

Minutes of Meeting  
COLORADO RIVER BOARD OF CALIFORNIA  
Wednesday, April 9, 2014

A Meeting of the Colorado River Board of California was held at the Imperial Irrigation Water District, William Condit Auditorium, 1285 Broadway Street, El Centro, CA 92243, Wednesday, April 9, 2014.

Board Members and Alternates Present

Dana Bart Fisher, Jr., Chairman  
Franz De Klotz  
Stephen Benson  
Henry Kuiper  
Glen D. Peterson  
Doug Wilson

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

Board Members and Alternates Absent

Terese Ghio  
James Hanks  
James McDaniel  
David Pettijohn

Bud Pocklington  
John Powell, Jr.

Others Present

Steve Abbott  
Vince Brooke  
Robert Cheng  
Dan Denham  
Matt Dessert  
William J. DuBois  
Kris Fontaine  
Ismael Gomez  
Bill Hasencamp  
Ian Hendry  
Michael Hughes  
Lisa Johansen  
Al Kalin  
Eric Katz  
Bruce Kuhn

Kara Mathews  
Jan Matusak  
Autumn Plourd  
Angela Rashid  
Eric Ruckdaschel  
Jack Seiler  
Tina Shields  
Peter Silva  
Ed Smith  
Joanna Smith  
Carl Stills  
Mark Stuart  
Tanya Trujillo  
Charles Van Dyke

## **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**

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. Hearing none, Chairman Fisher moved to the next agenda item.

Mr. Steve Benson welcomed the Colorado River Board to the Imperial Valley and the Imperial Irrigation District (IID) and summarized the tour hosted by IID. Mr. Benson introduced IID's General Manager, Kevin Kelly, Power Manager, Carl Stills, Water Manager, Ismael Gomez, Colorado River manager Tina Shields, and other staff members.

## **ADMINISTRATION**

### Approval of Minutes of the March 12, 2014 Colorado River Board Meeting

Chairman Fisher asked if there was a motion to approve the March 12, 2014 minutes. Mr. Benson moved that the minutes be approved, seconded by Mr. Kuiper, and unanimously carried, the March 12, 2014, meeting minutes were approved.

### Resolution in Honor of Jack Foley

Chairman Fisher presented a draft resolution in honor of Jack Foley, who served for sixteen years on the Colorado River Board. The resolution recognizes Mr. Foley's public service for the State of California and as an outstanding leader on water issues in Southern California. Mr. Fisher reported that Mr. Foley was a natural leader. He had served a tour of duty in Vietnam, and during that time had commanded an engineering team that was headed by Dennis Underwood, a previous Executive Director of the Colorado River Board. Board member Mr. Peterson commented that Jack Foley was the second longest running Chairman of the Board at The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California.

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

### Resolution in Honor of Rita Schmidt Sudman

Ms. Trujillo presented a draft resolution in honor of Rita Schmidt Sudman, who has announced her retirement after 34 years of service as the Executive Director of the

Water Education Foundation. The resolution recognizes her leadership and enthusiasm and her many years of service to the State of California and its water users. Ms. Trujillo reported that Ms. Sudman was very instrumental in setting up the Water Education Foundation, and establishing publications such as the Western Water Magazine and the River Report.

MOTION: Upon the motion of Mr. Benson, seconded by Mr. Wilson, and unanimously carried, the Board adopted the resolution to honor Ms. Rita Schmidt Sudman.

## **COLORADO RIVER BASIN WATER REPORT AND CALIFORNIA DROUGHT UPDATE**

### Colorado River Basin Water Report

Ms. Trujillo provided the Board with an updated water report regarding precipitation and water supply conditions in the Colorado River Basin. She reported that as of March 31, 2014, the water level at Lake Mead was at 1,102 feet with 11.91 million acre-feet (maf) of storage, or 46% of capacity, while the water level at Lake Powell was at 3,575 feet with 9.50 maf of storage, or 39% of capacity. She reported that the total System active storage was 28.19 maf, or 47% of capacity, which is 3.69 maf less than this time last year. Ms. Trujillo reported that portions of Wyoming and Colorado still had regions with snowpack slightly above average, but other regions within the Basin were below normal. She also reported that Bureau of Reclamation currently projects that unregulated inflow into Lake Powell could be approximately 11.4 maf.

Ms. Trujillo noted that with Governor Brown's declaration of a Drought State of Emergency on January 17, 2014, work continues on the actions intended to help address statewide drought conditions. She reported that the Department of Water Resources continues to issue weekly Drought Briefs providing updates on current conditions and key actions taking place regarding the drought. Ms. Trujillo also described the April 1, 2014 Drought Monitor map for California that indicates that approximately 70% of the State is experiencing extreme or exceptional drought conditions and 100% of the state is experiencing some level of drought conditions. Despite recent rainfall and late-season storms, the statewide snowpack reports are still far below average, having only reached 32% of average as of the April 1 snowpack readings.

### State and Local Agency Reports

Mr. Mark Stuart with the Department of Water Resources provided a brief overview of the statewide precipitation and water supply conditions. Mr. Stuart reported that precipitation in the southern California region is well below normal, and that the water year should finish with the region having received about six inches for the year. Mr. Stuart reported that with several good storms during March that the Sierra snowpack has recovered somewhat, but that the overall snowpack was still well below normal, at

about 40% of average. Currently, DWR projects that the runoff is likely to be about 25% of normal. Mr. Stuart also reported that statewide reservoir storage still remains well below normal for this time of year.

Mr. Glen Peterson, of the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, reported that MWD's total system storage was currently at about 70%. He stated that MWD is conserving as much water as possible in the large Diamond Valley Reservoir for use later in the summer months. Mr. Peterson reported that MWD is also currently involved in a number of important water storage and conservation programs in the Central Valley, and that MWD will likely be drawing upon these supplies as the year progresses.

Ms. Trujillo reported to the Board that California's U.S. Senators Feinstein and Boxer have proposed legislation related to California's continuing drought conditions, and that the current version of the bill includes a Colorado River Basin provision that is intended to increase system storage in both the upper and lower basins through a Colorado River Basin System Water Pilot Project. She indicated that MWD's Board recently approved participation in this proposed pilot project. Ms. Trujillo stated that the Board will continue to monitor the progress of the legislation and report back as appropriate.

Ms. Jeanine Jones, of the Department of Water Resources, reported that the Department, in conjunction with Reclamation, released a drought operations plan that will guide the coordinated operations of the State and Federal Water Projects in California. This plan will take into account the needs of the salmon and other endangered fisheries, Delta water quality requirements, as well as the agricultural and M&I uses and demands in the Central Valley.

## **COLORADO RIVER BASIN PROGRAM REPORTS**

### **Presentation Regarding the Salton Sea Restoration and Renewable Energy Initiative**

Mr. Kevin Kelly, Manager of the Imperial Irrigation District, gave a brief presentation on the Salton Sea Restoration and Renewable Energy Initiative and the Salton Sea's geothermal energy resource potential. Mr. Kelly began his presentation with a brief history of the Salton Sea, noting that a flood on the Colorado River that occurred from 1905 to 1907 formed the Salton Sea. Mr. Kelly noted that the Salton Sea is destined to become smaller as a result of water transfers that IID is implementing as mandated by the Quantification Settlement Agreement (QSA). Further, by 2030, it is estimated that approximately 60,000 acres of the southern end of the Salton Sea will be exposed, exposing the community to health risks. Mr. Kelly explained that although the recession of the Salton Sea presents significant environmental and health risks, that restoration of the Salton Sea may lie with developing its vast geothermal resources. It is estimated that the area has approximately 2,000 MW of untapped geothermal energy, with a majority of it located on IID-owned lands.

Mr. Kelly explained that the IID Board, the Imperial County Board of Supervisors, and the Imperial County Air Pollution Control District signed a Memorandum of Understanding in the fall of 2013, which made way for the Salton Sea Restoration and Renewable Energy Initiative. Mr. Kelly noted that one potential vehicle that could make this initiative possible is California State Senate Bill 1139. SB 1139 would compel all utilities in the State to purchase 500 megawatts of geothermal over the next five to ten years. Mr. Kelly explained that geothermal energy is a good alternative to intermittent resources such as wind and solar, as it can maintain a more stable base load. Mr. Kelly stated that the Salton Sea Restoration and Renewable Energy Initiative has been endorsed by the Southern California Association of Governments Regional Council and urged the Colorado River Board to support the initiative as well.

Board Member Benson asked for more information regarding the State's obligation to the Salton Sea once Joint Powers monies are expended. Mr. Kelly responded that the mitigation obligation to deliver water to Salton Sea as required by the QSA ends in 2017. Mr. Kelly added that developing the Salton Sea's geothermal resources could provide a funding mechanism for any potential restoration efforts.

#### Colorado River Basin Water Supply and Demand Study

Ms. Trujillo reported that the Basin Study Work Groups, which include the Municipal Conservation & Reuse, Agricultural Conservation, and Environmental Flows Work Groups, are continuing to progress. Ms. Trujillo also thanked Board Members for their assistance on the Agricultural Conservation Work Group and during the latest in-person meeting held in San Diego, CA, at the end of March. Ms. Trujillo noted that the California agricultural entities provided helpful background information regarding the complexities associated with agricultural conservation in the region. Ms. Trujillo reported that the Work Groups were on schedule to prepare their respective Phase 1 reports and will soon begin discussions regarding concepts for Phase 2. The next Work Group meetings are scheduled for early and mid-May. The Coordination Committee is scheduled to meet in person on May 19, 2014, at McCarran Airport in Las Vegas.

#### Minute 319 Implementation

Ms. Trujillo reminded Board members that the Environmental Flows Delivery Plan developed by the Consultative Council and submitted to IBWC and CILA, was approved on February 18, 2014. The scheduled pulse flow began with water being released from Morelos Dam in Mexico on March 23, 2014. The pulse flow will include approximately 105,000 acre-feet of water that will be released for approximately eight weeks. A ceremony hosted by the Mexican delegation was held at Morelos Dam on March 27, 2014. Chairman Fisher provided remarks at the ceremony on behalf of the Basin States and the water and power users in the Colorado River System. Also present were Deputy Secretary Connor, Anne Castle, and high level delegates from the Mexican government. Ms. Trujillo also reported that the pulse flow is being closely monitored by the U.S. and Mexican scientists. As of April 6, 2014, the pulse flow had traveled

approximately 60 miles downriver. Ms. Trujillo showed a photo of the water coming down into the dry river bed. Several entities are writing blogs and providing updates of how the flow is tracking. They are also monitoring how the pulse flow is benefiting the birds and other wildlife in the area.

Chairman Fisher reported that, as of April 9, 2014, BOR's update on the Pulse Flow indicated that the water had reached the Laguna Grande restoration area and may connect to the Rio Hardy River. Mr. Fisher also reported that the environmental flows component was a high priority of the bi-national group of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and Mexico's previous administration.

Ms. Trujillo reported that the environmental flows component is one of several components that needs further development in the context of Minute 319. There is also a commitment to try to work on a more long-term agreement with Mexico. Minute 319 is a five-pilot project with an opportunity for a broader agreement.

In response to Mr. Wilson's question, Ms. Trujillo responded that part of the delivery plan includes the base flow component, in addition to the pulse flow. The base flow quantity is about 52,000 acre-feet that would be utilized between 2014 and 2017 in support of some of the habitat that had been developed as a response to the pulse flow. That water is held through a water trust in Mexico. Ms. Trujillo reported that the NGOs have committed to fundraising to purchase the water rights for that trust.

#### Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Program

Ms. Trujillo reported on the on-going process to identify feasible options for addressing the Lower Basin Fund shortfall associated with funding the Lower Basin States' cost-share obligation related to implementation of the Salinity Control Program. She explained that the revenue for the Fund is derived from the generation and sale of electrical energy at Hoover, Davis and Parker Dams, and that declining reservoir elevations have impacted the amount of energy generated and revenues collected. She indicated that the seven Basin States are working to develop strategies that can increase revenues and/or modify the cost-sharing ratios. Regardless of what strategy is ultimately chosen as most feasible, it will likely require federal legislation. Ms. Trujillo also reported that the next meeting of the Salinity Control Forum has been scheduled for June 12-13, 2014, and will be held in Jackson, Wyoming.

Board member Benson asked about the status of the Yuma Desalting Plant. Ms. Trujillo responded that the Yuma Desalting Plant, which was authorized by the same legislation that established the Salinity Control Program, is not active. Reclamation uses it as a research facility. Reclamation completed a test project at the facility and issued a final report in 2012. The report indicated that the facility ran at one-third of its capacity, which resulted in a savings of about 30,000 acre-feet. Ms. Trujillo also reported that the potential to restart the facility and generate more water savings in the basin continues as a discussion topic between the Department of Interior and the Basin States.

Chairman Fisher reported that the States are trying to develop creative solutions in keeping Lake Mead elevations high enough to prevent either water shortage triggers or put the Hoover intake for Las Vegas, Nevada in jeopardy.

#### Glen Canyon Dam—Long-Term Experimental Management Plan (LTEMP) EIS Process

Ms. Trujillo provided an overview of the recent modeling results workshop that was held on March 31-April 1, 2014, in Tempe, Arizona. She reported that at that workshop the LTEMP EIS co-leads (Reclamation and National Park Service) presented the detailed results of modeling that was performed on all of the proposed LTEMP EIS alternatives. The data consistently indicated that the Basin States' "Resource-Targeted Condition-Dependent" alternative performed the best from the perspective of humpback chub conservation, non-native trout management, and sediment conservation. She reported that the Basin States continue to work closely with the co-lead agencies and the DOI Management Team in analysis of the various alternatives, accurate depiction of important resource goals, and the development of a preferred alternative for the draft LTEMP EIS.

#### Lower Colorado River Multi-Species Conservation Program

Ms. Trujillo reported that Board staff attended the recent Work Group meeting in Yuma, Arizona, on March 12-13, 2014. At the meeting, Reclamation's Lower Colorado River Multi-Species Conservation Program (LCR MSCP) Implementation Group gave a detailed overview of the conceptual ecological models that were being developed to help identify critical information needs and potential work task activities to be included in Annual Work Plans and budgets. The use of the conceptual ecological models are intended to make the adaptive management component of the LCR MSCP even more effective and robust. Additionally, Reclamation staff provided members of the Work Group with a tour of the newly implemented Laguna Division Habitat Conservation Area located between Imperial and Laguna Dams. This nearly 2,000 acre project includes water control structures which allow periodic flooding of the created habitats, both marsh and native riparian vegetation. Finally, she reported that the LCR MSCP Steering Committee would be meeting in Las Vegas, Nevada, on April 23, 2014.

#### 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, May 14, 2014, at 10:00 a.m. at the Holiday Inn Ontario Airport, 2155 East 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. Wilson, seconded by Mr. Kuiper, and unanimously carried, the meeting was adjourned at 2:36 p.m. on April 9, 2014.