

Minutes of Meeting
COLORADO RIVER BOARD OF CALIFORNIA
Wednesday, November 09, 2016

A meeting of the Colorado River Board of California was held on Wednesday, October 12, 2016.

Committee Members and Alternates Present

Stephen Benson	Glen D. Peterson
Brian Brady	David R. Pettijohn
Dana Bart Fisher, Jr., Chairman	Doug Wilson, Vice-Chairman
Jeanine Jones	

Committee Members and Alternates Absent

James Hanks	John Powell, Jr.
Christopher Hayes	Jack Seiler
Hank Kuiper	Michael Touhey
Peter Nelson	David Vigil

Others Present

Steve Abbott	Kara Mathews
Melissa Baum-Haley	Jan Matusak
Tim Blair	Jessica Neuwerth
Javier Carlos	Vic Nguyen
Karen Donovan	Autumn Plourd
Christopher Harris	Angela Rashid
Bill Hasencamp	Jack Seiler
Ned Hyde	Alina Tishchenko
Lori Jones	Kimberlyn Velasquez
Tom Levy	Donnell Wilcox
Lindia Liu	Gerald Zimmerman

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Fisher announced the presence of a quorum and called the meeting to order at 10:08 A.M.

OPPORTUNITY FOR THE PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE BOARD

Chairman Fisher invited anyone in the audience 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 indicated that during this Board meeting Mr. Harris will represent the staff in the absence of Executive Director Trujillo.

Consideration and Approval of the Minutes

Chairman Fisher asked for a motion to approve the October 12, 2016 meeting minutes. Ms. Jones moved that the minutes be approved, seconded by Mr. Peterson, and by unanimous support, the October 12, 2016 meeting minutes were approved.

Selection of Vice Chairman pursuant to Board Rules & Regulations

Board Member Peterson nominated Mr. Pettijohn for the position of the CRB's Vice Chairman. This was seconded by Board Member Wilson and by unanimous support Mr. Pettijohn was selected as a Vice Chairman.

Additionally, Chairman Fisher appointed a small group to review the CRB Rules & Regulations. Mr. Fisher stated that the Chairman of the CRB Rules & Regulations subcommittee would be Mr. Peterson and other members include Board Member Nelson, Jones, and Mr. Harris.

Review of draft schedule for 2017 Colorado River Board meetings

The next item on the agenda was presentation of the draft schedule for the 2017 Colorado River Board meetings. Mr. Harris went over the proposed schedule including a proposed tour of the Palo Verde area in the spring and the Coastal Region in the summer and requested feedback prior to the next Board meeting. Mr. Fisher confirmed that the schedule will be finalized during the next board meeting.

Colorado River Basin Water Reports

Ms. Rashid reported as of October 31, 2016, the water level at Lake Mead was at 1076.23 feet with 9.70 million acre-feet of storage, or 37% of capacity. The water level at Lake Powell was at 3,609.51 feet with 12.68 million acre-feet of storage, or 52% of capacity. Ms. Rashid reported that as of October 30, 2016, the total system storage was 29.87 million acre-feet, or 50% of capacity, similar to storage levels the same time last year. The Preliminary Observed Inflow for Water Year 2016 was 9.62 million acre-feet, which is 89% of normal. Ms. Rashid stated that the reservoir storage in the Upper Colorado River basin, other than Lake Powell, ranged from 66% of capacity at Fontenelle Reservoir to 85% of capacity at Flaming Gorge in Wyoming, 73% of capacity at Blue Mesa, 73% of capacity at Blue Mesa to 91% of capacity at Morrow Point in Colorado and 77% of capacity at Navajo in New Mexico. Ms. Rashid reported that as of October 27, Brock and Senator Wash Reservoir captured 128,978 acre feet and 61,297 acre feet, respectively. As of October 31, 2016, excess flows to Mexico were 3,008 acre feet, 10,000 acre feet less than the same time last year. The Bypass Flows per Minute 242 were 80,846 acre feet.

Ms. Rashid reported that California is still experiencing drought conditions, with over 40% of the State in the Extreme Drought category. Ms. Rashid also noted that October was the fifth wettest October on record, with much of the rainfall concentrated in Northern California. Ms. Jones remarked that many areas in Northern California received rainfall that fell into the rank of top ten and better for the month of October, but the rainfall still represents a small fraction of what the State needs. Ms. Jones also stated that it will take some time for the big reservoirs in the State's system to increase their storage levels. Chairman Fisher noted that the rainfall should bring additional water to the salmon and smelt. Ms. Jones responded that the precipitation is not running off because it is seeping into the ground. Board Member Benson inquired about how the State calculates evapotranspiration values. Ms. Jones explained that ET values are calculated using satellite-based data in the California Irrigation Management Information System (CIMIS). Ms. Jones added that there have been many questions about the amount of water needed to get the State out of the drought. She stated that the National Weather Service has performed theoretical calculations to answer this question but it is difficult to calculate over a statewide scale. Mr. Benson noted that in agriculture there are calculations to determine the amount water needed to build the soil moisture back up if the land was fallowed. Mr. Harris remarked that the Colorado River Basin Forecast Center analyzes soil moisture and uses the data to determine snowmelt runoff in the spring. Ms. Jones remarked that the recent amount of precipitation in Northern California has reduced the forest fire danger, but added that the Central and Southern Sierras are still experiencing tree mortality issues.

State and Local Reports

Board Member Peterson reported that Diamond Valley Lake is 70% full. He also reported that Lake Castaic storage is up to 250,000 acre-feet and noted that MWD stored 70,000 acre-feet in the Lake last year. Mr. Peterson noted that several agencies have been dependent on deliveries from Castaic and the State Water Project. Mr. Peterson also stated that its member agencies are continuing to conserve water.

Board Member Pettijohn stated that the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP) will begin reporting on the status of the Los Angeles Aqueduct next month.

Vice Chairman Wilson reported that San Diego County is still continuing to conserve water, although they are no longer under a State mandate and have passed the stress test. He also reported that local reservoir storage was good.

Board Member Benson thanked the Board and announced that this meeting was his last serving as a Board Member on the Colorado River Board of California. His last meeting with the Imperial Irrigation District (IID) Board would be November 14, 2016. A new IID Board Member will not be transitioned onto the Board until early December. Mr. Benson reported that IID is continuing to analyze sites for potential reservoirs which include five locations within the district and some sites near the All American Canal. It is estimated that it would take 5 years to build out the first reservoir. Mr. Benson stated that Reclamation sent a letter confirming that construction of the reservoirs is considered a beneficial use of water. Mr. Benson stated that IID discussed the possibility of building out Brock Reservoir but stated the environmental approvals would stretch out the timeline and that the reservoir is located too far away from farmland.

Benson reported that IID's underrun is close to 120,000 acre-feet, noting that IID has been over conserving this year. Mr. Benson also reported that more farmers have signed up for IID's on-farm efficiency program which requires farmers to install drip, sprinklers and limit the amount of water used. Mr. Benson reported that IID's budget is currently under consideration and has not been approved yet. He added that in addition to water sales, IID's budget also includes monies generated through conservation transfers and State programs. Mr. Benson stated that IID also operates a \$500 million power company and power revenues have declined over the years.

Mr. Benson stated that the State's minimum wage increases are affecting agricultural practices. He stated that farmers in the Imperial Valley are considering changing their watering practices to shorter runs. Mr. Benson reported that the State Water Board has scheduled a hearing on November 15, 2016 to discuss the status of the Salton Sea. Mr. Benson noted that in 2016, IID delivered 130,000 acre-feet to the Salton Sea and in 2017, IID will deliver 150,000

acre-feet, which includes some pre-delivered water from this year. Mr. Benson stated that in 2016, IID will produce 120,000 acre-feet of water through the on-farm efficiency program and in 2017 IID will produce 145,000 acre-feet, increasing each year and capping at 300,000 in the late 2020s.

Mr. Hyduke reported that Palo Verde Irrigation District (PVID) is continuing to analyze the impact of proposed solar projects within PVID. Mr. Hyduke also reported that PVID is continuing its dam maintenance project and a water outage is scheduled in January.

Basin States Drought Contingency Planning

Deputy Director Harris reported that discussions are continuing among and within each of the Lower Basin States to review the concepts being put forth among the states and Reclamation for the Drought Contingency Plan (DCP). The intent of the DCP is to encourage more water savings and storage in Lake Mead in order to decrease the likelihood that Lake Mead will drop below elevation 1,020 feet and to add flexibility and certainty for operations at lower reservoir levels. The new DCP is also intended to supplement the existing 2007 Interim Guidelines for the Coordinated Operation of Lakes Mead and Powell that run through 2026.

With respect to implementation of the DCP, if approved, each of the Lower Basin States would create savings or reduce diversions on an annual basis pursuant to specific triggers tied to specific elevations in Lake Mead. Implementing agreements will have to be developed within each of the three States to facilitate the methods of generating the proposed DCP storage volumes. Currently, California's DCP contribution volumes would not be required until Lake Mead hit a January 1 elevation of 1,045 feet, after the initial two tiers of shortages from the 2007 Interim Guidelines were imposed and after significant additional contributions from Arizona and Nevada had been made. Mr. Harris also indicated that the current status of the DCP was reviewed on November 7 at MWD's Water Planning and Stewardship Committee, and that a brief power-point presentation providing an overview of the current DCP was available for download and review.

Deputy Director Harris also reported that during the term of the new DCP agreement, and consistent with the existing terms in the 2007 Interim Guidelines, Lake Mead's elevation levels will continue to be monitored on an annual basis and additional consultations would occur if Lake Mead elevation levels continue to decline after implementation of the proposed DCP measures. The additional stored water could be recovered by the contributing agencies under specific conditions, or if Lake Mead reaches an elevation level above 1,110 feet. Of significant importance to California, during the term of the new DCP agreement, the States and Reclamation will have clearly established rules regarding the storage and release of Intentionally Created Surplus (ICS) water supplies below Lake Mead elevation 1,075 feet, eliminating uncertainty that

currently exists for those operations in the current 2007 Guidelines.

Deputy Director Harris indicated that the DCP negotiation process with the states, agencies and Reclamation is anticipated to continue. Chairman Fisher also briefly described the status of the negotiations among the Lower Basin States. He indicated that there are still some rather complex issues that remain to be resolved within both California and Arizona, including a requirement for the Arizona Legislature to endorse the final DCP agreement. Chairman Fisher indicated that intra-California discussions associated with the California DCP contribution volumes among MWD, PVID, CVWD and IID were proceeding. Chairman Fisher also reported that if a new agreement is not finalized before January 20, 2017, the new federal administration and nonfederal parties will have to determine how to move forward with their planning efforts. Finally, Mr. Harris also reported that the California parties continue to acknowledge that ongoing issues related to operations in the Bay-Delta and planning and management efforts at the Salton Sea must continue in parallel along with the Colorado River drought contingency planning efforts.

Status of Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Forum & Advisory Council

Mr. Harris reported that the Salinity Control Forum and Advisory Council met in Moab, Utah on October 26-27 to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the operation of the Paradox Valley Unit (PVU) salinity control project. He reported that an excellent tour of the Paradox Valley was held on October 25th to see the deep injection well, shallow collection wells, and other infrastructure of the current PVU. Additionally, tour participants were able to visit potential areas for drilling a second injection well, and siting evaporation ponds and brine crystallization disposal project areas. These are all elements being considered in the ongoing Paradox Valley Unit EIS alternatives analysis process.

Deputy Director Harris reported that the Forum and Advisory Council adopted recommended funding levels of \$8.16 million for Reclamation's Basinwide Program, \$14.3 million through NRCS's Environmental Quality Incentives Program, and \$1.5 million for salinity-specific funding for BLM's Soil, Water, and Air Program, to support the Salinity Control Program for FY-2017. Mr. Harris noted the relationship between federal appropriations and the Basin States' cost-sharing and the importance of continuing salinity control projects and the impacts of declining power revenues as a result of low reservoir levels at Lake Mead. Mr. Harris reported that the 2017 Triennial Review is being prepared and will include budget considerations as well as proposed salinity control measures as the Plan of Implementation for the Program for the 2017-2020 period.

In response to a comment by Board Member Jones regarding injection well-induced seismicity in Oklahoma, Deputy Director Harris noted that Reclamation had modified its operations of the PVU injection well following the January 2013 Magnitude 4.4 earthquake near

Paradox, Colorado, and there have not been any significant seismically-induced events since that time. The next Salinity Control Forum and Advisory Council meetings are tentatively scheduled for early June 2017 in Jackson, Wyoming.

Status of the implementation of Minute 319 and negotiation of Minute 32x

Deputy Director Harris reported that the bi-national group that is continuing to negotiate the potential successor to Minute 319 met on November 7-9 in San Diego to continue evaluation and development of the potential elements to include in the next Minute. Mexico's participation in drought contingency planning efforts to increase and protect Lake Mead's elevation levels and storage continues to be a topic of the bi-national discussions. Elements under discussion also include whether to extend or expand some of the current provisions of Minute 319 through 2026, so that the new Minute would coincide with the timeline of the 2007 Interim Guidelines.

Mr. Harris also indicated that the new Minute will build off elements of Minute 319, which included an agreement regarding operations at both low and high reservoir conditions, funding for conservation projects to create water savings for use in the U.S., Mexico and for environmental purposes in the Colorado River Delta region, including water flows in the channel, habitat restoration and monitoring. Currently, no major modifications are anticipated to the Minute 319 framework, but that there is still some uncertainty about the level of drought planning contributions Mexico may be willing to agree to, and regarding the details of the specific water conservation projects that will be included in this next Minute. Development of the key domestic implementation agreements will start as soon as the basic elements of the new Minute have come together. Mr. Harris reported that the Administration is diligently working with Mexico and the Basin States to try and bring the negotiation process to a successful conclusion in the late-December or early-January timeframe.

Glen Canyon Dam Adaptive Management Program

Mr. Harris noted that the Technical Work Group (TWG) of the Glen Canyon Dam Adaptive Management Program met in Phoenix, Arizona October 18-19. Mr. Harris reported that the group was working on the guidelines for the triennial budget and work plan development. Mr. Harris also reported that the Long-Term Experimental and Management Plan (LTEMP) Final EIS had been released on October 7 and a Record of Decision (ROD) was expected to be finalized during the CRWUA conference in December. Mr. Harris noted that a biological opinion from the Fish and Wildlife Service was also being completed.

Mr. Harris reported that a high flow experiment (HFE) release from Glen Canyon Dam was currently taking place, with a flow of 36,000 cfs being released from the dam over 96 hours to mobilize sediment. A nonnative green sunfish population had been treated before the HFE

could be carried out. Finally, Mr. Harris noted that the Grand Canyon Monitoring and Research Center would hold its annual reporting meeting January 24-26 to present the previous year's research.

Lower Colorado River Multi-Species Conservation Program

Mr. Harris reported that the Lower Colorado River Multi-Species Conservation Program (LCR MSCP) Steering Committee met in Las Vegas, Nevada on October 26th. The steering committee approved the addition of the recently listed northern Mexican gartersnake to the program's list of covered species. Mr. Harris also noted that northern Mexican gartersnakes had been found at a LCR MSCP conservation area (Beal Lake Conservation Area), although the species is still rarely detected along the Lower Colorado River.

Mr. Harris made a brief presentation regarding the water use at the LCR MSCP Palo Verde Ecological Reserve (PVER). Mr. Harris described the history of the property, located in the northern part of the Palo Verde Valley, and now made up of over 1,000 acres of native habitat. The habitat uses water for evapotranspiration and to maintain moist soils for nesting birds, with unconsumed applied water assumed to drain through the habitat and return to the Colorado River via deep percolation. Mr. Harris described the system by which the Bureau of Reclamation currently estimates unmeasured return flow from the Palo Verde Irrigation District, which does not accurately reflect the unmeasured return flow from the PVER property. Mr. Harris provided an estimate of the amount of water that has returned to the river from irrigation at PVER, but which has not been properly accounted for. Mr. Harris reported that a process is being developed that includes more effective and efficient water management, as well as an accounting process that more accurately determines the amount of unmeasured return flow and consumptive use by the riparian vegetation. In response to a question from Chairman Fisher, Mr. Harris reported that although the Bureau of Reclamation seems willing to adjust Decree Accounting Reports going forward, amending reports from previous years will require additional discussion.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Harris reported that the State Water Resources Control Board will be holding a workshop regarding the status of the Salton Sea Management Program. Mr. Harris also confirmed that a Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) was released through the WaterSMART Program.

Mr. Harris reported that the Colorado River Water Users Association (CRWUA) conference will be held on December 14 -16, 2016. A Colorado River Board meeting will be held in conjunction to the conference.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further items to be brought before the Board, Chairman Fisher asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Upon the motion of Mr. Pettijohn, seconded by Mr. Peterson, and unanimously carried, the meeting was adjourned at 11:49 A.M.