

Minutes of Meeting
COLORADO RIVER BOARD OF CALIFORNIA
Wednesday, February 12, 2014

A Meeting of the Colorado River Board of California was held in the Council Chambers, City Hall, 235 N. Broadway, Blythe, CA 92225, Wednesday, February 12, 2014.

Board Members and Alternates Present

Dana Bart Fisher, Jr., Chairman
Franz W. De Klotz
Stephen Benson
Henry Kuiper
Glen D. Peterson
David Pettijohn

Doug Wilson
Jeanine Jones, Designee
Department of Water Resources
Christopher G. Hayes, Designee
Department of Fish & Wildlife

Board Members and Alternates Absent

John V. Foley
Terese M. Ghio
James Hanks
James B. McDaniel

Bud Pocklington
John Powell, Jr.

Others Present

Steve Abbott
Duane E. Berger
Grant Chaffin
Larry Chaffin
Robert Cheng
Cheryl Cloud
Tom Crook
Dan Denham
Ron Derma
Matt Dessert
Andrew Fisher
Norma Sierra Galindo
Ismael Gomez
Christopher S. Harris
Bill Hasencamp
Michael Hughes
Lori Jones
Jan Matusak

Evan Olivas
Autumn Plourd
Angela Rashid
Dan Robinson
Eric Ruckdaschel
Bill Scott
Jack Seiler
Tina Shields
Ed W. Smith
Joanna Smith
Mark Stuart
Ron Swan
Ann Tom
Tanya Trujillo
David Vigil
Michael Yu

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Fisher announced the presence of a quorum and called the meeting to order at 1:31 p.m.

OPPORTUNITY FOR THE PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE BOARD

Jack Seiler, from the Palo Verde Irrigation District, welcomed the Colorado River Board to Blythe.

Chairman Fisher asked if there was anyone in the audience who wished to address the Board on items on the agenda or matters related to the Board. Mr. Ron Derma from the Bard Water District (Bard) announced that Bard is looking for support from the Colorado River Board (Board) or any of the other member agencies to include Bard and the Haughtelin Lakes project as potential habitat restoration projects for the Lower Colorado River Multi-Species Conservation Program.

ADMINISTRATION

Approval of Minutes

Chairman Fisher asked if there was a motion to approve the December 11, 2013 minutes. Chairman Fisher acknowledged Mr. Wilson's comment that he was at the December 11, 2013 Board meeting, but he was not identified in the current draft of the minutes. Mr. Pettijohn moved that the minutes be approved, seconded by Mr. De Klotz, and unanimously carried, the December 11, 2013, meeting minutes were approved.

Statement of Economic Interest Deadline

Ms. Trujillo reminded the Board members that they need to fill out the Form 700 statements by the deadline of April 1, 2014.

Update of the Colorado River Board Website

Ms. Trujillo reported that the Colorado River Board is in the process of updating its website and remodeling the office in Glendale. The website will be more user friendly and its format updated similar to the Department of Water Resources website. The meeting notices, agendas, and other meeting materials will continue to be posted on the website.

COLORADO RIVER BASIN WATER REPORT

Ms. Trujillo reported that as of February 4, 2014 the forecasted unregulated inflow into Lake Powell for Water Year 2014 is 96% of average and that the current Basin snowpack is 102 percent of average. However, monthly precipitation maps for December 2013 and January 2014 indicate that a vast majority of the Basin is still in a drought situation. Currently, reservoir storage in Lake Powell is 40 percent of capacity and Lake Mead is 48 percent of capacity. Total system storage is 49 percent of capacity, as compared to 55 percent last year. In addition, Ms. Trujillo noted that she provided the Board with satellite images from the Colorado River Basin Forecast Center which show the dramatic contrast between snowpack conditions in the Sierras from the current year and last year.

Mr. Mark Stuart of the California Department of Water Resources' Southern District Office provided an overview of the current statewide precipitation and hydrological conditions. Mr. Stuart reported that conditions remain exceptionally dry in the Los Angeles Basin with just over an inch of rainfall recorded so far. Mr. Stuart also reported that the Sacramento region went the entire month of January without any measurable precipitation; and that the precipitation conditions across the entire state of California is currently between 10% and 25% of normal as of mid-February.

Mr. Stuart reported that the storage in the State Water Project reservoir system is currently at 40% of capacity. Consequently, the Department of Water Resources is currently projecting that the State Water Project allocations will be zero. This is the first time in the history of the project that water allocations will not be made. He also reported that it is expected to be a similar forecast of little or no allocations being made available from the federal Central Valley Project system.

Presentation by Ms. Jeanine Jones regarding the California Drought

Ms. Jeanine Jones reported that 2014 is shaping up to be the third dry year in a row in California, and that the Governor has begun to implement a number of actions in response to this extreme hydrology. She reported that the Governor has issued an Executive Order directing DWR and the State Water Resources Control Board to facilitate water transfers; the Governor has created an Inter-Agency Drought Task Force; and followed that up in mid-January with his Drought Emergency Proclamation. In the Proclamation, the Governor has asked local agencies to achieve a goal of a 20% water use reduction through conservation and other measures. Ms. Jones commended MWD for following that lead at their recent Board meeting. Ms. Jones described the details of the elements contained in the drought declaration. She noted that the recent storms have not made too much of a difference in the overall snowpack levels and that there is still a long ways to go to move California out of its drought. Ms. Jones noted that the Governor's office is taking the drought relief efforts very seriously and has devoted a lot of high-level resources into it. The Governor's Drought Task Force meets weekly and includes over 50 people from various State agencies. Ms. Trujillo indicated that a copy

of the Governor's Drought Emergency Proclamation was included within the Board folder.

Presentation by Mr. Chris Hayes, of Department of Fish and Wildlife

Board member, Mr. Chris Hayes, representing the California Department of Fish and Wildlife provided an overview of the Department's Colorado River Program that he manages from the Blythe Field Office. Mr. Hayes indicated that the program area encompasses significant portions of San Bernardino, Riverside and Imperial Counties from Needles, California to the Northerly International Boundary with Mexico near Yuma, Arizona. He reported that the Blythe Field Office is currently staffed with ten employees.

Mr. Hayes provided a brief description of the Palo Verde Ecological Reserve located in the Palo Verde Valley. This property, at just over 1,300 acres, was acquired with Proposition 50 funds and has been restored with native riparian and marsh habitats and has been included as part of the LCR MSCP. While much of the PVER habitat is managed for LCR MSCP purposes, portions of PVER are also managed for upland game bird and waterfowl hunting opportunities and other recreational activities. He reported that some of the work at PVER has been facilitated and funded through grant opportunities from North American Wetlands Conservation Council and Ducks Unlimited.

Mr. Hayes reported that his staff are also heavily involved in habitat and species monitoring activities along the Lower Colorado River, and that much of this work is in conjunction with implementation of the LCR MSCP. Mr. Hayes indicated that the Department's Inland Deserts-Eastern Sierra Region was expanding the installation of "big-game drinkers and guzzlers" for wildlife in the desert regions. These facilities can capture precipitation from limited rainfall events in the desert regions and store this water and make it available for wildlife during dry periods.

Mr. Hayes reported that because of the recent influx of new solar energy projects in the desert that there has been a significant expansion of desert Kit fox monitoring. He also stated that Department continues to conduct native fish and sport-fish monitoring in the riverine, lake, and backwater aquatic habitats along the Lower Colorado River. Finally, Mr. Hayes indicated that he and his staff continue to be heavily involved in the repatriation and monitoring of native endangered fishes like the Razorback Sucker and Bonytail in mainstream aquatic habitats of the Lower Colorado River in California.

Colorado River Basin Programs

Status of the Colorado River Basin Water Supply & Demand Study

Ms. Trujillo reported that the Next Steps phase of the program will have its first

year anniversary in May 2014. Three workgroups (Municipal Conservation, Agricultural Conservation, and Environmental Flows Analysis) are in the process of formulating study reports. The purpose of the reports is to gather municipal and agricultural data relating to existing conservation programs. The data will be compiled to highlight potential “best practices” that exist throughout the Basin States. The Environmental Flows workgroup is analyzing whether the existing models utilized by Reclamation for stream regulation purposes can be expanded to accommodate the environmental flows concerns and needs in the Upper Basin, and possibly in the Lower Basin river reaches, which may include the Bill Williams River in Arizona.

Ms. Trujillo reported that Imperial Irrigation District (IID) is helping to lead the Agricultural Conservation group, and Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MWD) is one of the co-chairs on the Municipal Conservation sub-workgroups. Additional workgroup meetings are scheduled for February and March. Phase one reports will be due in April 2014.

Report on Minute 319 Implementation

Ms. Trujillo reported that on January 16, 2014 the Minute 319 partners received a “Partners in Conservation Award” from the Secretary of the Interior in Washington, D.C.

The Environmental Flows Delivery Plan was compiled by a bi-national technical group who volunteer their efforts on the U.S. side from non-governmental organizations, universities, the Basin States, and Federal agencies. The plan was submitted to the International Boundary and Water Commission (IBWC) on January 14, 2014 for review by the IBWC and the Mexican Delegation/CILA. Ms. Trujillo explained that the pulse flow will utilize about 105,000 acre-feet of Mexican water that is stored in Lake Mead and is proposed to be released in late-March and early-April of 2014. The next step would be to monitor the effects of the pulse flow and analyze how the habitat has been affected in the Mexican reach below the Yuma area.

Ms. Trujillo reported that a ceremony hosted by the Mexican delegation/CILA is planned for March 27, 2014 at Morelos Dam to commemorate the pulse flow. Additionally, Reclamation is contemplating a ceremony to commemorate the pulse flow on the U.S. side in Yuma, Arizona on March 28.

Minute 319 implementation workgroups are scheduled to meet in Tijuana, Mexico on February 13-14, 2014 to discuss a potential bi-lateral connection on the All-American Canal between Mexico and IID and additional pilot projects that would involve United States investments in infrastructure improvements in Mexico to create water conserved within Mexico that could be stored in the U.S. and converted for use by U.S. funding entities.

Chairman Fisher commented that the pulse flow event was negotiated as part of Minute 319. Mexico takes virtually all the water delivered into Mexico and diverts it for agriculture and municipal uses. The old river channel is basically dry and barren except

for a copious amount of salt cedar and other plants. The idea with the pulse flow is that they'll open their gates and fill the old limitrophe and push water down in the direction of the Delta. This will allow Mexico to evaluate the environmental effects of returning water flows to their original area.

Mr. Harris reported that releasing 105,000 acre-feet over a week to ten days will not impact agricultural or recreational activities along the Lower Colorado River. One area of initial concern was flooding in the Yuma Region with the Yuma East Wetlands, which is inside the levee and will probably be inundated with water. Mr. Harris reported that the pulse flow will probably also benefit the Laguna Conservation Area that's being worked on between Imperial and Laguna Dams, Yuma East Wetlands, and the Hunter's Hole Conservation Area in the Limitrophe Division. Overall, there should be relatively little impact to the United States.

Ms. Trujillo reported that Reclamation is working closely with the irrigation districts in Arizona and that they will coordinate with IID with respect to operations of the All-American Canal and the diversion facilities so that the pulse flow does not adversely impact any deliveries on the U.S. side.

Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Program

Mr. Harris, of the Board's staff, provided a brief update associated with the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Program. He reported that the Advisory Council conducted a very brief meeting in December 2013 in conjunction with the Colorado River Water User's Association annual meeting. At the meeting the Advisory Council confirmed approval of federal funding recommendations for continued implementation of the Salinity Control Program.

Mr. Harris also reported that a small group of Forum members continues to work on identifying some options for ensuring the continued fiscal integrity of the Lower Basin Fund and maintaining an adequate revenue stream for implementation of the Salinity Control Program annually. The small group is looking at Program funding for short-term and long-term fixes. A long-term structural fix would require consensus among the seven Basin States, Reclamation, and USDA, but could also require federal legislation.

Mr. Harris updated the Board regarding funding for implementation of the Salinity Control Program in 2014. Reclamation anticipates expending approximately \$10 million through the Basinwide Program in 2014. BLM believes that it will be allocated about \$750,000 for the Program through its Soil, Water and Air Program. Finally, Mr. Harris reported that the NRCS believes that its 2014 allocation is likely to be just over \$12 million through the EQIP appropriation.

Mr. Harris reported that on February 7th, the Farm Bill was signed into law by the President. The Farm Bill is now known as the "Agricultural Act of 2014". He stated that the new Farm Bill lays out the appropriations schedule and amounts for the EQIP program over the period 2014 through 2018, and that the majority of the funding utilized

by NRCS for on-farm salinity control in the Basin continues to be through the EQIP program.

Mr. Harris provided an update on the USGS efforts to reschedule the Pah Tempe Springs pump test for February 10-14th. He reminded the Board that the first pump test had been initiated in November 2013, but was stopped because of a high-flow rainfall event that caused damage to equipment and inhibited the ability to effectively draw-down the spring outfall. He reported that the USGS and the Washington County Water Conservancy District have replaced the measuring equipment, and added additional pumps and hope to be better able to dewater the highly saline spring flow during the test.

Finally, Mr. Harris reported that the Salinity Control Work Group was scheduled to meet in Phoenix, Arizona, on February 26-27th. At this meeting, Work Group members will continue to work on preparation of the 2014 Triennial Review; discuss Reclamation's preparation of the Paradox Alternatives Studies and EIS process; and review planning studies recently completed for the Lower Gunnison and Uinta Basins; as well as receive reports associated with 2014/2015 budgets and activities from each of the federal agencies.

Glen Canyon Dam—Long-Term Experimental Management Plan EIS Process

Mr. Harris provided the Board with an update regarding the activities associated with the continued preparation of the draft EIS associated with the Long-Term Experimental and Management Plan (LTEMP) by the co-lead agencies, Reclamation and the National Park Service. He reported that the co-lead agencies and Argonne National Laboratories continue to refine the models being used to evaluate the alternatives being considered for inclusion in the draft EIS. Mr. Harris reported that the Department of the Interior Management Team has been working closely with all stakeholders regarding the next round of "Structured Decision Analysis" (SDA) that is being proposed as part of the alternatives analysis process. After significant discussion with Basin States representatives, DOI has developed a proposed schedule for completion of the SDA process. It is hoped that the SDA process will help the DOI Management Team and interested stakeholders better understand the various natural, physical, and cultural resources of the Glen and Grand Canyon reaches of the Colorado River below Glen Canyon Dam.

Mr. Harris reported that the Glen Canyon Dam Adaptive Management Program's Technical Work Group met on January 28-30 for its annual Science Activities reporting meeting to receive presentations on the status and trends of native and non-native fish; results of a food web analysis study; and reviewed the very preliminary results of the November 2013 High Flow Experimental (HFE) Release. He stated that the Adaptive Management Work Group was scheduled to meet on February 19-20, 2014, in Tempe Arizona, to discuss the LTEMP EIS, results of the November 2013 HFE, current basin hydrology and operations, impacts to the Fiscal Year 2014 budget as a result of the sequestration, and a preliminary Fiscal Year 2015-16 budget and work plan.

Lower Colorado River Multi-Species Conservation Program

Mr. Harris updated the Board about the current status of the Lower Colorado River Multi-Species Conservation Program (LCR MSCP). He reported that the Winter 2014 edition of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's *Endangered Species News Bulletin* included an article entitled "The Yuma Clapper Rail—A Marsh Bird in the Desert". He indicated that the article provided an excellent overview of current Yuma clapper rail conservation efforts along the Colorado River and at the Salton Sea. In the article the USFWS singled out the efforts of the LCR MSCP, work of the IID at the Salton Sea, and the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan, as well as the continued activities of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife at the Wister Unit. Mr. Harris indicated that a copy of the article could be found on-line and had been included in the Board folder.

Mr. Harris reported that a meeting of the LCR MSCP Technical Work Group was scheduled for March 12th, and will be held at the Hilton Garden Pivot Point Inn in Yuma, Arizona. The Work Group meeting will be followed by a tour of the continuing restoration and revegetation work at the Laguna Habitat Conservation Area on March 13th. He also reported that the LCR MSCP Steering Committee will be holding its next meeting on April 23rd in Las Vegas, Nevada.

Update Regarding the Lower Colorado Water Supply Act, P.L. 99-655/P.L. 109-103

Ms. Trujillo reported that information available to the public associated with the Board's website regarding the Lower Colorado Water Supply Project has been updated. The Board serves as a clearinghouse for Reclamation's consideration of applications for additional water rights on the Colorado River. The City of Needles serves as the master contractor and municipal or industrial water users that don't have Colorado River water rights can apply for a subcontract through the City of Needles to legitimize their water uses.

Ms. Trujillo reported that the program was originally authorized by Congress in 1986 and the legislation was updated in 2005. The Board's procedures and background information dated back to that original authorization of 1986, so they have been updated. To date, the total amount of water rights allocated under the project is approximately 5,800 acre-feet. The project capacity will reach its maximum of 10,000 acre-feet after the completion of Stage Two. Under the project, MWD is able to utilize unused project water as one of the additional components of its water supply. The contract for drilling the Stage Two well was finalized between the City of Needles and Reclamation on December 31, 2013 and drilling will progress for the remainder of this year.

Additional Announcements and Notices

Resolution Honoring Ms. Pat Mulroy of the Southern Nevada Water Authority

Ms. Trujillo presented a draft resolution honoring Pat Mulroy, General Manager of the Southern Nevada Water Authority for the State of Nevada. Ms. Mulroy began working with SNWA in 1993 and remained General Manager until she retired on February 7, 2014. Mr. John Entsminger, will take over as General Manager. The resolution recognizes Pat Mulroy's public service as a tenacious and tireless representative of the State of Nevada, and her significant leadership working closely with her colleagues on Colorado River Basin projects such as the LCR MSCP and the 2007 Coordinated Operations Guidelines. She was involved in finalizing Minute 319 with the Republic of Mexico and has been an advocate for working collaboratively and cooperatively, as opposed to engaging in litigation to resolve conflicts on the Colorado River. Her legacy will be long lasting. Mr. Fisher commented that Ms. Mulroy is one of the most powerful leaders on the Colorado River and is an outstanding person and leader.

MOTION: Upon the motion of Mr. Wilson, seconded by Mr. Kuiper, and unanimously carried, the Board adopted the resolution to honor Ms. Pat Mulroy.

Resolution Honoring Ms. Sandy Fabritz-Whitney, of the Arizona Department of Water Resources

Ms. Trujillo presented a draft resolution honoring Ms. Sandy Fabritz-Whitney, Director of the State of Arizona Department of Water Resources. The resolution recognizes Ms. Fabritz-Whitney's public service and professional achievements. Ms. Trujillo stated that Ms. Fabritz-Whitney emphasized the importance of collaboration for activities on the Colorado River and vigorously represented the State of Arizona. Mr. Fisher commented that during Ms. Fabritz-Whitney's term, California and Arizona has had a very positive working relationship.

MOTION: Upon the motion of Mr. Kuiper, seconded by Mr. Peterson, and unanimously carried, the Board adopted the resolution to honor Ms. Sandy Fabritz-Whitney.

Next Board Meeting

Chairman Fisher announced that there is no executive session today and that the next meeting of the Colorado River Board will be held on Wednesday, March 12, 2014, at MWD in Los Angeles, 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. Peterson, seconded by Mr. Wilson, and unanimously carried, the meeting was adjourned at 3:04 p.m. on February 12, 2014.