



Long Range Plan 2012-2016

Revision February 22, 2013



215 Executive Court, Suite A
Yreka, CA 96097
(530)842-6121 ext:106
www.svrcd.org

History of the Shasta Valley Resource Conservation District

The Shasta Valley Resource Conservation District (RCD) was formed in July of 1953 and reached its present boundaries in 1957. Under Division 9 of the California Public Resources Code, Soil Conservation Districts were originally empowered to manage soil and water resources for conservation. However, these powers were expanded in the early 1970s to include “related resources,” including fish and wildlife habitat. California now has 99 Resource Conservation Districts, most of which are funded largely through grants. Although a few RCDs throughout the state do receive limited funds through county property taxes, the Shasta Valley RCD does not receive tax revenues.

Since 1988 the Shasta Valley RCD has utilized over \$20 million in grant funds from a variety of sources. These funds have been used to develop projects that focus on the improvement of fisheries and water quality in the Shasta River and its tributaries. Sensitive to the strong agricultural presence in the Shasta Valley, the RCD has worked with agricultural landowners and irrigation districts to implement voluntary restoration projects ranging from riparian fencing to upgrading diversions to provide fish passage and water delivery system upgrades that benefit the rancher, the water and the aquatic life.

Despite its name, the Shasta Valley RCD boundary extends beyond the Shasta Valley. The Shasta Valley RCD recognizes the need to engage communities outside of the Shasta Valley that nonetheless make up part of the Shasta Valley RCD district area. Acting on this, projects and partnerships are currently being developed in the Sacramento and McCloud watersheds and work is or has been done in the Klamath and lower Scott River watersheds. In the future the RCD expects to continue with district-wide effort.



United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service

(NRCS). The Shasta Valley RCD provides guidance on developing local priorities and projects for the NRCS, assists in coordination and communication, provides education and outreach on NRCS programs to community partners and landowners, and reports on the technical and financial assistance needs. In return, the NRCS houses the RCD in its Yreka office, supports watershed planning and conservation efforts, provides technical and financial assistance and equipment loans to complete projects, coordinates federal NRCS programs with the RCD, and assists in the distribution of public information and conservation education activities. By working together and sharing resources, the Shasta Valley RCD and NRCS are able to do more for local landowners and their communities. The Shasta Valley RCD will continue to utilize and strengthen this relationship with the NRCS.

The RCD and the Natural Resource Conservation Service

The Shasta Valley RCD has had a long and fruitful relationship with the Natural Resource Conservation Service

Funding and Structure of the RCD

The Shasta Valley RCD is a California authorized special district under the direction of an all volunteer board. Unlike many Resource Conservation Districts, the Shasta Valley RCD does not receive funding from local taxes and instead relies on a combination of grant, fundraising, and fee for service options to complete projects. The vast majority of funding currently comes from various

grants. The RCD has managed over \$15,000,000 in grant money from 2006 to 2011 alone.

The five non-paid, volunteer directors meet monthly and additionally as needed to direct projects and meet fiduciary responsibilities. As provided in Division 9 of the California Public Resources Code, Chapter 3, Article 7, Sections 9314 and 9316, the Board of Supervisors selects RCD board member appointments from a list of applicants that have demonstrated interest in resource issues.

Today, the RCD’s Board consists of persons whose backgrounds vary from agriculture, academia, geology and environmental sciences. This diverse Board has given the RCD a capacity to better serve the diverse population within its boundaries as well as address a wide range of resource issues.

Associate Directors serve under the board as technical and professional advisors. Candidates for Associate Directors indicate interest to the board and are appointed by the RCD Board. They must attend a required minimum number of Board meetings each year. Associate Directors cannot vote on actions taken by the Board, but their input is critical for making sure all Board members fully understand the issues under discussion and what their impacts might be.



Currently, the District manages 25 open funding contracts and employs 9 permanent staff. The majority of the staff works on a part-time basis. In addition to permanent staff, the District also employs 16 seasonal employees who work under the direction of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to provide annual salmonid outmigrant estimates (i.e. rotary screw Trap operations) in both the Shasta and Scott Rivers.

2012 Governing Board

<i>Title</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Start Year</i>
Chairman:	Kerry Mauro	2003
Vice Chairman:	William (Bill) Hirt	2005
Directors:	Ryan Walker	2011
	Mike Matherly	2009
	Chris Robertson	2011

2012 Regular Staff

<i>Title</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Start Year</i>
District Administrator:	Adriane Garayalde	2001
Business Manager:	Brenda Nystrom	2005
Senior Project Coordinator/CRMP:	Dave Webb	1991
Project Coordinator:	Tim Beck	2006
Monitoring Specialist:	Karen Mallory	2007
Reporting Staff:	Steve Hill	2007
Project Staff:	Ayn Perry	2010
Office Assistant:	Amanda Hungate	2010
Watershed Coordinator:	Kara Baylog	2011

Service Area

The Shasta Valley RCD service area includes the Klamath watershed and all its minor tributaries from the California State line near Keno to below Happy Camp, the entire portion of the Applegate River in California, the lower end of the Scott River, the entire Shasta River watershed, and the Siskiyou County portions of the Sacramento River watershed, McCloud River watershed and Fall River watershed. The District service area does not include municipalities.

Adjacent areas outside of the district may also be the site of projects if it is consistent with RCD goals, it will have beneficial effects on conditions within the district, and if funding is available.

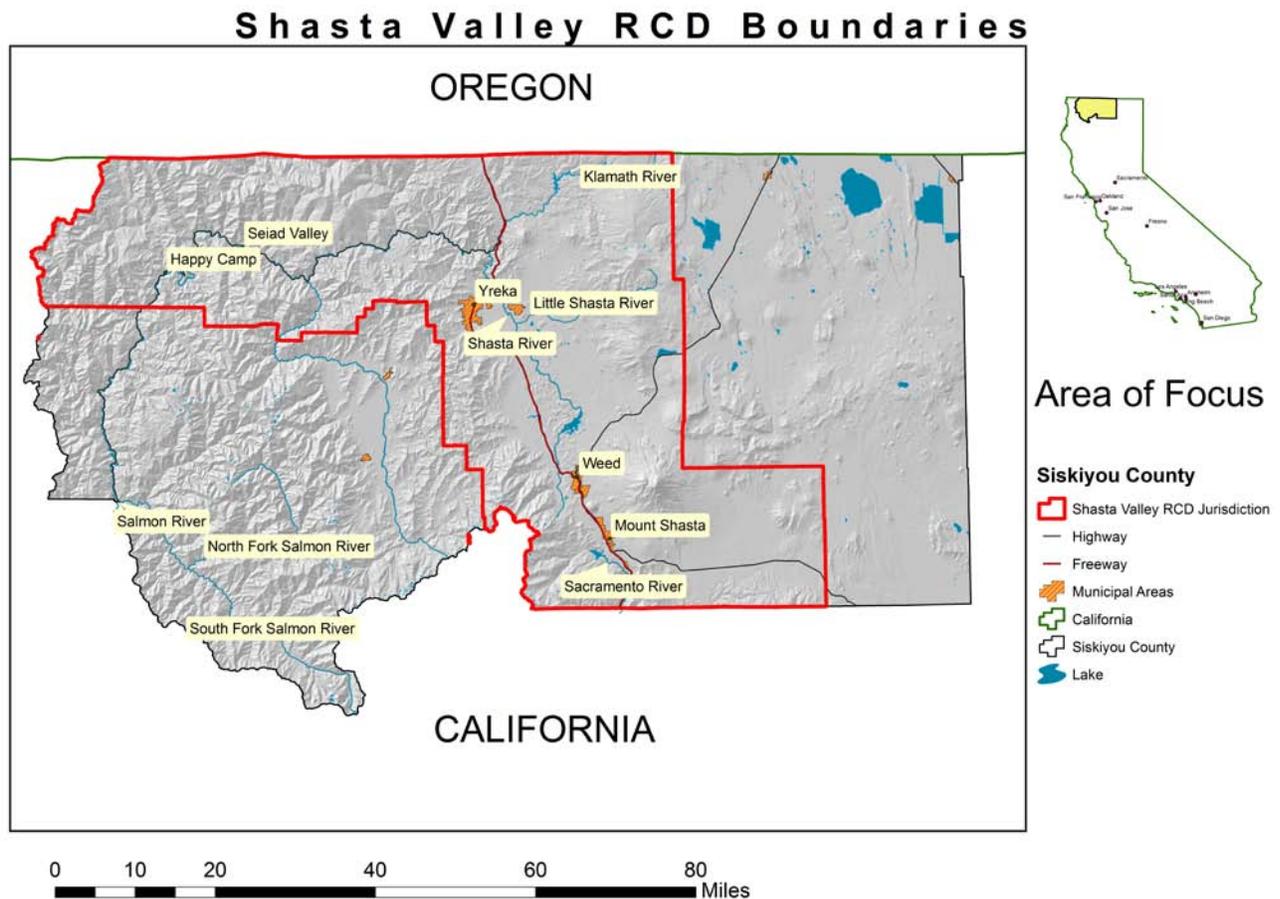


Figure 1: Map of the area served by the Shasta Valley Resource Conservation District. Municipalities and other areas that are not shown on this map are outside of the District.

The service area of the Shasta Valley RCD encompasses a diverse geography and climate, from high desert to alpine conditions. Within this geographic variability, natural resources remain a strong part of the economy of the region, both directly and indirectly. Excluding environmental government agencies, the natural resource based industries operating in Siskiyou County produce over \$235,000,000 for the local economy (Siskiyou County Economic and Demographic Profile 2009-2010).

Natural resource based industry is large part of the cultural identity of the Shasta Valley. In the Siskiyou County over 750,000 acres are devoted to agriculture, primarily for cattle and pasture cultivation operations. Timberlands also make up a sizable portion of the Shasta Valley RCD service area. The top 15 largest employers in Siskiyou County include the Klamath National Forest, CALFIRE, and two industrial timber product producers. The Klamath National Forest and the Shasta-Trinity National Forest make up approximately 59% of lands in Siskiyou County, much of it within the SVRCD boundary.

Recreation is responsible for a sizable portion of economic activity. In addition to the national forests, tourists take advantage of several municipal parks and Castle Crags State Park. Within a day's drive from large metropolitan areas such as Sacramento and the San Francisco Bay Area, Siskiyou County benefits from seasonal influxes of people seeking relaxation and adventure that the area's aesthetic natural resources provide. Visitors enjoying these recreational activities contribute to the local economy through retail purchases.

Mission Statement

To work with interested landowners on a voluntary basis to enhance the management and sustainable use of natural resources in order to ensure the long term economic viability of the community.

Vision Statement

We believe that by working together with landowners we can help the people within the District to meet the environmental and economic challenges they face.

Value Statement

The Shasta Valley Resource Conservation District will approach all interactions with funders, partners, agencies and members of the public with professionalism, integrity, fairness, respectfulness and an open mind.

Future Project Focus and Activities

On March 30, 2012 the Shasta Valley RCD board met to identify and prioritize project focuses for the next five years. The Shasta Valley RCD staff will pursue funding for and develop projects that fall under one or more of the following focus areas. Projects will be selected based on their capacity to help the district and improve the RCD's role, and/or its beneficial impact to natural resources, water quality and fish habitat in the Shasta, Mid Upper Klamath, Upper Sacramento and McCloud watersheds and financial feasibility based on available grant funding or fee-for-service.

Invasive Species

The Shasta Valley RCD will work with private landowners on projects with objectives to completely remove or mitigate the consequences of harmful, invasive plant and animal species. Projects regarding invasive species that cause harm to water quality, outcompete or destroy the habitat of native species, or otherwise reduce the productive capacity of intended land use are of highest priority in this category as they will achieve multiple Shasta Valley RCD project focus objectives.

Projects involving the removal or mitigation of invasive species will likely involve coordination, capacity building and outreach in attracting volunteer labor among the community and obtaining the required equipment and technical skills for the projects.

Student Education

Youth education and outreach to schools will be a priority for the Shasta Valley RCD over the next 5 years. Youth education projects include outreach to schools from elementary to college age students and members of local farming, ranching, and other youth organizations. The Shasta Valley RCD will engage students and young people in the community through hands-on educational activities, presentations, and by using young volunteers in projects and outreach.

Small and Mid-sized Capacity Agricultural Support

The Shasta Valley RCD will provide technical support and coordinate resources for projects that conserve natural resources, mitigate environmental impacts, or increase agricultural efficiency. These projects are intended to benefit agricultural producers that are otherwise unable to efficiently implement similar projects on their agricultural lands alone. In the future, this may include the acquisition of equipment for loan to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, coordinating among agricultural producers to reduce costs and offering monitoring, educational and other support services as needed.

Assisting Natural Resource Users

The Shasta Valley RCD is neither a regulatory agency nor an agent of any regulatory agency. Notwithstanding the independent nature of the RCD, future projects may focus on assisting natural resource users to meet regulatory requirements. Target regulations impacting people within the district boundaries include but are not limited to Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs), timber regulations, fish habitat regulations and others. Assistance will be given to landowners on a voluntary basis only. While the Shasta Valley RCD may conduct outreach, activities for these projects will be developed only for interested landowners who solicit the help of the RCD. Projects that assist landowners in meeting regulatory requirements include the redesigning of diversions, piping installation and fencing projects.

The RCD will not participate in regulatory enforcement.

Land Use Planning

For interested residential timberland owners and small agricultural land owners, the Shasta Valley RCD will offer services and assistance in land use planning. This may include water quality planning on ranch lands and collaborative timber management plans for residential landowners. Land use planning projects will be conducted only on properties where the landowner has requested assistance from the RCD.

Greenways

Building upon the success of projects like the Yreka Creek Greenway project, the Shasta Valley RCD will focus on projects that restore, maintain and enhance open space in community areas that are easily accessible by the public. Greenway projects will preserve and protect natural areas while providing the community with recreational opportunities and enhancing the aesthetic quality of the area.

Project Monitoring

The Shasta Valley RCD will continue to utilize technical skills in fisheries, water quality and water quantity monitoring in projects that develop inventories of relevant data on behalf of landowners and resource users. Such data can be used to help landowners make informed decisions about the use of their land, measure the effectiveness of water quality and water quantity improvement projects and inform the RCD on project areas. The Shasta Valley RCD may also conduct workshops and loan equipment for individual landowners to develop their own monitoring programs. The Shasta Valley RCD may develop a fee-for-service program to develop monitoring projects when grant funding is not available.

Forestry and Forest Management

The Shasta Valley RCD recognizes the importance of timberlands and the timber industry in Siskiyou County. The RCD will focus on projects that improve forest health and fire resilience. Forest management projects may include work on non-industrial timberlands or via partnerships with large landowners such as the US Forest Service through Stewardship Contracts and community forest programs. In the future, the RCD may also acquire forest treatment equipment for RCD use and to loan to small non-industrial timber landowners.

Shasta Valley Public Outreach

The Shasta Valley RCD will make an effort over the next five years to become more engaged with other public service organizations and the public to enhance or develop partnerships and foster community support for projects. Outreach activities may include but are not limited to further public forums, presentations to discuss the activities, benefits and lessons learned from each project, and participation in the meetings of other organizations. RCD staff will develop an inventory of pictures and presentations for each project to have available for public meetings. The RCD Board and Staff will present information to other organizations, the public and at conferences to share project experiences and lessons learned.

Technical Appraisal

Where funding allows, and where potential impacts within the district may be considerable or by community or landowner request, the Shasta Valley RCD may review proposed plans or regulations from state and federal agencies prior to enactment. The RCD will provide a technical opinion and a review of agency models to ensure they fit local conditions as much as possible. The RCD will serve as a neutral third party and assist the community to develop informed comments improving the understanding and dialogue between interested parties.

Accomplishments to Date

In the past five years the Shasta Valley RCD has been instrumental in completing several projects throughout the district. While not an exhaustive description of all the work of the RCD, the projects illustrated below provide a good example of RCD project objectives and the activities the RCD undertook to reach those objectives.

Araujo Dam Removal

The concept of the Araujo Dam project began in 2001, with actual implementation activities beginning in 2007. Activities consisted of the removal of a flashboard dam that had been utilized

since 1857 to divert water for irrigation. In place of the dam, a boulder weir and pump station with fish screens was installed and nine miles of pipe replaced earthen ditches to transport irrigation water. This project utilized over \$2.5 million from nine separate funders.

The purpose of the Araujo Dam Removal Project was to improve irrigation water delivery efficiency for several ranches, while improving fish passages and improving in stream water quality by minimizing impounded water instream, by reducing reliance on the use of herbicides in ditches near the Shasta River, and by reducing irrigation tailwater return to the river. Through the project 30 miles of upstream habitat, previously impeded by the dam, were made more easily accessible to fish. The project included incentives to reduce the demand for water during the spring and fall irrigation season and reduce the amount of warm, nutrient-rich tailwater that returns to the river.

Shasta River Water Association Dam Removal

Along with the Araujo Dam Removal Project, Shasta Valley RCD engaged in a partnership with the Shasta River Water Association and several other agencies, stakeholders and businesses, for another dam removal and irrigation system improvement. Project activities consisted of the replacement of a flashboard dam with the installation of two boulder weirs, the improvement of the irrigation system through the installation of variable speed pumps and the installation of several miles of piping to replace leaky irrigation ditches. At the point of diversion, a new, improved-design fish screen was installed to ensure that fish were kept safely in the river and were kept away from the apparatus. Project activities were completed by the winter of 2009. This project utilized over \$4.5 million from twelve separate funders.

Similar to the Araujo Dam Removal project, the purpose of these activities was to improve the ecological health of the Shasta River, while enhancing irrigators' ability to manage their ranchlands. Fish passage was improved as a result of this project. Improved water quality objectives include elimination of a large heat-absorbing impoundment, reduced oxygen demand, decreased sedimentation, reduced use of toxic chemicals in ditches and a reduction in warm, nutrient-rich tailwater while setting the foundation for reducing the amount of diverted river water. For ranchers, the objectives of this project were to improve water use efficiency and reduce the need for electrical power. All these factors contributed to more efficient operations and reduced the pressure to abandon ranching.

Fish Screens

The Shasta Valley RCD has worked closely with agricultural landowners to install fish screens at irrigation water diversion points throughout in the district. To date 20 fish screens have been installed along the Shasta, Little Shasta and Klamath rivers and Parks, Yreka, and Seiad Creeks.

By installing fish screens the Shasta Valley RCD is reducing the risk of mortality to fish, including the endangered coho salmon. Landowners receive the benefit of keeping fish out of their irrigation pumps and ditches while reducing their incidental impact to other aquatic species.

Shasta River Tailwater Reduction – Demonstration and Implementation (Tailwater I)

The Shasta Valley RCD began this multi-faceted project in December of 2006. Project focus areas were developed through the use of LiDAR (aerial topography surveying) to define tailwater

drainage areas. Tailwater quantity, quality and flow were measured at key locations for pre-project planning. These data were then used to develop tailwater flow models for the entire Shasta Valley. An extensive outreach effort was conducted to engage landowners and develop ranch-specific tailwater reduction project options. Using all this information along with landowner suggestions, the RCD developed a watershed-wide tailwater reduction plan with prioritized project areas on a landscape level and project guidelines to maximize the cost effectiveness of any projects developed. This planning effort now provides ongoing guidance for current and future tailwater reduction projects.

Concurrent to the creation of the watershed wide tailwater plan, the RCD and landowners also implemented five irrigation efficiency projects and one riparian buffer project for three separate ranches and one irrigation district, the Shasta River Water Association. Efficiency projects included the replacement of earthen ditches with the installation of buried pipelines fitted with appropriate valves, or hydrants, the installation of gated irrigation pipeline, and with the installation of water-tight gates and laterals, all to allow better irrigation control to reduce the use of river water and/or the creation of tailwater. These were coupled with tailwater capture systems to enable the reuse of irrigation tailwater in lieu of river water.

The riparian buffer project involved the installation of 3,913 feet of cattle exclusion fencing and served as a pilot project to demonstrate how an adequate riparian buffer zone can reduce tailwater temperatures and decrease nutrient loads. Two stock water systems were constructed to provide water for cattle outside of the exclusion zone and away from the stream bank.

The Shasta River Tailwater Reduction Program is designed to improve water quality by reducing tailwater returns to the Shasta River. This was accomplished by improving water use efficiency for several landowners, thus reducing the amount of water they needed for irrigation. The riparian buffer project was designed to demonstrate how riparian zones can shade and cool remaining tailwater before returning to the river while providing the space to decrease nutrient loads. In addition, the Shasta Valley RCD has worked with participating landowners to improve management of irrigation water systems. All projects were also designed with the intent of encouraging participation of the larger community in future irrigation efficiency projects.

Yreka Creek Projects

The Yreka Creek Restoration Implementation Plan was completed during February of 2010. This project was based in part upon earlier work funded by the Siskiyou County Resource Advisory Committee and awarded to the RCD in 2007. It facilitated the development of both the Yreka Creek Uplands Assessment and also the Aquatic Resource Needs Assessment. The two assessments documented baseline upland conditions regarding sediment delivery to streams, and identified instream fisheries resource needs respectively. The recommendations from these reports were combined with the City of Yreka's Ecological Stormwater Assessment to form the final Implementation Plan. This plan prioritizes potential projects for the restoration and enhancement of Yreka Creek, to be implemented as funding is secured.

The City of Yreka was also able to acquire funding from the California River Parkways Program for the North Yreka Creek Trail Project, which involves six acres of floodplain restoration (debris removal, site grading), habitat enhancement (planting of native species), and trail development

(footbridges, picnic area, parking lot) along a portion of Yreka Creek near the north edge of Yreka. Improvements will also be made to the Greenway Visitor Center behind the Siskiyou County Museum. The RCD has been hired as a consulting project manager for this grant. In addition to the ecological objectives of this project, it will improve the aesthetic values of the city of Yreka for both residents and visitors.

The project is currently slated for implementation in 2012 – 2013.

Internal RCD Goals, Objectives and Strategies

The Shasta Valley Resource Conservation District is continually striving to improve its organizational structure. On November 26, 2012 the Shasta Valley RCD staff met to identify opportunities for organizational enhancement and strategies to meet those goals. On January 22, 2013 the Shasta Valley RCD board reviewed and approved these goals, objectives and strategies.

The Shasta Valley staff has identified several goals and objectives that will streamline our functions and provide clear accountability to partner organizations, grant funders and the public. Over the next 5 years, we will implement the following strategies required to meet these objectives.

Goal 1: A solid and sustainable organization

The Shasta Valley RCD will continue to operate with openness and a clear decision-making process to streamline projects, improve internal functions and provide accountability. Current operations will be improved by the development of protocols and plans that guide daily functions and communications, developing schedules for administrative duties, developing continued and alternative funding strategies, and increasing board interaction within the community.

Objective 1.1: Establish professional and efficient business practices

Objective Strategies	
1.1A	Continue to track and update contract balances. Produce a contract use report.
1.1B	Update procedural manual for administrative tasks
1.1C	Review and update personnel policies
1.1D	Develop an administrative calendar
1.1E	Develop and implement a Drug Free Workplace policy
1.1F	Develop guidelines for pre-project review timelines and protocols

1.1G	Develop guidelines for efficient and effective board meetings
1.1H	Continue to maintain and update an unallocated funds budget

Objective 1.2: Increase Funding Base

Objective Strategies	
1.2A	Develop a list of potential funders, potential donations and grants
1.2B	Develop fee-for-service options to provide RCD assistance to landowners outside of grant funded projects
1.2C	Track in-kind contributions monthly

Objective 1.3: Effective communication

Objective Strategies	
1.3A	Produce an annual report to be made available to the public
1.3B	Produce quarterly CRMP newsletters
1.3C	Update RCD website

Objective 1.4: Increased RCD Board Participation

Objective Strategies	
1.4A	Review and update the statement on the purpose and expectations of the RCD board
1.4B	Develop a written statement on the purpose and expectations of the Associate Directors
1.4C	Attend events and meetings of local organizations to strengthen community relationships
1.4D	Develop an RCD presentation Power Point to utilize at meetings with local organizations, community functions and conferences

1.4E	Develop an outreach packet that includes the Mission and Vision of the RCD for board and staff to use for outreach with the community and local organizations
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Goal 2: Effective projects that meet the needs of the region

The Shasta Valley RCD will work with interested landowners, communities and organizations to realize mutually held natural resource conservation goals. The RCD will learn and grow with the community to develop projects that are relevant and beneficial to landowners working to use natural resources more effectively. Education and outreach will also facilitate interaction with the community by giving the public an understanding of the role of the RCD and how the RCD can be used as a tool to meet their objectives.

Objective 2.1: Effective Conservation-Oriented Projects

Objective Strategies	
2.1A	Develop new projects utilizing the guidelines of the Long Range Plan 2012-2016
2.1B	Continue outreach and educational efforts to the community
2.1C	Develop activities for and participate in community events that celebrate and strengthen the rural character of region
2.1D	Recognize the importance of sustainable agriculture, healthy aquatic resources, and firesafe forests to the culture and lifestyles of the region.

Goal 3: Provide guidance and direction to the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS)

The Shasta Valley RCD and NRCS share a unique relationship. The NRCS has the technical and financial tools needed to implement some projects through the RCD and the RCD may serve as an interface within the community to determine what project needs are. The Shasta Valley RCD will capitalize and strengthen this relationship with the NRCS.

Objective 3.1: Assist landowners with identifying potential NRCS funded projects

Objective Strategies	
3.1A	Make staff and Board members available when needed

Objective 3.2: Assist NRCS with identifying funding needs through the EQIP program within the District

Objective Strategies	
3.2A	Make staff and Board members available when needed

Summary

The Shasta Valley RCD will continue to work at the intersection of science and politics, custom and culture, focusing our efforts on working with private landowners helping them to both meet the changing demands they face, and assist them in efforts they wish to undertake to enhance the natural environment. In this sometimes difficult arena, we will strive to continue to provide accurate and balanced information and assistance on resource related topics.