

**Rural County Representatives of California
Board of Directors Meeting
March 25, 2026 – 8:00 a.m.
1215 K Street, Suite 1650
Sacramento, CA 95814**

MINUTES

Breakfast Session: Media Training Session

Karen Terill, President, and Kerry Shearer, Crisis Response Trainer, both of Media Survival Group, provided an informational media training focused on interview preparation techniques and effective message delivery.

Call to Order, Determination of Quorum and Self Introductions

Chair, Supervisor Miles Menetrey, Mariposa County, presided. Present were President and CEO Patrick Blacklock, General Counsel Arthur J. Wylene, and Director of Board Operations, Maggie Chui, clerk. Chair Menetrey called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. A quorum was determined at that time. Those members present:

Supervisor

David Griffith
Martin Huberty
Darrin Short
Lori Parlin
Monica Rossman
Rex Bohn
Ryan Kelley
Jen Roeser
Doug Verboon
EJ Crandell
Aaron Albaugh
Robert Poythress
Miles Menetrey
Madeline Cline
Daron McDaniel
Geri Byrne
Rhonda Duggan
Chris Lopez
Anne Cottrell
Sue Hoek
Shanti Landon
Kevin Goss
Mindy Sotelo
John Peschong
Nancy Ogren
Jeff Stephens

County

Alpine
Calaveras
Del Norte
El Dorado
Glenn
Humboldt
Imperial
Inyo
Kings
Lake
Lassen
Madera
Mariposa
Mendocino
Merced
Modoc
Mono
Monterey
Napa
Nevada
Placer
Plumas
San Benito
San Luis Obispo
Siskiyou
Sutter

Matt Hansen
Jill Cox
Dennis Townsend
Mike Holland
Sheila Allen
Gary Bradford

Tehama
Trinity
Tulare
Tuolumne
Yolo
Yuba

Absent

Brian Oneto
Bill Connelly
Daurice Smith
Bob Nelson
Chris Kelstrom
Lee Adams
Mitch Mashburn
James Gore

Amador
Butte
Colusa
Santa Barbara
Shasta
Sierra
Solano
Sonoma

Public Comment

None

Consent Agenda

- a. January 21, 2026 Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
- b. RCRC Strategic Plan Update
- c. **Assembly Bill 1941 (Gonzalez): Organized Metal Theft**
- d. **California Public Utilities Commission Update**

Supervisor Jill Cox, Trinity County, requested that item c. Assembly Bill 1941 (Gonzalez): Organized Metal Theft be pulled from the Consent Agenda for discussion. This item was considered separately following removal from the Consent Agenda.

Chair, Supervisor Miles Menetrey, Mariposa County, called for approval of the above-listed consent agenda items.

Supervisor Rex Bohn, Humboldt County, motioned to approve the consent agenda items. Supervisor Lori Parlin, El Dorado County, seconded the motion. Motion passed with all Supervisors present voting “Aye,” except:

Not Voting: Yolo County

Assembly Bill 1941 (Gonzalez): Organized Metal Theft

Sarah Dukett, Senior Policy Advocate, provided an overview of Assembly Bill 1941 (Gonzalez), which enhances enforcement against copper wire theft.

Staff Recommendation

RCRC staff recommended the RCRC Board of Directors adopt a “Support” position on AB 1941 (Gonzalez) – Organized metal theft.

Supervisor Jill Cox, Trinity County, motioned to approve a “Support” position on Assembly Bill 1941 (Gonzalez). Supervisor Darrin Short, Del Norte County, seconded the motion. Motion passed with all Supervisors present voting “Aye,” except:

Not Voting: Yolo County

RCRC Chair’s Report

Chair, Supervisor Miles Menetrey, Mariposa County, welcomed supervisors to the March RCRC Board of Directors meeting.

Supervisor Menetrey discussed the recent trip to Washington, D.C., where the RCRC delegation advocated for federal priorities during the RCRC Officers’ Fly-In and the National Association of Counties’ Legislative Conference. Each Board Member attending as part of the RCRC delegation had the opportunity to share insights from the trip.

Guest Speaker – Senate President pro Tempore Monique Limón

Senate President pro Tempore Monique Limón, California State Senate, addressed the RCRC Board of Directors regarding her perspectives and priorities for the 2025–26 Legislative Session. Pro Tem Limón’s remarks focused on legislative priorities, the State Budget outlook, and issues impacting rural communities.

Following the presentation, RCRC Board Members engaged in an in-depth discussion with pro Tem Limón.

President’s Report

Patrick Blacklock, President and CEO, provided a report on recent activities the organization is engaged in that align with the RCRC Strategic Plan goals, encompassing Equitable Access, Impactful Advocacy, Healthy Communities, and Operational Excellence.

Member County Comments and Reports

Chair, Supervisor Miles Menetrey, Mariposa County, provided an opportunity for the RCRC Board of Directors to discuss their individual member county concerns and issues. RCRC staff will review the concerns and issues raised by RCRC Board Members and assess each item for possible plans of action.

The RCRC Board of Directors heard from the following supervisors:

- Supervisor Lori Parlin, El Dorado County, raised concerns regarding Senate Bill 884 (Umberg and Cervantes), which would extend in-person vote center requirements from 11 days to 20 days, noting the burden on rural counties and questioning the efficiency and cost of the mandate.
- Supervisor David Griffith, Alpine County, discussed challenges related to Short-Term Residential Treatment Program group homes in small rural counties.

Supervisor Griffith also emphasized the need to encourage the California Department of Transportation to reopen Monitor Pass between winter storms.

- Supervisor EJ Crandell, Lake County, raised concerns regarding rent stabilization efforts, particularly related to mobile home park residents, and requested to connect with fellow Supervisors to discuss potential approaches.
- Supervisor Madeline Cline, Mendocino County, highlighted Assembly Bill 2494 (Rogers) related to California's demonstration state forests, noting Mendocino County's support while RCRC is opposed.
- Supervisor Geri Byrne, Modoc County, discussed challenges facing probation chiefs due to reduced funding. Supervisor Byrne also provided an update on a meeting with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) Director Meghan Hertel, including discussions related to wolf management.
- Supervisor Doug Verboon, Kings County, reported on Senate Bill 1289 (Hurtado) related to hazardous waste, and also noted ongoing challenges related to groundwater sustainability efforts and probation-related issues.
- Supervisor Aaron Albaugh, Lassen County, provided updates from a CDFW meeting on wolf management, and raised concerns regarding Senate Bill 1305 (Richardson) related to grizzly bear legislation.
- Supervisor Monica Rossman, Glenn County, raised concerns regarding delays in Meals on Wheels services and the impact on seniors, urging counties to review wait times and expand access to support services.
- Supervisor Nancy Ogren, Siskiyou County, added to discussions with CDFW regarding wolves, grizzly bears, water, and fire, noting a productive engagement with leadership.
- Supervisor Darrin Short, Del Norte County, shared that participation in the NACo Legislative Conference was a valuable experience and encouraged counties to engage in NACo and federal advocacy efforts.
- Supervisor Rex Bohn, Humboldt County, praised RCRC for coordinating visits ahead of the NACo Legislative Conference to maximize effectiveness, and noted recent federal funding for forest and biomass-related projects.
- Supervisor Jill Cox, Trinity County, raised considerations regarding small, underutilized federal land parcels being considered for transfer to private ownership to support county tax rolls.
- Supervisor Miles Menetrey, Mariposa County, discussed county efforts related to public defender services, including potential state requirements to establish public defender offices, and raised concerns about impacts on rural counties.

June 2026 County of the Chair Meeting Update

Dorothy Poole, Governmental Affairs Operations Manager, and Chair, Supervisor Miles Menetrey, Mariposa County, presented information about this year's County of the Chair meeting, which will take place in Mariposa County from June 3-5, 2026.

2025 Financial Summary - RCRC and Affiliated Entities

Milena De Melo, Finance Director, provided a comprehensive overview of the 2025 financial standing of RCRC and its affiliated entities. Based on the interest expressed by

the RCRC Executive Committee at their February meeting, this presentation is expected to be provided to the RCRC Board of Directors on an annual basis.

Informational Presentation Regarding RCRC's State Mandates Initiatives

Arthur J. Wylene, General Counsel, and Taylor Kayatta, Deputy General Counsel, presented an informational update on recent developments related to state mandate claims and RCRC initiatives to assist RCRC Member Counties. The presentation included an overview of ongoing efforts to pursue reimbursement for unfunded state mandates and outlined next steps in advancing those claims.

Following the presentation, the RCRC Board of Directors discussed the status of these efforts. RCRC has completed test claim assistance for Sutter County and is currently assisting Butte County, with one additional slot remaining

*Supervisor Sheila Allen, Yolo County, arrived at the meeting at approximately 11:20 a.m.

*Supervisor Nancy Ogren, Siskiyou County, departed the meeting at approximately 12:30 p.m.

State and Federal Legislative Update

Mary-Ann Warmerdam, Senior Vice President Governmental Affairs, along with members of the Governmental Affairs Department, provided an update on key issues at the state level, including the Governor's proposed 2026–27 State Budget, qualified statewide ballot measures, sponsored measures, and key legislation.

John Kennedy, Senior Policy Advocate, Sarah Dukett, Senior Policy Advocate, and Ms. Warmerdam, reviewed sponsored and pending legislation, including bills addressing household hazardous waste reporting, physician workforce shortages, vape disposal and regulation, property tax processes, and California Environmental Quality Act exemptions for childcare facilities. Additional measures related to battery recycling, wildfire smoke impacts, road maintenance cost recovery, and public health protections were also discussed. Update on state budget priorities included funding for indigent care, investments in wildfire resilience, and opposition to proposed In-Home Supportive Services realignment, among other issues.

The RCRC Board Members discussed additional issues of concern, particularly on vehicle miles traveled, the use of gas tax revenues, and the cap-and-trade program.

Water Issues Update

Eric Will, Policy Advocate, provided an update on California water issues, including activities related to the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act Ad Hoc Committee and updates from the California Department of Water Resources. Mr. Will also discussed the State Water Project and development of the California Water Plan 2028, as well as ongoing legislative proposals affecting water policy.

Forest Management and Wildfire Update

Staci Heaton, Senior Policy Advocate, provided an update on legislative efforts and activities across various state and federal agencies. Ms. Heaton discussed recent Executive Orders issued by Governor Newsom, federal proposals to establish a U.S. Wildland Fire Service, and key wildfire-related legislation. Upcoming coordination efforts, including meetings of statewide task forces, were also noted.

John Kennedy briefly discussed the implications of Senate Bill 254 (Chaptered 119, 2025), particularly as they relate to energy affordability and permitting implementation.

*Supervisors Sheila Allen, Yolo County, and Dennis Townsend, Tulare County, departed the meeting at approximately 1:45 p.m.

*Supervisors Lori Parlin, El Dorado County, Monica Rossman, Glenn County, and Kevin Goss, Plumas County, departed the meeting at approximately 2:00 p.m.

Predatory Species Management Update

Staci Heaton provided an update on predatory species management and increasing human-wildlife conflicts. This included federal efforts related to gray wolf de-listing and updates to the Wolf-Livestock Compensation Program. The discussion also included key state and federal legislative efforts addressing predatory species such as wolves, bears, and mountain lions.

*Supervisor Gary Bradford, Yuba County, departed the meeting at approximately 2:15 p.m.

Senate Bill 1176 (Choi) – Agricultural Land: Prohibited Foreign Actors

John Kennedy provided an overview of Senate Bill 1176 (Choi), which would prohibit certain foreign actors from acquiring or controlling agricultural land in California. Mr. Kennedy discussed the bill's definitions, exemptions, and potential amendments, as well as its potential impacts on rural counties.

The RCRC Board of Directors discussed at-length whether to take a position on SB 1176, weighing the potential advantages and disadvantages.

Staff Recommendation

Staff did not have a recommended position on SB 1176, but brought the issue before the RCRC Board of Directors for discussion and consideration of whether to adopt a position on the bill or remain neutral.

A motion was made for “Support if Amended,” but did not receive a second.

Supervisor Darrin Short, Del Norte County, motioned to adopt a “Support” position on Senate Bill 1176 (Choi). Supervisor Jill Cox, Trinity County, seconded the motion. Motion passed with the roll call vote:

“Aye”: Calaveras County; Del Norte County; Humboldt County; Inyo County; Kings County; Lake County; Madera County; Mariposa County; Mendocino County; Merced County; Modoc County; Monterey County; Nevada County; Placer County; San Benito County; San Luis Obispo County; Trinity County; Tuolumne County

“No”: Alpine County; Imperial County; Lassen County; Mono County; Napa County

Abstaining: Sutter County

Not Voting: El Dorado County; Glenn County; Plumas County; Siskiyou County; Tehama County; Tulare County; Yolo County; Yuba County

*Supervisor Doug Verboon, Kings County, departed the meeting at approximately 2:35 p.m.

Discussion on Data Centers

Mary-Ann Warmerdam presented on recent discussions regarding data centers to gauge Board interest and solicit feedback. The RCRC Board of Directors discussed potential opportunities, infrastructure considerations, and local impacts associated with data center development in rural communities.

Summary of RCRC Roundtables with Candidates for Governor Steve Hilton, Chad Bianco, Tom Steyer, and Xavier Becerra

Mary-Ann Warmerdam provided a summary of recent RCRC roundtables held with gubernatorial candidates Steve Hilton, Chad Bianco, Tom Steyer, and Xavier Becerra, which included participation from RCRC Board Members. RCRC staff are coordinating with other gubernatorial candidates to schedule additional roundtables.

Adjournment

Chair, Supervisor Miles Menetrey, Mariposa County, adjourned the RCRC Board of Directors Meeting at 2:48 p.m.