

Minutes of Meeting
COLORADO RIVER BOARD OF CALIFORNIA
Wednesday, June 14, 2017

A meeting of the Colorado River Board of California was held on Wednesday, June 14, 2017.

Committee Members and Alternates Present

Dana Bart Fisher, Jr., Chairman
James Hanks
Jeanine Jones
Hank Kuiper
Peter Nelson

Glen D. Peterson
David R. Pettijohn, Vice-Chairman
Jack Seiler
Mark Watton
Doug Wilson
David Vigil

Committee Members and Alternates Absent

Norma Sierra Galindo
Christopher Hayes

John Powell, Jr.
Michael Touhey

Others Present

Steve Abbott
Rich Atwater
Grant Chaffin
Dan Denham
Karen Donovan
Bill Hasencamp
Michael Hughes
Ned Hyduke
David De Jesus
Lori Jones
Anthony De Julio
Tom Levy
Kara Mathews
Jan Matusak

Jessica Neuwerth
Vic Nguyen
Craig Parker
Shanti Rosset
Autumn Plourd
Angela Rashid
Dan Robinson
Tom Ryan
Tina Shields
Alina Tishchenko
Joe Vanderhorst
Jerry Zimmerman

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Fisher announced the presence of a quorum and called the meeting to order at 10:01 A.M. Chairman Fisher asked Mr. Doug Wilson to introduce the new alternate Board member, Mr. Mark Watton, from San Diego County Water Authority.

OPPORTUNITY FOR THE PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE BOARD

Chairman Fisher invited members of 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.

ADMINISTRATION

Chairman Fisher asked for a motion to approve the May 10, 2017 meeting minutes. Mr. Pettijohn moved that the minutes be approved, seconded by Ms. Jones, and with unanimous consent, the May 10, 2017 meeting minutes were approved.

Chairman Fisher asked for a motion to approve the Colorado River Board's budget for FY-2017/2018. Mr. Kuiper moved that the budget be approved, seconded by Mr. Pettijohn, and with unanimous consent, the budget was adopted.

COLORADO RIVER BASIN WATER REPORTS

Ms. Rashid reported that as of June 5, 2017, the water surface elevation at Lake Mead was 1,081.30 feet with 10.12 million acre-feet of storage (MAF), or 39% of capacity. The water surface elevation at Lake Powell was 3,621.22 feet with 13.89 MAF of storage, or 57% of capacity. As of June 4, 2017, the total system storage was 31.93 MAF, which is 54% of capacity, and nearly 2.0 MAF more than this time last year.

Ms. Rashid reported that the forecasted unregulated inflow into Lake Powell for Water Year-2017 is 12.36 MAF, or 114% of average. To date, the Water Year-2017 precipitation is 116% of average. The forecasted April to July inflow is 8.30 MAF, or 116% of average. Ms. Rashid reported that the monthly precipitation for April was mixed with some areas below average and other areas slightly above to above average. Precipitation in May was below average throughout the Basin except in some areas including parts of Arizona were above average. The Upper Basin snow water equivalent (SWE) was above average in several areas including the Upper Green, Bear, Yampa-White and Gunnison watersheds. Executive Director Harris noted that the Upper Green

Basin received significant precipitation, which helped the Colorado River Basin to be above average for the Water Year. Ms. Rashid reported that as of June 4, 2017, the Upper Colorado River Basin reservoirs, excluding Lake Powell, ranged from 40% of capacity at Fontenelle in Wyoming, 86% of capacity at Flaming Gorge in Wyoming and Utah, 96% of capacity at Morrow Point and 72% of capacity at Blue Mesa in Colorado, and 90% of capacity at Navajo in New Mexico. Mr. Harris noted that Fontenelle is likely making flood control releases to make space for more runoff from the Upper Green River Basin watershed.

Ms. Rashid reported that through June 8, 2017, Brock and Senator Wash reservoirs have captured 62,082 acre-feet and 38,196 acre-feet, respectively. She also reported that the excess deliveries to Mexico were 6,687 acre-feet as of June 8, 2017. As of June 5, 2017, the total bypassed flows of saline drainage to the Cienega de Santa Clara in Mexico were 43,815 acre-feet.

State and Local Reports

Ms. Jones, representing the California Department of Water Resources (CDWR), reported on her recent visit to the Upper Colorado River Basin and the status of the uranium tailing cleanup near Moab. She stated that the tailing piles have been significantly reduced in size. Ms. Jones reported that Northern California and the San Joaquin River Basin have had a record year. The Tulare Basin did not exceed its previous record, but it was still one of the wettest years on record. The Tulare and San Joaquin Basins are experiencing very high snowmelt runoff, creating a potential public hazard as people recreate in the cold fast-moving water. There is still snowpack in the Sierras, particularly in the southern Sierras, but it is diminishing quickly. Finally, Ms. Jones reported that the elevation at Lake Oroville is being held down to facilitate spillway repairs.

Board member Peterson, representing The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MWD), reported that MWD is using more State Water Project water because it has lower alkalinity than Colorado River water. He also noted that conservation in MWD's service area is still continuing. Mr. Peterson reported that MWD is unable to recharge the Los Angeles County groundwater basins with Colorado River water because of the quagga mussel issue. He also stated that there was a 24-day shutdown of the system between February and March for maintenance and capital improvement activities on the aqueduct.

Board member Pettijohn, representing the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP), reported that the Eastern Sierra snowpack has been melting and that the Mammoth ski resort has enough snow to stay open until August. He also stated that LADWP's system is receiving an abundance of runoff and they are trying to figure out ways to store it. Mr. Pettijohn noted that in-city demands have increased. The LADWP has also been cautiously applying water onto the Owens Valley to avoid impacting the billion dollars in capital investments made for dust suppression. Mr. Pettijohn stated that the LADWP hopes to have more options to manage the excess water by the end of the year, but noted that it may be difficult because in the fall demands

decline and runoff are still occurring, possibly over-saturating the Owens Valley groundwater basin.

Mr. Harris reported on a few Basin-related updates. He stated that the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) released the final Article 5 Decree Accounting report in mid-May, and it is posted on Reclamation's Lower Colorado Region website. He noted that the input from California agencies was incorporated in both the California draft and then the final draft of the Accounting report. Mr. Harris reported that Reclamation held the first consultation for the 2018 Annual Operating Plan (AOP) on May 25, 2017 via webinar. He stated that the projected operational tier for Lake Powell in 2018 will be the Upper Elevation Balancing Tier with a most probable release of 10.89 MAF. He noted this is a preliminary projection and that we should continue to examine the contents of Lakes Powell and Mead and the 24-Month studies over the next several months to hone in on a more solid projection. The second consultation is scheduled for July 27, 2017 in Las Vegas, Nevada and will also be available via webinar.

Mr. Harris reported that staff attended the Colorado River Hydrology Research Symposium hosted by the Southern Nevada Water Authority (SNWA) in late May at the Springs Preserve in Las Vegas, Nevada. Mr. Harris explained that the purpose of the Symposium was to bring together academics, researchers and forecasters that many of the agencies rely upon in making operational decisions for the Colorado River System. Mr. Harris remarked that the Symposium was very useful, especially when learning about the cutting-edge research in such topics as airborne snow surveys and climate change. A follow-up meeting is scheduled for June 20, 2017 in Denver, Colorado, with the goal of identifying specific data and information needs of agencies and researchers. The meeting may also explore cross-sharing of information and participation in demonstration pilot projects. Mr. Harris noted that there is a likelihood that the Symposium will occur again in the future to ensure that water managers and researchers are collaborating to make better planning and management decisions.

STATUS OF COLORADO RIVER BASIN PROGRAMS

Basin States Drought Contingency Planning and Minutes 319 and 32x

Mr. Harris reported that the specifics of the Minute 32x agreement have been changing quickly and often. A draft of the document was completed in December 2016 and Mexican officials recently signaled a willingness to move forward with the agreement. The Basin States, U.S. Department of the Interior, and the U.S. Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission have been working to finalize the associated domestic agreements. Mr. Harris noted that the major issue seems to be the contingency aspects of Section IV of the Minute, which contains the Mexican Water Scarcity Contingency Plan that would run in parallel with the Lower Basin Drought Contingency Plan (DCP). The method of triggering the Mexican Water Scarcity

Plan and the plan's connection to the still-evolving Lower Basin DCP continue to be a source of conflict and uncertainty.

Mr. Harris noted that the U.S. Technical Team would meet via webinar on June 15, followed by a meeting in Las Vegas, Nevada on June 21. Mr. Harris reported that the group hopes to finalize Minute 32x before the expiration of Minute 319 on December 31, 2017.

Chairman Fisher reported that the Basin States principals had a call with Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke on June 12, during which the States described the Minute process as the group's highest priority. Chairman Fisher noted that, although staff at the Department of the Interior is still incomplete, the group and their concerns were well-received. Mr. Harris reported that Secretary Zinke asked Chairman Fisher questions about California agriculture and emphasized that he intends to shift decision-making in the department from Washington D.C. to local entities and offices. Mr. Harris also noted that Mr. Tom Buschatzke of the Arizona Department of Water Resources had mentioned his state's "DCP Plus" plan to the Secretary, who seemed receptive and willing to provide support.

Lower Colorado Water Supply Project

Mr. Nguyen reported that Board staff attended a stakeholder's meeting hosted by Reclamation at the Yuma Area Office on May 17th. Reclamation discussed the status of Stage II of the Lower Colorado Water Supply Project and the well construction. The remaining work to be done includes infrastructure construction for the wells, power connection, and then transferring the project to operations & maintenance. The project is scheduled to be completed by end of 2017.

Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Program

Mr. Nguyen reported that there was a Work Group meeting as well as a Forum meeting at the Jackson Lake Lodge in Wyoming last week. There was an election of new Forum officers during the Forum meeting. Mr. Eric Millis, who is the current Vice-Chair of the Forum and the Director of the Utah Division of Water Resources, was nominated and selected to be the Chair. Mr. Bill Hasencamp from MWD was nominated and selected to be the Vice-Chair.

Mr. Nguyen reported that one of the major tasks at the meeting was the 2017 Triennial Review, which is updated every three years under the direction of the Forum. This Review is the 14th review since the mid-70s. The Review includes a Plan of Implementation and numeric criteria, which is water quality goals or thresholds at the three monitoring stations at Hoover, Parker, and Imperial Dams. The thresholds range between 700 and 900 mg/L. The Plan of Implementation is the actual plan on the ground to be implemented to not exceed the thresholds. The plan calls for an additional 63,000 tons per year of salt control over the next three years, which if added to the existing 1.33 million tons per year of salt control, would total about 1.4 million tons of salt control per year. Mr. Nguyen reported that the Salinity Economic Impact Model was updated as well as the associated appendix in the Review. The appendix was revised to add areas in the Lower Basin

and in California, including non-MWD entities in the counties of San Bernardino, Imperial, and Riverside. The areas included agricultural and urban entities within Imperial County, Palo Verde and Coachella Valleys. Mr. Nguyen thanked the member agency staff for providing the data to support the model. Mr. Harris added that this model is going to be a very valuable tool going forward and that technical staff in each of the member agencies would find use for this model. He added that the model is going to be helpful in trying to make a case for a more equitable cost-share ratio between the Lower Basin and the Upper Basin in the context of the overall Salinity Control Program, whose cost is largely borne by Lower Basin users and largely by California.

Mr. Nguyen reported that the final comments for the Triennial Review from Forum members or stakeholders should be submitted to the Work Group within a couple of weeks. The Review will go through a 30-day public comment period and then the Work Group will address and incorporate any comments received. After that, a final draft will be submitted to the Forum to be finalized and adopted. Mr. Harris added that the draft Review will be sent to the Board member agencies for review and comment, and that in California, we also coordinate review with the State Water Resources Control Board. Once all the seven states adopt the Review through their various water quality agencies, EPA would then adopt the Triennial Review.

Mr. Nguyen reported that Reclamation presented an update on the Paradox Valley Unit operations. As a result of the earthquake that occurred in March 2017 about 13 km north of the existing injection well, Reclamation revised its operations at the well, which is now disposing 5% less than before at about 95,000 tons per year of salt control from the previous 100,000 tons per year of salt control. The alternatives being evaluated under the EIS for the long-term fix are the evaporation ponds, a second injection well, and the zero-liquid discharge technology, of which Reclamation plans to do a demonstration project later this year. In response to Mr. Wilson's question regarding operational changes made, Mr. Nguyen said that following an earthquake, Reclamation may make changes to shutdown periods and injection volumes. Mr. Harris explained that the ability of the current well to handle the brine continues to degrade and thus the need for a second injection well or an alternative disposal soon. Board Member Jones added that USGS and other agencies have learned a lot about induced seismicity for fluid injection, particularly in places like Oklahoma and North Dakota. Board Member Peterson asked if Reclamation has considered concentrating the salt and creating brine (evaporation) ponds and Mr. Harris responded that this alternative is being evaluated in the EIS. Chairman Fisher asked if the salts can be concentrated further for injection, and Mr. Harris replied that there may be concerns about the energy required for deep injection as well as the potential for corrosion of the well casing.

The fall Forum meeting will occur in late October this year in Sacramento, and will include a tour of the Bay-Delta.

Glen Canyon Adaptive Management Program

Board Staff Jessica Neuwerth reported that the Glen Canyon Dam Adaptive Management Program activities have been on hold since May 5, when the Department of the Interior issued a Secretarial order halting all Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) activities pending administrative review. Ms. Neuwerth noted that on June 12, the group received a waiver allowing some subcommittee activities to continue, specifically those dealing with the FY18-20 triennial work plan and budget, a brown trout management workshop, and planning for a potential fall 2017 high flow experiment (HFE).

Lower Colorado River Multi-Species Conservation Program

Ms. Neuwerth reported that the Lower Colorado River Multi-Species Conservation Program (LCR MSCP) held a work group meeting on May 10-11 in San Diego, California. During this meeting, the group looked at the past year's accomplishments, the current year's work tasks, and the upcoming year's budget and work plan. Ms. Neuwerth noted that the program currently has 14 completed conservation areas and 3 proposed conservation areas, totaling more than 5,400 acres of habitat. The Mohave Valley Conservation Area and Planet Ranch Conservation Area are the two newest conservation areas, both of which will provide native fish habitat. The LCR MSCP is also considering conservation areas at Parker Dam Camp, the Palo Verde Ecological Reserve South, Three-Fingers Lake, Yuma Meadows, and the Dennis Underwood Conservation Area.

Ms. Neuwerth reported that in FY-16, researchers detected 56 yellow-billed cuckoos along the Lower Colorado River, most of which were at LCR MSCP conservation areas. By comparison, when the program began in 2005, there were only 6 detections in the same area, all along the Bill Williams River. Ms. Neuwerth noted that the program is undergoing research on the elf owl and gilded flicker, both of which have not yet been detected at LCR MSCP conservation areas, to determine their habitat needs and usage. Additionally, the program is working to evaluate the genetics of razorback sucker in Lake Mohave. The Lake Mohave population of razorback sucker serves as the broodstock for the native fish the LCR MSCP stocks, so the genetic health and stability of the population is critical.

Finally, Ms. Neuwerth reported that the LCR MSCP Steering Committee plans to meet via teleconference on June 28th. The group will consider taking action on a proposal to add the northern Mexican gartersnake, a threatened species recently detected at an LCR MSCP conservation area, to the program as a covered species.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Harris discussed the FY-2018 federal budget and noted a proposed 11 percent cut for the Department of the Interior and 21 percent cut for the Department of Agriculture. In the context of Title 1 and Title 2 of Salinity Control Act, a budget of \$15.45M was identified for Title 1

(downstream from Imperial Dam) and \$8.37M for Title 2 salinity control programs that are implemented largely in the Upper Colorado River Basin. Mr. David Bernhardt is the President's nominee for Interior Deputy Secretary and there is no nominee yet for the Commissioner of Reclamation.

Mr. Harris discussed the Walton Family Foundation report entitled "Colorado River Critical Infrastructure Needs". The report identified 15 projects in the Colorado River Basin, divided between the Upper and Lower basins. Noteworthy projects include the Los Angeles Regional Recycled Water to cleanup runoff and other local supply sources and then recharge that water, Salton Sea habitat improvement and dust suppression perhaps to build on the State's Salton Sea Management Program Phase 1: 10-Year Plan, Yuma Desalting plant, and Minute 242 well field upgrades. Finally, in the context of the salinity control program, there were a couple of projects described in the report including the Paradox Valley Unit and Pah Tempe Springs.

Mr. Harris announced that on May 31, the California Senate approved Senate Bill 701, the Salton Sea Obligations Act of 2018. A bond measure could be put before the voters in November 2018, whereby if it passes, then about \$500M could be made available to implement Phase 1 of the Salton Sea Management Program. Mr. Harris noted that the state of California is gearing up to do a series of public workshops on the state's Salton Sea Management Program.

Mr. Harris noted that Board staff also recently attended a couple of the Natural Resources Agency's Safeguarding California Plan workshops in Los Angeles and in the Coachella Valley to get an update on California's climate change adaptation strategies.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further items to be brought before the Board, Chairman Fisher adjourned the meeting at 10:57 A.M.