

# Contra Costa Special Districts Association Newsletter

Contra Costa Chapter of the California Special Districts Association

July 2018 Quarterly Newsletter

## Mark your calendars with the future Chapter Meeting Dates:

~ July 16, 2018 ~ October 15, 2018 ~

*The Chapter normally meets from 10:00 AM - 12:30 PM at the Central Contra Costa Sanitary District - Come at 9:30 AM for a meet and greet opportunity to network. Refreshments will be available.  
Address: 5019 Imhoff Place, Martinez 94553*

*See the map for directions on the last page of this newsletter.*

## Contra Costa Special Districts Association July 16<sup>th</sup> Meeting

“All Things CSDA” will be the theme for the meeting with presentations from CSDA. We have invited special districts from Solano County to attend. Solano County is considering starting a local chapter of special districts. Please welcome any of the Solano County guests that you have the opportunity to meet.

## Is Your District Budget Under \$8 Million?

The Special District Leadership Foundation (SDLF) still has scholarship funds available to help pay for CSDA conferences - including the Special District Leadership Academy, CSDA Annual Conference & Exhibitor Showcase, and CSDA's Board Secretary/Clerk Conference, workshops, and webinars. Funds are available for both district staff and directors/trustees. There is rolling deadline of the 15th of each month and award notifications are made by the 30th of each month as funds are available. Visit [sdlf.org](http://sdlf.org) for more information and applications.



## 2018 CSDA Legislative Days

May 22nd marked the beginning of the 2018 Special District Legislative Days in Sacramento. Attendees arrived early Tuesday morning for the District NetWorks Café where special district officials met with other leaders from their region of California. The networking event was followed by a presentation recognizing Assembly Member Anna Caballero as Legislator of the Year and a legislative briefing from CSDA's legislative representatives.

Special districts leaders then went to the Capitol meeting with legislators and their staff. This year's event offers more Capitol visits than ever before in the afternoon, attendees returned to the Capitol for additional meetings. The Capitol Office Visits were focusing on three priority bills affecting transparency, property taxes, and district land leases. They heard an insightful policy briefing from CSDA staff and attend one of three in-depth policy breakout sessions focusing on human resources and personnel, public works and facilities, and revenue.

## CSDA Student Video Competition

In an effort to increase the understanding and awareness of special districts, the California Special Districts Association (CSDA) is hosting another video competition for California high school and college students. Students are invited to learn more about special districts and enter the contest by creating a 60-second video. The main focus of the video must be on an individual special district, a type of special district, or a service provided by a special district.

For additional information and official rules see the Districts Make a Difference website or contact CSDA's Public Affairs Specialist, Tamara De La Rosa via email [tde ROSA@csda.net](mailto:tde ROSA@csda.net) or by calling 916-442-7887

See the 2017 contest winners at:  
<http://www.districtsmakethedifference.org>

## American Wetlands Billboard

Mt. View Sanitary District celebrated American Wetlands Month again this spring with a billboard which was up during the month of May. McNabney Marsh, the Mt. View Sanitary District treatment plant and administrative offices are adjacent to I-680 just before the Benicia Bridge.



North America's largest and most widespread heron, the Great Blue Heron, has a wing-span of up to six feet. It can be found along the shores of fresh or salt water most often in wetlands. The Great Blue Heron is a very distinctive and handsome bird. It is very majestic to see them in flight, usually I only see them standing and wading to feed.

Great Blue Herons have adapted so well to living with humans that they have even been seen fishing for gold fish in small backyard ponds! Although primarily fish eaters, Great Blue Herons also eat frogs, turtles, crabs, aquatic insects, rodents, and even small birds. Great Blue Herons are solitary feeders, and usually forage while standing in water, sometimes up to their belly.

## Central Contra Costa Sanitary Adopts PARS Pension Rate Stabilization Program (PRSP)

Public Agencies Retirement Services (PARS) designs, implements and administers retirement products designed for the unique needs of public agencies.

The PARS Pension Rate Stabilization Program (PRSP) is designed for setting aside funds (prefunding) to address future pension contribution rate increases (due to lowered discount rates and changes to amortization policies). The PRSP allows a special district to maintain local control over these assets, has the potential for greater returns than a general fund can offer, and assets can be used at any time to pay pension obligations.



## ISD receives Transparency certification

Ironhouse Sanitary District received the Special Districts Leadership Foundation's (SDLF) District of Transparency Certificate of Excellence, once again showing its commitment to open government.



Left Board President Chris Lauritzen, CSDA board member Stan Caldwell, & Chad Davison Manager

To be eligible for the award, a district must satisfy a list of guidelines that show it is on a path of overall transparency, openness and accountability.

"Sharing information with our community is an obligation we take very seriously at Ironhouse," ISD General Manager Chad Davison said. "It is important to our Board of Directors and staff that we work to empower the public with information and facilitate engagement and oversight."

SDLF is an independent, nonprofit organization formed to promote good governance and best practices among California's special districts through certification, accreditation and other recognition programs. This is the third time ISD has been awarded transparency certification through SDLF.

## CSDA Sample Policy Handbook Updates Now Available

Subscribers to the CSDA Sample Policy Handbook will be receiving their quarterly update with new policies. The Inclusive Workplace Policy, provided by CSDA Business Affiliate, Churchwell White, LLC brings districts up-to-date with SB 396.

Another recently drafted policy is the Legislative Advocacy Policy, providing guidance to special district board members and staff when advocating in their district's best interests. This policy was developed by CSDA's own legislative analyst, Mustafa Hessabi. Purchase of the handbook, delivered on a USB drive in an editable format, includes a subscription to quarterly updates.

## Assemblymember Anna Caballero was named the 2017 Legislator of the Year by the California Special District Association

On March 28, Assemblymember Anna Caballero was recognized as the CSDA Legislator of the Year. The event held at the Salinas Valley Memorial Healthcare System with dozens of special district officials and other local government leaders from across the state gathered together to express their appreciation for Assembly member Caballero's support of special districts and local flexibility.



Memorial Healthcare System President/CEO Pete Delgado, AnnaCaballero, and CSDA Board Member Jeff Hodge

Throughout 2017, Assembly Member Caballero provided a thoughtful and considerate voice supporting local flexibility. She supported AB 979 which streamlined the process for special districts to obtain representation on their county's Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) board. Assemblymember Caballero was also one of just a few legislators to stand with special districts in opposing SB 496, which now places the burden of upfront litigation costs on special districts when lawsuits arise from design professionals' negligence.

"Special districts play an important role in closing critical service gaps to communities. Special districts allow local leaders who are highly-informed about a particular service and about the specific needs of an area to make decisions that best serve the community," said Assemblymember Caballero upon receiving the Legislator of the Year award.

During CSDA's 2017 Special Districts Legislative Days conference, Assemblymember Caballero personally met with special district officials visiting the Capitol. She also attended CSDA's awards luncheon in Monterey to support special districts throughout the State who went above and beyond in serving their communities.

## East Bay Regional Parks Acquire Roddy Ranch Property

On April 3, 2018, the East Bay Regional Park District Board of Directors unanimously approved the acquisition of the Roddy Ranch Golf Course. The 230-acre property is being acquired in partnership with the East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservancy, which is providing funding for the majority of the purchase price. The total acquisition cost is \$1,955,000 with the Conservancy providing \$1,935,000 and purchase option. The District is also providing \$205,000 for the purchase of on-site, non-land property. All District funds are coming from Measure WW, approved by voters in 2008.

The 18-hole golf course announced its closing on August 11, 2016 after 16 years of operation. Many of the golf course greens and fairways have reverted to a more natural state. The golf course property and surrounding former Roddy Ranch properties will continue to be grazed to manage vegetation and reduce fire risks.

Park planning is expected to take several years and requires substantial environmental evaluation and community engagement. However, assembling a majority of the Roddy Ranch and other recently acquired properties as one new contiguous Park District property represents a giant leap forward toward bringing Deer Valley Regional Park to fruition.

The 230-acre golf course properties, along with the previously acquired Roddy Ranch properties, are part of the envisioned Deer Valley Regional Park. Deer Valley Regional Park was included in the District's 2013 master plan to protect habitat and expand recreational opportunities in East Contra Costa County. The purchase brings the future Deer Valley Regional Park to 3,254 total acres.



East Bay Regional Park District Ward 7 Director Colin Coffey, EBRPD Supervisor Rex Caufield and Keith Haydon, East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservancy board member, overlook the Roddy Ranch Golf Club,

## Contra Costa Resource Conservation District has a New Manager

Chris Lim says that he is honored and humbled to be the new Executive Director of the Contra Costa Resource Conservation District (RCD). He grew up in Contra Costa County, Lafayette to be exact, so to do conservation work in his home watersheds is a special opportunity for him.

Looking back on the path that led him to the RCD, he realized that he was always a scientist at heart. In remember in elementary school having two books titled, "How Things Work" and "Why Things Are." Out of all the sciences, he has always been most interested in Biology. Chris received an undergraduate degree from the University of California at Berkeley in Integrative Biology with an emphasis in Marine Biology and Oceanography. He also minored in Geography. After college, Chris started working in environmental laboratories, both collecting samples in the field and testing effluent. While he enjoyed working in applied science, he felt the need to make a bigger difference. So that led Chris to take jobs here and there in environmental education. This was the "front line" for creating positive environmental change in our communities. Continuing on this path led Chris to The Watershed Project, a grassroots environmental nonprofit located in Richmond, CA where he managed the "Living Shoreline Program." The program combined native Olympia oyster restoration with in-class education, including field trips, for Title one high schools.

Chris built one of the first community-based oyster reefs in San Francisco Bay (check it out during a low tide at Point Pinole Regional Park). While working, Chris also wanted to expand his skillset, so he enrolled in the Masters of Nonprofit Administration program at the University of San Francisco.

This rounded out his experience and he took the position of Executive Director for a nonprofit in San Luis Obispo County, Central Coast Salmon Enhancement, working on restoring Steelhead trout in combination with environmental education.

All Chris Lim's previous work experience, in the four sectors (private, public, nonprofit, and special districts), has led him to the Executive Director position at the RCD. In his several months at the RCD, he's gained a great appreciation for the skills of the staff and Board, while realizing there is so much potential to do more good work with greater impact.

The RCD's main programs currently focus on increasing watershed health by supporting local watershed and creek groups as well as partner ranchers and farmers. Chris envisions expanding RCD programs to incorporate more habitat restoration,

environmental education, and climate change adaptation. Welcome Chris Lim to the Contra Costa Resource Conservation District!

## Message from the CCSDA Executive Committee

We would welcome your comments and ideas anytime, please email us. Contact information can be found on the last page of this newsletter. Please feel free to send us a message; your valuable feedback will certainly help us continue to improve our service to you.



Stan Caldwell  
President



Ed Duarte  
Vice President



Susan Morgan  
Director at Large

We met in May and we concluded that we would like to have more frequency for the newsletter; we will produce it quarterly and strive to send it out the last week of the month prior to each meeting.

As attendees at our meetings know we have had agenda timing issues, effective with the next quarterly meeting we will provide written reports instead of verbal reports. (The reports will be sent out at agenda time) with the exception of the LAFCO report the Legislative Report, and maybe the California Special Districts Association report.

Susan Morgan wondered if we should move from CSDA web space to our own website, we will explore further the costs and benefits of doing so. It looks like Streamline can help build a website and host it for free! If we are lucky we may have a knock-up to share at the July meeting.

We are exploring a joint Alameda/Contra Costa special districts get-together. Possibly an evening reception with speakers of interested to both chapters.

We learned that Central San may not have meeting space for us due to a construction project that will remodel the multi-purpose room that we meet in, arrangements are being made to utilize the Pleasant Hill Community Center if that occurs.

For our July 16<sup>th</sup> chapter meeting we have invited special districts from Solano County to join us. Please welcome all of them you meet.

## Earth Day & John Muir's Birthday

Environmentalist John Muir who was instrumental in establishing the National Park Service and helped the founding of the Sierra Club would have been 180 years old on his birthday April 21<sup>st</sup>.

An Earth Day celebration held each April on Earth Day at the John Muir House in Martinez always has local special districts with information booths. It was held on April 21<sup>st</sup> this year.

The celebration, hosted by the John Muir Association and the National Park Service, attracted an estimated 2,800 participants who learned about the organizations and public agencies in Contra Costa County that provide education and public outreach on many different environmental issues.



Contra Costa Water District, Central San, East Bay Regional Parks, and Mt. View Sanitary District each had a booth at the Earth Day Celebration. The booths provided information about conservation, ecology, and pollution themes.

The celebration features family-oriented activities, food for sale, live music including a bagpipe band, song performances by original cast members of the play Mountain Days, and exhibits by national parks and local environmental organizations.



Igor Skaredoff from the Contra Costa Conservation District acted as the Master of Ceremonies.

## Accessory Dwelling Unit Bills Scaled Back in Committee

Three bills that would ban all local agency fees on Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) were significantly scaled back in policy committees in April. . As amended, SB 831 (Wieckowski) and SB 1469 (Skinner) would ban impact fees, but would allow water and sanitary districts to continue to charge fees for establishing new connections and capacity charges. These agencies are still bringing their fee schedules into compliance with SB 1069 (2016) and SB 229 (2017), which placed limits on the amount a district can charge for connection and capacity fees. The third ADU bill, AB 2890 (Ting), took amendments that entirely removed the language banning local agency fees.

SB 831 and SB 1469 still ban impact fees, which account for the impacts on the usage of local public services other than water and sewer. Many park districts and fire protection districts rely on these fees to subsidize the indirect costs of growth. Exempting ADUs from impact fees would encourage developers to build more housing specifically as ADUs to evade local fees. The bills exempt ADUs up to 1,200 square feet.

## The "Big Picture" Master Plan

Pleasant Hill Recreation & Park District (Rec & Park) is now launching the next phase of their "Big Picture" Master Plan process. In mid-May, a randomized selection of District residents will receive a survey in the mail requesting feedback and ideas on District parks, facilities and recreational programs. Rec & Park highly encourages all recipients to complete and submit their surveys as soon as possible.

"This phase of our "Big Picture" process is a key opportunity for residents to anonymously voice their input and feedback," said Michelle Lacy, General Manager, and Rec & Park. "The goal is to get a clear picture of community priorities— new projects and improvements most valued by District residents."

The "Big Picture" Master Plan process is a yearlong project to. Project completion is expected in January 2019.

## CSDA 2018 General Manager Leadership Summit

June 24 - 26, 2018

\$625 CSDA member - \$940 Non-member

Contact CSDA or visit the GM Leadership Summit

website here: <http://gmsummit.csdanet/home>

## CCSDA Scholarship/Grant program Historical Society Update

Contra Costa County Historical Society ideas we are currently working on with the historical society:

Create a curriculum friendly history of the independent special districts that could ultimately be used by school teachers. Work with the Contra Costa County Historical Society which would produce a document of 2 to 3 pages per District (including maps) that would reflect the description and history of each District in Contra Costa County in a way that could best be used by a teacher to introduce the various Districts to his or her students. In 2017 they proposed to do this for \$3,000 and expected it would take up to one year to complete. This was a proposal from July 2017 that we did not act upon.

Essay Contest (as proposed by Bette Boatman) - work with the various Contra Costa County Historical Societies to develop an essay contest for high school students to provide up to 1500 word essay about the history of special districts. (For a page with 1 inch margins, 12 point Times New Roman font, and minimal spacing elements, a good rule of thumb is 500 words for a single spaced page). Provide funds up to \$1500, (Historical Society to receive \$250 to administer the contest) the local historical society which would determine the amounts of the scholarship, and they would administer the contest. Winners would be recognized by the chapter.

## CCSDA Associate Members

Organizations and businesses that are not independent special districts can also participate in CCSDA as Associate Members. Associate Members will receive invitations to meetings and other CCSDA activities.

They will be featured in the newsletters; and will be listed on the CCSDA webpage. It will be a great way for them to stay up-to-date on local governance issues and engage directly with special districts.

Our Associate Members fund our Scholarships and Grants, if you know of any interested potential new members let the executive committee know and we will contact them.

## The Town of Discovery Bay CSD will hold a 20th Anniversary Celebration!

A celebration will be held on Saturday, June 23, 2018 at the Discovery Bay Community Center to celebrate the town's 20th anniversary. Congratulations and Happy Anniversary!

## BART to Antioch Service was kicked off with a Community Celebration

The service between the Pittsburg/Bay Point Station and Antioch is 10 miles long and adds two new stations. The extension will be able to carry an estimated 2,400 people in each direction, per hour, during rush hours.



The extension will use a different type of train called a Diesel Multiple Unit (DMU). These trains are state-of-the-art, clean, and comfortable. They are environmentally friendly, meet the US Government's strictest emissions standards, and use renewable diesel from hydrogenated vegetable oil.

The BART to Antioch extension began carrying riders in East Contra Costa County on Saturday, May 26, 2018.

To celebrate, BART held a community ribbon-cutting celebration on Friday, May 25, 2018 at the new Antioch Station featuring free preview train rides and local entertainment.

The new service between the Pittsburg/Bay Point Station and Antioch is 10 miles long, adds two new stations, and provides much needed congestion relief on State Route 4.



## Best in State CWEA Awards

Ironhouse Sanitary District continues to garner major awards, and for the first time in its history has been named Plant of the Year for the entire state by the California Water Environment Association, or CWEA. The prestigious title is one of several ISD and its employees took home in CWEA's recent regional and statewide competitions.



The Plant of the Year award was among three statewide top honors ISD received during the annual CWEA spring conference in Sacramento. Ironhouse public outreach consultant Roni Gehlke won for Community Engagement and Outreach Person of the Year, while the District's Ironhouse Insider newsletter was named Newsletter of the Year. The District also received two second place awards: Supervisor of the Year for collections supervisor Louis Solana, and Community Engagement Project of the Year for the Fats, Oils and Grease (FOG) recycling station.

"This is a great honor for us," said Chad Davisson, general manager. "We're working hard to ensure that Ironhouse delivers the highest quality clean, sustainable recycled water, and to be recognized by our peers as the best in the state is incredibly gratifying."

Davisson also acknowledged a proactive Board of Directors and an innovative team of professionals as keys to ISD positioning itself not only as a leader in the recycled water industry, but also as a role model that other similar-sized agencies throughout California can aspire to.

To qualify for the state awards, entries must first win at CWEA regional competition. ISD is a member of the CWEA San Francisco Bay Section, which held its awards banquet at the Concord Hilton in January.

"We will continue to do our best for our customers," Davisson said. "This is just the beginning of what we want to achieve and where we want to go. We hold keeping the environment healthy and safe for our communities in the highest regard and intend to continue to be among the best in the state."

Below is a complete list of awards Ironhouse received this year:

### *CWEA STATE LEVEL*

- FIRST PLACE: Plant of the Year, Small – Water Recycling Facility
- FIRST PLACE: Community Engagement and Outreach, Person of the Year – Roni Gehlke, R&G Promotions, ISD Public Outreach Consultant
- FIRST PLACE: Community Engagement and Outreach, Newsletter of the Year – Ironhouse Insider newsletter
- SECOND PLACE: Supervisor of the Year – Louis Solana, ISD Collections Superintendent
- SECOND PLACE: Community Engagement and Outreach, Project of the Year, Small Budget – Fats, Oils and Grease (FOG) Recycling Station

### *CWEA SAN FRANCISCO BAY SECTION*

- FIRST PLACE: Plant of the Year, Small
- FIRST PLACE: Collection System of the Year, Small
- FIRST PLACE: Community Engagement and Outreach, Person of the Year
- FIRST PLACE: Community Engagement and Outreach, Project of the Year
- FIRST PLACE: Supervisor of the Year

## Different type font being used beginning with this newsletter

Did you notice the new type font being used throughout this newsletter? Supposedly the font Sans Serif is easier to read than the previously used font Arial. Serif and Sans Serif fonts have a traditional and conservative look and feel

## Is CCSDA Getting Your District News and Press Releases?

Contra Costa Special Districts Association (CCSDA) wants to know what is happening at your district. News of our local districts is of interest to us all. Please send us your news stories! Anytime your special district sends out a news release to the public or to the media please send a copy to CCSDA!

Send your district news to Stan Caldwell at [stan\\_caldwell@comcast.net](mailto:stan_caldwell@comcast.net) and keep us informed on all of the exciting things going on in your special district.



**California Special Districts Association**  
*Districts Stronger Together*

# Send your District News and Press Releases!

Please send your district news to Stan Caldwell at stan\_caldwell@comcast.net. Keep us informed on all of the exciting things your special district is up to. We welcome your news contributions to our newsletter!

---

## Mark your calendars with our future Chapter Meeting Dates:

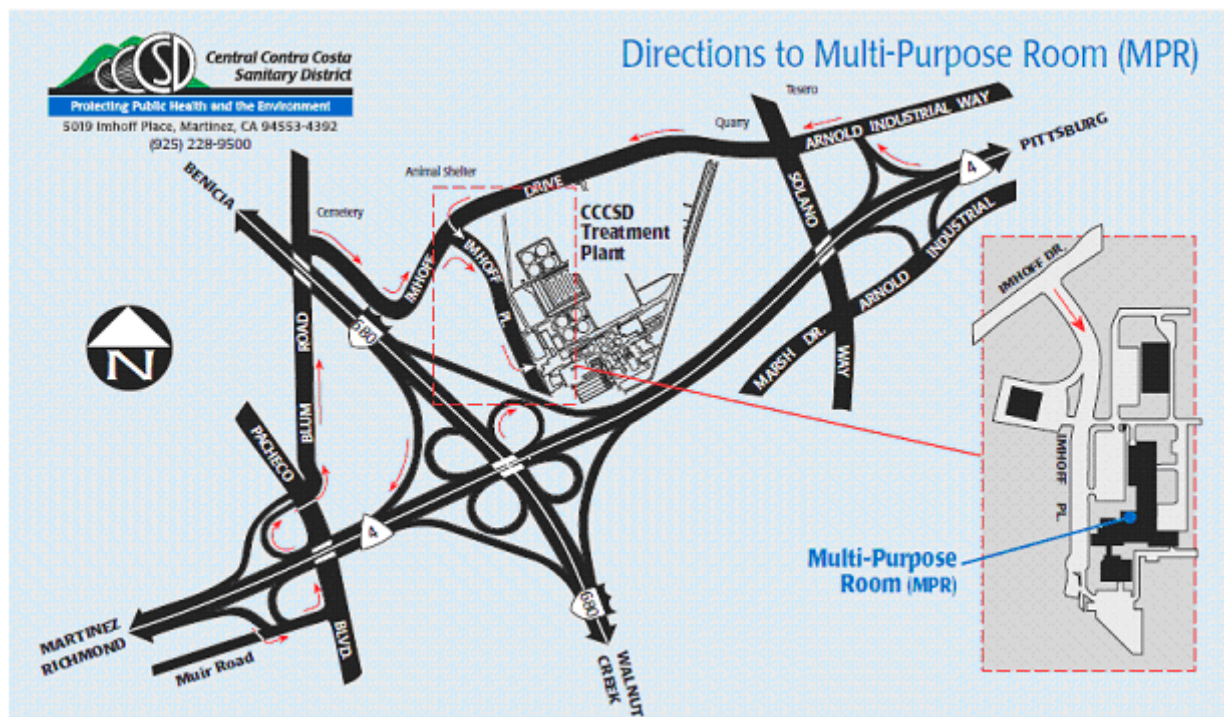
~ July 16, 2018 ~ October 15, 2018 ~

Come at 9:30 AM for a meet and greet opportunity to network, with refreshments available.

👉 Meeting begins at 10:00 AM

---

We meet at Central Contra Costa Sanitary District, 5019 Imhoff Place, Martinez, CA.



---

Contra Costa Special Districts Association  
C/o Central Contra Costa Sanitary District  
5019 Imhoff Place  
Martinez, CA 94553

Central Contra Costa Sanitary District contact Suzette Crayton Email: scrayton@centralsan.org  
Stanley Caldwell - President & Newsletter Editor - Email: stan\_caldwell@comcast.net  
Edward Duarte - Vice President - Email: duarte@dsrsd.com  
Susan Morgan - Member at Large email: smorgan@equilytics.com  
Bert Michalczyk Treasurer - Email: leedscourt@comcast.net:

California Special Districts Association  
1112 "I" Street, Suite 200, Sacramento, CA 95814 877.924.2732

Note the revised link for our chapter web space hosted at CSDA  
<https://www.csdanet/about-csda/chapters-networks/chapter-contra-costa>