that provision has been made for this in Section III of the Workshop (S/he refers participants to the Agenda) at which time direct interaction between speakers and audience members may occur.

After debate, the chair asks, "Shall the decision of the chair be sustained?" A member moves to sustain the decision of the chair not to allow direct interaction between speakers and the assembly and the motion is seconded. A vote is taken. The motion is carried.

Activity 2: The chair invites one of the meeting participants to take his/her place as chair for the remainder of the meeting. The volunteer will be supported in this role in several ways. First, they will be assisted when needed by the presiding chair, who can coach or lend advice as needed. Second, copies of the handouts, "Order of Business in an RCD Board of Directors' Meeting," Duties of a Meeting chair," and "Principle Motions (Robert's Rules of Order)" will be available as needed.

4.7 Rules for Voting

The new chair calls on a committee member to present information on voting to the assembly. The member uses the handout, "Rules for Voting" to explain parliamentary procedures for voting. The committee member thanks the chair for giving the floor to him/her. She returns the floor to the chair.

4.8 Secretary's Report: How to Take and Write Minutes.

The chair calls on the secretary to present his/her report. The secretary, who has been taking minutes during the meeting thus far, presents the important points about taking minutes using the handout, "How to Take and Write Meeting Minutes." The secretary illustrates the main points of this presentation using the minutes from the day's proceedings.

III. RECESS/DISCUSSION OF MEETING PART I.

The chair states that the chair of an assembly has the right to call a recess at any time during proceedings. The chair then declares a short recess (approximately 15 minutes) after which a discussion of Part I will take place. When the recess period is over the chair resumes his/her role as workshop facilitator. S/he recaps the morning's events (by listing main items) and asks participants the following questions:

1. Name several items a secretary would likely record while taking minutes.
2. Which comes first, a motion or a vote?
3. True or false, "Practically speaking, an individual board member is the same as the district board whenever he or she is the only board person present at an event." Why?
4. Using your handout, "Principle Meeting Motions (Robert's Rules of Order)," name the types of motions made already during the meeting. Which one was not made?
5. During the meeting, to whom did the designated speakers address their remarks?
6. Which one of the following terms best describes the role of the chair during the meeting:
 - a. Spokesperson b. Leader c. Organizer d. Gatekeeper

Why?

7. Any general thoughts or reactions to the proceedings? Would you call them formal or informal? Why might that be appropriate?

PART IV. MEETING PART II

The facilitator reminds the assembly that they chose a new chair during the previous part of the workshop (the facilitator states the name of the new chair) and now invites a volunteer to act as secretary during the remaining portion of the workshop. S/he states that such a volunteer would have guidance from the previous secretary throughout the remainder of the meeting. Once a volunteer is chosen, the facilitator states that the second portion of the meeting may begin, and s/he turns the meeting over to the new chair.

5.0 Program: the Ralph M. Brown Act: California's Open Meeting Law

The new chair introduces the featured speaker for the program and the floor is turned over to the guest speaker.

Activity: The guest speaker rises and presents the following information, utilizing the handouts and overheads included.

Introduction

The Ralph M. Brown Act, otherwise known as the Brown Act or California's "Open Meeting Law," has many details, but the basic idea is that the Brown Act requires "local government business to be conducted in open and public meetings except in certain limited situations." (see handout, "Key Idea of the Brown Act").

This applies to "legislative bodies" of local government, including local agencies, commissions, committees, and boards, or any other body created by formal action of one of these, such as a sub-committee (an example might be a budget sub-committee). This law thus applies to resource conservation districts because even though they are special districts of the state, they were formed by formal action of county government and are thus considered county government agencies.

Exceptions: *Ad hoc* committees are not required to be open and public (use handouts, "What is an *Ad Hoc* Committee?" and "What is a Standing Committee?")

Public Meetings

Meetings of a legislative body, then, under the Brown act must be open and public. But what is a meeting? (Use handout, "What Constitutes a Meeting?")

There are exceptions to this law that concern other occasions when a majority of board members might find themselves at the same gathering. Obviously, there may be times that this might happen that in no way constitute a meeting that should be considered a public meeting of the board. (Use the handout, “What Does Not Constitute a District Board Meeting”).

Serial Meetings

There are ways that board members may intentionally or unintentionally violate the open meeting requirement by holding “serial” meetings. A “serial” meeting is really a full board meeting to discuss or take action on an issue that does not take place with all members present at any given time, but which all members provide input to one at a time and sequentially.

For example: Suppose that one board member discusses an issue with one other member during a private phone call. This is not in itself a violation of the Brown Act. But, further, let’s suppose that one of these two members then discusses the issue with a third, who then discusses it with a fourth, and so on and through this process a decision is made or is now ready to be made. This is considered a serial meeting and considered a violation of the Brown Act.

Notice and Agenda Requirements

The speaker uses the handout “Agenda Requirements and Public Notice Requirements” to discuss these topics.

Public Participation

The speaker uses the handout, “Public Participation Guidelines” to present this portion of the program.

Closed Sessions

The speaker uses the handout, “Closed Sessions” to present this portion of the program.

Conclusion

The speaker concludes this portion of the meeting by asking for questions from the board or members of the public. After this discussion period s/he returns the floor to the chair.

6.0 Open Agenda/Public Input

The chair thanks the speaker for the presentation on the Brown Act and invites public comment on this or any other matter. S/he states that comments from members of the public are limited to three minutes for each speaker.

7.0 Open Agenda/Public Comment

After the public comment period is concluded, the chair adjourns the meeting.

HOW TO HOLD LEGAL MEETINGS: WORKSHOP MATERIALS

1. Legal Meetings Workshop Agenda (Handout)
2. Legal Meetings Workshop Agenda--Revised (Handout)
3. Powers/Authorities/Duties of California Resource Conservation Districts
4. Conservation District Official's Job Description
5. What is a Quorum?
6. Order of Business in an RCD Board of Directors' Meeting (Handout)
7. Duties of a Chair and Other District Officials (Handout)
8. Order of Motions, Discussion, and Voting
9. Principle Meeting Motions
10. How to Take and Write Meeting Minutes
11. The Brown Act
12. What is an *Ad Hoc* Committee?
13. What is a Standing Committee?
14. What Constitutes a Meeting?
15. Agenda Requirements
16. Public Notice Requirements
17. Public Participation Guidelines
18. Closed Sessions

HOW TO HOLD LEGAL MEETINGS: WORKSHOP AGENDA

IV. INTRODUCTION: THE FORMAT OF THE WORKSHOP

V. MEETING PART I

- 1.0 Call to Order/Review Agenda/Public Input on Agenda Items
- 2.0 Review Minutes of Previous Meeting
- 4.0 Treasurer's Report
- 5.0 "Committee" Reports:
 - 5.1 Directors' Roles and Responsibilities
 - 5.2 Division 9 of the Public Resources Code
 - 5.3 What is a Quorum?
 - 5.4 Order of Business In a Meeting
 - 5.5 Duties of a Chair and Other Officials
 - 5.6 Principle Motions (Robert's Rules of Order)
 - 5.7 Rules for Voting
 - 5.8 Secretary's Report: How to Take and Write Minutes

VI. RECESS/DISCUSSION OF PART I

IV. MEETING PART II

- 6.0 Program: The Ralph M. Brown Act: California's Open Meeting Law
- 7.0 Open Agenda/Public Input
- 8.0 Adjournment

V. CLOSURE/DISCUSSION

HOW TO HOLD LEGAL MEETINGS: WORKSHOP AGENDA (REVISED)

- 1.0 Call to Order/Review Agenda/Public Input on Agenda Items
- 2.0 Review Minutes of Previous Meeting
- 3.0 Treasurer's Report
- 4.0 "Committee" Reports:
 - 4.1 Directors' Roles and Responsibilities
 - 4.2 Division 9 of the Public Resources Code
 - 4.3 What is a Quorum?
 - 4.4 Order of Business In a Meeting
 - 4.5 Duties of a Chair and Other Officials
 - 4.6 Principle Motions (Robert's Rules of Order)
 - 4.7 Rules for Voting
 - 4.8 Secretary's Report: How to Take and Write Minutes
- 5.0 Program: The Ralph M. Brown Act: California's Open Meeting Law
- 6.0 Open Agenda/Public Input
- 7.0 Adjournment

Powers and Authorities of RCDs Under Division 9

MANAGING

- Manage District Operations
- Manage Projects Within Districts On Public And Private Lands
- Make Improvements on Private and Public Lands
- Acquire Lands, Easements, and Property

COOPERATING TO PLAN, RECEIVE FUNDING, AND DELIVER SERVICES

- Partner with other Districts, CARCD, CARCD Areas
- Cooperate with Federal, State, and Local Governments and Tribes

Coordinate Representation to Federal, State, and Local Governments

PERFORM EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

- Conduct Surveys and Research, Disseminate Information
- Perform Education, Outreach, and Demonstration Projects

Accept Funding

- Accept Grants and Gifts
- Receive Funding through Federal, State, and Private Sources
- Establish Fees for Services
- Accept and Use Contributions

Act as an Employer

- Employ Agents, Officers, and Employees
- Employ Contractors

Exercise Legal Powers

- Sue and be Sued
- Call upon District Attorney or County Council for Legal Advice

Create and Execute Conservation Plans

- Develop Long-Range and Annual Plans

CONSERVATION DISTRICT OFFICIAL'S JOB DESCRIPTION

Description

Conservation district officials serve on a multi-member board that establishes and implements programs to conserve soil, water, prime and unique farmland, rangeland, woodland, wildlife, energy, and other renewable resources on local, non-federal lands.

Duties

- ❖ Identify local conservation needs, and develop, implement, and evaluate programs to meet them.
- ❖ Educate and inform landowners and operators, general public, and local, state, and federal legislators on conservation issues and programs.
- ❖ Supervise other volunteers and paid staff working with the district; coordinate with cooperating agency personnel.
- ❖ Administer the district by delegating tasks through a structure of board officers and members, committees, and others; raise and budget district funds and report on activities to the public.
- ❖ Coordinate assistance and funding from federal, state and local governments, district associations and private groups.

Qualifications

- ❖ Interest and background in conserving renewable resources.
- ❖ Communication skills.

Relationships

- ❖ Other district officials.
- ❖ State conservation agency.

Benefits

- ❖ Satisfaction in seeing conservation practices applied.
- ❖ Interaction with others interested in natural resource conservation.
- ❖ Input into local, state, and federal conservation programs.
- ❖ Training through the state conservation agency.

Time Required

Attend 12 regularly scheduled board meetings, as well as committee, special meetings and events—for an average of approximately 30 days per year.

WHAT IS A QUORUM?

A quorum is the minimum number of board members who need to be present at a meeting in order for the board to discuss, vote, or take action on any agenda items

A quorum is a simple majority of the total board whether present or not present at a meeting.

Examples:

With a Five-member board,

Three members constitute a quorum, and:

As long as three members are present at a meeting decisions to discuss and take action can be made, but all three present must vote in favor of resolutions for them to pass.

With a Seven-member board,

Four members constitute a quorum, and:

As long as four members are present at a meeting decisions to discuss and take action can be made, but all four present must vote in favor of resolutions for them to pass.

With a Nine-member board,

Five members constitute a quorum, and

As long as five members are present at a meeting decisions to discuss and take action can be made, but all five present must vote in favor of resolutions for them to pass.

ORDER OF BUSINESS IN PARLIAMENTARY PROCEEDINGS

- 1. The meeting is called to order by the chair.**
- 2. The minutes of the previous meeting are read by the secretary and:**
 - a. May be approved as read;**
 - b. May be approved with additions or corrections.**
- 3. Monthly statement of the treasurer is “Received as read and filed for audit” (stated by the chair). No motion of approval is needed.**
- 4. Reports of standing committees are called for by the chair.**
- 5. Reports of special committees are called for by the chair.**
- 6. Unfinished business is next in order at the call of the chair or of the meeting.**
- 7. New business.**
- 8. The program (if an annual or other special meeting). The program is part of the meeting; the chair presides throughout.**
- 9. Adjournment.**

DUTIES OF A CHAIR AND OTHER DISTRICT OFFICIALS

The Chair shall:

- 1. Preside at meetings**
- 2. Keep calm at all times.**
- 3. Talk no more than necessary while presiding**
- 4. Have an agenda for a meeting before him/her and proceed in a businesslike manner.**
- 5. Have a working knowledge of parliamentary law and a thorough understanding of the constitution and bylaws or other legal charter of the organization**
- 6. Keep a list of committees on the table while presiding**
- 7. Refrain from entering the debate of questions before the assembly. If it is essential that this be done, the vice-chair should be placed in the chair. A chair is not permitted to resume the chair until after the vote has been taken on the question under discussion**
- 8. Extend every courtesy to the opponents of a motion, even though the motion is one that the presiding officer favors**
- 9. Always appear at the rostrum a few minutes before the time the meeting is to be called to order. When the time arrives, note whether a quorum is present; if so, call the meeting to order and declare "a quorum is present."**

The Vice Chair shall:

- 1. Act in place of the chair whenever needed**
- 2. Not fill vacancies when acting in place of the chair, unless the by-laws so give this authority**

The Secretary shall:

- 1. Issue all calls or notices of meetings**
- 2. Write letters as the board of directors designates**
- 3. Keep neat and careful records of all business done in meetings, with exact wording of every motion and whether it was lost or carried**
- 4. Record names of persons appointed to committees and notify all persons nominated or elected on any committee**
- 5. Be present before the meeting is called to order and should have the minute book of the organization with him/her so reference can be made to past meeting minutes if necessary.**
- 6. Have present a copy of the bylaws, standing rules, book of parliamentary procedure endorsed by the organization, lists of members and committees, and a list of unfinished business, which should be given to the presiding officer.**

The Treasurer shall:

- 1. Preferably be bonded**
- 2. Prepare a monthly statement to present to the board**
- 3. Prepare an annual statement to present to the board**
- 4. Prepare a statement at any time at the request of the board**
- 5. Allow the annual report to be audited**
- 6. Present the auditors report to the board immediately after the annual treasurer's report**

Committees shall:

- 1. Exercise no authority except that granted them by the board**
- 2. Recognize the first-named member or person receiving the most votes as the committee chair**
- 3. Take no action except by a majority vote, or quorum, of the committee.**

ORDER OF MOTIONS, DISCUSSION, AND VOTING

Before the district board can decide to take new action on an issue the following events must occur, in this order:

Motion	A motion is a formal proposal that the district take action as suggested by the motion.
Second	In order for a motion to be considered, it must be “seconded” by a member other than the one who made the initial motion.
Restatement	After a motion has been seconded, the President or chair restates the motion word-for-word to the assembly. At this point a new motion to <i>amend</i> the wording of the motion can be made. This must also be seconded and can itself be debated and voted upon.
Discussion/ Debate	After restatement, a motion can be debated. Members of the board discuss first and then the matter is opened up to the public for comment. The chair ensures that dissenting opinions are heard. Once all have had a chance to comment a vote can be taken. Note: a motion can be made at any time during debate to close discussion and immediately vote. This motion itself must be seconded and voted upon.
Vote	Once debate has been closed the board (not the assembly) votes on the motion. A majority of assenting votes (“Yea’s”) affirms the motion, which can thus be acted upon. A majority of dissenting votes (“Nay’s”) defeats the motion, which is immediately dropped.

NOTE:

Motions must be considered one at a time and fully decided before another motion is considered. Exceptions to this, noted above, are when amendments to the motion itself are made and when motions to postpone, table, or close debate are made. When these occur, they are considered in full and resolved before returning to the main motion for full consideration.

PRINCIPLE MEETING MOTIONS

1. *Motion to Amend*

To amend a main motion before it is voted on, a member motions to amend it. This motion must be seconded. Alternatively, the main motion can be amended with the consent of the members who have moved to close debate and have seconded.

2. *Motion to Table*

To table a main motion (to suspend it from consideration until some future *unspecified* time), a member motions to table it. This motion to table must be seconded and approved by a majority vote of the board. Once a motion is tabled, consideration of and voting on the motion are indefinitely suspended.

3. *Motion to Postpone*

To postpone deliberation on a main motion until some *specified* time in the future, a member motions to postpone it. This motion must be seconded and approved by a majority vote of the board. After a main motion has been postponed, deliberation will continue at the specified time.

4. *Motion to Refer to Committee*

To refer a main motion to a board committee for further study, a member motions to refer it to committee. This motion must be seconded and approved by a majority vote of the board.

5. *Motion to Close Debate and Vote Immediately*

To end the debate about a main motion, a member motions to close debate and vote immediately. This motion must be seconded and approved by a majority vote of the board.

6. *Motion to Adjourn*

To adjourn a meeting, a member motions to adjourn. This motion must be seconded and approved by a majority vote of the board.

Rules for Voting

- **Voting does not commence until a motion has been made, seconded, and restated by the chair**
- **The chair restates the motion and asks for a vote for all in favor of a motion (those in favor answer, “Aye.”) and those opposed (“Nay”).**
- **A majority vote of the board (whether all members are present or not) is needed to carry a motion**
- **A tie vote means a motion is not carried (lost)**

HOW TO TAKE MEETING MINUTES

The minutes of an organization should contain a record of what is done and not what is said. Minutes therefore contain:

- 1. Date, time, and place of the meeting**
- 2. Whether it is a regular (usually monthly) or special meeting**
- 3. Name of the person presiding**
- 4. Name of the secretary**
- 5. Names of board members present**
- 6. Names of board members absent**
- 7. Names of any staff members present**
- 8. All main motions, whether adopted or rejected**
- 9. Names of persons making the motions; names of persons seconding is not required**
- 10. Points of order and appeals, whether sustained or lost**

Note: Withdrawn motions are not recorded.

KEY IDEA OF THE BROWN ACT

“All meetings of the legislative body of a local agency shall be open and public, and all persons shall be permitted to attend any meeting of the legislative body of a local agency, except as otherwise provided for in this [Act].”

WHAT IS AN *Ad Hoc* COMMITTEE?

An *ad hoc* committee is an assembly of less than a quorum of the board that meets on the spur of the moment to discuss an issue. Once the issue is resolved, the committee is immediately dissolved.

This applies when *ad hoc* committees have no continuing subject matter jurisdiction and do not have a meeting schedule fixed by formal action of the legislative body.

“Ad Hoc”:

- 1. Formed or used for specific or immediate problems or needs (*“ad hoc”* solutions);**
- 2. Fashioned from whatever is immediately available: improvised.**

WHAT IS A STANDING COMMITTEE?

A STANDING COMMITTEE IS A COMMITTEE OF THE LARGER LEGISLATIVE BODY THAT MEETS REGULARLY TO DISCUSS AND CRAFT ADVICE TO THE FULL BODY. WHEN PARTICULAR ISSUES ARE RESOLVED, A STANDING COMMITTEE, UNLIKE AN AD HOC COMMITTEE IS NOT DISSOLVED. IT CARRIES ON WITH OTHER BUSINESS.

WHAT CONSTITUTES A MEETING?

**A MEETING IS ANY GATHERING OF A
MAJORITY OF MEMBERS OF A DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS TO HEAR OR
DISCUSS ANY ITEM OF DISTRICT BUSINESS
OR POTENTIAL DISTRICT BUSINESS.**

WHAT DOES *NOT* CONSTITUTE A DISTRICT BOARD MEETING

1. The Social or Ceremonial Occasion exception

Does not have to be open and public even if a majority of the board is present as long as district business is not discussed by a majority of members.

2. The Seminar exception

A majority of board members may be present at a seminar without violating the Brown Act so long as it is open to the public and the public attends under the same terms as board members (pays the same fees, for example).

3. The community meeting exception

This type of meeting would also be exempt from the Brown Act if it met the same conditions as the seminar exception.

4. The other legislative body exception

A majority of board members may attend a meeting of another legislative body and not need to print and post agendas separately so long as it meets the same conditions as the seminar and community meeting exceptions. Business that pertains specifically to a resource conservation district may only be discussed if it has have been posted on the agenda of the other legislative body and the meeting must itself be open and public.

AGENDA AND PUBLIC NOTICE REQUIREMENTS

- 1. ONLY AGENDA ITEMS MAY BE DISCUSSED AT A PUBLIC MEETING**
- 2. AGENDAS MUST BE POSTED IN A PLACE “FREELY ACCESSIBLE” TO THE PUBLIC**
- 3. AGENDAS FOR REGULAR (MONTHLY) BOARD MEETINGS MUST BE POSTED AND SENT OUT 72 HOURS BEFORE THE SCHEDULED MEETING TIME**
- 4. AGENDAS FOR SPECIAL BOARD MEETINGS MUST BE POSTED AND SENT OUT 24 HOURS BEFORE THE SCHEDULED MEETING TIME**
- 5. EACH MEMBER OF THE BOARD MUST RECEIVE WRITTEN NOTICE OF THE MEETINGS, UNLESS THEY HAVE PERSONALLY WAIVED THIS REQUIREMENT**
- 6. MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS MAY REQUEST NOTICES OF SPECIAL BOARD MEETINGS**

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GUIDELINES

- **Any member of the public may attend.**
- **No special requirements may be imposed on attendance, such as:**
 - Mandatory Registration of Names**
 - Mandatory Questionnaire Completion**
 - Any Other Mandatory Documents**

Such forms or questionnaires or registration of names may be solicited so long as any compliance is completely voluntary on the part of attendees.

- **Meeting facilities must be accessible by all and carry no explicit or implicit messages to discourage attendance by anyone because of race, creed, ethnic origin, or religion. Meetings must be accessible by people with handicaps.**
- **No fees or special purchases must be required to attend.**
- **A meeting is either fully open or fully closed (as long as it meets the requirements of a closed session). There can be no “semi” open meetings to admit some members of the public and not others.**
- **Members of the public willfully disrupting the proceedings may be removed. If disturbances continue, the meeting may be cleared except for members of the press (unless they were involved in the disturbance).**
- **Open public meetings may be audiotaped, videotaped, recorded, or filmed so long as such methods do not persistently disrupt the proceedings.**
- **The public must be given an opportunity to comment on agenda items before or during their discussion.**
- **Public discussion time of agenda items may be limited to a reasonable amount of time by the board.**
- **Once an item has been publicly discussed as an agenda item the board is not required to hear further comment.**

CLOSED SESSIONS

CLOSED SESSION *MAY* BE HELD UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES:

- **DURING PERSONNEL EVALUATIONS**
 - **DURING LABOR NEGOTIATIONS**
 - **AS A RESULT OF PENDING LITIGATION AND TO DISCUSS SUCH LITIGATION**
 - **DURING REAL ESTATE NEGOTIATIONS**
-

CLOSED SESSION *MAY NOT* BE HELD UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES:

- **DUE TO POLITICALLY SENSITIVE SUBJECT MATTER**
-

NOTE: CLOSED SESSIONS MUST BE POSTED IN ADVANCE LIKE ANY SPECIAL BOARD MEETING

- **AN AGENDA WITH DESCRIPTIONS OF ITEMS MUST BE POSTED**
 - **PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS MUST BE HEARD PRIOR TO THE CLOSED SESSION**
-

IN ADDITION: RESULTS (DECISIONS OR ACTIONS) OF A CLOSED SESSION MUST BE IMMEDIATELY AND PUBLICLY ANNOUNCED ONCE THE CLOSED SESSION IS CONCLUDED.

HOW TO HOLD EFFECTIVE MEETINGS: WORKSHOP AGENDA

- I. Opening: Welcome and Introductions**
- II. Introduction: Why Have a Meeting?**
- III. Purposes of Meetings**
- IV. Audience Issues**
- V. Goal Setting/Outcomes**
- VI. Physical Setup of Meetings**
- VII. Types of Meeting Activities**
- VII. Forming an Agenda**
- VIII. Facilitating Meetings**
- IX. Closure**

HOW TO HOLD EFFECTIVE MEETINGS: WORKSHOP OUTLINE

At the close of the workshop, participants will be able to:

- Name several purposes of meetings
- Identify potential audiences for meetings
- Create goals and outcomes for meetings
- List several types of meeting activities
- Create an agenda that reflects goals and objectives
- Name key points about meeting facilitation
- Facilitate a short portion of a meeting to the group

I. Opening: Welcome and Introductions

Main Ideas: The whole point of an effective meeting would be lost if the facilitator didn't put into practice some of the core ideas of effective meeting training from the very beginning. One of these ideas is that for a meeting to be effective participants must feel comfortable participating in order for the full benefit of a meeting to be gained. The opening portion of the workshop, then, seeks to get participants relaxed and ready to fully participate in the days' activities.

Activity (Whole Group): The facilitator introduces him/herself and welcomes participants to the meeting. S/he then says that people in the group will be interacting closely during the day and need a chance to get to know one another. A short warm-up activity is followed by the group. Introductions of individual meeting participants can be part of the warm-up activity or part of an informal introductions section immediately following. The goal of this first part of the meeting is, however, to get participants to relax and to see themselves as part of a team. The facilitator thus establishes a friendly, non-competitive and collaborative working environment at the very outset of the meeting.

II. Introduction: Why have a Meeting?

Main Ideas: Webster's Dictionary defines a meeting as: "an assembly or gathering of people, especially to discuss or decide on matters."

We have all attended meetings that didn't seem to have a definite purpose or direction. These meetings are usually ineffective. Meetings should be held with a specific goal or end result in mind that is clearly understood before the meeting takes place.

Meetings offer an alternative to individual planning and decision making. They provide an environment where people can discuss conservation programs and issues with friends, neighbors, and conservation professionals. By getting together and sharing concepts and resources, group members increase the effectiveness of any one individual. The results are better decisions, products or services. Groups often have the courage to make risky decisions that differ from past traditions. They bring about change.

Activity (Whole Group): In addition to summarizing the main ideas presented above, the facilitator also presents the characteristic of an effective group meeting using the handout, "Characteristics of an Effective Meeting."

The facilitator then distributes two handouts: 1. Goal of the Effective Meetings Workshop and 2. Effective Meeting Workshop Agenda, and s/he solicits group input and discussion on both (changes to the agenda as suggested by the group can be made).

S/he then asks, "Do you agree with the goal of the workshop?" "Do the scheduled agenda items seem to provide a route for reaching that goal?"

Once participants agree with the goals and proposed agenda the facilitator moves the meeting on to the next item.

III. Purposes of Meetings

Main Ideas: Meetings may be all alike in that they should accomplish something, but they are not all alike in the nature of what they should accomplish. There are many reasons for having a meeting. Here are a few related to resource conservation (Use handout, Meeting Purposes). Participants say what they think the purpose of the present meeting is. Facilitator states that this may seem obvious, but it is a first step in creating a meeting because the purpose will clearly affect every other action you undertake when planning a meeting.

Activity #1 (Whole Group): Find three other people to work with in a small group for the remainder of the day. The facilitator explains that for the day's workshop participants will create a meeting from start to finish in collaboration with a few others. The Facilitator asks the whole group to divide itself up into groups of approximately four people and assemble in their small groups for the next activity.

Activity #2 (Small Group): The first small group assignment, which sets the stage for what the groups will do for the rest of the day, is to identify a purpose and a topic to create a mock meeting for. They should keep in mind the purposes presented above.

Activity #3 (Whole Group): The whole group reconvenes and a spokesperson for each small group shares the group's ideas for a meeting topic and purpose. The facilitator guides the group in commenting on (and critiquing) each small group's idea. Small groups revise their initial ideas as needed with input from the whole group.

IV. Audience Issues

Main Ideas: In order to get an idea of what your meeting will include you need to consider who is likely to attend it. This of course depends on its purpose. Some meetings will have a diverse audience and include board and staff members, other resource conservation professionals, government agency officials, and members of the public. Of course, any meeting that you call that will include a

majority of board members must by law be open to the public, with a few exceptions (see information on the Brown Act in Volume I, Step 2).

Regular and special board meetings, strategic planning meetings, and other public meetings, such as informational workshops and meetings to receive public input on projects or publications, will likely have a fairly diverse audience.

On the other hand, training workshops, which don't necessarily have to be open to the public, may be, depending on the topic, intentionally limited to only conservation professionals (if the topic is technical), or target specific age children (if it is an educational workshop meant to fit a specified grade level).

What is important when preparing for your audience is knowing what to expect from the group in terms of their prior knowledge of the subject at hand, ability to read, speak, or even sit for long periods of time (an unreasonable demand for many age groups). You will need to accommodate the needs of your audience in terms of activities planned, level of knowledge, physical needs, attention span, and more.

Activity #1 (Whole Group) The facilitator shows the handout, "Audience Issues," and explains the main ideas presented above.

Activity #2 (Small Group): The small groups reconvene and discuss the potential audience for their meeting or workshop. They list likely audience members and try to identify which of the issues previously presented pertain to their meeting.

V. Goal Setting/Expected Outcomes

Main Ideas: Before you schedule a meeting, before you invite participants, or even before you create an agenda or outline possible meeting activities--you should be very clear about what you want your meeting to accomplish. A clear set of goals is the core around which you will build the meeting. Some examples of meeting goals are as follows:

- As a group we will decide on the best strategy for educating the public about riparian health issues.
- By the end of the meeting I should have board approval for my proposal or a clear idea about how I should modify it to gain their approval.
- I hope to recruit at least five volunteers to help with the project.

There are potentially thousands of possible goals to have for a meeting, and a single meeting may have more than one goal. To keep a meeting focused, however, it is best to limit the number of goals, and, if possible, to group these goals so that they are related. If you have too many goals, or unrelated goals, it might be better to hold two or more meetings so that you can keep each meeting focused and generate clear outcomes in line with your goals.

Activity #1 (Whole Group): Using the handout, "Goals for Meetings," explain the main ideas surrounding goal setting with participants.

Activity #2 (Small Group): Small groups meet again to establish goals for their meeting or workshop. They brainstorm among themselves and record a few goals to share with the whole group.

Activity #3 (Whole Group): Small groups designate a speaker and share their goals with the whole group. The facilitator helps the assembly provide constructive advice to each small group.

VI. Physical Setup of Meetings

Main Ideas: In our concern to have the ideas and activities for a meeting planned we may not take the time to consider what type of facility or other special equipment is needed. As obvious as these questions may seem, they are often overlooked in our rush to prepare for meetings. Make sure you also pay as much attention to details as you do to goals and objectives when planning your meeting.

Activity #1 (Whole Group): Facilitator discusses the main ideas above and offers suggestions for things to think about using the handout, “Physical Setup of Meetings.”

Activity #2 (Small Group): small groups meet to brainstorm and discuss the physical needs of their meeting or workshop as applicable. They record these ideas for use later in the workshop.

VII. Types of Meeting Activities

Main Ideas: All too often workshops and meetings are presented *by* speakers to audiences. Workshop presenters “speak” and audience members “listen.” Many may not have stopped to ask if this always needs to be the case. This approach to workshops and meetings is usually adopted by default: it is the approach people are used to, so it is the one they use when they plan a workshop or meeting. This is unfortunate because this approach is one of the least productive, at least in terms of participant involvement.

The lecture format is very good for formal situations, when a keynote speaker speaks before a large assembly at a conference, for example. However, many other meetings lend themselves to a more informal atmosphere. When you want people to participate, an informal atmosphere works best.

People learn by doing. If your meeting is a workshop, it is best to get people involved, participating—destroy that artificial dividing line between speaker and audience as soon as possible. If your meeting is not meant to teach—it is not a training workshop, for instance—then it may likely be intended to get input or advice from the audience. In any event, you want to get your “audience” actively involved.

Activity #1 (Whole Group): The facilitator presents the following ideas:

“In the following brief presentation of ideas I’m going to be preaching what I should be practicing, but I want you to bear with me for a few minutes while I give you some ideas worth acting on.”

Lecturing—speaking to an audience for an extended period of time—is one of the most over-used approaches to imparting information.

This “lecture” approach to conveying information has several advantages: it is efficient in terms of how much information can be conveyed, it demands very little from an audience, and it is very predictable in terms of outcome—that is, you can be very sure how much information you will “deliver” to an audience by speaking.

On the other hand, all of these “advantages” have hidden costs. A lecture may be able to deliver a large amount of information in a short time and therefore seem to be more efficient, but in reality, people do not tend to learn well by passively listening. Educational research has shown that people retain very little (around 20%) of what they hear in lectures. So even though a large amount of information has been “delivered” in a lecture, very little has been received in all likelihood. This is because people need to do something while they learn: talk, take notes, answer questions, solve problems, etc. People are not only more likely to understand something when they immediately get a chance to use it in some way, they are more likely to retain it and feel excited about having learned it.

The rule is this:

Give some information and then let participants wrestle with it in some way.

Delivering small amounts of “lecture” may be a good way to get people started on learning—provide them with information and directions, for instance. But the learning benefits of this approach sharply fall off after 15 or 20 minutes. At this point it is best to get people involved, get them to “wrestle” with what you have just told them.

Here are some activities to help wrestle with your material:

- Facilitated Discussion, which can take the form of Question and Answer Sessions (either speaker to audience or audience to speaker--or both)
- Whole group brainstorming (The “Speaker” is merely a facilitator and perhaps recorder of ideas)
- Group problem solving, including:
 - ❖ Discussing
 - ❖ Outlining
 - ❖ Writing
 - ❖ Creating a product or solution
 - ❖ Presenting solutions to the whole group

The facilitator can present these ideas to the whole group using the handout, “Types of Meeting/Workshop Activities.” Note that “lecturing” is one strategy for

meetings and workshops and in fact an effective one—if used sparingly. It was used here to provide this information. But as stated, this only works if people are given a chance to immediately use this information; otherwise it is only “inert” information and quickly forgotten.”

Activity #2 (Small Group): Facilitator asks small groups to meet to outline the ideas and activities of their workshop or meeting. What kinds of ideas do you want to discuss or convey? What activities are best suited to them? Small groups brainstorm and write their ideas to share with the group.

Activity #3 (Whole Group): Small groups share one “activity” idea with the group and share whether they had trouble finding ways other than lecture to present issues and ideas. Did they come across ideas that would *best* be handled with a lecture format? Do others agree?

VIII. Forming an Agenda

Main Ideas: Once you have identified topics and activities for your meeting, you are close to creating an agenda. Chairs of formal meetings (such as a public meeting of the city council or the RCD board of directors) typically follow the Parliamentary Procedures presented in the workshop, “How to Hold Legal Meetings.” In these cases, the agenda generally follows the format presented there.

There is considerably more freedom, however, in other types of meetings, including workshops and other informational meetings and workshops. Here the flow of agenda items follows the sequence of ideas of the major topic or topics you are presenting, and your agenda design will logically follow this flow of ideas and activities.

A few tips: Keep individual agenda items (topics or activities) to no more than one –to-two hour time blocks. Schedule short breaks between these longer agenda items. People need a chance to stretch, relax, get water and coffee and food. Keeping people motivated to participate often entails giving them freedom to be unmotivated for a while. After a break, people are often more excited about the work at hand. It is important, however, to set boundaries for break times: give participants a clear time frame for the break and tell them the session will resume promptly at a certain time.

Don’t be afraid to put the words, “Break” and “Lunch Break” on the agenda. People relax when they see that their need for breaks has been considered and they know when they will occur. Also, it is a good idea to put time frames for each agenda item to let people know the anticipated time that will be spent on each one. This can be done by listing the actual clock time for each activity on the agenda. (See the Sample Agenda for an Informal Meeting in the “workshop materials” section.)

Activity #1 (Whole Group). The facilitator distributes the handout, “Sample Agenda for an Informal Meeting” to the group and asks participants to identify some features of the agenda (“What do you notice about this agenda?”). A question and answer approach can be used to draw out of participants the ideas

presented above under “Main Ideas” (For example: Flow of ideas and activities, length of activities, frequency of breaks, etc.).

Activity #2 (Small Group): Individual small groups re-convene to collaborate on an agenda for their planned meeting.

Activity #3 (Whole Group): Small groups share their meeting agendas with the group. Group reviews each agenda according to the following criteria in the handout, “Evaluating Agendas.”

X. Facilitating Meetings

Major Ideas: The role of the facilitator is many faceted. The facilitator needs above all to act as the voice of reason and the mediator should disputes arise, but his/her role is also to motivate participants to do their best work for the group. It is the work of the group that counts, not whether someone is individually right or wrong. The facilitator establishes a cooperative atmosphere and one that is safe so that all may participate. The facilitator acts as “gatekeeper” of the discussion, not the authority. The facilitator avoids dominating the proceedings but strives to let the *whole group* dominate by becoming a cooperative unit.

Activity #1 (Whole Group): Facilitator distributes and presents ideas in the following handouts:

- ❖ The Facilitator’s Role
- ❖ Asking Questions Effectively
- ❖ Answering Questions Effectively
- ❖ Concluding Discussions
- ❖ Signs of Trouble
- ❖ Navigating Through Troubled Waters
- ❖ Key Points

Activity #2 (Small Group): Each small group reconvenes to chose a small portion of their planned meeting workshop to facilitate with the whole group. They create a strategy so that each small group member may take a portion to step in and facilitate. Every group member should have a chance to act as facilitator with the whole group. Flip charts should be made available for small groups to display their planned agenda and create any other displays they might need for their “workshop” or “meeting.”

Activity #3 (Whole Group): Each small group presents a portion of their planned workshop or meeting to the whole group, allowing each small group member a turn to facilitate discussion. The whole group should be cautioned to offer only positive feedback at the conclusion of each group’s presentation. Alternatively, the facilitator can ask the whole group to offer three positive observations on each group’s performance and limit criticism to one comment. Or, if groups seem able to handle a more critical approach, use the Facilitator Evaluation Criteria handout to enable the whole group to critique each small group’s work.

X. Closure

Activity #1 (Whole Group): Facilitator distributes two copies of the handout, “Effective Meeting Checklist” to each participant (one copy is to keep and the other to write on now). Facilitator also displays the checklist on an overhead for the group. As a whole, the group goes through the checklist to determine if the present workshop took into consideration all of the points made on the checklist. It is discussed as a group.

Activity #2 (Individual): Facilitator distributes copies of the Workshop Evaluation Form (see the Appendix to Volume II) to each participant. Participants are asked to honestly evaluate the workshop. They are encouraged to include their names and addresses but told to leave them off if they feel they cannot give frank responses. Honest responses are the most important element here.

HOW TO HOLD EFFECTIVE MEETINGS: WORKSHOP MATERIALS

1. Characteristics of an Effective Meeting
2. Goal of the Effective Meetings Workshop
3. How to Hold Effective Meetings: Workshop Agenda
4. Common Meeting Purposes
5. Audience Issues
6. Forming Goals for Meetings
7. Physical Setup of Meetings
8. Types of Meeting/Workshop Activities
9. Sample Agenda for an Informal Meeting
10. Evaluating Agendas
11. The Facilitator's Role
12. Asking Questions Effectively
13. Answering Questions Effectively
14. Concluding Discussions
15. Signs of Trouble
16. Navigating Through Troubled Waters
17. Key Points
18. Facilitator Evaluation Criteria
19. Effective Meeting Checklist

CHARACTERISTICS OF AN EFFECTIVE MEETING

- **The meeting follows an agenda and has a specific goal or objective**
- **The atmosphere is informal, comfortable and relaxed**
- **Discussions are extensive yet stay on track. Everyone participates**
- **Everyone understands and accepts the task or objective of the group**
- **The members listen to each other. Every idea is given a hearing. People are not afraid to share creative thoughts even if they seem fairly extreme. Brainstorming is encouraged when appropriate.**
- **Disagreements are not suppressed by the facilitator or over-ridden by premature group action.**
- **Most agreements are reached by a consensus in which it is clear that everyone accepts the group's decision. The need for formal voting is minimized; however, the group does not accept a simple majority as a proper basis for action.**
- **Criticism is frequent, frank, and without personal attack, either open or hidden.**
- **When action items are identified, clear, specific assignments are given and accepted.**
- **Ideally, the facilitator of the group does not dominate meetings, but keeps them on track and on time. Leadership shifts from time to time, depending upon the circumstances. There is little evidence of a struggle for power. The issue is not who controls, but that the goals of the meeting are met.**

GOAL OF THE EFFECTIVE MEETINGS WORKSHOP

**By the end of the workshop
participants will have mastered
the ideas and skills needed to
create and facilitate effective
meetings.**

**Participants will become more
comfortable with and develop
more effective meeting
participation skills.**

HOW TO HOLD EFFECTIVE MEETINGS: WORKSHOP AGENDA

- I. Opening: Welcome and Introductions**
- II. Introduction: Why Have a Meeting?**
- III. Purposes of Meetings**
- IV. Audience Issues**
- V. Goal Setting/Outcomes**
- VI. Physical Setup of Meetings**
- VII. Types of Activities**
- VIII. Forming an Agenda**
- IX. Facilitating Meetings**
- X. Closure**

COMMON MEETING PURPOSES

- **Legislative Body Meeting
(i.e., monthly board meeting)**
- **Planning Meeting**
- **Problem Solving Meeting**
- **Public Meeting to Get Input on
Plan, Report, etc.**
- **Public Informational Meeting**
- **Training Workshop**

AUDIENCE ISSUES

- **Prerequisite Knowledge or Skill Level**
- **Potentially Hostile or Disruptive**
- **How many?**
- **“Open and Public” or “Invitational”**
- **Provision for ordinary or any special physical needs**
- **Social “comfort level”**
- **Trust**

GOALS FOR MEETINGS

- 1. Be able to state clearly what you hope to accomplish in your meeting.**
- 2. Identify only one or a few goals. Do not set too many goals, especially if they are unrelated.**
- 3. Goals should be “measurable,” that is, you should be able to know whether you have reached your goal or not.**

For example, your goal is “By the end of the meeting we will have identified potential volunteers for the project.” How will you know if you’ve reached your goal or not?

Better: “By the end of the meeting we will have recruited five volunteers for the project who have made specific commitments to assist us.”

- 4. Avoid setting unrealistic goals.**

Goals such as, by the end of the meeting all participants will be able to explain all aspects of riparian zones and ecosystem interactions within them. Better:

Participants will be able to name the principle ecosystem “players” in a riparian zone and provide one example for each for how it contributes to the health of the system.

- 5. Gear the actions of the workshop or meeting toward reaching clearly defined goals.**

Physical Setup of Meetings

Meeting Facility

Ask yourself the following questions about the planned meeting facility:

- Is the planned meeting place close to most participants?
- Is there adequate space, heat, air, lighting?
- Are there enough chairs?
- Is there adequate parking, bathroom facilities, water, food, beverages?
- Is this meeting place accessible to all who might wish to attend?
- Will they be able to find it?

Special Equipment

Will I need any special equipment such as:

- Flip charts (Do I have enough paper and felt-tip pens?)
- Overhead projectors (Is the electrical outlet located close enough to the projection screen or surface?)
- Slide projectors (Are my slide trays ready? Is the prepared slide tray compatible with the projector? Do I have an extra projector bulb ready if the old one burns out suddenly? Is there an adequate viewing surface such as a screen or blank wall?)
- Video Cassette Player (Is the video rewound? Do I know how to operate it? Are there electrical outlets located where I want to show the video? Is glare a problem for viewers?)
- Any other special equipment

TYPES OF MEETING/WORKSHOP ACTIVITIES

1. Lecture (No Visual Aids)

Formal

2. Lecture with Visual Aids and Other Media

3. Facilitated Discussion, including:

- **Group Brainstorming**
- **Question and Answer Sessions**
- **Checks for Understanding**

4. Small Group Problem Solving, including:

- **Discussing**
- **Outlining**
- **Writing**
- **Creating a solution or product**
- **Preparing an oral presentation to the Whole Group**

Informal

SAMPLE AGENDA FOR AN INFORMAL MEETING: RIPARIAN ECOSYSTEMS WORKSHOP

**Welcome and Introductions
(10 Minutes)**

**Warm-up Activity:
(10 Minutes)**

**Video Excerpt and Discussion: Riparian Zones at the Crossroads
(20 Minutes)**

**Group Brainstorming: Identify Ecosystem Elements and Interactions
(30 Minutes)**

(Break 15 Minutes)

**Issue Groups: Identification of Ecosystem Element Core Functions
(30 Minutes)**

**Ecosystem Teams: Share Individual Points of View
(30 Minutes)**

**Ecosystem Teams: Ecosystem Interactions Brainstorming Revisited
(15 Minutes)**

(Lunch Break 60 Minutes)

**Ecosystem Teams: Draft Inter-Relationship Model
(75 Minutes)**

(Break)

**Ecosystem Teams Share Model with Whole Group
(60 Minutes)**

**Facilitated Discussion: Creation of a Whole-Group Meta-Model
(45 Minutes)**

**Closure
(15 Minutes)**

Total Workshop Time, Including Breaks: Approximately 7 Hours

EVALUATING AGENDAS

Does the meeting/workshop seem “Do-able”?

Does the meeting/workshop seem “Do-able” in the time allotted?

Does the flow of ideas/activities make sense?

Are individual agenda items kept to maximum 1-2 hour blocks?

Are provisions for breaks and a lunch break available?

Does the meeting/workshop lead to a tangible product or measurable outcome?

THE FACILITATOR'S ROLE

- **Establish energetic atmosphere by moving around and toward audience and varying voice tone, speed, and pitch**
- **Help Establish and Clearly State Goals of the Meeting/Workshop for the Group**
- **Present the Agenda to the Group**
- **Act as Gatekeeper for the Agenda**
- **Facilitate (Not Dominate) Discussion**
- **Motivate Participants to Act**
- **Establish Positive Safe, Risk-Free Environment**
- **Mediate Disputes by Taking Neutral Position**
- **Promote Universal Participation**
- **Offer Encouragement**
- **Keep Individuals and Groups Focused on Tasks**
- **Define and Redefine Nature of Products/Outcomes for the Meeting**

ASKING QUESTIONS EFFECTIVELY

- 1. Plan your Question.**
- 2. Know the Purpose of the Question:**
 - **To get information**
 - **To get opinions**
- 3. Relate questions to audience/individual frames of reference.**
- 4. Move from general to specific questions.**
- 5. Be ready with follow-up questions.**
- 6. Use one question at a time. Keep questions short and clear.**
- 7. Make logical transitions between questions.**
- 8. Direct most questions to the group; fewer to individuals.**
- 9. Allow time for answers. Giving participants time to formulate responses is crucial.**
- 10. Avoid interrogation.**
- 11. Use mostly open-ended questions.**
- 12. Clarify and paraphrase frequently.**
- 13. Summarize and draw conclusions.**

ANSWERING QUESTIONS EFFECTIVELY

- **Listen for content and emotion (they may be different)**
- **Search for hidden meanings**
- **Acknowledge the questions through paraphrasing, clarification**
- **Show appreciation for participation**
- **Turn to the group for response**
- **If needed, provide a response yourself**
- **Avoid non response, disapproval, diverting the question, tangents, combining questions**
- **Give an answer that is complete and concise**
- **Be prepared with proof, examples, or clarification**

CONCLUDING DISCUSSIONS

A DECISION, AN ISSUE, A CONSIDERATION, OR A CONSENSUS HAS BEEN REACHED WHEN:

- **A conclusion is agreed upon**
- **There insufficient information or authority to finalize a decision**
- **The discussion has wandered**

THEN:

- **Test that participants are in agreement**
- **Ensure that decisions are consistent with earlier decisions**
- **Summarize the results**
- **Confirm conclusions**

SIGNS OF TROUBLE

- **Too many disagreements**
- **Digging in**
- **Ignoring other ideas**
- **Some participants consistently dominating, or not participating**

NAVIGATING THROUGH TROUBLED WATERS

- **Be understanding and tactful, serve as a model of good behavior**
- **Encourage quiet members to get involved**
- **Help verbose participants to be succinct**
- **Mediate conflicts to reach win/win solutions**
- **Appeal to participants' sense of cooperation**
- **Use humor, awards, stories, self-directed humor to establish an open atmosphere**
- **Approach difficult participants and make eye contact; use open-palm gestures and non-combative questioning: make sure the participant feels like his/her point has been heard by summarizing it.**

Key Points

- **Start and Stop on Time**
- **Use People's Names**
- **Facilitator is an equal, not an authority**
- **Make small sub groups as diverse as possible—mix up the membership**
- **Model what you expect**
- **Intervene but don't intrude in small group work**
- **Be watchful and attentive**
- **Have fun!**

FACILITATOR EVALUATION CRITERIA

- 1. What type of activity was facilitated (e.g., whole group discussion, informative presentation, small group problem solving)?**
- 2. Did facilitator(s) follow guidelines presented earlier?**
- 3. Is it clear how the presented activity will lead to expected outcomes?**
- 4. Was the activity logically related to other items on the group's agenda?**
- 5. What were the participants' roles during the activity (passive listening, responding, finding solutions, interacting with others, presenting to the group)?**

EFFECTIVE MEETING CHECKLIST

BEFORE: PLANNING THE MEETING

- ☐ What is the *purpose* of the meeting?
- ☐ Who will participate? (Who is the *audience*?)
- ☐ Who should *facilitate* the meeting?
- ☐ What is the *goal* of the meeting?
- ☐ *Where* should the meeting be?
- ☐ Does the meeting need any *special equipment* (overhead projectors, tables, etc)?
- ☐ What kinds of *activities* should the meeting include?
- ☐ What *outcomes* do I want for the meeting?
- ☐ What should I include on the *agenda*?
- ☐ Agenda *sent* to all who will participate?
- ☐ Input solicited from agenda recipients?
- ☐ Have I planned the sequence of ideas/activities thoroughly and do they lead naturally to my desired outcomes?

☐ **DURING: WHAT TO DO DURING THE MEETING**

- ☐ Have I started the meeting on time?
- ☐ Have the attendees Introduced themselves?
- ☐ Have I initiated a short warm-up activity to "break the ice"
- ☐ Have I explained housekeeping: breaks, lunch, restrooms, refreshments, etc.?
- ☐ Have all participants reviewed and accepted the agenda?
- ☐ Have I involved all participants?
- ☐ Have I stuck to the agenda?
- ☐ Have I accurately captured questions and comments?
- ☐ Have we firmed up decisions, identified actions and people to accomplish them?
- ☐ Have we set a next meeting date if needed?
- ☐ Have I reflected on meeting processes and outcomes: did the meeting achieve desired outcomes? Did participants feel positively engaged in the meeting?

AFTER: WHAT TO DO AFTER THE MEETING

- ☐ Have I prepared minutes and sent them to participants?
- ☐ Have I followed up with people identified for assignments: Are they making progress? Will they meet deadlines? Do they need assistance? What can I do to help people follow through ?

**MATERIALS TO ACCOMPANY STEP 3:
HOW TO
PLAN STRATEGICALLY**

STRATEGIC PLANNING WORKSHOP OVERVIEW

- I. Introductions and Expectations
(30 Minutes)**
 - II. District Powers, Authorities, Roles, and Responsibilities
(15 Minutes)**
 - III. Mission Statement Development I
(45 Minutes)**

(Break 15 Minutes)
 - IV. Identification of Resource Issues and District Needs
(75 Minutes)**

(Lunch Break 60 Minutes)
 - V. Establishing Goals and Objectives
(90 Minutes)**

(Break 15 Minutes)
 - VI. Multi-year Timeline: Identifying Actions, Personnel, and Resources Needed
(45 Minutes)**
 - VII. Mission Statement Development II
(15 Minutes)**
 - VIII. Closure
(15 Minutes)**
- Total Workshop Time Including Lunch and Breaks:
(7 Hours)**

STRATEGIC PLANNING: WORKSHOP OUTLINE

Objectives:

At the close of the strategic planning workshop the planning team shall have:

- Created a district mission statement
- Identified key resource issues and needs within the district
- Identify district capacity goals for the planning period
- Prioritized resource issues and needs
- Established long-term conservation goals
- Crafted objectives for reaching long-term goals
- Identified actions necessary to reach objectives
- Identified personnel needed to undertake actions
- Identified materials and other resources needed to undertake actions
- Created a multi-year timeline on which to base annual plans

A. Introduction: *Expectations for the Workshop and Introduction of Participants*

(30 Minutes)

Major Ideas: The purpose of strategic planning is to create a unified, partnership approach to organizational planning, and to identify priorities so that an organization can use its resources efficiently. The opening segment familiarizes participants with these goals of strategic planning, provides them an overview of the process, and gives them a chance to get to know one another.

Activity #1 (Whole Group): Introductions

The participants on your strategic planning team may not all know one another. During the opening segment, provide a chance for them to introduce themselves to the group and tell whom they represent and what their expectations, if any, for the session might be.

Activity #2 (Whole Group): Expectations

After introductions, spend a few moments presenting *your* expectations for the strategic planning session and a brief overview of the day's events. By doing so you will help participants feel comfortable with their roles as part of the group. You also might present to the group the expectations Division 9 has for strategic planning by outlining briefly its provisions for long-range and annual plans (see handouts, "Long-range Plans in Division 9" and "Annual Plans in Division 9").

Activity #3 (Whole Group) : Warm-Up Activity

If you wish to "break the ice" and establish a friendly collaborative environment for the session, a short warm-up activity might be a good way to transform the loosely assembled participants into a unified team.

Handouts:

1. Conservation District Strategic Planning Work Session Design
2. Long Range Plans in Division 9
3. Annual Plans in Division 9

B. District Powers, Authorities, Roles, and Responsibilities**(15 Minutes)**

Major Ideas: All members of the strategic planning team may not be familiar with the nature of resource conservation districts. Even if all participants *are* familiar with the roles and responsibilities of districts, it is a good idea to refresh their memories. It is not necessary to go into great detail about the provisions of Division 9 in this section, but a brief overview of district functions will set the stage for the events to follow in the strategic planning session (see handout, “Powers, Authorities, Roles, Responsibilities”).

Activity (Whole Group): Facilitator sets the stage for the rest of the workshop by providing an overview of Division 9 concerning resource conservation districts to the group using the two handouts provided.

Handouts:

1. *The Function of a Resource Conservation District*
2. *Powers/Authorities of California Resource Conservation Districts*

C. Mission Statement Development I**(45 Minutes)**

Major Ideas: A mission statement is the umbrella under which all organizational activities take place. It defines the work of an organization, in this case a resource conservation district, at its broadest level. Every activity your district engages in should fit comfortably within the bounds of a district’s mission as defined in its mission statement.

Activity #1 (Whole Group): The facilitator presents the following information to the whole group.

An effective Mission Statement includes several pieces of information: it tells the name of the organization, what it seeks to achieve, how the organization proposes to achieve this, and, perhaps, who will benefit.

Although this sounds like a lot of information to pack into one short statement, it is possible to write mission statements that address all of these functions, are broad enough to cover all the potential activities of a district, yet are brief—only one or two sentences long.

A sample Mission Statement will underscore these ideas:

The Oregon State University Extension Service educates Oregonians by delivering research-based, objective information to help them solve problems, develop leadership, and manage resources wisely.

To put it simply, a mission statement states *who* will be the actor, *what* the actor will do, to *whom* it will render action, and *how* the action will be accomplished. These four pieces form the components of an effective mission statement.

Take another look at the sample mission statement above in light of this *who, what, whom, and how* analysis:

*The Oregon State University Extension Service **(Who)** educates Oregonians **(Whom)** by delivering research-based, objective information **(How)** to help them solve problems, develop leadership, and manage resources wisely **(What)**.*

Given this schematic of an effective mission statement, it is possible to craft an example that might serve a hypothetical resource conservation district:

*The Friendly Resource Conservation District **(Who)** protects and enhances the natural resources of Friendly County **(What)** through its technical, educational, and administrative expertise **(How)** to benefit the landowners, recreationists, plants, and wildlife of Friendly County **(Whom)**.*

Despite its simplicity and clarity a mission statement may be difficult to produce on first attempt. The strategic planning workshop outlined here thus includes two sections on mission statement development, one at the beginning of the session and one at the end. Experience has shown that participants may be much more aware of the range of issues and how to address them at the end of the planning process and be more able to write an effective mission statement after looking at potential resource issues in greater depth during the course of the strategic planning session.

Activity #2 (Whole Group): Draft a Working Mission Statement.

After presenting the main components of a mission statement and a few examples, have each participant write a sample mission statement. Give participants ten minutes to do so, and then ask for volunteers to share their statements. Have an assistant write each statement on a flip chart. After five or six examples are recorded, note the commonalities between the statements and try to synthesize them into one collaborative mission statement.

It is vital that the group reach consensus on a mission statement, so it is important to take the time to listen to objections, make additions or corrections, or add more examples to the first list. It is *not* vital, however, that the group reaches consensus *at this point in the session*. If consensus is not reached at this stage of the session, move on to the next section and revisit mission statement development at the end of the session.

Handouts:

1. *Mission Statement Formation*
2. *Sample Mission Statements*

D. Identification of Resource Issues and District Needs**(75 Minutes)**

Major Ideas: As stated above, Division 9 sees identification of all potential natural resource problems or issues as central to the strategic planning process. It is also important to identify potential needs your district might have in order to perform identified resource conservation work over the next five years.

Activity #1 (Whole Group): Identifying Geographical Areas of Concern

To provide a backdrop to the coming discussion of key resource conservation issues in the district, display a map of the district (large enough to be viewed comfortably by all) and facilitate a discussion on key areas of concern within the district for resource conservation. Highlight several areas of greatest concern in the district. Note any overlap with concerns or projects of other groups and agencies. If possible, use transparent overlays to show conservation district boundaries and the boundaries of other agencies or groups (such as a fire district, air quality district, wildlife management area, watershed boundary, etc.). Generate a discussion on the areas of concern, soliciting input from the various perspectives other agencies might bring to the discussion (for example, plans for prescribed burns by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection in order to reduce fuel loading in a forested area might conflict with air quality goals for the area).

Activity #2 (Whole Group): Identifying Key Resource Issues

With the discussion of geographic areas of concern for resource conservation as a backdrop, lead the group in a brainstorming session to generate key issues in resource conservation in the district. Prepare the group for the kind of ideas you are hoping to generate later in the session by providing a few examples from the handout, "Examples of Critical Resource Conservation Issues."

Starting with natural resources issues as a topic, facilitate a brainstorming session with the whole group to generate a list of critical resource issues in the district. As is true with brainstorming on any topic, tell participants that all suggestions are welcome, there are no wrong or ridiculous ideas, and there shall be no comment or judgement on any suggestion (See the handout, "Rules for Brainstorming" to set the stage for this part of the workshop). All ideas are recorded on a flip chart or large sheet of paper. Continue to generate ideas until no new ideas can be suggested (new ideas may come up in the next activity at which time they can be added).

Next, combine any similar or overlapping ideas. Once issues and ideas have been identified and combined where they are similar, clearly re-write the list of issues on a new sheet of chart paper.

Activity #3 (Whole Group): Prioritize Resource Conservation Issues.

Prioritize each resource issue by giving each participant three “Post-It” notes. Have participants label the notes 3, 2, 1 respectively. Each participant places the notes labeled “3” on the issue they see as most crucial, “2” as second most crucial, and “1” for third most crucial.

Once all participants have “voted,” tally up the scores for each issue and determine which issues the group felt were most critical. Rewrite the list of issues (an assistant can do this while the group takes a break) in order of greatest to least importance and display it for the group to see.

Activity #4 (Small Group): Identifying Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats

Divide the strategic planning group into roughly four equal parts, and assign one of the following topics to each of the groups: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats. Provide examples or define each term to the whole group as necessary. Each group will meet separately during this activity to discuss either the district’s present strengths, present weaknesses, opportunities for the district, or threats that might hamper the district in the future.

Once each group has met and generated ideas on their assigned topic, each group reports back to the whole assembly on their findings. These are recorded on large sheets of paper and each topic is discussed and any additions or changes made by the whole group.

Activity #5 (Whole Group): Identifying District Needs

With the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats as a backdrop, brainstorm as a group the key needs or issues a district will face as it undertakes resource conservation over the next five years.

Create a list on chart paper, and combine any like issues, as was done with resource issues in the activity above. Have each participant vote on three critical issues related to district needs by using the Post-it method used above under resource needs. Tally up the scores for each issue. While the group takes a lunch break have an assistant rewrite the district needs list in order of greatest to least as based on the polling of participants. Have the list ready for display when the group returns from lunch.

Handouts:

1. Examples of Resource Conservation Issues
2. Rules for Brainstorming

E. Establishing Goals and Objectives.

(90 Minutes)

Main Ideas: After the group returns from lunch, the lists generated from the previous activities will be used to set goals for the district and establish “lines of business” in which the district will engage over the next five years. The next activity draws on the group’s findings on both resource issues and district needs.

Activity #1 (Small Group): Creating Goals and Objectives

Goals are statements about what the district hopes to achieve over the next five years regarding each resource issue or identified district need. It might be impossible for a district to address all potential resource issues identified earlier, and most likely you will have identified more issues than the district can realistically tackle in the five-year planning period. Depending on the size of the planning group, choose a manageable number of resource issues the district might address over the five-year period, and divide participants into small groups, with each dedicated to one issue. The small groups then meet separately to create a goal statement for the issue and write a goal with measurable outcomes and a method for measurement.

For example, the strategic planning group may have identified controlling erosion in the Friendly Creek Watershed as a critical resource need. The small group, in turning this need into a goal statement, might state that in five years sediment delivery to Friendly Creek will decrease by 80 percent as measured by sediment catchment basins in Friendly Creek. Note that this goal sets a measurable target (80 percent reduction in sediment delivery) and a means for measuring outcomes (sediment catchment basins).

After each small group has written a goal statement for their chosen issue, they next outline the steps necessary for achieving the goal identified. For example, the group that set the goal of reducing sediment delivery to Friendly Creek may have identified the following steps or objectives necessary for reaching that goal:

1. Obtain funding for watershed restoration and revegetation
2. Install sediment catchments basins in Friendly Creek
3. Monitor sediment to establish baseline data
4. Identify critical erosion sites and causes for erosion
5. Create a system for mapping the watershed, particularly critical sites
6. Create a revegetation plan for the watershed based on mapping
7. Implement revegetation plan (plant trees, native grasses, etc.)
8. Monitor results of revegetation
9. Regularly monitor sediment delivery to determine trend

This is a roughly sequential outline of how work might progress over a five-year period. Each of the activities or steps above may itself involve numerous sub-steps or pose problems or develop obstacles of its own. For instance, the district may not have the expertise at present (perhaps identified as a “Weakness” above) to create a revegetation plan, and it may need to hire or contract a botanist to do so. Because the long-range plan will cover many goals and associated objectives, it is best to leave detailed planning to annual plans, where such additional problems or obstacles can be addressed. (For more information, see Volume I, Step 3, Annual Planning).

At this point in developing goals and objectives, therefore, the small group may need to limit themselves to the broadest level of planning: creating a clear goal statement for each resource issue and identifying major steps (measurable objectives) to be undertaken to achieve that goal.

Small groups may require an hour or more to draft goals and objectives.

Activity #2 (Small Group): Feedback on Goals and Objectives

After a group has stated its goal in measurable terms and listed objectives to support it, they meet with one other small group to solicit input on their work. Each small group shares its work with the other, and their goals and objectives are analyzed according to the following heuristic (see also the handout for this exercise):

- Is the goal clearly stated?
- Are objectives logically sequenced?
- Are there any major objectives missing?
- Are the objectives measurable?
- Is there a viable means for measuring progress?
- Does the sequence of objectives lead to both the desired outcome and a realistic way of measuring it?

This method of teaming up small groups is designed as a time-saving device. With many goals identified, it would be very time consuming to have the whole group check the work of each small group according to the heuristic. If, on the other hand, you have chosen a limited number of goals to address (if you have utilized only a few small groups to craft goals and objectives), then it is feasible to review all goals and objectives as a whole group.

Which ever method you choose to implement, all sets of goals and objectives should be checked in light of the heuristic above to make future planning tasks action oriented and outcomes measurable.

Activity #3 (Small Group): District Needs Assessment Goals and Objectives

The same process used above to identify resource conservation goals and objectives is repeated for the district needs assessment. As before, each high-priority need is assigned to a working group, which writes a goal based on the identified need that is measurable and provides a means for measurement, as applicable.

For example, one group may have chosen to address the district's lack of up-to-date computer equipment and programs for creating district reports and publications. Their goal might state: The district will obtain a grant or other source of funding in order to purchase computer equipment that will enable the district to prepare reports, newsletters, and other publications in order to disseminate information on district activities to the public, partners, and other stakeholders.

As before, each small group will identify major objectives for reaching the goal identified. To continue the above example:

1. Research grant and other funding sources
2. Write grant(s) to receive funding
3. Purchase equipment once funding is secured
4. Submit receipts and other documentation to granting agency

It is possible that purchasing such computer equipment may be possible as part of a grant written for another identified goal. Funding agencies will frequently allow for the purchase of equipment for achieving resource conservation goals, in which case this district goal would be met as part of actions to meet another goal.

Progress toward this and other goals is documented in a district annual report. The yearly report is the place to sum up accomplishments for the year and indicate when specific objectives still have not been met. This annual summing up prepares the way for planning work for the next year (See also Volume 1, Step 9, How to Write Annual Reports).

Handout:

Goals and Objectives Heuristic

F. Multi-Year Timeline: Identifying Actions, Personnel, and Resources Needed

(45 Minutes)

Main Ideas: Once the small working groups have established goals and major objectives for each goal, district activities over the next five years can be outlined. Timelines for each goal will be created and appropriate partners and personnel identified who will implement each action in the timeline.

Activity (Small Group): Create an Action Plan

The worksheet entitled, "Action Plan" is distributed to each small working group. At the top of the sheet, the group writes the goal statement written earlier. The group transfers its sequence of measurable objectives identified in the previous

activity to the worksheet under the left-hand section titled, “Action Required.” For each action, or objective, a person or persons responsible for carrying out the action is identified, as well as a time frame for the action. Any identifiable resources need (“hours, dollars, other”) are also recorded on the sheet.

These Action Plan sheets will be copied so that each group member has a copy, as well as the facilitator or other person responsible for writing the long-range plan. The Action Plan sheets will be the basis for creating the major portion of the strategic plan (see Volume I, Step 3, How to Plan Strategically, for more information on crafting the long-range plan).

Overheads/Handouts for this section:

Action Plan Worksheets

G. Mission Statement Development II

Main Ideas: mission statements are deceptively simple. What makes writing them so difficult is that they must be broad enough to encapsulate all the district’s activities. For this reason Mission Statement Development is revisited at the close of the strategic planning session. The length of time needed for this second look will vary depending on whether the group successfully crafted a mission statement at the beginning of the session or whether they had difficulty doing so. If possible, try to have a completed mission statement agreed on at the close of the workshop.

Activity (Whole Group): Mission Statement Revisited

Once goals, objectives, and timelines for each are developed, strategic planning is fairly well accomplished. This point in the session might be a good time to revisit the Mission Statement developed earlier in the day. If the strategic planning team had difficulty coming to consensus on the wording of a mission statement, the intervening activities may have clarified the district’s goals enough for a clearer idea of the district’s mission to emerge. Even if a mission statement had been written and agreed upon by all, it might be a good time to take another look at the mission statement, and ask of the group, “In light of our newly established goals and objectives, does the mission statement still reflect how we see the business of the district?” A short discussion may enable you to make some minor adjustments to wording as needed to reflect any new perspectives gained on district functioning. If all are agreed, then the final mission statement should be recorded in the minutes of the strategic planning session.

Handouts:

None

H. Closure

Main Ideas: You can wrap up the strategic planning session very quickly by thanking attendees for their hard work that day and repeat the next steps for developing the long-range plan. As facilitator you may or may not be developing the final plan. Inform

participants that minutes for the meeting will be drafted, and their input on these minutes will be sought to help capture all of the important points of the meeting. The flip charts and other recording materials (such as copies of Action Plan Worksheets) can be used to develop the minutes of the meeting. You might also inform participants that you will be seeking their assistance and advise on the final long-range and annual plans you will develop based on the minutes of the meeting.

Activity (Whole Group): As a final closing activity, you might get each small group to share one item they identified as an objective for the planning period and a sample action they will undertake to achieve this objective.

Handouts/Overheads:

None

STRATEGIC PLANNING: WORKSHOP MATERIALS

1. Conservation District Strategic Plan Work Session Design
2. Long-Range Plans in Division 9
3. Annual Plans in Division 9
4. The Function of a Resource Conservation District
5. Powers/Authorities of California Resource Conservation Districts
6. Mission Statement Formation
7. Sample Mission Statements
8. Examples of Critical Resource Conservation Issues
9. Rules for Brainstorming
10. Goals and Objectives Heuristic
11. Action Plan

CONSERVATION DISTRICT STRATEGIC PLAN WORK SESSION DESIGN

Time	Actions	Materials Needed
30 Minutes	Introductions and Expectations. What to expect during the strategic planning session. Who we are and what we expect.	Flip Chart & Markers White Butcher Paper Copies of Handouts
15 Minutes	District Powers, Authorities, Roles, and Responsibilities. What a district can and should do according to Division 9 of the Public Resources Code.	
45 Minutes	Mission Statement Development. Individuals craft potential mission statements and share them with the group. The group collectively creates a district mission statement.	
15 Minutes	Break	
75 Minutes	Identification of Resource Issues and District Needs. A group brainstorming session leads to identification of district priorities for conserving resources and for developing the district's capacity to function.	
60 Minutes	Lunch Break	Total time for Workshop: Approximately 7 Hours
90 Minutes	Establishing Goals and Objectives. Small groups or teams are each assigned one high-priority resource need and/or district need. Teams create a sequence of objectives for reaching each goal.	
15 Minutes	Break	
45 Minutes	Multi-Year Timeline: Identifying Actions, Personnel, and Resources Needed. Teams create specific actions for implementing objectives.	
15 Minutes	Mission Statement Development II. Review/refine Mission Statement created earlier in the session.	
15 Minutes	Closure. Questions/comments, review of day's activities.	

LONG-RANGE PLANS IN DIVISION 9

LONG-RANGE PLANS SHALL:

- **Establish long-range goals**
- **Be 5-year plans**
- **Address the full range of soil and related resource problems found to occur within the district**
- **Identify all resource issues within the district for local, state, and federal resource conservation planning**
- **Involve other agencies in the strategic planning process**
- **Provide a framework for setting annual priorities**
- **Create a basis for evaluating annual work plan achievements and allocating state funds to the district**
- **Provide for disseminating information concerning district programs and goals to local, state, federal government agencies and the public**

ANNUAL PLANS in Division 9

ANNUAL PLANNING SHALL:

- **Be adopted before March 1st of each year**
- **Identify high-priority actions to be taken during the coming year**
- **Identify person(s) responsible for actions listed above, as well as how and when they will be performed and completed**
- **Demonstrate a relationship between annual plans and long-range plans**
- **Assist local NRCS in adjusting staff and priorities to match district goals**
- **Inform the public of district goals for the upcoming year**
- **Involve other agencies in the annual planning process**

THE FUNCTION OF A RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT IS

To take available technical, financial, and educational resources, whatever their source, and focus or coordinate them so that they meet the needs of the local land user.

POWERS AND AUTHORITIES OF RCDs UNDER DIVISION 9

Managing

- Manage District Operations.
- Manage Projects Within Districts On Public And Private Lands
- Make Improvements on Private and Public Lands.
- Acquire Lands, Easements, and Property.

Cooperating to Plan, Receive Funding, and Deliver Services

- Partner with other Districts, CARCD, CARCD Areas.
- Cooperate with Federal, State, and Local Governments and Tribes

Coordinate Representation to Federal, State, and Local Governments

Perform Education and Outreach

- Conduct Surveys and Research, Disseminate Information.
- Perform Education, Outreach, and Demonstration Projects

Accept Funding

- Accept Grants and Gifts.
- Receive Funding through Federal, State, and Private Sources.
- Establish Fees for Services.
- Accept and Use Contributions.

Act as an Employer

- Employ Agents, Officers, and Employees.
- Employ Contractors.

Exercise Legal Powers

- Sue and be Sued.
- Call upon District Attorney or County Council for Legal Advice.

Create and Execute Conservation Plans

- Develop Long-Range and Annual Plans.

MISSION STATEMENT FORMATION



A Mission Statement explains the purpose of an organization. Every action a Resource Conservation District undertakes should be directed toward fulfilling the district's mission.

Many Mission Statements contain four elements:

- Who*** The name of the organization
- What*** What the organization strives to achieve
- How*** The method or methods the organization uses to carry out its mission
- Whom*** The recipients of benefits from the organization's efforts

MISSION STATEMENTS

A mission statement should be short,

Yet

**A mission statement should be clear enough to serve as
a test of every action made by the organization at any
time.**

SAMPLE MISSION STATEMENTS

* * * * *

The Oregon State University Extension Service educates Oregonians by delivering research-based, objective information to help them solve problems, develop leadership, and manage resources wisely.

* * * * *

The Yolo County Resource Conservation District protects, improves, and sustains the natural resources of Yolo County. We promote stewardship by

- Demonstrating conservation practices through co-operative land users,
- Sponsoring partnerships and networks, and
- Educating agencies and the public in resource conservation

* * * * *

The California High Desert RC&D will enhance the quality of life and achieve economic growth while protecting the environment.

* * * * *

The mission of the Department of Conservation is to protect public health and safety, ensure environmental quality, and support the State's long-term economic viability in the use of California's land and mineral resources.

EXAMPLES OF CRITICAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION ISSUES

- **Excessive sediment loading in Friendly creek**
- **Hazardous buildup of fuels in Friendly Creek watershed, especially in residential areas neat the mouth of Friendly creek**
- **High potential for crossing failures in Friendly Creek watershed road system, primarily due to inadequate drainage structures (eg., undersized culverts).**
- **Illegal off-road vehicle activity in Friendly Creek watershed is destroying ground cover, leading to heightened erosion.**

RULES FOR BRAINSTORMING

- 1. ALL IDEAS ARE GOOD**
- 2. SAVE CRITICISM FOR LATER**
- 3. KEEP IDEAS FLOWING**
- 4. GENERATE IDEAS RAPIDLY**
- 5. WRITE IDEAS DOWN AS THEY COME TO MIND**
- 6. AIM FOR QUANTITY OF IDEAS WITHOUT OVER CONCERN FOR QUALITY**
- 7. MAKE SURE ALL MEMBERS CONTRIBUTE**
- 8. FOLLOW UP INTERESTING IDEAS WITH VARIATIONS**
- 9. CONTINUE UNTIL NO NEW IDEAS ARE GENERATED**

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES HEURISTIC

- **Is the goal clearly stated?**
- **Are objectives logically sequenced?**
- **Are there any major objectives missing?**
- **Are the objectives measurable?**
- **Is there a viable means for measuring progress?**
- **Does the sequence of objectives lead to both the desired outcome and a realistic way of measuring it?**

ACTION PLAN

Goal:

Actions Required	Persons Responsible	Time Frame	Resources Needed
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			

**MATERIALS TO ACCOMPANY STEPS 5 & 6:
Plans, Programs, and Grants**

**Grant Writing Workshop:
Agenda**

**I. Introduction: Strategic Planning is Key to Grant Writing Success
(60 Minutes)**

Break (10 Minutes)

**II. How to Use Programs to Implement Plans
(15 Minutes)**

**II. Steps to Becoming a Grantee
(20 Minutes)**

**III. What is an RFP?
(60 Minutes)**

Break (10 Minutes)

**IV. Drafting Grant Proposals
(60 Minutes)**

Lunch Break

**V. Evaluating Grant Proposals
(60 Minutes)**

**VI. What To Do If Your Proposal Is Not Accepted
(60 Minutes)**

Break (15 Minutes)

**VIII. Closure
(15 MINUTES)**

Total Time (Including Breaks): Approximately 7 Hours

GRANT WRITING: WORKSHOP OUTLINE

Objectives:

At the close of the workshop participants will be able to:

- Explain the importance of strategic planning to the grant writing process
- Evaluate whether a proposal reflects an organization's mission and long-range plan
- Evaluate potential programs for assistance with projects
- Write a brief proposal idea in response to a hypothetical Request for Proposals
- Provide a brief overview of the grant writing process
- Identify major components of a grant proposal
- Draft a hypothetical grant proposal
- Evaluate a grant proposal in accordance with evaluation criteria
- Revise a grant proposal

I. Introduction: Strategic Planning is Key to Grant Writing Success.

(60 Minutes)

Major Ideas: Funding agencies and foundations often evaluate a proposal based on an organization's long-term plans. In reviewing grant applications, granting agencies and organizations may ask such questions as, "What is the organization's mission? What are its goals? Does the proposal fit in with the organization's mission, plans, and goals?" An *existing* resource conservation need or goal should provide the reason for developing and submitting a grant proposal.

Activity #1 (Whole Group): Participants are given a district's mission and goals (see handout) from a sample strategic plan and asked to evaluate a short proposal (see handout) in terms of the organization's long-term plan.

Discussion Questions:

- Does the proposal fit the organization's Mission and Long-range Plan? Why or Why not?
- If not, could it be made to fit by rewording the proposal? How?
- Could you reword the long-range plan instead? Why or Why not?
- Which goal(s) does the proposal draw on?
- Would you fund this proposal? Why or Why not?

Activity #2 (Small Group): Form participants into small groups (roughly groups of four people). Make sure there is an even number of groups¹. Each group should designate a recorder and a speaker to make presentations to the whole group.

¹ Later in the workshops the small groups will pair up to evaluate each others' grant proposals. This is why there needs to be an even number of groups.

Provide each group with the mission statement and long-range goals shown earlier. Each group:

- Brainstorms several project ideas for which they might seek funding
- Selects one project which they will use for the rest of the workshop.

Activity #3: (Whole Group): Each small group shares its proposed project with the whole group. Whole group evaluates whether each proposal reflects the mission and goals given.

Handouts:

1. Friendly RCD's Mission and Goals
2. Friendly Creek Sample Proposal Idea
3. Rules for Brainstorming
4. Identifying Potential Projects

I. How to Use Programs to Implement Plans

Major Ideas: A very large source of funding for locally led conservation is government grant programs. There are numerous grant programs for a variety of purposes. Participants need to become familiar with the most common agency programs and be able to identify those that might fit the work they have identified and want to carry out.

Activity #1 (Whole Group): Facilitator asks if any participants know what a 205(j) is? How about a 319(h)? What is a WHIP, a FIP, a SIP? These are examples of the numerous programs, state and federal, that offer assistance to RCDs. The number of programs is daunting, but the districts should become familiar with the most common and know which ones might potentially benefit them as they seek funding for their plans.

Activity #2 (Small Group): Small groups created earlier meet again to evaluate their proposed project in the light of given information on government programs. A handout with brief explanations of several common programs (for e.g., EQIP) is given to each small group. Groups identify which programs potentially fit their identified plans.

Activity #3 (Whole Group): Small groups share their proposal idea and state which programs might fit their plans. Discussion of any groups that could not identify potential programs. What steps could they take? Should they change their plans?

Handout:

- Common Federal and State Programs for Local Conservation Assistance

III. Steps to Becoming a Grantee

(20 Minutes)

Major Ideas: The grant writing process unfolds over a series of steps. All grants don't have to follow this process exactly; these are general guidelines for the process.

Activity (Whole Group): Facilitator explains the important steps of the grant writing process. Check for understanding of participants: there are three basic phases in the grant writing process. What might you call them? Which steps shown in the overhead belong to each phase?

Handout:

- Steps to Becoming a Grantee

II. What is an RFP?

(60 Minutes)

Major Ideas: A Request for Proposals (RFP) is a detailed announcement by a funding agency or organization of the availability of funds for a project and the criteria under which proposals for grant applicants will be evaluated. RFPs vary, but they typically include:

- Background information on the funding agency
- Goals of the grant program and amount of money available
- Deadline and proposal submission requirements (e.g., number of copies, prohibition against fax submissions, etc.)
- Funding agency contact information, including telephone, address, fax number, e-mail address, etc.
- Requirements for proposal contents
- Format criteria (maximum length, etc.)
- Cover page format
- Budget format

In addition, RFPs for resource conservation projects might request some additional information, including letters of support, a copy of the district's long-range plan and/or annual plan, and maps of project location, watershed location, etc.

Activity #1 (Whole Group): Facilitator defines the term "RFP" and explains what one is, using the handout, "What is an RFP." Facilitator explains that RFPs differ from agency to agency but usually ask for similar material. The admonition to follow RFPs exactly is reiterated. "Know your RFP" might be a good way of putting this.

Activity #2 (Small Group): Small groups meet to review a sample RFP to determine if it is appropriate for their particular project. Groups read through the proposal, and they decide on a strategy for writing a sample proposal.

Handouts:

1. What is an RFP?
2. Sample RFPs

III. Drafting Grant Proposals

(60 Minutes)

Major Ideas: Successful grant proposals follow the recommended format included in the RFP. Content requirements can vary, but they typically include:

- *A Summary*
- *An Introduction*
- *A Problem or Needs Statement*
- *Objectives*
- *Methods*
- *Means For Monitoring or Evaluating Project Success*
- *Future Course of Action*
- *A Budget*

You may contact a granting agency if you have questions about an RFP. You may also contact the granting agency and briefly explain your idea if you have doubts that it might not fit into the framework of the RFP. Once you think you have a good grant proposal idea, you can begin writing the proposal.

Activity #1 (Whole Group): Facilitator displays the elements of a typical grant proposal to the group, explaining briefly each item, and answering any questions participants might have. Participants are given copies of the handout, "Elements of a Typical Grant Proposal" on which to take notes.

Activity #2 (Small Group): The previously established small groups draft a short proposal using the RFP and the grant idea they created earlier. They strive to include all of the elements requested in the RFP, improvising as needed for the sake of the exercise. The group writes a proposal to share with another small group.

Handout:

- Elements of a Typical Grant Proposal

IV. Evaluating Grant Proposals

(60 Minutes)

Major Ideas: Facilitator explains how granting agencies typically evaluate grants: through the use of evaluation sheets, a scoring system, etc.

Activity #1 (Whole Group): Facilitator demonstrates with a sample grant proposal how a grant might be rated according to an evaluation sheet.

Activity #2 (Small Group): Each small group exchanges their completed grant proposal with another group. The groups then evaluate each other's proposals as if each were now a grant review team. Teams are given a short evaluation review sheet (see "Sample Grant Review Sheet" handout) on which to base their evaluations. Each pair of small groups meets to share the results of their evaluations, examining each criteria item in turn. In addition, each evaluation team shares with the grant writing team the following:

- Would you fund this grant as written?
- What would you tell the submitting organization to improve/revise grant for possible funding?
- Would you reject the grant? Why?

Handout:

- Grant Evaluation Sheet

V. What To Do If Your Proposal Is Not Accepted

(60 Minutes)

Major ideas: A rejected proposal is not the end of the grant seeking process; it might be just the beginning. Being persistent is one way to eventually receive funding for your organization's goals.

The first thing to do is find out (if possible) why the proposal was not accepted. The funding agency or organization may tell you it was simply because there were limited funds and all proposals could not be funded. Probe deeper. How, then, did the proposals receiving funding get selected? What was weaker about yours? This may be tough but this is valuable information. Once you know what you could have done better, you have several courses of action open to you:

- You could revise the proposal to correct deficiencies identified by the funding agency or organization and re-submit it to them immediately (if they are open to this and timelines permit) or later, during the next funding cycle;
- You could submit a revised version of the proposal to another funding agency, adapting your proposal to fit the second agency's proposal criteria;

- You could examine why your proposed project is not fundable as envisioned, and try to find an alternative project idea that meets the needs of your long-term goals.

Activity #1 (Whole Group): Facilitator presents options for what to do if your grant proposal is not accepted using overhead provided.

Activity (Small Group): Small groups are returned rejected proposals or proposals in need of revision. Group chooses one of the choices listed above (or another they might think of) and continues with a new course of action. They present their ideas to the funding agency (the review team) or to the facilitator.

Handout:

- What to do if your proposal is not funded.

VI. Closure

Major Ideas: There is no way to prepare for all the possible challenges you might face during the grant writing process. Funding agencies operate differently, and RFPs vary in terms of what elements might be included or left out. Nevertheless, there are some key points to remember about grant writing which will pertain to just about any grant you write.

Closing Activity (Whole Group): Facilitator asks workshop participants to look back over the materials presented and created during the workshop. S/he asks them to list key points, which the facilitator records. After a list has been generated the facilitator presents the following ideas orally to the group (see handout, "Key Ideas in Grant Writing"). The most important ideas to take away from the workshop might be the following:

- Base grant proposals on goals and objectives in strategic planning documents;
- Establish a personal relationship with the funding agency, if possible;
- Follow the prescriptions of the RFP *exactly*;
- Write well and invite others to review your work;
- Be persistent; if at first you don't get funded, write, write again.

GRANT WRITING WORKSHOP MATERIALS

1. Friendly RCD Mission and Goals
2. Friendly RCD Sample Proposal Idea
3. Rules for Brainstorming
4. Identifying Potential Projects
5. Common Federal and State Programs for Conservation Assistance
6. Steps to Becoming a Grantee
7. What is an RFP?
8. Sample RFPs
9. Elements of a Typical Grant Proposal
10. Sample Grant Review Sheet
11. What to Do If Your Proposal is Not Funded
12. Key Ideas in Grant Writing

FRIENDLY RCD'S MISSION AND GOALS

Mission

The Friendly Resource Conservation District protects and enhances the natural resources of Friendly County through its technical, educational, and administrative expertise to benefit the landowners, recreationists, plants, and wildlife of Friendly County.

Goals

- ***Improve water quality in Friendly Creek to benefit fish and wildlife, recreation, and the quality of life in Friendly County.***
- ***Teach the residents of Friendly County the importance of conserving natural resources to benefit all the inhabitants of the watershed.***
- ***Develop partnerships with agencies, landowners, citizens, and others to create a unified approach to resource conservation.***
- ***Continue to develop the Sustainable Ecosystem Model to provide information and insights to the district and its partners on approaches to sustainable agriculture, land stewardship, and resource conservation.***

FRIENDLY RCD SAMPLE PROPOSAL IDEA

The Friendly Resource Conservation District is seeking financial assistance with developing and delivering public workshops on the importance of native vegetation. Assistance will help the district purchase native plant seed and seedlings, design hands-on workshops, create visual aids and materials, advertise, and rent meeting room space.

RULES FOR BRAINSTORMING

- 1. All ideas are good**
- 2. Save criticism for later**
- 3. Keep ideas flowing**
- 4. Generate ideas rapidly**
- 5. Write ideas down as they come to mind**
- 6. Aim for quantity of ideas without over concern for quality**
- 7. Make sure all members contribute**
- 8. Follow up interesting ideas with variations**
- 9. Continue until no new ideas are generated**

IDENTIFYING POTENTIAL PROJECTS

Based on the sample mission and goals of the Friendly RCD, brainstorm with your group some potential projects that reflect the district's mission and goals. Follow the rules for brainstorming in order to generate a maximum amount of ideas with your group.

[illegible]

COMMON FEDERAL AND STATE PROGRAMS FOR LOCAL CONSERVATION ASSISTANCE

FEDERAL PROGRAMS

US Department of Agriculture, NRCS Programs:

EQIP- The *Environmental Quality Incentives Program* provides technical, financial, and educational assistance to address significant natural resource needs and objectives.

WHIP- The *Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program* provides technical assistance and cost sharing to help establish and improve fish and wildlife habitat.

WRP- The *Wetlands Reserve Program* provides landowners an opportunity to sell easements to the Department of Agriculture and receive cost share assistance to restore and protect wetlands.

FPP- The *Farmland Protection Program* purchases conservation easements on land with prime, unique or other productive soil for the purposes of protecting topsoil by limiting non-agricultural uses of the land.

RC&D- The *Resource Conservation and Development* program assists local people in initiating and carrying out long-range programs of resource conservation and development, conducting grant searches, and coordinating multi-county planning.

US Department of Agriculture, Farm Service Agency:

CRP – The *Conservation Reserve Program* provides annual rental payments and cost-share assistance to establish long-term, resource-conserving covers on eligible cropland.

US Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management:

Land Exchange Program – Provides funds to convert private land into public lands.

STATE PROGRAMS

California Department of Conservation:

The *RCD Grants Program* provides competitive grants to RCDs throughout the state to undertake a wide range of projects, include watershed restoration projects, district capacity building, and support for creation and sustenance of Coordinated Resource Management Planning (CRMP) groups.

ALSP- The *Agricultural Land Stewardship Program* provides incentives to protect productive agricultural land from development pressures. ALSP provides funding for cities, counties, and non-profit land trusts to purchase development rights, known as agricultural conservation easements, from farmland owners.

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection:

FIP – The *Forestry Incentives Program* funds restoration of forest ecosystems devastated by natural disasters such as catastrophic wildfires, drought, and insect and disease infestations.

CFIP – The *California Forest Improvement Program* provides grant assistance for local landowners wishing to undertake forest improvement practices on their property; support for local organizations for planning, outreach, and education; and for organizing restoration projects in watersheds.

SIP – The *Stewardship Incentive Program* provides experts to work with landowners to develop management plans that meet landowner objectives and protect and enhance resources.

California Department of Fish and Game:

The *Fisheries Restoration Grant Program* provides grants to improve or restore salmon and steelhead populations through fishery habitat improvement projects, cooperative fish-rearing programs, and public education.

Cal-EPA/State Water Resources Control Board:

CWA 319(h) Grants - The state's Clean Water Act Section 319(h) grant program provides assistance for projects mitigating non-point source pollution.

CWA 205(j) Grants - The state's Clean Water Act Section 205(j) grant program provides assistance for water quality and natural resource planning.

Proposition 204 – Proposition 204, the state's "Safe, Clean, Reliable Water Supply Act, Article 5 – Delta Tributary watershed Program," provides for rehabilitation of watersheds tributary to the San Joaquin/Sacramento Rivers.

STEPS TO BECOMING A GRANTEE

1. **Identify potential projects based on strategic planning goals and objectives.**
2. **Identify potential funding sources for proposed project(s).**
3. **Obtain any Request for Proposals (RFPs) that relate to your potential project.**
4. **Build a project team and identify roles co-workers and cooperators may play.**
5. **Talk to funding sources before you write the grant: briefly present ideas and ask any questions you might have.**
6. **Write the grant proposal, following all directions in the RFP. Include a detailed budget that justifies amount of money requested.**
7. **Invite comments on the draft grant proposal from other team members or stakeholders.**
8. **Incorporate reviewer comments.**
9. **Proofread grant request.**
10. **Send Grant proposal to funding agency *before* the deadline.**
11. **Follow up submission: write thank-you letters.**
12. **Be persistent: find out why the grant was rejected; submit revised proposals if possible; submit new proposals to other funding sources.**

WHAT IS AN RFP?

A Request for Proposals (RFP) is a short document announcing the availability of grant funds and requesting proposals for projects that might be funded under the grant. An RFP frequently includes the following:

- **Brief background information on the funding agency, grant, or both.**
- **Goals of the grant program and the total amount of money available**
- **Proposal deadline and submission requirements (for e.g., the number of copies to include, to whom to address the proposal, etc.)**
- **Requirements for proposal contents**
- **Format criteria (headings, number of pages, etc.)**
- **Cover page format or example**
- **Budget format**

SAMPLE RFP

TO: Resource Conservation Districts

RE: \$120,000 Grant Funding

I am pleased to inform you the Governor's 1998/99 budget again provides \$120,000 for grants to promote watershed management and conservation by California's Resource Conservation Districts (RCDs). The grant program supports specific RCD efforts to improve and sustain the health of California's watersheds, and to build the capacity of RCDs to work with communities and landowners towards that end. The Department of Conservation administers this program.

Enclosed is the Resource Conservation District Grant Program request for proposals package. This document provides the basic application information and forms districts will need to apply for grant funding. **Project proposals must be received by the Department of Conservation no later than 5:00 p.m., January 15, 1999.**

We look forward to working with eligible applicants in developing and implementing projects that enhance California's watersheds. For information regarding Resource Conservation District Programs, please contact Kathy Davis, Division of Land Resource Protection, at (916) 327-2145.

Sincerely,

Director,
Department of Conservation

Enclosure

RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT GRANT PROGRAM

RCD Grant Objectives

The Department of Conservation is pleased to announce availability of grant funding targeting the State's Resource Conservation Districts (RCDs). Funding will assist RCDs to perform projects that improve the health of California's watersheds and build the capacity of RCDs to promote and support conservation with landowners and communities within watersheds. The Governor's 1998/99 budget contains a total of **\$120,000** available for the grants program which continues the Governor's commitment to the work initiated in 1996/97. Project proposals must be received by the Department of Conservation no later than 5:00 p.m., **January 15, 1999**.

Grant Application Eligibility

Grant funds target projects directed by RCDs. Individual RCDs are encouraged to work in partnership with other RCDs, other public entities and/or private groups to jointly submit applications for projects. Since only one grant award will be made per district, a proposal may include multiple projects. There is no minimum or maximum amount that can be requested; however, the Department seeks to support as many projects as possible.

Eligible Projects

Many types of watershed related projects may be eligible for funding. Examples of eligible project categories for funding are listed below.

Examples of Project Categories

Land Restoration: Includes projects such as tree planting and other revegetation efforts; land stabilization and soil erosion control; fire related rehabilitation and fuel load management.

Habitat Enhancement: Includes projects which improve fisheries and other wildlife habitat.

Urban/rural water quality/conservation: Includes projects addressing agricultural chemical runoff or infiltration control; stormwater pollution prevention; irrigation management; and efforts to improve water use efficiency.

Public Outreach and Education: Includes publicity for watershed project efforts through training, tours, presentations, and literature; education of children and adults on restoration projects within watersheds; and public outreach regarding conservation practices.

District Capacity Building: Includes projects designed to enhance district operations enabling a district to participate in future watershed projects; community organization, mobilization and planning activities that culminate in watershed projects; and volunteer recruitment.

Rating Criteria

In addition to meeting the eligibility requirements, proposals will be evaluated according to the criteria listed below. Projects do not need to encompass all criteria in order to qualify but these criteria will be used in rating proposals.

1. Demonstrated need. There is a demonstrated need for the project as defined in the Project Justification. Without funding this need is likely to go unfilled for an extended time.

2. Consistency with annual/long range plans. The proposed project is consistent with the RCD's annual and long range plans for managing resources within its watershed. Applicant has submitted copies of annual/long range plans.

3. Collaborations/new partnerships. The proposal builds upon existing collaborative efforts, involves multiple private and public partners, benefits/involves landowners within the watershed, and/or forges new partnerships.

4. Resource management on-the-land. A tangible and physical product of the project will be evident upon completion. (For district capacity building projects, a tangible product might be a plan developed by a CRMP).

5. Education and outreach. Where not directly tied to on-the-land resource conservation work, the project provides support that efforts will have a direct impact upon resource conservation.

6. Sustainability. Projects involving direct resource management practices include provisions for monitoring and maintenance of work completed so that benefits can be sustained.

7. Cost sharing. Project includes a cost share component demonstrating commitments/project support from other entities. The difference between *actual*, *in-kind services*, and *potential* cost share funding is clearly made.

8. Delivery of services. The proposal enhances or expands the RCD's ability to deliver local resource conservation services.

9. Timeliness. The project will be completed within a 12 month period and/or will have specific component objectives and products achieved within that time frame.

10. Project effectiveness. The project includes measurable objectives and clearly explains how these objectives will contribute to the overall health of a specific watershed.

How to Apply: Resource Conservation Districts are requested to submit their full proposals following these guidelines. NOTE: Failure to follow these guidelines may result in disqualification of your proposal.

A. Cover Page

Use the attached Cover Page as the first page of your proposal. Fill in all applicable blanks.

1. Project Leader(s) - Identify project leaders, including their affiliation, mailing addresses, e-mail address, and telephone and fax numbers.

2. Cooperator(s) - Provide the name, affiliation, mailing address, and telephone number for each cooperator. A cooperator is considered to be an individual or organization with a specific role in the project that is not directly associated with the RCD submitting the proposal.

3. Supporter(s) - Specify any organizations or individuals which support the project but are not providing funding or in-kind contributions. Support should be documented by letters that explain the basis for the support. Examples of supporters include local government jurisdictions and key agencies or organizations having regulatory responsibilities within the geographic area of the proposed project.

4. Other Sources of Funding - Specify the organizations that have committed funding to this project, along with amounts, contact names, addresses and telephone numbers. List separately other potential sources of funding. Please distinguish between actual, potential and in-kind funding.

B. Executive Summary

The Executive Summary should immediately follow the Cover Page and should not exceed one-half page. Define the problem to be addressed, state the specific objectives of the proposed project, describe the approach that will be used and define the criteria used to evaluate the project's success. Who will benefit from the project, and in what specific ways? (It may be helpful to consider this section as though it were to be utilized or easily adapted as a press release for your project.)

C. Project Justification

Specify the problem to be addressed by the project, and describe its extent, severity, and magnitude. What is the statewide significance as indicated by studies, inventories or regulatory actions (e.g., is the water body listed by the State Water Resources Control Board as impacted or impaired?) What are the environmental, agronomic, economic, or other implications of the project expressed on a watershed or subwatershed basis? Describe the project's potential for measurable progress toward long-term solutions of the specific problem(s) you are addressing. Describe related work already taking place (or that is planned) and indicate the potential for coordination of efforts. Include maps showing the project location and the area to benefit from the project. **The project justification should not exceed two pages (exclusive of maps).**

D. Objectives

Provide a clear, concise, and complete statement for each specific objective your project proposes to address.

E. Workplans and Methods

Describe the activities and/or tasks that will address each of the objectives you have identified. Explain the methods and resource conservation approaches to be utilized. Please describe methods and procedures in sufficient detail to provide an understanding of how each task will be conducted. Describe interim and final products or milestones for each task. Performance will be judged on these outputs. Using the Implementation Schedule form, prepare timelines for implementation and completion of the project tasks. Be sure to allocate sufficient time.

F. Budget Itemization

Please use the attached Budget Sheet to prepare a budget table for your proposed project. Indicate the amounts requested from the Department of Conservation as well as those that may be provided by other organizations. Specify the name of the organization(s) if other funding is provided. Identify whether funding is actual cash or in-kind. Please indicate whether funding from other sources is actual or potential.

Deadline and address

SIX COPIES OF YOUR PROPOSAL MUST BE RECEIVED BY 5:00 P.M. ON JANUARY 15, 1999, AT THE FOLLOWING ADDRESS:

Scott Brennan-Smith
Department of Conservation
Division of Land Resource Protection
801 K Street, MS 13-71
Sacramento, CA 95814

**NOTE: FAXES WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.
LATE PROPOSALS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.**

Proposal review and evaluation timelines

All proposals will be reviewed by an independent panel of reviewers assembled by the Department of Conservation. Proposals will be reviewed/announced according to the following timelines.

1/15/99	Deadline for proposal submission
2/16/99	Evaluation of proposals complete
3/15/99	Notification of awards
5/01/99	Contracts signed/work may begin
6/15/99	First status reports due

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION
RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT GRANT PROGRAM
FISCAL YEAR 1998/99
PROPOSAL COVER PAGE

Resource Conservation District's name _____

President's name _____

RCD mailing address _____

Telephone/fax/email _____

RCD federal I.D. # _____

Project title _____

Project location, county and watershed _____

Project leader(s) (Name, title, affiliation, mailing address, telephone, fax)

Cooperator(s) (Name, title, affiliation, mailing address, telephone, fax)

Supporter(s) (Name, title, affiliation, mailing address, telephone, fax)

Other funding (Amount, duration, organization, contact person, mailing address, telephone)

Request from the Department of Conservation \$ _____

Other funding \$ _____

Total project budget \$ _____

BUDGET ITEMIZATION

FISCAL YEAR 1998/99

	DOC Request	Other Funding (Cash)	Other Funding (In-Kind)	Total Funding
A. Personnel Services	_____	_____	_____	_____
B. Operating Expenses (Itemize/explain for clarification)				
Travel	_____	_____	_____	_____
Equipment	_____	_____	_____	_____
Materials & Supplies	_____	_____	_____	_____
C. Professional/Consultant Services (Identify consultants and their roles)	_____	_____	_____	_____
<hr/>				
TOTAL				

IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE

FISCAL YEAR 1998/99

Project Title:

Project Term: May 1, 1999 to _____

[illegible]

ANY CHANGES TO THE IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE MUST HAVE PRIOR APPROVAL BY THE GRANT MANAGER

ELEMENTS OF A TYPICAL GRANT PROPOSAL

Summary: This is a short paragraph that gives an overview of the project by summarizing the main ideas in each of the parts of the proposal.

Introduction: This portion introduces the qualifications of your agency to undertake the work you are proposing. Here also is where you can show how the proposed project fits into your district's mission and long-range plans.

Problem or Needs

Statement: This continues the discussion started in the Introduction, adding reasons for why this particular project is needed to further the aims of your strategic plan and/or address resource or environmental needs.

Objectives: These are the specific outcomes you expect to achieve through your project. Objectives should be measurable.

Methods: These are the actions you plan to undertake to reach your objectives.

Evaluation: At the end of the project you evaluate whether you reached the project objectives or not. Because you created measurable objectives, it is relatively easy to determine the extent to which you reached project objectives.

Future Course of Action:

Even if your project is successful, it was still probably a part of a larger effort or long-term goal. This section of the proposal, if included, might discuss next steps for meeting a specific long-term goal, or ways in which the results of the present project may be continued, improved, or monitored.

Budget: One of the most important elements of your proposal is a budget which provides the funding agency an estimate of how much your project will cost, broken down into relevant budget categories.

SAMPLE GRANT REVIEW SHEET

Reviewed by _____

Applicant name _____ Score _____

Please indicate whether the project exceeds, meets or does not meet the following criteria. Provide comments in the space provided below each criteria.

- 1. Demonstrated Need.** There is a demonstrated need for the project as defined in the Problem or Needs Statement. Without funding this need is likely to go unfulfilled for an extended time.

____ exceeds (2 points) ____ meets (1 point) ____ does not meet (0 points)

- 2. Consistency with Annual/Long Range Plans.** The proposed project is consistent with the RCD's annual and long-range plans. Applicant has submitted copies of annual/long-range plans with proposal.

____ exceeds (2 points) ____ meets (1 point) ____ does not meet (0 points)

- 3. Positive Effect on Resources.** Either a tangible and physical product will be evident upon completion of the project or, if this is an education project, the project is linked to a tangible watershed project or proposed project.

____ exceeds (2 points) ____ meets (1 point) ____ does not meet (0 points)

- 4. Project Effectiveness.** Project includes measurable objectives and clearly explains how these objectives will contribute to the overall health of a specific watershed.

____ exceeds (2 points) ____ meets (1 point) ____ does not meet (0 points)

WHAT TO DO IF YOUR PROPOSAL IS NOT FUNDED

- 1. Find out why the proposal was not funded. Ask for specifics. What might have been done better?**
- 2. Submit a new proposal to another funding agency, strengthening those areas identified as weak, where appropriate. Follow all guidelines for the new RFP.**
- 3. Re-design project as needed to make it more viable for funding:**
 - Is the project truly worthwhile?**
 - Is project in keeping with strategic plans?**
 - Does the project have measurable objectives?**
 - Are the methods appropriate?**
 - Is there a plan for evaluating outcomes?**
 - Is the project sustainable over the long haul?**
 - Is the budget realistic and in line with funding opportunities?**
- 4. Re-examine long-term goals and identify alternative projects for funding. Continue grant seeking/writing.**
- 5. Don't Give Up!**

KEY IDEAS IN GRANT WRITING

- Base grant proposals on goals and objectives in strategic planning Documents.
- Establish a personal relationship with funding agency, if possible.
- Follow the guidelines of the RFP EXACTLY.
- Write well.
- Invite many others to review your work.
- Be persistent: If at first you don't get funded, write, write, again!