

## About the Ventura County Resource Conservation District

### VCRCD Mission Statement

*To facilitate the Conservation, Sustainability, and Restoration of Ventura County's Natural Resources for Current and Future Generations by working with Willing Partners and Community Members.*

### What is the VCRCD?

[View Service Area](#)

### What is a Resource Conservation District?

Resource Conservation Districts (RCDs), once known as Soil Conservation Districts, are “special districts” of the state of California, set up under California law to be locally governed agencies with their own locally appointed, independent boards of directors. Although RCDs are established locally by the rules of a county’s Local Agency Formation Committee (LAFCO), and the often have close ties to county government, they are not county government entities.

RCDs are a vital link between federal, state, and local programs, helping these agencies meet their conservation goals. RCDs conduct:

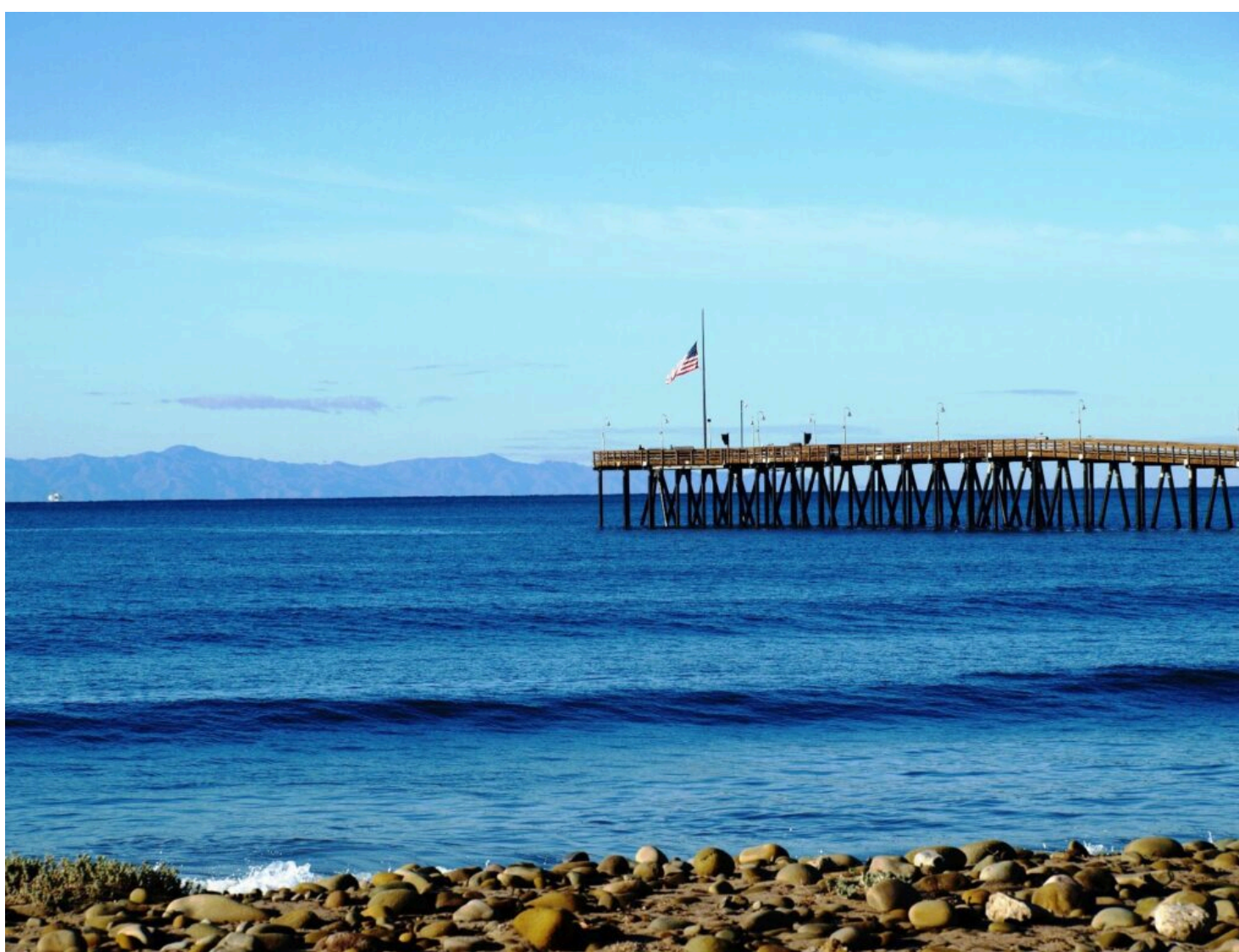
- Watershed planning and management
- Water Conservation
- Water quality protection and enhancement
- Agricultural land conservation
- Wildlife habitat enhancement
- Wetland conservation
- Recreational land restoration
- Irrigation management
- Conservation education
- Forest stewardship
- Fuels Management
- Urban resource conservation

### History of RCDs

In response to the national “Dust Bowl” crisis of the 1930s, when millions of acres of cropland were destroyed by drought and attendant soil loss, the federal government passed legislation establishing a Soil Conservation Service (SCS) in 1937. Conservationists quickly realized that a centrally governed federal agency in Washington could not be as responsive to local needs as it might be, so local counterparts of the SCS were set up under state law to be controlled by local boards of directors. Thus were born “Soil Conservation Districts”, which quickly spread throughout the 48 states. Soil Conservation Districts began to successfully perform the functions originally envisioned by the formation of the SCS.

In California, Soil Conservation Districts have been formed in all parts of the state beginning in the 1940s, continuing up to the present. Today, RCDs manage a diversity of resource conservation projects, including soil and water conservation, wildlife habitat enhancement and restoration, control of exotic plant species, watershed restoration, conservation planning, education and many others. Since most RCDs receive very little regular funding through local taxation, they rely heavily on grants and other types of fundraising to stay in operation.

### Importance of RCDs



### RCDs and NRCS

RCDs and the US Department of Agriculture’s Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)— formerly known as the “SCS,” have a long-standing relationship. As noted above, the NRCS was originally formed to address the crisis of the Dust Bowl, and the legislation establishing local conservation districts was created shortly thereafter. Since then, the NRCS and RCDs have had a close working relationship within districts, with the NRCS appointing a local District Conservationist to provide technical assistance to districts, as well as acting as a liaison between the district and federal programs. Local offices of the NRCS also frequently employ other specialists, such as soil conservationists and engineers, to provide technical assistance to the district board.

RCDs and NRCS formally ratified their relationship through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed over fifty years ago to establish a partnership and mutual roles between districts and the USDA. In 1994 the MOU was revised “to modernize and reinvent their historic partnership,” and to add state conservation agencies to the agreement.

#### Quick Links

[View RCD Board Meetings & Agendas](#)  
[Meet Our Team](#)  
[Register to Volunteer - Become an Eco-Warrior](#)

#### Contact Us

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