

Minutes of Special Meeting
COLORADO RIVER BOARD OF CALIFORNIA
Wednesday, December 14, 2011

A Special Meeting of the Colorado River Board of California (Board) was held in the Ballroom Emperor I, of Caesars Palace Hotel, at 3570 Las Vegas Boulevard South, Las Vegas, Nevada 89109-8924, Wednesday, December 14, 2011.

Board Members and Alternate Present

Dana Bart Fisher, Jr., Chairman
John V. Foley
W.D. "Bill" Knutson
David R. Pettijohn

John Palmer Powell Jr.

Jeanine Jones, Designee
Department of Water Resources

Board Members and Alternate Absent

Terese Marie Ghio
James Cleo Hanks
Henry Merle Kuiper
John Pierre Menvielle

James B. McDaniel

Christopher G. Hayes, Designee
Department of Fish and Game

Others Present

Steven B. Abbott
Don Barnett
James H. Bond
David Bradsman
Brenda Burman
John Penn Carter
Ron Derma
Steve Glazer
Leslie Gallagher
William J. Hasencamp
Tim Henley
Fadi Kamand
Michael L. King

Thomas E. Levy
Jan P. Matusak
Stella A. Mendoza
Roger K. Patterson
Glen Peterson
Halla Razak
Steven B. Robbins
Anthony Sanchez
Jack Seiler
Tina L. Shields
Jesse I. Silva
Peter S. Silva
Ed W. Smith

Catherine Stites
Rob Thomson
Deven Upadhyay
Joseph A. Vanderhorst
Bill D. Wright
Michael Yu
J.C. Jay Chen
Christopher S. Harris
Lindia Y. Liu
Mark van Vlack
Gerald R. Zimmerman

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Fisher welcomed the audience and announced that a quorum was present and called the meeting to order at 2:04 p.m.

OPPORTUNITY FOR THE PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE BOARD

Chairman Fisher asked if there was anyone in the audience who wanted to address the Board on items on the agenda or matters related to the Board. Hearing none, Chairman Fisher moved to the next agenda item.

ADMINISTRATION

Approval of Minutes

Chairman Fisher requested the approval of the November 9th meeting minutes. Mr. Foley moved that the minutes be approved. Mr. Knutson seconded the motion. Unanimously carried, the Board approved the November 9th meeting minutes.

PROTECTION OF EXISTING RIGHTS

Colorado River Water Report

Mr. Harris reported that precipitation in the Colorado River Basin, as of December 5th, was about 104 percent of average. The observed April through July 2011 unregulated flow into Lake Powell was 12.9 million acre-feet (maf), or 162 percent of average. The observed 2011 water year unregulated flow into Lake Powell was 16.8 maf, or 139 percent of average.

Mr. Harris reported that, as of December 4th, the storage in Lake Powell was 16.59 maf, or 68 percent of capacity. The water surface elevation was 3,644.9 feet. The storage in Lake Mead was 14.03 maf, or 54 percent of capacity, and water surface elevation was 1,126.8 feet. Total System storage was about 38.47 maf, or 64 percent of capacity. Last year at this time, there was 32.30 maf in storage, also 54 percent of capacity. Lake Powell is up about two million acre-feet and Lake Mead is up about four million acre-feet from this time last year.

Mr. Harris reported Reclamation's projected consumptive use (CU) for the State of Nevada to be under its basic entitlement of 300,000 acre-feet (i.e., 230,000 acre-feet), and Arizona CU of Colorado River water to be under its 2.8 maf apportionment (i.e., 2.783 maf), and that California CU is projected to be slightly under its 4.4 maf apportionment (i.e., 4.318 maf). The CU in the Lower Basin is expected to be about 7.331 maf.

Mr. Zimmerman reported that it's the Board position that if equalization between Lakes Powell and Mead does not occur by the end of the water year then it should occur by the end of the calendar year. Mr. Zimmerman reported that he had attended the Upper Colorado River Commission meeting and that Ms. Ann Gold, Deputy Regional Director of Reclamation's Upper Colorado Region, acknowledged that equalization wasn't reached by the end of the water year but she reported that equalization is expected to occur by December 28th or December 29th.

State and Local Water Reports

Mr. Harris reported that precipitation, in seven major regions in Southern California, was slightly above normal (i.e. 110 to 131 percent of normal) except for the desert regions (30 to 73 percent of normal). Statewide precipitation was about 90 percent of normal, though average reservoir storage was 125 percent of normal, due to last year's season. The California State Water Project (SWP), as of December 1st, for Northern California was about 2.93 MAF, or 79 percent of capacity and Southern California was about 1.54 MAF, or 84 percent of capacity. Total SWP storage was 4.47 MAF or 81 percent of capacity. Ms. Jeanine Jones, of the California Department of Water Resources (DWR), added that the initial SWP projected deliveries for Table A Entitlements was 60 percent. Late November and early December have been particularly dry and the current forecast is dry so the actual deliveries may be less optimistic than current projections. Ms. Jones reported that the California DWR held the annual winter outlook workshop, November 29th, where scientists from the weather and climate fields convened to discuss potential 2012 water year conditions. Weak to moderate La Niña conditions are currently being experienced, following somewhat stronger La Niña conditions last year. The current Water Year 2012 forecast is a near normal runoff season in Northern California while Southern California may be more dry. Ultimately, California's annual water supply conditions may depend on a relatively small number of storms. A few less major winter storms, or conversely a few more winter storms with high rainfall intensities or extended duration, can tip the water year balance to dry or wet.

Mr. Foley, of The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MWD), reported surface water storage in MWD's principal reservoirs, as of December 1st, was about 954 thousand acre-feet, or 92 percent of capacity. Diamond Valley reservoir capacity was about 778 thousand acre-feet, or 96 percent of capacity. Lake Mathews was about 141 thousand acre-feet, or 77 percent of capacity, and Lake Skinner was about 35 thousand acre-feet, or 81 percent of capacity. Mr. Foley reported that total 2011 calendar year deliveries through October was about 1.43 MAF, or 77 percent of average deliveries (last ten years).

Mr. David Pettijohn, of the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, reported that last two and a half months have been dry in the Eastern Sierra and the forecast for the next two weeks continues to be dry. Last year there was a mid December storm about one half of the annual precipitation occurred from one series of storms, so things could change quickly before the end of the winter season.

Colorado River Operations

2012 Annual Operating Plan

Mr. Harris reported that the final 2012 Annual Operating Plan (2012 AOP) is in the Commissioner's Office awaiting approval. After approval by the Secretary of the Department of the Interior, the final 2012 AOP is expected to be posted on Reclamation's Upper and Lower Colorado Region webpages.

Status of the Basin Study Report Development Process

Mr. Harris reported that the Basin Study Report has entered Phase 4, or the "Options & Strategies Phase". The California Basin Study participants are continuing to work with

Reclamation to finalize the current trends and demand data and develop data for each of the alternative demand scenarios. The goals of the Phase 4 of the Basin Study are: 1) Receive broad input on potential options for addressing future water supply and demand imbalances; 2) Evaluate representative options for major categories of options received; 3) Explore the effectiveness of various combinations of options; and 4) Summarize the findings related to performance and robustness of various options and portfolios.

Mr. Harris reported that Reclamation's efforts to receive input of any and all interested parties includes a public outreach process of meetings with interested stakeholders throughout the Basin, webinars, and a booth at the Colorado River Water Users Association (CRWUA) conference in Las Vegas, Nevada.

Basin States Discussions

Status of the Binational Discussions

Mr. Zimmerman reported that the objective continues to be to have a signed Treaty Minute 319 acceptable to both countries, early in 2012. Meetings have continued over the last two months. Reclamation Commissioner Conner and IBWC representatives from the U.S. and Mexico are scheduled to meet during the CRWUA and hopefully accelerate the process. The several small subgroups continue to meet, and the larger Legal Committee continues to receive reports from these smaller groups. Mr. Zimmerman reported that as in previous agreements involving the Basin States, much work needs to be done to bring about a Treaty Minute 319 that the Basin States are willing to support.

WATER QUALITY

Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Program

Mr. Don Barnett, of the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Forum, reported that they'd just completed their three year review process, where the seven states come together to review the water quality standards for the Colorado River Basin. The review looks at both the numerical criteria as well as planned implementation standards. There are current measures in place controlling about 1.2 million tons per year. Modeling studies performed by Reclamation indicate that current measures lower the total dissolved solids (TDS) by about 100 milligrams per liter (mg/l) at the Imperial Dam. The plan of implementation is to control an additional 644,000 tons by 2030 that would reduce the projected increase by about 50 mg/l.

Mr. Barnett reported that salinity control proposals submitted in 2010 were estimated to cost about \$100 million. Eleven projects were selected that would control between 30,000-35,000 tons of salt annually, at a cost of about \$35 million. Appropriations are expected to fund about \$20 million, with the remaining \$15 million from cost-share. The eleven selected programs are scheduled to be implemented over the next three years.

Mr. Barnett reported that the Paradox Valley Unit that has been in operation since 1996, intercepting brine of 250,000 parts per million (ppm) before it discharges into the Dolores River. This brine is disposed in a 16,000 foot injection well. The injection rate has been steadily

decreasing while the pressure to inject the brine is about 500 psi and increasing. Reclamation has received funding to begin seeking well replacement alternatives. Options include: (1) initiating the EIS process for Alternatives Study; (2) a pilot evaporation pond study; (3) hydrogeologic study of the valley; and (4) permitting a replacement well(s) in case the existing injection well fails.

Mr. Barnett reported that since 1996 on-farm salinity control efforts have been funded through the Natural Resources Conservation Service's (NRCS) Environmental Quality Improvement Program (EQIP), which was last authorized in the 2008 Farm Bill. The Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Program is a small part of the EQIP, and is a very small part of the Farm Bill. Mr. Barnett expressed concern for the future of salinity control efforts given that a large part of the funding is such a small part of a large federal program, whose authorization expires on September 30, 2012. There was discussion about potential future federal funding of the salinity control program that might be under a conservation bill rather than a future Farm Bill. Hopefully the program won't be lost in the shuffle. Mr. Harris reported that the Board will be working with Mr. Barnett so that the salinity control program benefits are not lost in future federal funding programs.

OTHER BUSINESS

Status of Mr. William H. Swan

Mr. John Carter reported that Mr. Bill Swan, long time representative of California agricultural interests – specifically the Imperial Irrigation District, is recuperating from treatments and may remain in the hospital over the holidays depending on the success of the first phase of his treatments. Further tests are scheduled and there may be a need to find a bone marrow match for Mr. Swan. One of his brothers may be a possible donor, but further tests are needed. Mr. Carter reported that Mr. Swan appreciated the cards and letters he had received and that he does check his email on occasion.

Next Board Meeting

Chairman Fisher announced that the next meeting of the Colorado River Board will be held on Wednesday, January 11, 2012, 10:00 a.m., at the Holiday Inn Ontario Airport, 2155 E. Convention Center Way, Ontario, California.

There being no further items to be brought before the Board, Chairman Fisher asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Upon the motion of Mr. Foley, seconded by Mr. Knutson, and unanimously carried, the meeting was adjourned 2:31 p.m. on December 14, 2011.

/S/

Christopher S. Harris
Acting Executive Director