



COASTAL SAN LUIS
RESOURCE
CONSERVATION
DISTRICT



Photo Courtesy of A. Leigh

2025 / 2026

ANNUAL REPORT

Your Partner in Local Conservation & Agriculture

July 1st 2025 - June 30th 2026

_____ www.coastalrkd.org

Executive Insights



Dominic Roques

This year the District achieved many successes in our Habitat Restoration, Watershed Management, Fire Resilience, and Working Lands programs. We also expanded the District's scope and capacity in rangeland resource management and wildfire resiliency while continuing several multi-year restoration efforts and bringing several planning projects closer to implementation. Throughout these efforts the District continues to strengthen existing, and build new, partnerships with regional RCDs, agency partners, and landowners – partnerships that proved especially important as staff found themselves navigating a dynamic and uncertain federal funding environment. We also welcomed a new board member – Lexie Bell joined us at the beginning of fiscal year 2025/26.

Sincerely, *Dominic Roques*
CSLRCD Board President



Hallie Richard

The Coastal San Luis RCD is incredibly fortunate to have three distinguished Directors who have dedicated over 25 years of service each to the District. Through their leadership they have provided the District with clear vision and steadfast direction. Director Linda Chipping joined the Board in 1996 and immediately began working to keep the Arroyo Grande flood control district under local management. Her tenacity and strategy in the face of red tape has left an indelible impact on resource management across the District. Upon joining the Board in 1998, Director Neil Havlik began building the critical CSLRCD workforce and relationships that have resulted in the restoration of over 500 acres of native dune habitat restoration at the Oceano Dunes State Park. As an agriculturalist, advocate for water quality standards, and Director since 2004, Director Jean-Pierre Wolff embodies the unique role that Resource Conservation Districts play, demonstrating the strength of diverse and balanced partnerships. These are just snapshots of the rich and enduring legacies these Directors have built over their tenures with CSLRCD. It is with heartfelt gratitude that I acknowledge the service of Directors Linda Chipping, Neil Havlik, and Jean-Pierre Wolff.

Sincerely, *J. Wolff*
CSLRCD Executive Director

Mission Statement

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

CSLRCD's Local Impact 2007 TO PRESENT

388 acres of land protected in perpetuity

149 conservation plans developed

191 irrigation water audits completed

518 conservation practices implemented

Over 5,000 community members educated

More than 2,100 acres restored



CSLRCD Board of Directors

The CSLRCD's Board consists of 7 Directors all of whom are appointed by the SLO County Board of Supervisors. Each Director serves a 4 year term.



Dominic Roques
Board President
Serving 3 years



Ron Munds
Vice- President
Serving 7 years



Linda Chipping
Board Director
Serving 31 years



Jean-Pierre Wolff
Board Director
Serving 22 years



Lexie Bell
Board Director
Serving 1 year



Neil Havlik
Board Director
Serving 28 years



Dan Chesini
Board Director
Serving 3 years



Jeana Cadby
Associate Director
Serving 5 years



Chris Bersbach
Associate Director
Stepped down as of 03/26



Pictured Left to Right
Back Row: Joshua Kouri,
Grant Johnson, Sarah Lopez,
Samantha Vitt, Shelly Rachels,
Raymond Dennis, & Amanda Cempa
Front Row: Rhealynn Ravarra,
Kelli Carlisle, Hallie Richard,
Samantha Alvarez & Rue
Not Pictured: Hayley Barnes

CSLRCD Staff

Fire Resilience & Habitat Restoration

Program Manager | Samantha Alvarez

Conservation Program Manager | Hayley Barnes

Restoration Project Manager | Kelli Carlisle

Restoration Technician | Kaitlin Cartwright/until 03/26

Administrative Coordinator &

Board Secretary | Amanda Cempa

Environmental Specialist | Raymond Dennis

Temporary Restoration Technician | Tatum Francis/until 03/26

Rangeland Planner | Grant Johnson

Regional Coordinator-

Central Coast Soil Hub | Joshua Kouri

Restoration Specialist | Sarah Lopez

Director of Finance | Shelly Rachels

Sustainable Agriculture

Project Manager | Rhealynn Ravarra

Executive Director | Hallie Richard

Restoration Specialist | Samantha Vitt

Current Active Projects for the Report Year

25/26 Annual Report Map

Projects

Fire Resilience Program

-  Forest Improvement on Non-Industrial Private Forest Land

Habitat Restoration Program

-  Dune Habitat Restoration at Oceano Dunes SVRA
-  Pismo State Beach Foredune Restoration Project
-  Pollinator Habitat Enhancement

Working Lands Program

-  Central Coast Soil hub
-  Conservation Agriculture Planning Grants Program
-  Mobile Irrigation Lab

Watershed Management Program

-  Chorro Creek Floodplain Resilience Planning Project
-  Los Osos Creek Wetland Restoration
-  Morro Bay Watershed On-farm Water Quality Enhancement
-  Morro Creek Stormwater Management Plan
-  SLO County Flood Control Zone 1/1A
-  Stenner Creek Watershed Enhancement Project
-  Water Quality and Flow Monitoring

Boundary Lines

-  County Boundary
-  District Boundary





Dune Habitat Restoration at Oceano Dunes SVRA

Restoration Project Manager | Kelli Carlisle



Since 2018, the Coastal San Luis Resource Conservation District has partnered with California State Parks at Oceano Dunes State Vehicular Recreation Area to restore large areas of native dune habitat within the off-highway vehicle park. This work is part of a mandate from the San Luis Obispo Air Pollution Control District to reduce elevated airborne particulate matter, beyond what would occur naturally, that can drift downwind of the Park and cause air quality to fall below state and federal standards.

Through partnerships with groups like California Polytechnic State University's Horticulture Unit, American Conservation Experience (ACE), and California Conservation Corps (CCC), about 124,000 plants are planted across approximately 40 acres each year. Each season starts by collecting native seeds and growing plants in the spring and summer months. In the fall, straw is spread over the project area to help temporarily hold the sand in place and support new plants as they get established, similar to how you might use mulch in your garden. In winter, planting is done with help from ACE and CCC crews. Finally, native seeds are spread across the site after planting is complete to increase species diversity and better reflect a healthy, natural plant community.

For the 2025-2026 season, ACE and CCC crews provided us with approximately 6,720 hours of labor. With their help, about 109,000 plants were installed across 42 acres. In addition, 445 pounds of clean native seed were dispersed, and about 400 willow stakes were planted over the entire project site. These efforts support dune recovery, enhance native habitat quality, and reduce dust emissions, helping to protect natural resources and public health.





Pismo State Beach Foredune Restoration

Environmental Specialist | Raymond Dennis

The Pismo State Beach Foredune Restoration and Improvement Project was launched in 2025 through a partnership between the Coastal San Luis Resource Conservation District and the California Department of Parks and Recreation (CDPR). Funded by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's Office of Spill Prevention and Response Environmental Enhancement Fund, this effort will restore approximately 150 acres of foredune habitat along California's Central Coast.



The project aims to improve coastal resilience and restore habitat for sensitive and native species. Invasive plant species have altered natural dune processes by stabilizing sand movement, displacing native vegetation, and reducing habitat quality. Restoration activities focus on removing invasive species such as European beachgrass, iceplant, and golden wattle, using targeted treatments and mechanical removal methods.

Following invasive species control, locally sourced native dune plants will be propagated and installed to restore ecosystem function and support long-term resilience. Restoration is being implemented through a phased, adaptive management approach guided by ongoing monitoring and environmental compliance measures.

Initial work began early in 2026 with invasive vegetation treatment across the project area. Long-term restoration efforts will help reestablish natural dune dynamics, improve habitat connectivity, and enhance the resilience of this important coastal ecosystem.



Before



After



Enhancing Pollinator Habitat, One Partnership at a Time

Conservation Program Manager | Hayley Barnes



CSLRCD staff continued working with producers and land managers to plan and implement pollinator habitat across the District. With funding through CDFA's Conservation Agriculture Planning Grants Program (CAPGP) and CDFA's Healthy Soils Program, delivered through a Fibershed block grant, staff partnered with producers to develop conservation plans and put pollinator habitat on the ground on working lands.

The District lies within Priority 1 habitat for the recovery of the Western Monarch butterfly. To support the recovery of this iconic species, the District integrates habitat into areas of an agricultural operation where appropriate. Location is an important factor in conservation planning and plant selection. On farms and ranches closer to the coast, plantings are designed to provide nectar sources that support overwintering monarchs and the first leg of their long migration. In contrast, more inland properties focus on breeding and migration. In addition to supporting monarch recovery, pollinator habitats enhance on-farm pollination and provide refuge for beneficial insects. As a result, the land steward's working needs are met alongside the broader conservation goal.

Since 2023, CSLRCD has partnered with Camp San Luis Obispo and the California Conservation Corps to establish pollinator habitat on base. This year, that work expanded to a neighboring farm, supported by a Ca Association of RCD (CARCD) block grant funded through the U.S. Forest Service's International Programs Monarch & Pollinator Habitat Restoration on Department of Defense Lands initiative, growing a connected network of quality habitat in the area.

This spring, the District partnered with Tomorro Farms, the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), CARCD and the U.S. Forest Service to host a community hedgerow-planting event at Tomorro Farms. Twenty-two community members participated in planting 600 feet of pollinator hedgerow. This project, and projects like it, are made possible by land stewards who open their operations to enhance sustainability, and by the grant partners who fund and support that vision. Together, they are helping to build a more connected and resilient landscape for pollinators throughout the District.

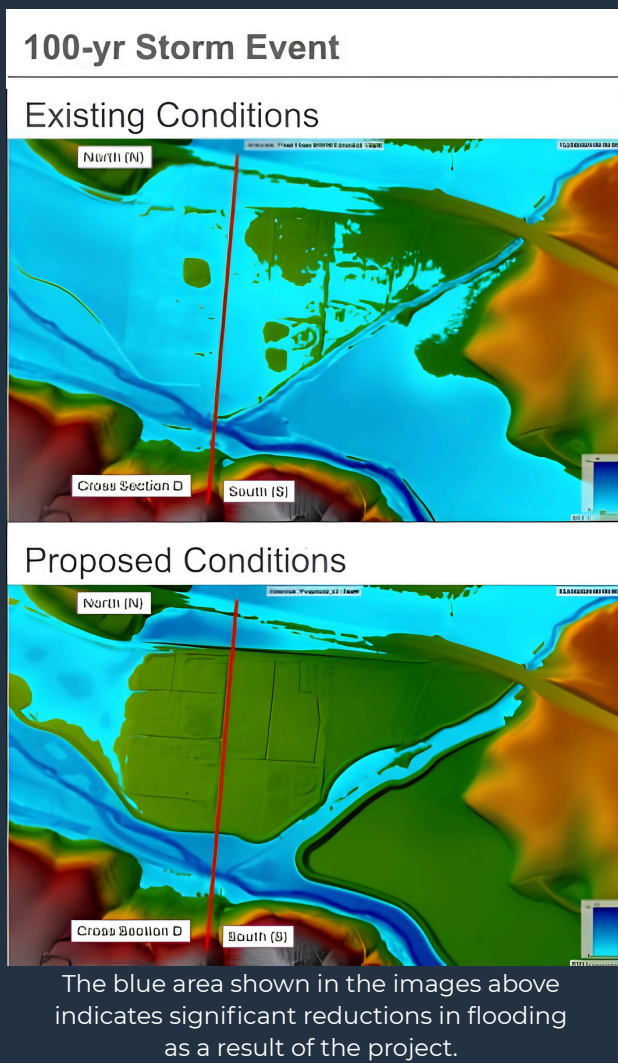




Chorro Creek Floodplain Resilience

Executive Director | Hallie Richard

June of 2026 marked a significant milestone in the Lower Chorro Creek Floodplain Resilience Planning project: following 2 years of planning that included building the hydraulic and hydrologic model, developing over 25 individual conceptual alternatives, and completing environmental review, the project team selected three high priority projects to advance for the initial phase of implementation. The projects include:



1) Berm setbacks and inset floodplain benching at the confluence of Chorro and San Bernardo Creeks. This project is located on parcels owned by CSLRCD (Chorro Flats), the City of Morro Bay, and a private landowner.

Once implemented, this project will reduce flood elevations in the adjacent Chorro Creek Road community and Quintana Road, as well as enhance habitat for steelhead and a Red-legged frog (CRLF).

2) Wetland enhancements on Chorro Flats, including interconnected seasonal ponds and swales that will increase the overall habitat value and flood conveyance capacity and reduce instances of water overtopping the channel-adjacent berm during flood events. The ponds are designed to host seasonal open water habitat, while the swales are designed to activate during seasonal storms as well as during lower frequency high-intensity storms.

3) Floodplain reconnection and relocation of well infrastructure out of the floodway. This project is located between Lower Chorro Flats and State Parks property. Once implemented, this project will reduce fish stranding along the existing county road and set the stage for natural geomorphic processes to take place within the existing Chorro Creek primary and secondary channels.

The project team, with Stillwater Sciences leading the technical approach, completed 65% engineered design plans for each of the three sites, submitted permit packages, and began applying for implementation funding.





Morro Creek Watershed Management Plan

Executive Director | Hallie Richard

The Morro Creek watershed, like many coastal stream systems, is highly modified. Natural meanders have been straightened and rerouted to accommodate roads and sediment from upstream sources deposits in its lower reaches, inviting dense vegetative growth and reducing capacity. Like many coastal stream systems, increased storm intensity resulting from climate change casts these modifications in a dramatic light: in early 2023, homes, roads and businesses were flooded by two sequential storms and extreme high tides that destroyed agricultural crops, stranded families, and resulted in hundreds of thousands of dollars of property loss. Like many stream-side communities, local residents, technical experts, city staff and elected officials are seeking solutions rooted in nature and based on hydrologic modeling that integrate sea level rise and predictive climate change models to plan for, withstand and adapt to future storms.



CSLRCD is supporting the City of Morro Bay in the development of the Morro Creek Watershed Management Plan, with Stillwater Sciences leading the technical approach. The effort is being funded through the California Office of Emergency Services (CalOES) Hazard Mitigation grant program, which receives funding from FEMA. The project team is building



a hydraulic and hydrologic model to fully understand existing conditions and inform the development of Conceptual Alternatives designed to reduce flooding impacts and frequency in the lower watershed. Alternatives will be evaluated and the preferred alternative will be advanced to 60% designs and environmental review will be complete. Throughout the planning phase, the project team will engage with local stakeholders to ensure project outcomes meet the needs of the community. Once the environmental review is complete, the project team will seek funding for implementation.



Forest Improvement for Private Landowners

Fire Resilience & Habitat Restoration Program Manager | Samantha Alvarez

The Forest Improvement on Non-Industrial Private Forest Land (NIPFL) Project was launched in 2024 through a partnership between the Coastal San Luis Resource Conservation District (CSLRCD), the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE), and the California Association of Resource Conservation Districts (CARCD). Implemented across privately owned woodlands within CSLRCD's district, the project supports forest enhancement and fuels reduction activities designed to improve ecosystem health, reduce wildfire risk, and strengthen landscape resilience.

Shaped by a long history of frequent fire and Indigenous land stewardship, the landscapes across San Luis Obispo County evolved with regular low-intensity fire that supported healthy ecosystem function. Today, decades of fire exclusion, combined with climate change and continued development adjacent to wildlands, have contributed to increased vegetation density and elevated wildfire risk. Much of the district falls within Moderate, High, or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones, highlighting the need for proactive vegetation management and forest health treatments.

Project activities focus on implementing forest improvement practices, including tree pruning, thinning, and brush management, to reduce hazardous fuel loads while maintaining ecological function. Treatments are designed to improve stand conditions, promote healthier woodland structure, and create more fire-adapted landscapes and communities.

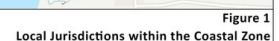


Initial implementation was completed in 2025 with 24 acres of fuel reduction work in the Huasna area, where residential properties are interspersed throughout expansive oak woodland habitat. Work resulted in reduced fuel continuity, improved defensible space conditions, and increased community interest in wildfire preparedness and long-term land stewardship. Building on the success of this effort and continued local demand, CSLRCD is pursuing additional funding opportunities to expand forest health and wildfire resilience efforts across both private and public lands throughout the district.

Conservation Program Manager | Hayley Barnes

In January 2026 CSLRCD received funding from the California State Coastal Conservancy to develop a Public Works Plan (PWP), a streamlined, programmatic coastal permitting pathway designed to increase the pace and scale of forest health and fire resilience projects in the coastal zone of our District. CSLRCD is working with Onterris on the PWP, which is expected to be approved, certified, and ready for use in spring 2027.

This effort builds on similar work by other Resource Conservation Districts across the state, including the Upper Salinas-Las Tablas RCD here in San Luis Obispo County, where a certified PWP has helped move large-scale forest health projects forward in a fraction of the usual permitting time on our own coastline.





Central Coast Soil Update

Regional Coordinator | Joshua Kouri

The Hub—a regional collaboration between CSLRCD and the other RCDs in San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and Ventura Counties—works to build capacity and strengthen partnerships across the region to deliver impactful resources to farmers, ranchers, and other land managers.

Building Capacity

One big step forward this year was hiring Grant Johnson as our new Regional Rangeland Conservation Planner. Grant is the first shared staff member hired by the Hub, adding capacity and critical expertise in a way that would be difficult for individual RCDs to deliver on their own. The Hub is also building capacity through designing a new conservation planning software, a first-of-its-kind solution built around the needs of RCD staff. By improving both efficiency and effectiveness, RCD staff will be able to deliver more impactful plans to more land managers than ever before.

Growing Partnerships

One advantage of participation in the Hub is the connection to a wide range of partners throughout the region. The Hub works to break down siloes and facilitate actionable collaborations between groups. For example, we partnered with the Community Environmental Council to host a workshop for fresh produce growers, focused on co-managing farmland for both food safety and environmental sustainability. This workshop brought together RCD and nonprofit staff, professors from Allan Hancock College, inspectors from the CDFA Produce Safety Program, industry sustainability experts, and a wide range of farmers

Providing Resources

The Hub provides a variety of resources to land managers, helping the local agricultural community stay both environmentally and economically sustainable. One resource the Hub launched this year is “Funding Opportunities for Farmers,” a database of grants and incentive programs tailored to farmers and ranchers on the Central Coast. The Hub also continued to invest in educational events for producers, with two more Rancher-to-Rancher gatherings this year and more workshops planned for the near future!





Rangeland Update: Grazing for Soil Health

Regional Rangeland Planner | Grant Johnson

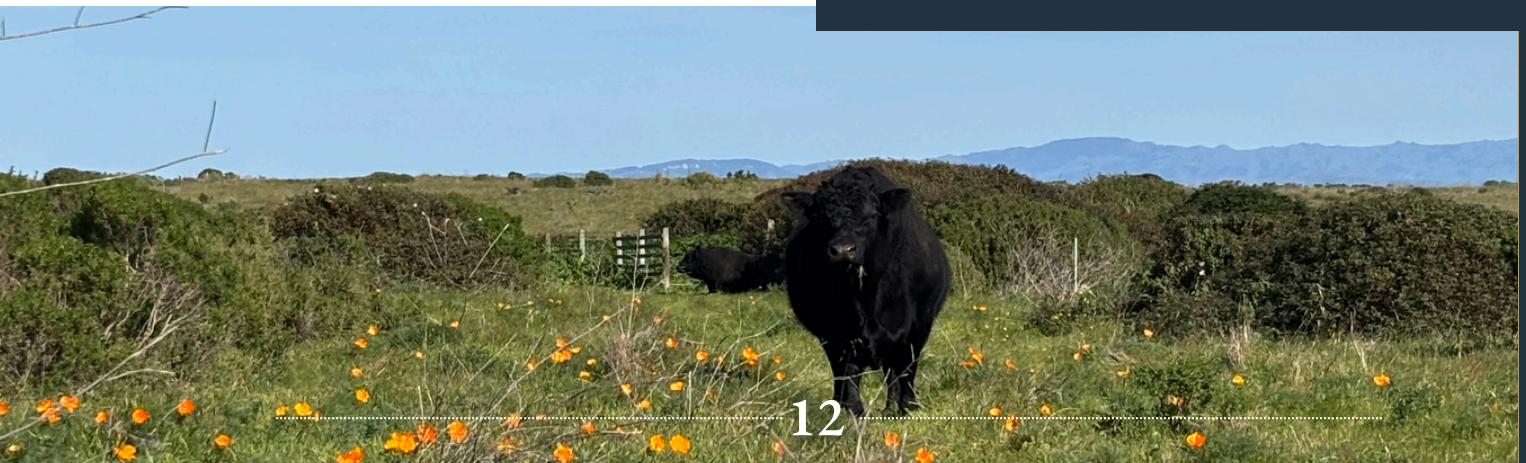


Working rangelands are the backbone of the Central Coast's ecological health, agricultural economy, and rural heritage. Healthy rangelands support more than livestock—they sustain biodiversity, protect watersheds, store carbon, and maintain the open grassland landscapes that define the Central Coast. This is why CSLRCD and the other RCDs in the Central Coast Soil Hub (The Hub) have been building a regional rangeland conservation program and recently hired a Regional Rangeland Conservation Planner. By working alongside landowners, the Rangeland Planner helps ensure these lands and the people who steward them remain productive and resilient for generations to come.

In January, Grant Johnson stepped into the new Rangeland Planner position. Grant is the first shared staff member hired by the Hub. He brings expertise in natural resource conservation and ranch management, allowing him to offer technical support, planning assistance, and on-the-ground guidance to help landowners steward their landscapes and reach their goals. This role combines theory and practice together with producer-driven goals to strengthen the long-term resilience of working lands. By working directly with ranchers, farmers, and land managers we aim to understand their operation, identify opportunities, and develop strategies that improve both ecological function and agricultural productivity.

Looking ahead...

The Hub is excited to offer producer-focused workshops and gatherings across the Central Coast in the coming years. These events emphasize peer-to-peer learning, amplifying the knowledge and experience already present within our ranching and farming community and create spaces for producers to connect, share insights, and learn from one another. Community input continues to guide our planning process, helping tailor workshop topics to local needs and priorities. Keep an eye out as we begin rolling out these events and opportunities for collaboration.

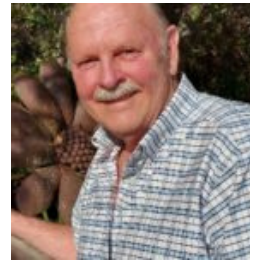


Celebrating Years of Service

Neil Havlik

Reflecting on your 28-year tenure as a CSLRCD Director, what do you see as the District's biggest impact on natural resource conservation and the communities it serves?

I believe that the CSLRCD's greatest impact is in our work for local water management, including water conservation, retention, and quality. We have excellent examples of all three of these types of efforts and how they have improved water management in innumerable small ways. Together they add up to a blueprint for sound water management in the future as our local supply becomes more vulnerable to climate effects and the need for more careful and year round management of water manifests itself. Our work will be a model for similar efforts in the Central Coast farms, ranches, and rural homesites.



Linda Chipping

In the 30 years you've been a Director, your contributions to the District have been immense. What contribution has brought you the greatest joy over the last 30 years?



Early in my tenure as a CSLRCD Director, the lower Arroyo Grande Creek levee breached during a storm, adversely impacting the residents and lands of the area. With the involvement and support of CSLRCD, agriculturalists and community members made a commitment to actively address the flooding issues. The process took several years.

This included dozens of community meetings with local, state and federal agencies and a county self-taxation vote. The community learned through the experience that they did have a voice and could be heard.

Jean-Pierre Wolff

Your ability to concurrently reflect on where we've come from, and drive us to strategic directions has been an incredible asset to the District over your 22-year tenure. Looking forward, where do you see the biggest opportunity for CSLRCD to support and impact our agricultural communities in the future?

Over the past two decades of my tenure on the CSLRCD, the environmental landscape and waterscape of the Central Coast have changed. I envision our highest impact portfolio for the next decade to include watershed and floodplain restoration, groundwater recharge and climate resilience, climate-smart agriculture and soil health, wildfire resilience, long-term regional conservation finance sustainability, and partnerships.



Grants and Private Contracts

July 1st 2025 - June 30th 2026

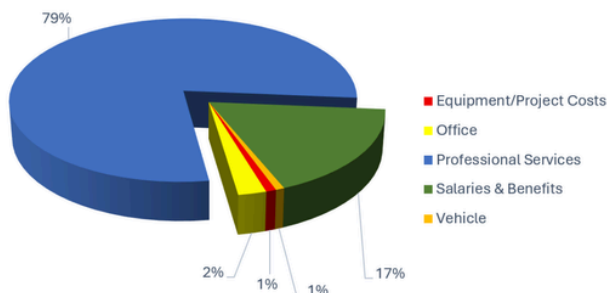
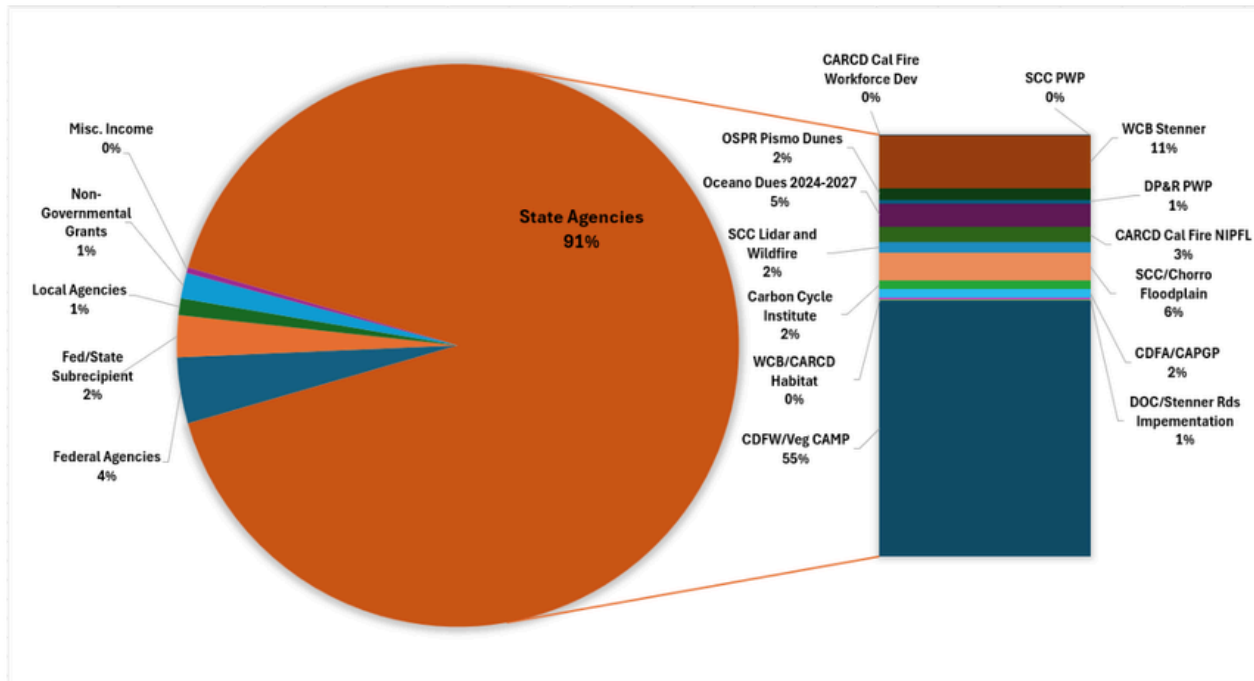
Our operations and community programs are supported by federal, state and local grants, and contracts. We do not receive tax-base funding. These numbers are derived from audited financial statements for the fiscal year ending June 30th, 2026.

By the Numbers

State Agencies	\$ 6,118,449.02	Local Agencies	\$ 64,307.04
Federal Agencies	\$ 255,433.74	Non-Governmental Grants	\$ 98,628.95
Fed/State Subrecipient	\$ 161,557.32	Misc. Income	\$ 22,295.74

Total Revenues

\$ 6,720,671.81



Expenses

Equipment/Project Costs	\$ 53,212
Office	\$ 146,531
Professional Services	\$ 4,972,181
Salaries & Benefits	\$ 1,096,797
Vehicle	\$ 45,514

Total Expenses

\$ 6,314,235

*A complete audited financial statement is available upon request and is on our website at www.cslrccd.org.

Support Our

MISSION



Our work is made possible through grants, fee-for-service projects, and the generosity of our community.

Make a tax-deductible donation today by scanning the QR code below or by visiting our website at <https://www.coastalrcd.org/donate-today>



The CSLRCD may receive tax deductible donations under Internal Revenue Service Code Section 170 (b) and 170 (c) (1). This section says that contributions to a governmental entity are deductible up to 50% of the taxpayer's adjusted gross income. The CSLRCD may accept all forms of contributions including, but not limited to, gifts, property, cash, stocks and securities. California law also allows the CSLRCD to acquire and own land. Your contributions can help the operations and projects of the CSLRCD.



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