

**MINUTES
OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
SAN JOAQUIN RIVER EXCHANGE CONTRACTORS WATER AUTHORITY
HELD FRIDAY, JUNE 4, 2021**

The Board of Directors of the *San Joaquin River Exchange Contractors Water Authority (SJRECWA)* met in Regular Session on Friday, June 4, 2021 in the Board Room of the *San Joaquin River Exchange Contractors Water Authority*, 541 “H” Street, City of Los Banos, County of Merced, State of California.

The following persons were present:

REPRESENTATIVES:

Central California Irrigation District (CCID): James O’Banion, Chairman
San Luis Canal Company (SLCC): James Nickel, Director

STAFF MEMBERS:

Chris White, Executive Director; Steve Chedester, Director of Policy and Program; Joann White, Director of Finance and Administration; Adam Hoffman, Water Resources Specialist; and Darlene O’Brien, Administrative Assistant

In accordance with the Governor’s Executive Order (N-29-20) and the declared State of Emergency as a result of the threat of COVID-19, the following members of the Exchange Contractors’ Board of Directors and staff, and members of the public participated via teleconference:

REPRESENTATIVES:

CCID: Jarrett Martin, Manager
SLCC: John Wiersma, Manager
Firebaugh Canal Water District (FCWD): Mike Stearns, Director; Jeff Bryant, Manager
Columbia Canal Company (CCC): Chris Cardella, Vice-Chairman; Randy Houk, Manager

OTHERS:

Andrew McClure, Minasian, Meith, Soares, Sexton & Cooper LLP; Kirk Jensen, CCID Director; Cannon Michael, SLCC Director; Kimberly Brown, CCC Director; David Cory, Consultant; Rick Iger, Provost & Pritchard Consulting Group; Eric Ruckdaschel, Landowner; Manny Amorelli, James Irrigation District; Breanne Vandenberg, Merced County Farm Bureau; and Sarah Woolf and Kristi Robinson, Water Wise

CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman O’Banion opened the meeting at 9:00 a.m. and proceeded to take roll call of the Board members in attendance via teleconference.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

The unapproved minutes from the May 7, 2021 Board meeting were presented.

Director Cardella made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Director Nickel. Upon a roll call vote, the motion was passed by a 4-0 vote.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

There was no public participation presented.

BOARD TO APPROVE THE MAY 2021 EXPENDITURES AND FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT:

Joann White presented the May 2021 Expenditure List and Financial Report and provided highlights of the revenue and expenses for the General, Water Transfer, Water Resources Plan, and San Joaquin Valley Drainage Authority Budget Comparisons. An outline of the Cash Activity Report was then presented.

Following the report, a motion was made by Director Nickel and seconded by Director Stearns to approve the Expenditure List and Financial Report as presented. Upon a roll call vote, the motion was passed by a 4-0 vote.

The Finance Committee meeting minutes of May 4, 2021 were provided for informational purposes.

WATER REPORT:

Water Resources Specialist, Adam Hoffman provided a review of his water report that included the following data: Exchange Contractors' total demands: 1,699 cubic feet per second (c.f.s.), of that, 1,357 c.f.s. from the Mendota Pool and 342 c.f.s. from the Delta Mendota Canal (DMC). He then reported that releases from Friant Dam into the San Joaquin River are 400 c.f.s., with 151 c.f.s. at Gravelly Ford. Currently, there is 72 c.f.s. entering the Mendota Pool from the San Joaquin River, with 55 c.f.s. going past Sack Dam as part of the San Joaquin River Restoration Program (SJRRP) flows. Mr. Hoffman reported that earlier this week, a decision was made to curtail the SJRRP flows and, within the next few days, 0 c.f.s. will be going past Sack Dam until mid-September in an effort to conserve cold water in Millerton Lake.

Mr. Hoffman next reported on the following current reservoir storage: Shasta – 1,976,296 acre feet (a.f.); Millerton – 260,561 a.f.; and San Luis Reservoir – 885,570 a.f., observing that the Federal share in the San Luis Reservoir is 288,541 a.f., with the State project water at 597,029 a.f. Next, he stated that Pine Flat is 404,841 a.f. of storage and the Los Banos Creek Detention Dam is at 19,089 a.f. The Upper San Joaquin Basin combined storage is 415,272 a.f., which is about 93% of average, and the accumulated full natural flow into Shasta Lake is 41% of average.

The Delta Operations data was then provided as follows: inflows are 7,991 c.f.s and exports are 1,332 c.f.s. The outflow index is at 3,709 c.f.s and 13% of inflows diverted, noting the controlling factor for this is the Delta water quality. Mr. Hoffman stated that the State and Federal projects

submitted a Temporary Urgency Change Petition (TUCP) which was accepted by the State Water Board. The State Water Project (SWP) and Central Valley Project (CVP) are currently working together to make operations work. The current plan has the Exchange Contractors receiving all their water through the Delta.

Additional data included in the report for informational purposes was: Current Reservoir Conditions, San Luis Reservoir Storage Levels, Shasta Dam Operations, Millerton Lake Daily Operation's Report, and Daily CVP Water Supply Report.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Executive Director White stated that staff spent the majority of time from the past month on operations. The upstream reservoir forecast has dropped significantly with all upstream reservoirs in severe condition. The Temperature Urgency Change Petition (TUCP) was submitted by the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) and U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) and did receive a conditional approval from the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB), which gives the projects a relaxation of outflow standards with some ability for incidental Delta exports. There are two items currently pending approval before the operations plan can be finalized: the SWRCB approval of the Temperature Plan and approval of the joint DWR/ Reclamation Drought Operation's Plan. There will be further discussion of this matter in Closed Session.

DIRECTOR OF POLICY & PROGRAM REPORT:

Steve Chedester provided a report on the following issues:

San Joaquin River Restoration Program (SJRRP) –

- *Mendota Pool Fish Screen and Control Structure* – At this time there is nothing new to report on the reverse flow facility, waiting for the 60% design to be released to be able to move forward. Regarding the fish recapture facility, the inlet facilities analysis including future subsidence parameters have proven to be a challenge and the facilities are being revised based on fisheries' input. There is an estimated completion for the Reclamation/Fish tech team approval at the end of June with the project being delayed approximately two months.
- *Sack Dam, Fish Passage and Arroyo Canal Fish Screen* – SLCC was informed by TSC/Reclamation that the in-river flat plate, cross-river flat plat and cylindrical T-screen alternatives will be taken to 30% design. Weekly coordination meetings are taking place between Reclamation and SLCC.
- *Mowry Bridge* – Construction continues with an estimated completion at the end of June.

WATER TRANSFER PROGRAM:

The Executive Director reported that CCID and SLCC have requested approval of additional groundwater exchange transfer applications. He stated that all required documentation had been submitted and reviewed by staff and was recommending approval on the following transfer proposals: CCID groundwater exchange transfer of up to 62 AF to Del Puerto Water District and

SLCC with up to 164 AF of water to Pacheco Water District and up to 45 AF to San Luis Water District.

Director Stearns made a motion to approve CCID’s and SLCC’s additional groundwater exchange transfer applications for 2021. The motion was seconded by Director Nickel. Upon a roll call vote, the motion was passed unanimously by a 4-0 vote.

WATER RESOURCES PLAN:

Del Puerto Creek Reservoir (DPCR) Project – Executive Director White reported the draft Request for Quotes (RFQ) on the dam designs are being reviewed. There have been several meetings with various State and Federal agencies regarding additional funding for the project. Congressman Harder has been very active in helping find funding for the construction and design of the project and has also requested additional funding from the WIIN Act through the Department of Interior. We are working directly with PG&E and had a site visit to discuss the utility relocation. PG&E is currently working on 30% design for the relocation to give us a more accurate cost for the process.

Orestimba Creek Recharge and Recovery Expansion Project – The Director of Policy and Program reported that all permits have been received to conduct the critical and biological surveys which began this past week. Quotes have been received for drilling the test holes and a driller has been selected. The driller will be coordinating with Dr. Kenneth Schmidt on the test holes and anticipate completion by the end of summer. The required documents have been completed to receive the \$5.6 million Storm Water Grant.

Los Banos Creek Recharge and Recovery Project – The long-term permitting process is on hold until Reclamation completes the Drought Operations Plan as mentioned above.

Community Projects Funding – Mr. Chedester reported that Congressman Costa has selected the Los Banos Creek Detention Dam Reservoir Regulation and Storage Project as one of his ten projects to support. Additionally, this project along with the Los Banos Creek Recharge and Recovery project has been submitted to Senator Feinstein’s office for consideration. We have also coordinated with San Luis & Delta-Mendota Water Authority to provide a list of “shovel ready” projects in our region which has been submitted to the State for potential funding from the Governor’s office.

BAY-DELTA WATER QUALITY AND REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD (RWOCB) REPORT:

Consultant, David Cory gave the following update:

Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program (ILRP): The coalitions are working to generate the Groundwater Protection Values for each high vulnerability township in the Central Valley by the July 19th deadline. The Westside Coalition has posted a link to a video that all growers must watch to comply with their 2020 annual meeting requirement.

LEGISLATIVE REPORT:

State: Executive Director White presented Dominic DiMare’s report and discussed the Governor’s recent drought proclamations, specifically the May 10th proclamation which discusses the State and Federal projects and was the basis for the TUCP, as well as some additional proposed budget for drought investments. It was also noted that the Exchange Contractors will be hosting an upcoming tour with Nancy Vogel, Deputy Secretary for Water at the Natural Resources Agency on June 11th.

Federal: The Executive Director referred to Nancy Williams’ report which discusses the FY22 Appropriations process and the Biden infrastructure proposal. There have been various congressional committee activities including an oversight hearing on the Western drought. Various legislation has been introduced which we are following carefully and may have some impact on the Exchange Contractors.

ATTORNEY’S REPORT:

Legal counsel reviewed the following issues and said that some of the discussions will take place in Closed Session:

- Governor’s Drought Declarations
- DWR/Reclamation’s TUCP
- Temperature Management Plan
- Friant Court of Claims Litigation

FOUR ENTITIES’ MANAGER REPORTS:

Central California Irrigation District:

Manager Martin reported that water deliveries were average for the month of May and currently maximizing wells to offset losses and reduce surface water deliveries. CCID continues to deal with the aquatic weeds, noting that the California Department of Boating and Waterways have come out to spray the hyacinth at Mendota Pool.

San Luis Canal Company:

Manager Wiersma reported a slightly higher average of water deliveries for May. SLCC is also trying to deal with the aquatic weed problem. Staff continues to assist growers with their allocations and making water use data easily available to them. The Board recently approved the budget and staff is focused on their capital projects list for the upcoming construction season.

Columbia Canal Company:

Manager Houk stated that CCC held their annual meeting and the current board members were reelected.

Firebaugh Canal Company:

Manager Bryant reported that FCWD has controlled aquatic weeds through copper treatments that have been utilized by the district. At the San Joaquin River Improvement Project (SJRIP), everything is going well under the new management and operations. They have engaged

Reclamation and are in the process of redoing and reviewing old grant documents with hopes of being reinstated by Reclamation's next fiscal year.

INFORMATIONAL:

Executive Director White presented a thank you letter from Water Education Foundation after receipt of the annual contribution.

CLOSED SESSION:

Chairman O'Banion adjourned the meeting to Closed Session at 9:55 a.m.

The Chairman returned the meeting to Open Session at 11:15 a.m. and announced that direction was given to staff and legal counsel. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:16 a.m.

JAMES O'BANION, CHAIRMAN

Attest a true record of proceedings had
And taken at the foregoing meeting, our
Presence thereat and our consent thereto.

CHRIS WHITE, SECRETARY

CHRIS CARDELLA, VICE-CHAIRMAN

JAMES L. NICKEL, DIRECTOR

MIKE STEARNS, DIRECTOR