



Fall 2020

USDA Offers Assistance for Recent Fire-Affected Farmers & Ranchers in San Luis Obispo County



Disaster assistance programs from the Farm Service Agency (FSA) are available to support recovery efforts from lost livestock, grazing land, fences or eligible trees, bushes and vines as a result of natural disaster.

Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS) can offer the Emergency Watershed Protection Program (EWP) to help reduce imminent hazards to life and property.

Click on this [pdf link](#) to read more about these programs and access additional helpful links.



Upcoming Events

October 23, noon



Carbon Farm Plan at Cal Poly Moves to the Next Stage

SLO County's first Carbon Farm Plan, developed by CSLRCD in coordination

with Cal Poly, begins cover cropping and compost application this fall

In 2018 Coastal San Luis Resource Conservation District (CSLRCD) was awarded funding from Patagonia's Environmental Grants Program to develop a Carbon Farm Plan for more than 4,000 acres of rangeland owned and managed by Cal Poly. As weather patterns become less predictable and more intense, Carbon Farming offers both a localized solution, by increasing the resiliency and adaptability of working lands, and a global solution, by maximizing carbon sequestration on working lands.

Carbon Farming, which is essentially farming with the objective of maximizing carbon sequestration, is achieved by using farming practices that retain and increase organic matter in the soil and minimize soil disturbance. Increased soil organic matter is also essential to healthy, resilient soils that support vigorous pastures and crops, retain soil moisture, and help to regulate pests and disease.

The Cal Poly Ranches Carbon Farm Plan was developed collaboratively with CSLRCD staff and a dedicated and interdisciplinary team of Cal Poly staff, faculty and students led by Ranch Manager Aaron Lazanoff and Agricultural Operations Manager Kevin Piper. CSLRCD staff and the Cal Poly team identified, documented and prioritized a number of resource concerns and management objectives for the ranches, including improved pasture conditions, increased woodland habitat and improved riparian habitat.

These objectives were developed into prioritized action plans, and the potential for carbon sequestration was quantified for each using the COMET-Planner tool, developed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Colorado State to quantify carbon sequestration for agricultural practices.

The resulting plan prescribes more than 15 practices, including cover cropping, reduced tillage and riparian enhancements, that cumulatively have the potential to sequester 1,500 tons of CO₂ a year, the equivalent of removing 362 passenger vehicles from the road annually (EPA GHG equivalencies calculator).

Based on the completed Plan, a grant from the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) Healthy Soils Program was awarded to implement a selection of the prescribed practices on Cal Poly's Chorro Creek Ranch, including cover cropping and compost application. Implementation will begin this fall, and a number of students will gain hands-on experience developing sampling plans, implementing the practices and analyzing the results. Students will be able to apply this skill set and knowledge after graduation, amplifying the impacts of the Cal Poly Ranches Carbon Farm Plan beyond San Luis Obispo County.

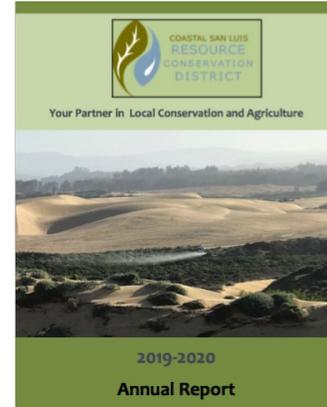
Would you like to discuss Carbon Farming for your farm or ranch?

CSLRCD staff is continually seeking partners interested in developing Carbon Farm Plans in the District. Increasingly, grant funders are identifying Carbon Farming as an essential tool for fighting climate change and creating resilient and adaptive working lands in California. As a result, a number of grant opportunities are available to fund the development and implementation of these plans. Contact CSLRCD Conservation Programs Manager [Hallie Richard](#) for more information.

Board of Directors Meeting
Location TBD

November TBD, noon
Board of Directors Meeting
Location TBD

[2019-2020 Annual Report](#)



Board of Directors

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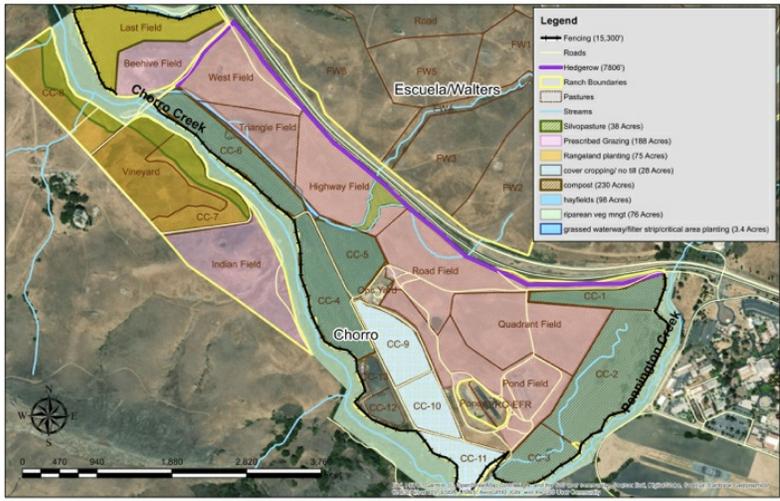
Expertise: agricultural and natural resources management

Cheryl Lenhardt

Associate Director
Expertise: construction and civil engineering

Learn More About CSLRCD

Chorro Ranch, Cal Poly



Staff

Jackie Crabb
District Manager

Hallie Richard
Conservation Programs
Manager

Lindsay Ringer
Conservation Projects
Manager

Joe Murphy
District Engineer

Grant Johnson
Environmental Resource
Specialist

Jessica O'Neill
Restoration Coordinator

Mark Skinner
Restoration Specialist II

Bridget Hobscheid
Restoration Specialist I

Shelly Rachels
Bookkeeper

Della Barrett
Board Secretary

Our New, Easy-to-Use Website Awaits Your Perusal at coastalrcd.org



***Mission Statement:** The Coastal San Luis Resource Conservation District is committed to protecting and enhancing natural resources through education, restoration, conservation, and collaboration with local stakeholders.*

What is a Resource Conservation District?

Resource Conservation Districts (RCD) across California serve as local hubs for conservation, connecting people with the technical, financial and educational assistance they need to conserve and manage natural resources. A defining characteristic of RCDs is that we provide non-regulatory, confidential, free assistance.

RCDs are established under California law to be locally governed with independent boards of directors that are accountable to our communities. Our relationships with the communities we serve and their trust are critical to how we accomplish our work.

Have you visited our new website yet? Only six menu categories help to make the new Coastal San Luis Resource Conservation District (CSLRCD) website better organized and easier to navigate so that you'll find the best programs and other resources to assist you!

For example, if you've heard about our "Healthy Soils Program" or "Carbon Farm Plans" but aren't sure how they might help you, just click on "Projects" for a summary of our main Projects. When you want to learn more about a Project, click "Read More." At the end of that description, you'll find an email address link to the person(s) at CSLRCD who can answer questions and help accomplish your goals.

What Are the Agricultural Conservation Needs of San Luis Obispo County?

The Resource Conservation Districts (RCD) play a vital role in obtaining information from the regions' agricultural producers, partners and agency representatives to help guide USDA-Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) in prioritizing local natural resource concerns, to ensure they are reflected in voluntary

conservation programs and for the most appropriate funding opportunities.



We invite all San Luis Obispo County agriculturalists to participate in this three-question survey and appreciate your input and help!

[Please click here for the survey.](#)

Resource Conservation District Local Work Group Survey

What are the conservation needs of San Luis Obispo County?

Every year local Resource Conservation Districts (RCD) and the USDA-Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) solicit feedback from community stakeholders to help us prioritize local natural resource concerns and to ensure they are reflected in voluntary conservation programs in San Luis Obispo County. We appreciate your help with this survey!

RCD Services

Call us today at [\(805\) 772-4391](tel:8057724391) for help with all of the following:

- Irrigation Evaluations
- Engineer Design
- Alternative Agricultural Grading Review (ARP)
- Erosion & Stormwater Control
- Conservation Easements
- Conservation Planning
- Permit Coordination
- Watershed & Habitat Restoration

Conservation Clip List is a weekly collection of articles distributed by NACD (National Association of Conservation Districts). This link discusses CDFA's Healthy Soils Program in all 10 California RCD regions:

<http://www.nacdnet.org/2017/06/15/california-rlds-cdfas-healthy-soils-program-leading-way-climate-smart-ag/>



The Coastal San Luis Resource Conservation District is committed to protecting and enhancing natural resources through education, restoration and collaboration with local stakeholders.