

**MINUTES
OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
SAN JOAQUIN RIVER EXCHANGE CONTRACTORS WATER AUTHORITY
HELD FRIDAY, AUGUST 5, 2022**

The Board of Directors of the *San Joaquin River Exchange Contractors Water Authority (SJRECWA)* met in Regular Session on Friday, August 5, 2022 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.

REPRESENTATIVES:

Columbia Canal Company (CCC):

Chris Cardella, Chair; Randy Houk, Manager

Firebaugh Canal Water District (FCWD):

Mike Stearns, Vice-Chair; Jeff Bryant, Manager

San Luis Canal Company (SLCC):

James Nickel, Director; John Wiersma, Manager

Central California Irrigation District (CCID):

Eric Fontana, Director; Jarrett Martin, Manager

STAFF MEMBERS:

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

PRESENT:

Kimberly Brown, CCC Director

The following participated via Conference Call:

David Cory, Consultant; Rick Iger, Provost & Pritchard; Audrey Arnao, WestWater Research and Tom Berliner, Duane Morris LLP (9:50 a.m.)

CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Chris Cardella opened the meeting at 9:00 a.m. and asked Manager Martin to lead the Pledge of Allegiance. Chair Cardella then asked for those participating by teleconference to introduce themselves.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

The unapproved minutes from the July 1, 2022 Board meeting were presented.

Director Nickel made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Director Stearns, and unanimously carried.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

There was no public participation presented.

BOARD TO APPROVE THE JULY 2022 EXPENDITURES AND FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT:

Joann White presented the July 2022 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 Stearns and seconded by Director Fontana to approve the Expenditure List and Financial Report as presented. The motion was unanimously carried.

The approved Finance Committee meeting minutes of June 27, 2022 were provided for informational purposes.

WATER REPORT:

Water Resources Specialist, Adam Hoffman reviewed his water report that included the following data: Exchange Contractors' total demands: 2,054 cubic feet per second (c.f.s.), of that, 1,610 c.f.s. from the Mendota Pool and 444 c.f.s. from the Delta Mendota Canal (DMC). He then reported that releases from Friant Dam into the San Joaquin River are 250 c.f.s., with 23 c.f.s. at Gravelly Ford. Since mid-July, there have been no flows entering the Mendota Pool from the San Joaquin River and we are currently receiving our deliveries from the DMC. The San Joaquin River Restoration Program (SJRRP) flows plan to restart in October.

Mr. Hoffman next reported on the following current reservoir storage: Shasta – 1,673,534 acre-feet (AF); San Luis Reservoir – 637,529 AF, stating that the Federal share in the San Luis Reservoir is 173,689 AF, with the State project water at 463,840 AF. Subsequent, he stated that Millerton's current storage is 280,809 AF and the Los Banos Creek Detention Dam is at 18,336 AF. The Upper San Joaquin Basin combined storage is 392,399 AF, which is about 87% of average, and the accumulated full natural flow into Shasta Lake is 52% of average.

The Delta Operation's data was then provided as follows: inflows are 11,444 c.f.s., with exports at 3,448 c.f.s. The outflow index is 3,796 c.f.s., noting the controlling factor for these flows.

In conclusion, Mr. Hoffman referred to additional data included in his report for informational purposes: 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:

The Executive Director gave brief updates on the following issues:

Operations: Staff continues to track operations. Jones Pumping Plant is currently at three (3) units which is favorable to our operations and the SJRRP flows are now scheduled to start in October.

Legislative: Working with Congressional staff on including the Water Resource Plan (WRP) projects in a potential drought emergency funding. Senator Caballero is working on additional funding for the Del Puerto Canyon Reservoir (DPCR) project.

SGMA: The SJREC GSA board adopted the First Amendment to the GSP at the July 5th hearing, the amendment document can be found on the Exchange Contractors website. Manager Martin confirmed the submittal of the First Amendment to the GSP to Department of Water Resources (DWR) SGMA portal on July 20, 2022. Manager Martin stated that there is no formal deadline for DWR to respond but hoping to receive comments from them by the end of the year.

CVP/SWP Discussions: Regarding the Voluntary Settlement Agreements (VSAs), Phase I is still preceding and we are working to get a seat at the table. A preliminary governance document will be presented to State Water Board staff for comments. There has been a lot of effort with modeling and baseline work on the Reinitiation of Consultation for Long Term Operations (ROC on LTO) and trying to get a new operation's plan in place by 2024.

Museum/Water Office Facility Project: Consultant is working on the Conceptual Plan for the site and working on a cost estimate.

Public Relations: Currently working with our public relation's firm, noting that the Exchange Contractors' website has been updated with FAQs and media relations.

Tours: California Ag Leadership Tour will take place on August 18 & 19.

DIRECTOR OF POLICY & PROGRAMS REPORT:

Steve Chedester provided a report on the following issues:

San Joaquin River Restoration Program (SJRRP):

- *Mendota Pool Fish Screen and Control Structure* –The 60% design and specifications report were delivered by United States Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) and Technical Service Center (TSC) in June. On July 29th, Reclamation submitted their comments to Jacobs and had a joint review on August 4th on the first set of comments. Reclamation released the combined 30% design for the compact bypass facility, fish ladder and fish recapture facility with comments submitted at the end of July.
- *Sack Dam, Fish Passage and Arroyo Canal Fish Screen* – Reclamation stated that they will be moving forward with the modified alternative 1 alignment which puts the fish ladder/ramp on the east side of the dam. We have not received any formal drawings or designs which will need be reviewed by SLCC.

- *Reach 2B Levees* – The 30% design for the South Levee has been released and formal comments from the Exchange Contractors are being submitted.

WATER RESOURCES PLAN (WRP) – UPDATE:

The Director of Policy and Programs provided an update on the following WRP projects:

- *Orestimba Creek* – We are waiting for TSC concurrence on the box culvert so we can finalize the design and initiate long-term license agreements. DWR encroachment permit for geotechnical boring has been received. Design is approximately 85% complete.
- *Los Banos Creek Project* – We have received final comments on the cultural and biological reports and will be submitted to Reclamation so they can begin the NEPA/CEQA and Section 106 consultation process. Projected construction completion by mid-2023. Staff time was focused on working with Legislative staff on getting the Community Projects Funding authorized.

Water Blueprint for the San Joaquin Valley: Currently looking to hire a part-time Executive Director.

Del Puerto Canyon Reservoir (DPCR) Project: Executive Director White gave a brief update on the dam design process, stating that the next round of drilling for Geotech design purposes will start this month.

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

Consultant, David Cory gave the following update:

Groundwater Protection Formulas, Values and Targets: On July 19th, coalitions submitted to the RWQCB Groundwater Protection (GWP) Targets for each high vulnerability township within the Central Valley and are currently under review and out for public comment.

LEGISLATIVE REPORT:

State: The Executive Director referred to Dominic DiMare’s report noting that the Legislature was in recess for the entire month of July.

Federal: The Executive Director presented Nancy Williams’ report which discusses the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 and the FY23 Appropriations.

ATTORNEY’S REPORT:

The Executive Director reviewed Legal Counsel’s report and said that some discussions will take place in Closed Session.

FOUR ENTITIES' MANAGER REPORTS:

Columbia Canal Company: Manager Houk reported that last month's focus was on water quality and pump testing all the district wells. CCC continues to battle aquatics issues.

Firebaugh Canal Water District: Manager Bryant stated that FCWD had an average month on water for a critical year. The office building construction continues to be a slow process due to waiting on supplies and parts. The environmental work on the canal lining project is now complete and should be able to start in November. FCWD board has recently approved a solar project. It was noted that they had lost a well by the Mendota Pool. FCWD is also working on a water sustainability project to deal with critical years and looking for partners.

San Luis Canal Company: Manager Wiersma reported that July was an average month for water deliveries for a critical year. Staff has been focused on water deliveries and operations and are beginning to work on design and maintenance for upcoming capital projects.

Central California Irrigation District: Manager Martin stated that staff is currently working on well rehab pump testing and water quality to prepare for another potentially dry year. They are also getting ready for their capital projects which will include designing and constructing in-house two long-crested weirs.

CLOSED SESSION:

Chair Cardella asked if there was any public input and hearing none, he adjourned the meeting to Closed Session and called for a short recess at 9:45 a.m. The meeting was reconvened to Closed Session at 9:50 a.m.

Chair Cardella returned the meeting to Open Session at 10:42 a.m. and announced that no action was taken in Closed Session.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:43 a.m.

CHRIS CARDELLA, CHAIR

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

CHRIS WHITE, SECRETARY

(Signatures Continue on Following Page)

MIKE STEARNS, VICE-CHAIR

ERIC FONTANA, DIRECTOR

JAMES NICKEL, DIRECTOR