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# BUILDING CAPACITY THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS

Ann Baldrige





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# AGENDA

About RCD Greater San Diego

Fire Safe Council of San Diego County & Collaboration

Collaboration with Local Utility

Partnership with School District

Collaboration between RCDs

Collaboration with State and National Association

# INTRODUCTION

We serve to protect, conserve, and restore natural resources through information, education, and technical assistance programs.

Working collaboratively is so much easier than doing it in isolation!



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# OUR DISTRICT

- Covers nearly 2,900 square miles.
  - Encompasses mountains, deserts, forests, and coast.
  - Includes urban, agricultural, and suburban areas.
  - Densely populated.
  - Largest number of small farms (<10 acres) in the nation.
  - 24 staff, Board of 7, 4 main program areas.
  - Current year's budget approx. \$10m
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# RCD PROGRAM AREAS



Farming



Pollinator  
Health



Education



Wildfire  
Resilience

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# FUNDING SOURCES

## Grants and contracts

- RCD seeks competitive grants from state and federal agencies; currently 25. Funded through RCD and Fire Safe Council.
- Some foundation funding and donations through RCD Foundation 501c3.
- Renewable MOU with local utility.

## Tax base

- A portion of land tax on developed parcels in the unincorporated parts of SD County.
- Approx \$400,000 per year.
- Some islands within our tax base; plans for annexation.

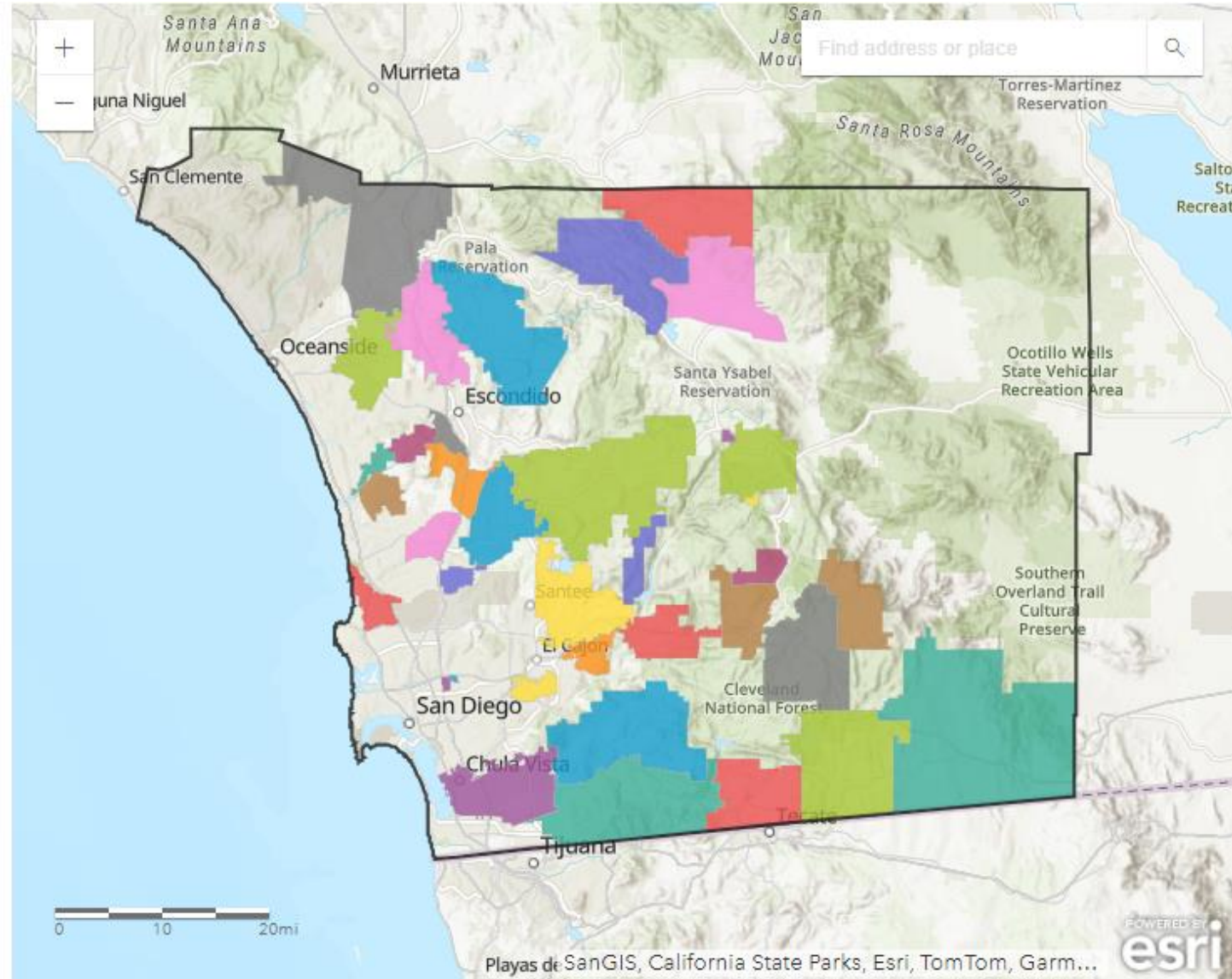
# FIRE SAFE COUNCIL

501(c)3 non-profit formed in 1997.

Managed by RCD staff in partnership with federal, state, and local fire agency representatives.

## Mission

- To provide an exchange of information through education and training, and to foster fire prevention and safety throughout the San Diego region.
- Support the formation and activities of Community Fire Safe Councils- currently 37!





*Alone we can do so  
little, together we can do  
so much.*

Helen Keller



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# FSCSDC TEAM



**Community FSCs**



**Executive Board**



**Individual agencies**



**RCD staff**

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# COLLABORATION FOR PROGRAM

## Homeowner Assistance Programs DELIVERY

- RCD collaborates with FSCSDC to apply for grants for defensible space programs
  - No Cost Chipping
  - Defensible Space Assistance Program
  - Home Assessment Program
  - Education



## Fire Safe Council Support

- RCD staff supports the FSCSDC programs and network of community Fire Safe Councils.
- Recent grant from the CA Fire Safe Council has fully funded our FSC Coordinator staff position.



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# COLLABORATION WITH LOCAL UTILITY

## SAFE Awards

- - Small grants for community FSCs.
- - Leverage funds and support from SD Regional Foundation and RCD.
- - Awarded at Fire Safe Council Volunteer Awards.

## Community Safety Grants

- - Medium sized grants through SDGE community programs.
- - Has funded DSAP work.

## •Fuel Reduction MOU

- - MOU between FSCSDC and SDG&E to facilitate grants for fuel reduction work.
- - Renewable for initial 5-year period.
- - Funds homeowner assistance and community protection projects.
- - Helps meet their objectives of protecting infrastructure.

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# PARTNERSHIP WITH SCHOOL DISTRICT

- Collaboration between Wild Willow Farm and Sweetwater Union High School District
- Both entities applied for and received CDFA Farm to School Grants to support each other
- RCD/Willow Farm
  - Grow food for district's nutrition education programs
  - Grow items for use in cafeterias
  - Support district with farming education
- SUHSD
  - Develop farm
  - Develop/enhance school gardens
  - Increase nutrition education opportunities



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# COLLABORATION BETWEEN RCDs

## One-to-one support

- One RCD supports another.
- Expands footprint of the work and serves more people.



## Master MOU

- Agreement between all 3 SD County RCDs.
- Facilitates collaboration and working across boundaries.
- Developed with support of LAFCO and RCDs' legal counsel.

## Regional capacity building

- Working across the Southern CA region, with multiple RCDs and partners, to build capacity. Stronger together.
  - Regional Forest & Fire Capacity Program
  - SoCal Soil & Water Hub

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# COLLABORATION WITH STATE ASSOCIATION

## Block grants

- CARCD has facilitated numerous block grant opportunities with state and federal funders
  - Wildlife Conservation Board
  - CAL FIRE
  - NRCS
- Helps build capacity among RCDs and reduces reporting (and grant writing) burden
- Have participated in NACD programs too

## Community support

- District Manager / Executive Director listserv
- Staff listserv
- Newsletter
- Annual conference
- They're great!





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# SUMMARY

- Collaboration is central to the work we do!
- Can happen on many different scales with a diversity of partners.
- Enhances projects and programs – helps share resources, expertise, and reach more people.



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# THANK YOU

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