



Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District

MIDPENINSULA REGIONAL OPEN SPACE DISTRICT

PLANNING AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Tuesday, June 23, 2026

DRAFT MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Riffle called the meeting of the Planning and Natural Resources Committee to order at 1:02 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Members present: Jed Cyr, Yoriko Kishimoto, Curt Riffle

Members absent: None

Staff present: General Manager Ana Ruiz, General Counsel Hilary Stevenson, Assistant General Manager Susanna Chan, Chief Financial Officer Stefan Jaskulak, District Clerk/Assistant to the General Manager Maria Soria, Executive Assistant/Deputy District Clerk Shaylynn Nelson, Management Analyst II Sophie Christel, Water Resources Specialist III Jacqueline Van Der Hout

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Deputy District Clerk Shaylynn Nelson reported there were no public speakers for this item.

COMMITTEE BUSINESS

1. Approve the April 27, 2026 Planning And Natural Resources Committee Meeting Minutes

Public comment period opened.

Ms. Nelson reported there were no public speakers for this item.

Public comment period closed.

Motion: Director Cyr moved, and Director Kishimoto seconded the motion to approve the April 27, 2026 Planning and Natural Resources Committee meeting minutes.

ROLL CALL VOTE: 3-0-0

2. Partnership Agreement to Enhance Carbon Sequestration and Storage at Purisima Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserve (R-26-88)

Management Analyst II Sophie Christel and San Mateo Resources Conservation District (RCD) Agricultural Stewardship Project Manager Mia Riddle presented. General Manager Ana Ruiz, RCD Executive Director Kellyx Nelson, and RCD Senior Program Manager and San Mateo County Agricultural Ombudsman Eliza Milio assisted in answering questions.

Director Kishimoto inquired whether it should be a Board policy decision to eliminate silvopasture and hedgerows on the grazing lands due to their impact on grazing operations.

Director Riffle asked for more information on what led staff to make the tradeoff between silvopasture with hedgerows and grazing land.

Ms. Christel explained that staff had consulted with the tenant and Farm Bureau to ensure that the pilot project did not impact the grazing operation in an undesirable way. She noted that the agricultural elements of the coastal mission led staff to prioritize agricultural goals and objectives as part of this project but at other non-agricultural locations, staff could assess whether the silvopasture of hedgerow plantings would be appropriate for a site. She suggested that if the District implements carbon farming elsewhere, it may be best to look at sites that are not actively grazed.

Director Kishimoto expressed that carbon farming should perhaps be built into expectations and suggested it be flagged for the Board.

Ms. Christel explained that the pilot sites were not ideal due to the proximity to the road, the way the tenants feed and water their animals, and the size of the land.

Kellyx Nelson further explained that each site will have specific needs, priorities, opportunities, and constraints and noted that this was a small portion of land that allowed the opportunity to learn from the experience for future projects.

Ms. Ruiz stated that the strategy of silvopasture needs further education and conversations with the agricultural community since there is sensitivity about how grazing areas are managed and avoiding what would be perceived as loss of grassland. She explained that staff needs to first also assess the available opportunities to expand grazing in areas that can sustain it, where there is no active grazing currently. She also noted that there are multiple steps that the District would need pursue to grow support from the community prior to adopting silvopastures as a broader land management strategy.

Ms. Christel noted that staff has a plan for a project in a future fiscal year to look at silvopastures specifically and to identify appropriate areas for the practice.

Chair Riffle inquired what type of decisions the Board of Directors (Board) will need to consider as the project progresses.

Ms. Christel responded that if additional carbon farming projects are presented to the Board, it would be a site-by-site decision making process. She explained there is an upcoming project to

examine silvopasture potential and priority locations need to be identified. She further noted that each project would need to be designed individually since there are different variables.

Chair Riffle explained he is disinclined to have the Board make approvals on a site-by-site basis and expressed a preference for setting up a structure similar to the Integrated Pest Management program.

Ms. Christel explained that another consideration is that many of the actions could be implemented as part of the Open Space Maintenance and Restoration Programs on an annual basis since the practices are routine. She also suggested that if a project comes below the threshold requiring Board approval, then it would not necessarily need to be presented to the Board.

Public comment period opened.

Ms. Nelson reported there were no public speakers for this item.

Public comment period closed.

Director Cyr expressed a preference for keeping the project small during the initial phases to ensure that the District is successful with carbon sequestration.

Director Riffle requested staff to consider how the District will proceed with the project after three years and to also keep the Board apprised of updates through a memo.

Motion: Director Kishimoto moved, and Director Cyr seconded the motion to forward a recommendation to the full Board of Directors to approve a partnership agreement with the San Mateo Resource Conservation District to implement the Bluebrush Ranch Carbon Farming Implementation Project at Purisima Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserve.

ROLL CALL VOTE: 3-0-0

3. Three Coastside Fisheries Improvement and Monitoring Projects: Lobitos Creek and Arroyo Leon Creek Stream Assessments and Conceptual Designs, and San Gregorio Creek Fisheries Monitoring (R-26-89)

Water Resources Specialist III Jacqueline Van Der Hout and RCD Habitat Enhancement Program Director Amy Kaeser presented. RCD Executive Director Kellyx Nelson assisted in answering questions.

Public comment period opened.

Ms. Nelson reported there were no public speakers for this item.

Public comment period closed.

Director Kishimoto requested that staff provide additional information regarding the feasibility study, particularly related to the first level design, when presenting to the full Board.

Motion: Director Kishimoto moved, and Director Cyr seconded the motion to forward a recommendation to the full Board of Directors, with any Committee feedback, to approve partnership agreements with the San Mateo Resource Conservation District for the Lobitos Creek and Arroyo Leon Creek Fish Passage Improvements Feasibility Projects, and the San Gregorio Creek Fisheries Monitoring Project.

ROLL CALL VOTE: 3-0-0

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Riffle adjourned the meeting of the Planning and Natural Resources Committee at 2:47 p.m.

Shaylynn Nelson
Deputy District Clerk