

**MINUTES  
OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE  
SAN JOAQUIN RIVER EXCHANGE CONTRACTORS WATER AUTHORITY  
HELD FRIDAY, OCTOBER 7, 2022**

The Board of Directors of the *San Joaquin River Exchange Contractors Water Authority (SJRECWA)* met in Regular Session on Friday, October 7, 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.

The following persons were present:

**REPRESENTATIVES:**

**Central California Irrigation District (CCID):** Chris Medeiros, Alternate Director; Jarrett Martin, Manager

**Firebaugh Canal Water District (FCWD):** Mike Stearns, Director

**Columbia Canal Company (CCC):** Chris Cardella, Chair; Randy Houk, Manager

**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

**PRESENT:**

Andrew McClure, Minasian, Meith, Soares, Sexton & Cooper LLP; Don Wright, Journalist and Steve Jackson, Elevated Ag

The following participated via Conference Call:

James Nickel, SLCC Director; Jeff Bryant, FCWD Manager; Manny Amorelli, James Irrigation District; David Cory, Consultant; Rick Iger, Provost & Pritchard; Mike Wade, California Farm Water Coalition; and Thomas Berliner, Duane Morris LLP

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Chair Chris Cardella opened the meeting at 1:45 p.m.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

The unapproved minutes from the September 2, 2022 Board meeting, and the Special Board meeting minutes of September 20, 2022 were presented.

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

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:**

There was no public participation presented.

**BOARD TO APPROVE THE SEPTEMBER 2022 EXPENDITURES AND FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT:**

Joann White presented the September 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 Alternate Director Medeiros to approve the Expenditure List and Financial Report as presented. The motion was unanimously carried.

**Draft 2023 Proposed Budget:**

Executive Director White provided review and explanation of the 2023 Budget Summary sheet as informational only. He stated that a workshop will be scheduled to discuss the Water Resources Plan budget in more detail. He referred to the copy of the proposed budget in the Board packets and gave a summary of each budget category. In concluding, Mr. White will be presenting the Draft 2023 Budget to each of the individual member entity boards and will bring it back to the Exchange Contractors' Board for final approval at the November Board meeting.

The approved Finance Committee meeting minutes of August 29, 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: 1,351 cubic feet per second (c.f.s.), of that, 874 c.f.s. from the Mendota Pool and 477 c.f.s from the Delta Mendota Canal (DMC). He then reported that releases from Friant Dam into the San Joaquin River are 459 c.f.s., with 144 c.f.s. at Gravelly Ford. The San Joaquin River Restoration Program (SJRRP) flows started on October 1<sup>st</sup> with initial flow releases targeting increasing flows over Sack Dam to 100 c.f.s. and then ramping up to 280 c.f.s. in December.

Mr. Hoffman next reported on the following current reservoir storage: Shasta – 1,505,406 acre-feet (AF); San Luis Reservoir – 579,404 AF, adding that the Federal share in the San Luis Reservoir is 241,000 AF, with the State project water at 338,404 AF. Subsequently, he stated that Millerton's current storage is 341,669 AF and the Los Banos Creek Detention Dam is at 17,651 AF. The Upper San Joaquin Basin combined storage is 212,124 AF, which is about 69% of average, and the accumulated full natural flow into Shasta Lake is 53% of average. The new water year has started with a target of 4 million AF needed at Shasta for a non-critical year in 2023..

The Delta Operation's data was then provided as follows: inflows are 8,485 c.f.s., with exports at 1,550 c.f.s. The outflow index is 4,900 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:** We are hopeful for a two (2) pump operation this Fall. As refuge deliveries start to ramp up, we will begin seeing depletions in the San Luis Reservoir storage. Fortunately, we are in a better position going into the water year due to a positive storage amount in the San Luis Reservoir as compared with negative storage in San Luis Reservoir at this time last year.

**Legislative:** We continue to work with both State and Federal Congressional staff. There is a tour scheduled with Senator Caballero this month to highlight some of our projects.

**SGMA/Subsidence:** Manager Martin stated that round two of grant solicitations has started for SGMA projects so there will be some decisions made on GSP development and implementation.

**CVP/SWP Discussions:** We continue to participate in the process in regards to the Voluntary Agreements (VAs).

**Museum/Water Office Facility Project:** We have received a preliminary cost estimate for the project which we will be focusing on with the project partners in an upcoming meeting as to scope and vision.

**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* – Jacobs is scheduled to provide a final 60% design by early November. We will be in a holding pattern until around February 2023 while the United States Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) gets caught up on the projects and the combined package can move forward together.
- *Sack Dam, Fish Passage and Arroyo Canal Fish Screen* – Reclamation reinitiated the Reach 3 operation's plan with stakeholders for the Sack Dam complex. The goal is to develop an operations and accounting protocol of the SJRRP flows with San Luis & Delta-Mendota Water Authority (SLDMWA) and Exchange Contractors.

**WATER RESOURCES PLAN (WRP) – UPDATE:**

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

- *Orestimba Creek* – We are ready to resubmit the water availability analysis on the water rights application, currently waiting on consultation with California Department Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). Revisions to the CDFW Land and Streambed alteration agreement was submitted in August, and CDFW has until November 8 to accept or request additional information. We expect to receive the initial draft of a long-term license agreement with Reclamation by late October. CCID and Del Puerto Water District (DPWD) are working together to apply for federal funding through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.
- *Los Banos Creek Project* – Revisions to the draft plan were made and able to move forward. San Luis Water District (SLWD) is drafting the narrative to accompany the spreadsheet by mid-October. The cultural and biological reports were sent to Reclamation in August. We are currently developing a funding agreement with Reclamation regarding the Community Funding amount of \$500,000 for the project. We are also receiving grant money of \$300,000 towards SJRECWA’s share of the project.

**Water Blueprint for the San Joaquin Valley:** Currently looking to hire a part-time Executive Director. A budget and call for funds are being developed.

**Del Puerto Canyon Reservoir (DPCR) Project:** Executive Director White gave a brief update on the dam design process.

**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 19<sup>th</sup>, 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. The Regional Board staff is evaluating the proposed targets and the Regional Board will hold a workshop in December to present the proposed targets.

**LEGISLATIVE REPORT:**

**State:** The Executive Director referred to Dominic DiMare’s report which discussed the closing of the 2022 Legislative session.

**Federal:** The Executive Director presented Nancy Williams’ report noting the FY23 Appropriations; the House Republican bill on California water issues; and the Harder Legislation - Stop the Delta Tunnels Act.

**ATTORNEY’S REPORT:**

Legal Counsel reviewed the following issues and said that further discussions will take place in Closed Session:

- DPCR Litigation
- SGMA Litigation

- Settlement Contractors Drought Relief Plan
- California Water Curtailment Cases

**FOUR ENTITIES' MANAGER REPORTS:**

**Columbia Canal Company:** Manager Houk reported that CCC is currently working on budget reviews, ag waivers and drainage issues.

**Central California Irrigation District:** Manager Martin stated that CCID is currently working on winter construction with hopes of designing and constructing three long-crested weirs in-house.

**Firebaugh Canal Water District:** Manager Bryant stated they will be opening bids for the 2-mile canal lining project. The office building construction will hopefully be complete by next month. Working with Minasian Law regarding the specifics of their proposed solar project.

**INFORMATIONAL:**

**Upcoming Events/Meetings:**

- Tour with Senator Caballero – October 13
- ACWA Fall Conference – November 29 - December 1

**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 2:37 p.m. The meeting was reconvened to Closed Session at 2:48 p.m.

Chair Cardella returned the meeting to Open Session at 3:28 p.m. and announced that direction was given to staff and legal counsel. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:29 p.m.

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CHRIS CARDELLA, DIRECTOR

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

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CHRIS WHITE, SECRETARY

(Signatures Continue on Following Page)

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MIKE STEARNS, VICE-CHAIR

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CHRIS MEDEIROS, ALTERNATE DIRECTOR