

Minutes of Meeting  
COLORADO RIVER BOARD OF CALIFORNIA  
Wednesday, May 14, 2014

A Meeting of the Colorado River Board of California (Board) was held in the Vineyard Room, of the Holiday Inn Ontario Airport, 2155 East Convention Center Way, Ontario, California, Wednesday, May 14, 2014.

Board Members and Alternates Present

Dana Bart Fisher, Jr., Chairman  
Franz De Klotz  
James Hanks  
Henry Kuiper  
Glen Peterson  
David Pettijohn

Doug Wilson  
Jeanine Jones, Designee  
Department of Water Resources  
David Vigil, Designee  
Department of Fish & Wildlife

Board Members and Alternates Absent

Stephen Benson  
Terese Ghio  
James McDaniel

Bud Pocklington  
John Powell, Jr.

Others Present

Steve Abbott  
Tim Blair  
John Carter  
Shane Chapman  
J.C. Jay Chen  
Dan Denham  
Christopher Harris  
Bill Hasencamp  
Michael Hughes  
Lisa Johansen  
Lori Jones  
Eric Katz  
Tom Levy  
Kara Mathews

Jan Matusak  
Doug McPherson  
Autumn Plourd  
Angela Rashid  
Tom Ryan  
Jack Seiler  
Tina Shields  
Ed Smith  
Joanna Smith  
Mark Stuart  
Michael Touhey  
Tanya Trujillo  
Mark Van Vlack  
Jerry Zimmerman

## **CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Fisher announced the presence of a quorum and called the meeting to order at 10:12 a.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.

Chairman Fisher announced that Mr. Randy Record was unanimously elected as Chairman of the Board at The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California who replaced Mr. Jack Foley.

## **ADMINISTRATION**

### **Approval of Minutes of the April 9, 2014 Colorado River Board Meeting**

Chairman Fisher asked if there was a motion to approve the April 9, 2014 minutes. Mr. Kuiper moved that the minutes be approved, seconded by Mr. Pettijohn, and unanimously carried, the April 9, 2014, meeting minutes were approved.

### **Announcements/Notices**

Ms. Trujillo reported that a confirmation hearing was held at the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee for the nomination of Mr. Estevan Lopez as Commissioner of the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation). Mr. Lopez is currently the Director of the Interstate Stream Commission in New Mexico. Ms. Trujillo reported that the Colorado River Board and certain member agencies have sent a letter to the Committee in support of his nomination. Ms. Trujillo also reported that Ms. Suzette Kimball has been nominated to be Director of the United States Geological Survey (U.S.G.S.) and is currently serving as the Acting Director. The next step will be for the Committee to report out the nominees and then confirmation by the full Senate will be necessary.

## **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 May 5, 2014, the water level at Lake Mead was at 1,093 feet with 11.19 million acre-feet (maf) of storage, or 43% of capacity, while the water level at Lake Powell was at 3,579 feet with 9.82 maf of storage, or 40% of capacity. The total System active storage as of May 4 was just over 28 maf, or 47% of capacity, which is nearly 3.0 maf less than one year ago when the System storage was at 52% of capacity. Ms. Trujillo indicated that the Denver area and the Western Slope of Colorado seem to be near or slightly above average for precipitation.

Ms. Trujillo reported that the unregulated inflow into Lake Powell for Water Year 2014, based on Reclamation's May 2, 2014 information, is forecast to be 10.8 maf, or 100% of average. She also indicated that the Upper Basin snowpack was at 102% of average and the Water Year 2014 precipitation to date was at 97% of average.

Ms. Trujillo reported that on April 25, 2014, Governor Brown issued a Proclamation of a Continued State of Emergency that continues all of the drought relief programs initiated through the initial January 17, 2014, drought State of Emergency declaration and initiates 19 additional actions that should be implemented to help address the drought conditions. The Department of Water Resources has continued to issue weekly Drought Briefs to provide updates on current conditions and key action items taking place regarding the drought. The April 29, 2014 Drought Monitor map for California indicates that over 70% of the State continues to experience extreme or exceptional drought conditions and 100% of the state continues to experience some level of drought conditions. The statewide snowpack reports are still far below average, reading 18% of average as of the May 1 snowpack readings.

#### State and Local Agency Reports

Ms. Jeanine Jones, of the Department of Water Resources, also reported that the Governor's revised state budget included some additional funding related to the on-going drought. Much of this proposed funding would be directed to CalFire for fire suppression as well as additional emergency drought relief funding. Ms. Jones also reported that funding has been provided to DWR associated with drought management activities. She also indicated that the California Legislature currently has a couple of bills pending that address groundwater management. Finally, Ms. Jones reported that DWR and the Water Education Foundation are hosting a major drought forum event in Sacramento on June 4. She stated that one of the themes for the forum will be to improve forecast predictability for the future, and she mentioned the current projections of a potential El Nino water year in 2015 as an example.

Mr. Mark Stuart, with DWR's Southern District, provided an overview of current water supply conditions statewide. 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. He indicated that since last month's report that the Los Angeles region had picked up an additional third of an inch of precipitation, and that the region is somewhere between 25-45% of average. Mr. Stuart reported that with several good storms during the past couple of months have pushed the

Sierra snowpack has recovered somewhat, but that the overall snowpack was still well below normal, at about 50% of average. Currently, DWR projects that the runoff is likely to be about 35% of normal. Mr. Stuart also reported that statewide reservoir storage still remains well below normal, at about 70% of average, for this time of year. He did indicate that DWR has raised the State Water Project allocations from 0% of allocation to 5% of allocation, but that these deliveries will not start until September 1<sup>st</sup>.

Mr. Glen Peterson, of the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, reported that MWD's total system storage was currently at about 68% of capacity. Mr. Peterson indicated that MWD is now using Colorado River water supplies throughout the entire District, not just the eastern portions as is normally the case. Mr. Peterson reiterated that MWD continues to be 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. Finally, Mr. Peterson introduced Mr. Michael Touhey, a Metropolitan Director from the Upper San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District, as the alternate MWD representative to the Colorado River Board of California.

Mr. David Pettijohn, of the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, reported that the snowpack in the Eastern Sierra supplying the Los Angeles Aqueduct is well below normal and that precipitation conditions as of April 1<sup>st</sup> were still below 50% of normal. He indicated that it currently looks like the City of Los Angeles will be relying primarily on Colorado River water supplies from MWD to meet the City's needs.

## **COLORADO RIVER BASIN PROGRAM REPORTS**

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

Ms. Trujillo reported that the workgroups continue their efforts to develop their "Phase One" reports to document the Next Steps component of the Basin Study. The reports will be consolidated into a final report that will be completed later this summer. The next meeting of the Coordinating Committee is scheduled for May 19, 2014 in Las Vegas, Nevada, where they will be presented with detailed updates from each of the workgroups.

### **Minute 319 Implementation**

Ms. Trujillo reported that as of May 2, 2014 the Minute 319 "pulse flow" has traveled approximately 80 miles down the river channel from Morelos Dam. Ms. Trujillo stated that Reclamation is predicting a connection between the pulse flow and the sea on May 15, 2014, which is based on the high tide conditions in the Delta. The pulse flow is being carefully tracked by a team of scientists, primarily from US and Mexican federal agencies. There is also some involvement from the University of Arizona and a bi-national group of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), which have tracked similar events in the past. Ms. Trujillo reported that the base flow component of Minute 319 anticipates an additional 52,000 acre-feet of water that will be distributed to selected areas in the Delta over the next 4 years to supplement and encourage growth of habitat in

areas that may have been developed as a result of the pulse flow.

Ms. Trujillo responded to Mr. Peterson's question regarding wells are being re-charged as a result of the pulse flow. Ms. Trujillo explained that there is a significant amount of groundwater pumping in Mexico for agricultural purposes and the effect of the pulse flow on the recharge levels is included in the monitoring plan as an issue to evaluate. Ms. Trujillo pointed out that currently Mexico is using their existing irrigation infrastructure to route the pulse flow and that they are no longer releasing water through Morelos Dam in order to extend the water as far as possible.

Chairman Fisher asked if there were any reported impacts from the high water in the southern part of the Yuma Valley. Ms. Trujillo responded that she had not heard of any reports of damage or adverse results, and that significant modeling was done to avoid damage.

#### Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Program

Ms. Trujillo reported that a subcommittee of the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Forum continues to meet and brainstorm various options for addressing the Lower Basin Development Fund shortfall issue associated with cost-sharing implementation of the salinity control program. She reported that the subcommittee would be holding another teleconference call in late-May.

Ms. Trujillo also reported that the Salinity Control Forum, Advisory Council and Work Group would be holding its next meeting in Jackson, Wyoming, June 10-13, 2014. She also indicated that she would be joining the Forum's Executive Director, Mr. Don Barnett, in Washington, D.C. to attend congressional briefings and meet with members of the various Basin state delegations and the administration in an effort to encourage continued or increased participation in and funding for the salinity control program.

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

Ms. Trujillo reported that the Basin States are looking forward to a late-May meeting with representatives of the Department of the Interior to continue discussions associated with the analysis of alternatives to be included in the Long-Term Experimental and Management Plan (LTEMP) EIS process. Much of the modeling of the proposed alternatives has been completed, and the co-lead agencies (i.e., National Park Service and Reclamation) have initiated preparation of sections of an administrative draft of the LTEMP EIS.

Ms. Trujillo also reported that the Adaptive Management Work Group would be holding a webinar meeting on May 27<sup>th</sup>, and that this meeting is primarily associated with the development of the triennial budget for the adaptive management program.

Board Member Wilson, of San Diego, asked Ms. Trujillo about the swing-weighting process that was described in the Executive Director's monthly report. Ms.

Trujillo responded by explaining that the Department of the Interior was utilizing a structured decision-making process as part of the LTEMP EIS to help identify the important resource goals and objectives and aid in balancing the competing interests of all of the stakeholder groups involved in the process (e.g., hydropower, recreation, Native American, endangered species, sediment, etc.). Toward achieving that balancing, the U.S. Geological Survey has developed a worksheet exercise that the stakeholders can participate in. Ms. Trujillo indicated that a similar type of process was utilized by the Basin States and the scientists that developed the Basin States' "Resource-Targeted Condition-Dependent" alternative that was submitted to the Department of the Interior for consideration in the LTEMP EIS.

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

Mr. Harris reported that at its recent LCR MSCP Technical Work Group meeting in Phoenix, Arizona, on May 7-8, that Reclamation distributed the draft LCR MSCP "Implementation Report, Fiscal Year 2015 Work Plan and Budget, and Fiscal Year 2013 Accomplishment Report". He reported that in FY-2013, just over \$31 million was expended for Program implementation activities. The draft report indicates that Reclamation is currently projecting that approximately \$37 million will be expended for FY-2015 activities. In its report, Reclamation also reported that as of 2013, nearly 3,000 acres of habitat have been created and maintained, including nearly 2,000 acres of cottonwood-willow, nearly 500 acres of honey mesquite, and about 400 acres of marsh, and nearly 100 acres of backwater habitat. Mr. Harris indicated that the LCR MSCP, to date, a total of just over 130,000 razorback suckers and nearly 60,000 bonytail have been reintroduced to the Lower Colorado River.

Mr. Harris also reported that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (USFWS) Arizona Ecological Services Office is preparing to publish a technical correction to the official list of threatened and endangered species regarding the listed range for the Yuma clapper rail. Mr. Harris indicated that the Yuma clapper rail is also one of the key species targeted in the LCR MSCP. He stated that the result of the technical correction is the restoration of Mexico to the listed range of the Yuma clapper rail. Mr. Harris reported that the USFWS recently informed the LCR MSCP Steering Committee that implementing the technical correction will have no effects to the implementation of Sections 7 and 9 of the federal Endangered Species Act, as the "take prohibitions" of Section 9 do not apply in a foreign country, and that the Section 7 consultation and Section 10(a)(1)(B) permit establishing the LCR MSCP will not be affected by the technical correction, and no new Section 7 consultation is necessary because of this action.

#### Lower Colorado Water Supply Project Applications

Ms. Trujillo reported that the Board packet included a resolution for the Board's consideration on the Lower Colorado Water Supply Project (LCWSP). Ms. Trujillo reported that the process to review the applications is to verify that the proposed water uses and locations of the parcels meet the eligibility requirements for the project, and if

additional information is needed, the applicant is contacted. Ms. Trujillo reported that the current applications presented are associated with seven parcels of property that have requested approval for water uses under the project. There are two parcels in Imperial County and five in San Bernardino County. An exhibit is attached to the resolution that identifies the location of the parcels, the name of the owner, and the requested amount of water that the applicants are seeking. Ms. Trujillo also commented that, if the applications are approved by the Board, the City of Needles will be notified, and then the City of Needles and Reclamation can begin the process of setting up subcontracts for the new water users. Ms. Trujillo also stated that a couple of the applications involve requests to expand existing allocations from a previously authorized amount. The total quantity of subcontracted water sought, both for current and future use, is 48 acre-feet per year for the additional uses. Ms. Trujillo recommended the approval of the resolution and which would authorize CRB staff to contact Reclamation and the City of Needles to proceed with the contracting process to provide water for these new projected uses.

**MOTION:** Chairman Fisher asked if there was a motion to approve the LCWSP resolution. Mr. Pettijohn moved that the resolution be approved, seconded by Ms. Jones, and unanimously carried, the resolution was approved.

Ms. Trujillo provided a further update relating to the LCWSP. She reported that Congress authorized Phase Two of the project in 2006 and that the construction of the Phase II wells began in 2010 and is expected to be completed in October 2015. The overall project is about 50 percent complete.

In response to Chairman Fisher's question on the relative productivity of the existing wells, Ms. Trujillo stated that Reclamation's annual water use accounting report documents the exact amount of pumping that occurs through the project. Reclamation is projecting the use to be approximately 5,000 acre-feet for 2013. After drilling of the two new wells, the total capacity would be 10,000 acre-feet. Concerns about well capacity led to the authorization of Phase II of the project and have encouraged progress.

#### Announcements/Notices

Ms. Trujillo reported that a few additional documents have been added to the Board packet. Included in the packet is an April 7, 2014 letter from the Department of Interior addressed to the International Boundary Water Commission confirming the order of water for the pulse flow and reflecting that the same amount of water will be deducted in August, so that their accounting will break even with respect to the pulse flow. Also, included is an April 7, 2014 confirmation letter from Reclamation addressed to the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California verifying Reclamation's 2012 ICS creation amounts. Ms. Trujillo also reported that the Board packet included an April 15, 2014 letter from the Central Arizona Project (CAP) addressed to Reclamation announcing that CAP entered into a Pilot Fallowing and Forbearance Agreement with Yuma Mesa Irrigation and Drainage District (YMIDD). The letter suggests that Reclamation estimates that this test project will generate approximately 9,000 acre-feet in 2014. The letter also gives an advanced notice to Reclamation that CAP would like to

have the conserved water remain in the reservoir system and that CAP would agree not to divert the water as the water year progresses.

Finally, Ms. Trujillo reported that some of the member agencies participated in a tour sponsored by the State of Colorado last week. The tour participants saw several large projects in Colorado that utilize Colorado River water, both on the western side of the state, and through the trans-mountain diversion projects that carry water to the eastern slope.

#### Next Board Meeting

Chairman Fisher announced that the next meeting of the Colorado River Board will be held on Wednesday, June 11, 2014, at 10:00 a.m. at the Radisson Ontario, 2200 E. Holt Boulevard, 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. Kuiper, seconded by Mr. Peterson, and unanimously carried, the meeting was adjourned at 11:06 a.m. on May 14, 2014.