



Press Release

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RCRC Installs 2023 Officers and Recognizes Rural Leadership Award Recipients

SACRAMENTO, CA – On Wednesday, January 18, the Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC) installed its 2023 Officers and presented its Rural Leadership Awards.

During a meeting of the Board of Directors, California State Assemblymember James Gallagher administered the official Oath of Office for the 2023 RCRC Officers. Butte County Supervisor Doug Teeter was installed as Chair, Monterey County Supervisor Chris Lopez as First Vice Chair, Modoc County Supervisor Geri Byrne as Second Vice Chair, and Inyo County Supervisor Matt Kingsley as Executive Committee Member At-Large. The newly installed 2023 Officers will lead the organization in championing policies on behalf of California’s rural counties.

“I am honored to have been selected to lead the Rural County Representatives of California in 2023, and I look forward to working with each of my fellow officers in advancing the rural California perspective at the state and federal levels,” said Supervisor Teeter.

In the evening, at their annual reception in Sacramento, RCRC celebrated the new Officers and presented its Rural Leadership Awards to two public officials who have demonstrated an understanding of and distinctive leadership in rural issues and the unique challenges that rural communities face.

Assemblymember Jim Patterson (R- 8th District) was recognized as one of the two recipients of the 2022 Rural Leadership Award, largely because of his role in advancing wildfire risk reduction, community safety, and restoration of Williamson Act funding.

“Assemblymember Patterson authored several bills strongly supported by RCRC, including RCRC-sponsored AB 1154 which sought to create CEQA exemptions for egress route projects in high wildfire risk areas, and AB 1773, which would have appropriated \$40 million to make Williamson Act subvention payments to counties,” said RCRC President and CEO Patrick

Blacklock. “His leadership on bills like AB 1078, which would have relieved a tremendous burden for individuals seeking to rebuild homes destroyed in the catastrophic 2020 wildfires, demonstrates great compassion for communities faced with the danger of wildfire, and the aftermath of tragedy.”

“I am honored to be recognized by the Rural County Representatives of California for my legislation to address rural issues of concern, including my Assembly Bill 431. This bill extended the sunset date for an exemption for the state’s timber harvest plan requirements for projects to create defensible space around structures in high-fire risk areas,” said Assemblymember Patterson. “I look forward to working closely with supervisors and RCRC staff as we continue to support California’s rural communities.”

Angela Avery, Executive Officer of the Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC), also received the 2022 Rural Leadership Award. Ms. Avery was recognized for her bold leadership in forest stewardship and conservation. “Ms. Avery’s leadership has been crucial in several areas of partnership between RCRC and SNC, including bringing attention to the resurgence of California’s tree mortality problem, and providing support for RCRC member counties and their communities after the State’s most devastating wildfires,” remarked RCRC President and CEO Patrick Blacklock.

“It is a privilege and pleasure to accept this recognition from RCRC,” said Sierra Nevada Conservancy Executive Officer Avery. “California rural communities experience unique challenges that are exacerbated by a changing climate, historic lack of investment, difficult geography, and high levels of poverty, among other needs. Achieving SNC’s mission to support the environmental, social, and economic well-being of the California’s Sierra-Cascade would not be possible without strong partnerships with rural counties and the supervisors and organizations, like RCRC, that serve them.”

ABOUT RURAL COUNTY REPRESENTATIVES OF CALIFORNIA (RCRC)

The Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC) is a forty member county strong service organization that champions policies on behalf of California’s rural counties. RCRC is dedicated to representing the collective unique interests of its membership, providing legislative and regulatory representation at the State and Federal levels, and providing responsible services for its members to enhance and protect the quality of life in rural California counties. To learn more about RCRC, visit rcrcnet.org and follow @RuralCounties on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram.

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Assemblymember James Gallagher leading the oath of office for RCRC Chair Doug Teeter, First Vice Chair Chris Lopez, Second Vice Chair Geri Byrne, and Executive Committee Member At-Large Matt Kingsley



RCRC 2022 Rural Leadership Award Recipient Assemblymember Jim Patterson with RCRC Board Chair and Butte County Supervisor Doug Teeter



RCRC 2022 Rural Leadership Award Recipient Executive Officer Angela Avery with RCRC President and CEO Patrick Blacklock