

**MINUTES
OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
SAN JOAQUIN RIVER EXCHANGE CONTRACTORS WATER AUTHORITY
HELD FRIDAY, MARCH 3, 2023**

The Board of Directors of the *San Joaquin River Exchange Contractors Water Authority (SJRECWA)* met in Regular Session on Friday, March 3, 2023 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): Eric Fontana, Director; Jarrett Martin, Manager

San Luis Water District (SLCC): James Nickel, Director

Firebaugh Canal Water District (FCWD): Mike Stearns, Director; Jeff Bryant, Manager

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

STAFF MEMBERS:

Chris White, Executive Director; Steve Chedester, Director of Policy and Programs; Joann White, Director of Finance and Administration; and Adam Hoffman, Water Resources Specialist

PRESENT:

Andrew McClure, Minasian, Meith, Soares, Sexton & Cooper LLP; Kimberly Brown, CCC Director; and David Cory, Consultant

The following participated via Conference Call:

Rick Iger, Provost & Pritchard; Andrew Garcia, Valley Water District; Mitch Partovi, The Water Agency; and Tom Berliner, Duane Morris LLP

CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Chris Cardella opened the meeting at 9:10 a.m. Introductions were then provided by those participating via teleconference.

REVIEW OF AGENDA:

There were no proposed changes to the Agenda.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

The unapproved minutes from the February 10, 2023 Regular Board meeting and the February 27, 2023 Special Board meeting were presented.

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

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

Upon asking for any public comments, none were provided.

BOARD TO APPROVE THE FEBRUARY 2023 EXPENDITURES AND FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT:

Joann White presented and reviewed the February 2023 Expenditure List and Financial Report.

A motion was made by Director Nickel and seconded by Director Stearns to approve the Expenditure List and Financial Report as presented. The motion was unanimously carried.

WATER REPORT:

Water Resources Specialist, Adam Hoffman began his report by providing a recap of the recent notifications regarding flows being released from Friant and Pine Flat Dams, with additional side flows from Kings River. At this time, they are estimating that as a result of the predicted precipitation and snow accumulation, these flows will continue at least through the end of June. Mr. Hoffman also reported that Central Valley Operations (CVO) is forecasting that San Luis Reservoir will fill within the next 45 days for both the federal and state side. He then referred to his Board report and provided an overview the following data: Exchange Contractors' total demands: 316 cubic feet per second (c.f.s.), of that, 261 c.f.s. from the Mendota Pool and 45 c.f.s from the Delta Mendota Canal (DMC). Recapping releases from Friant Dam into the San Joaquin River, he reported a total of 460 c.f.s., with 930 c.f.s. at Gravelly Ford. Currently, there is 741 c.f.s. entering the Mendota Pool and 812 c.f.s. going past Sack Dam.

Mr. Hoffman continued his report by reviewing the following current reservoir storage: Shasta – 2,747,095 acre-feet (AF); San Luis Reservoir (SLR) – 1,560,651 AF, with the Federal share at 672,705 AF, and the State project water at 887,946 AF. He stated that Millerton's current storage is 234,814 AF and the Los Banos Creek Detention Dam is 22,152 AF. The Upper San Joaquin Basin combined storage is 329,712 AF, which is about 125% of average, and the accumulated full natural flow into Shasta Lake is 78% of average.

The Delta Operation's data was then provided as follows: inflows are 34,110 c.f.s., with exports increasing since posting his report by 5,800 c.f.s. The outflow index is 34,400 c.f.s. In conclusion, Mr. Hoffman referred to additional data included in his report that covers current reservoir conditions and projected forecasts.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

The Executive Director stated that it was good news when the Governor signed an Executive Order that provided a path for the State Water Resources Control Board to grant the Temporary Urgency Change Petition (TUCP) applied by Reclamation and the California Department of Water Resources

(DWR), noting that the Exchange Contractors were signatory to a joint letter to the State Water Resources Control in support of the TUCP. Executive Director White then reported on proposed state legislation, adding that a Legislative Committee meeting should be scheduled within the next month. Lastly, Mr. White reported on an informational hearing held by the State Assembly Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee and said that we are working through various channels in responding to comments made by presenters.

WATER TRANSFER PROGRAM – WATER TRANSFER COMMITTEE REPORT:

The Executive Director presented the proposed transfers listed as agenda items 8. B) through D) and reported that upon review, the Water Transfer Committee recommended approval of each of the proposals as presented. A motion followed by Director Stearns and seconded by Director Nickel to approve the proposed transfers as presented. The motion was unanimously carried.

DIRECTOR OF POLICY & PROGRAMS REPORT:

Steve Chedester provided a brief update on the Reach 2B Mendota Pool Fish Screen and Control Structure project explaining that the final three borings will be completed next week; once final report is completed, they hope to receive confirmation of the 60% design and are able to move forward with the 90%. Mr. Chedester said that he is still waiting on an updated schedule but included in his report his best estimate updating the schedule.

WATER RESOURCES PLAN (WRP) – UPDATE:

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

- *Orestimba Creek* – Permitting process has been completed and the last landowner easement agreement should be finalized by mid-March.
- *Los Banos Creek Project* – Comments to the draft NEPA/CEQA were submitted last week; cultural work started and should be completed by the end of March; and the Financial Assistance Agreement (FAA) continues to move forward.

Mr. Chedester also reported that the Water Blueprint for the San Joaquin Valley agreed to contract with a consultant to accomplish tasks, and the Temperance Flat Reservoir Authority will take action later in March to merge with the San Joaquin Valley Water Infrastructure Authority.

The Executive Director said that two Technical Review meetings were held on the Del Puerto Canyon Reservoir project to look at results of the Phase 1 drilling and geotechnical investigations. A recommendation will then be forwarded to the team on advancing to Phase 2 work.

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

Consultant, David Cory provided an outline of his report and responded to a question regarding the scheduling of an annual grower meeting.

LEGISLATIVE REPORT:

State: The Executive Director highlighted a couple of legislative bills included in Dominic DiMare's report that are currently being monitored and addressed. A more comprehensive list will be presented to the Legislative Committee this next month.

Federal: An outline of Nancy Williams' report on Washington DC activities throughout the past month was provided.

ATTORNEY'S REPORT:

Legal Counsel provided a brief update on the following matters: CVP/SWP TUCP for Delta Outflow Index and Governor's Executive Order; USBR TUCP Request for Millerton Reservoir Flood Releases; Del Puerto Canyon Reservoir CEQA litigation; SGMA Litigation; and, DWR's Determination on the Delta-Mendota Subbasin joint Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP). A recap of the timeline and process following receipt of the determination was provided. Attorney McClure stated that further discussions regarding litigation will take place in Closed Session.

FOUR ENTITIES' MANAGER REPORTS:

Columbia Canal Company: Manager Houk reported that they had no deliveries in February but preparing for any deliveries needed for frost protection.

Firebaugh Canal Water District: Manager Bryant said that a small amount of water was delivered in February; they experienced issues with Silver Creek flows impacting his 3rd lift and intake, and rain has hampered getting winter maintenance done, about 50% of the work has been completed.

Central California Irrigation District: Manager Martin reported that they had little pre-irrigation mostly for frost protection; and currently preparing for flood flows management.

San Luis Canal Company: In Manager Wiersma's absence, Director Nickel reported that they had very little pre-irrigation in February.

INFORMATIONAL:

There was no information provided.

CLOSED SESSION:

Chair Cardella asked if there was any public input and hearing none, adjourned the meeting to Closed Session and called for a short recess at 9:59 a.m. The meeting was reconvened to Closed Session at 10:10 a.m.

Chair Cardella returned the meeting to Open Session at 11:00 a.m. and said that the Board approved the transfer of the additional 20,000 AF of conserved water under the current environmental document and directed staff to begin the process to offer the water to existing transfer partners. The meeting was adjourned at 11:01 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

ERIC FONTANA, DIRECTOR

JAMES NICKEL, DIRECTOR

MIKE STEARNS, VICE-CHAIR