

Minutes of Meeting
COLORADO RIVER BOARD OF CALIFORNIA
Wednesday, October 11, 2023

A meeting of the Colorado River Board of California (Board) was held on Wednesday, October 11, 2023, at the IID Condit Auditorium, 1285 Broadway Avenue, El Centro, CA, 92243.

Board Members and Alternates Present:

Gloria Cordero (MWD)	Jeanine Jones (DWR Designee)
Gina Dockstader (IID Alternate)	Jim Madaffer, Vice Chairman (SDCWA)
Dana B. Fisher, Jr. (PVID)	Peter Nelson (CVWD)
John B. Hamby, Chairman (IID)	David R. Pettijohn (LADWP)
Eric Heidemann (SDCWA Alternate)	Frank Ruiz (Public Member)
Jordan Joaquin (Public Member)	David Vigil (DFW Alternate)

Board Members and Alternates Absent:

Castulo Estrada (CVWD Alternate)	Christopher Hayes (DFW Designee)
Jack Seiler (PVID)	David De Jesus (MWD Alternate)
	Delon Kwan (LADWP Alternate)

Others Present:

Steven Abbott	Dylan Mohamed
Brian Alvarez	Yuanyuan Myint
Nick Bahr	Jessica Neuwerth
Dennis Davis	Michael Pacheco
JR Echard	Glen Peerson
Justina Gamboa-Arce	Shana Rapoport
Javier Gonzalez	Alex Rodriguez
Christopher Harris	Shanti Rosset
Bill Hasencamp	Alexi Schnell
Ned Hyduke	Tina Shields
Eric Katz	Mike Wade
Laura Lamdin	Cherie Watte
Ronald Leimgruber	Meena Westford
Robin Madaffer	Jerry Zimmerman

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Hamby announced the presence of a quorum and called the meeting to order at 01:00 p.m.

OPPORTUNITY FOR THE PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE BOARD

Chairman Hamby invited members of the audience to address the Board on items on the agenda or matters related to the Board. Hearing none, he moved on to the next item on the agenda.

WELCOME FROM IMPERIAL IRRIGATION DISTRICT

Ms. Tina Shields welcomed everyone and thanked everyone for participation in the 20th anniversary of the Quantification Settlement Agreement (QSA) on October 10, 2023.

LOCAL AND STATE WATER SUPPLY AND OPERATIONS REPORTS

Member Jones, representing the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) reported that 2023 water year temperatures within the State were cold compared to historical records. She noted that the temperatures were between two to four degrees below average, noting that there were several cold storms during the winter season. She added that the colder temperatures assisted in the management of runoff during the spring snowmelt.

Member Cordero, representing The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MWD), stated that the Colorado River Aqueduct (CRA) will move up to a 5-pump flow for the rest of the year. She reported on water deliveries for the first eight months of 2023, noting that deliveries were at 80% on average.

COLORADO RIVER BASIN WATER SUPPLY AND OPERATIONS REPORT

Executive Director Harris reported that October 1st was the beginning of the 2024 Water Year. He stated that as of October 2nd, the water level at Lake Powell was 3,573.55 feet with 8.78 MAF of storage, or 38% of capacity. The water level at Lake Mead was 1,065.83 feet with 8.87 MAF of storage, or 34% of capacity. The total system storage was 25.26 MAF, or 43% of capacity, which is 5.71 MAF more than system storage at this time last year.

Executive Director Harris reported that as of October 2nd, for Water Year-2023 (WY-2023) the Preliminary Observed unregulated inflow into Lake Powell was 13.42 MAF, or 140% of

normal. He reported that the observed April to July inflow into Lake Powell is 10.62 MAF, or 166% of normal. He stated that observed inflow into Lake Powell for September was 65% of normal and the October inflow forecast was 88% of normal.

Executive Director Harris reported on precipitation conditions during August and September. He stated that in August precipitation conditions were above average in the Upper Colorado Basin, particularly in the Upper Green River Basin.

Executive Director Harris reported on the August 24-Month Study. He presented a figure showing the end of month elevations for Lakes Powell and Mead. He noted that Lake Powell's elevation has increased demonstrably. He reported that Lake Mead's elevation has also increased due to the balancing release from Lake Powell and the significant water conservation activities by the Lower Basin states and Mexico. Mr. Harris stated that Reclamation's total balancing release from Glen Canyon Dam will be about 8.6 MAF. He added that consumptive use for the Lower Basin and Mexico this year is one of the lowest in decades. The combined consumptive use is projected to be about 7.3 MAF, with the Lower basin at 5.83 MAF and Mexico at 1.4 MAF. He stated that due to the conservation efforts that have been implemented and the balancing release from Glen Canyon Dam, Lake Mead will gain about 1.58 MAF.

Executive Director Harris reported that through the end of September, the Brock and Senator Wash regulating reservoirs captured 84,801 AF and 60,599 AF, respectively. He also reported that the excess deliveries to Mexico were 54,482 AF, compared to 4,030 AF at this time last year. He stated that the excess flows to Mexico were significant this time of year, noting that it has been due to above average precipitation and water orders that were made and not diverted. He added that Reclamation was not able to catch and store the additional water in the system. He stated that saline drainage bypass to the Cienga de Santa Clara is about 92,000 AF and will probably end up at around 120,000 AF by the end of the year, which is about average.

COLORADO RIVER BASIN PROGRAM STAFF REPORTS

Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Forum

Staff Member Rapoport reported that the Salinity Control Forum (Forum) Work Group (Work Group) met in September.

Staff Member Rapoport reported that one of the items discussed was the triennial review of the Colorado River water quality standards. The water quality standard applies to all seven states. The Work Group did not propose any changes to the standard this year, nor were any

public comments received during the public comment period that just closed. The Forum will be taking the item up at their upcoming meeting in November.

Staff Member Rapoport reported that the Paradox Valley Unit (PVU) experienced a couple shutdowns early in the spring, one to perform upgrades to the SCADA system and a second shutdown because there was enough water flow that the salinity concentrations were low, and injection was not needed during that time. Injection at PVU resumed operations on June 22nd and has been running consistently since that time.

Status of the Glen Canyon Dam Adaptive Management Program

Staff Member Rapoport reported that the Glen Canyon Dam Adaptive Management Program did not have a meeting this month.

Staff Member Rapoport reported that a Notice of Intent (NOI) that has been released by Reclamation that is proposed to revise the Long-Term Experimental and Management Plan (LTEMP). The primary purpose of the proposed revision is to address non-native fish that are passing through the dam. The proposed action would adjust the flows below the dam to make the waters, especially the backwater areas that tend to be warmer and more stagnant, less hospitable for breeding of those populations to try and limit population growth. The proposed flows include higher flows to flush out spawning fish as well as releasing cooler water to reduce temperatures. Reclamation is working under a short timeline with the goal of having flow options available by next spring.

Staff Member Rapoport reported that the NOI includes a second component to potentially to revise the High Flow Experiment (HFE) protocol within the LTEMP. The current protocol is based on two six-month calendar windows for how to count sediment accumulation. The purpose of HFEs is to push sediment downstream to rebuild beaches. The proposed revision would increase the length of the accounting window to a year to increase the opportunity to perform HFEs.

Staff Member Rapoport reported that the NOI is open for public comment. Comments are due November 3rd. There are also two public meetings scheduled. Information on the online workshops is included in CRB's monthly report.

MEMBER AGENCY AND PUBLIC MEMBER REPORTS

California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW)

Member Vigil reported on upcoming hunting events. He stated that CDFW is getting ready for the Waterfowl hunting season. Member Vigil noted that Waterfowl hunts will take place at the Palo Verde Ecological Reserve beginning October 23, 2023.

California Department of Water Resources (DWR)

Member Jones reported that DWR issued \$187 million in Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) related grants for 103 projects in 32 groundwater basins. She added that next year will be the 10th anniversary of the passing of SGMA. She stated that the first set of plans for critically over drafted basins have completely gone through the review process, with some having been referred to the State Water Board for follow up for noncompliance. She reported that as we transition from the initial stage of plan formation and move on to implementation, DWR will begin to see changes in the next decade or so in groundwater management areas, especially in the San Joaquin Valley. She added that DWR does not know the impact of the wet water year on groundwater storage because it takes time for groundwater to recharge, adding more will be known by next spring. She stated that at the end of WY-2023 statewide reservoir storage wrapped up at 129% of average, surpassing Water Years 2017 and 2019.

San Diego County Water Authority (SDCWA)

Vice Chairman Madaffer reported that SDCWA climate change efforts have been popular. A slide was presented.

Vice Chairman Madaffer reported that the SDCWA recently named two new people into leadership positions at the Water Authority. Tish Berge is the new Deputy General Manager and Kelley Gage is the Assistant General Manager.

Vice Chairman Maddaffer added that one of the things that the SDCWA has done with respect to transparency on greenhouse gas emissions involve a number of efforts at the pump plants.

Vice Chairman Madaffer added that the SDCWA will hold a QSA celebration in November and that invitations will arrive shortly if they have not already.

Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MWD)

Member Cordero expressed gratitude for being able to visit Imperial Irrigation District (IID). She noted the important connections between agriculture in the Imperial Valley and her home city of Long Beach, noting in particular that agriculture products are often shipped through the ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach.

Member Cordero discussed two projects approved by MWD's board in September to help address last year's drought and inequities. She stated that the first is new pump stations along the supply of the feeder to serve the western part of the service area in the San Fernando Valley near Ventura County. She thanked MWD Director Glen Peterson for his leadership on that project. She stated that the second project is a new intertie between the two major pipelines that will pump stored water uphill to the Rialto pipeline and allow water to be delivered from Diamond Valley Lake to the San Gabriel Valley and the Inland Empire.

Member Cordero then discussed MWD's efforts working for a couple of years with the Newsom administration related to the voluntary agreements as part of the Bay Delta Water Quality Plan. She noted that the State Water Board has kicked off the process and is seeking public input to finalize a plan in the next few months. She noted that this is important to MWD because it will set water quality and flow requirements in the Delta and many of its tributaries. The plan could result in MWD requiring water suppliers and other water users to cut back on how much they divert for people and for farms.

Member Cordero noted that MWD General Manager, Adel Hagekhalil, hired a Chief of Staff, Moshin Mortada, on October 1st, described his background and indicated CRB members may see him occasionally.

Lastly, Member Cordero noted that this is Water Professional's Week in California, as designated by the state legislature, and noted that MWD has had several related activities .

Palo Verde Irrigation District (PVID)

Mr. JR Echard from PVID reported on damage from a severe storm on September 1st that resulted in 2 ½ inches of rain in the south end of Palo Verde. He noted that the storm caused severe damage to PVID's canal system, including a drain and several connected siphons. He noted that PVID has been able to repair four of the five siphons. Mr. Echard also noted the installation of a new telemetry system. He indicated that they would be working on repairing the drain and related storm damage through October and possibly November.

Mr. Echard reported that on October 26th PVID would be celebrating its 100th year as the Palo Verde Irrigation District and invited everyone present to join.

Coachella Valley Water District (CVWD)

Member Nelson reported on progress related to their Whitewater replenishment facilities damaged by tropical storm Hilary. He noted that repairs with the assistance of MWD's staff and equipment are now complete. He also noted that the CVWD had anticipated to have 400 cubic feet per second (cfs) restored at Whitewater, but only had about 50-100 cfs due to additional needed repairs in an upstream canal and the Colorado River Aqueduct. Mr. Nelson indicated that the related repairs were almost complete and that they would be fully back online soon for groundwater replenishment with exchange water and an advanced delivery.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Basin States Activities

Executive Director Harris reported that Reclamation would be releasing the updated draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) for the 2007 Guidelines sometime in the last week of October. There will be a 45-day public comment period. Executive Director Harris noted that the SEIS would analyze the Lower Basin plan submitted to Reclamation in May, which includes commitments the three Lower Basin states to create an additional 3 MAF of conserved water between 2023 and 2026. With the reductions already laid out in the 2007 Guidelines, Executive Director Harris reported that an additional estimated 6 MAF would bolster Lake Mead by the expiration of the Guidelines in 2026. Executive Director Harris reported that Reclamation expected to finalize the SEIS in spring or summer of 2024.

Executive Director Harris reported that Reclamation and the Basin States have begun to pivot to development of the post-2026 Guidelines. The scoping comment period for the post-2026 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) recently closed. Reclamation is working on preparing a scoping report summarizing the input received from the public.

Executive Director Harris reported that a Federal-States-Tribes workgroup has also been established, with the goal of establishing more effective and efficient communication between tribal nations, the Basin States, and the United States. The second meeting of this group was held earlier in October.

Executive Director Harris also reported that Reclamation kicked off a stakeholder technical modeling group about six months ago to look at all the potential modeling tools and decision support systems that may be used in evaluating the alternatives in the post-2026 EIS. Executive Director Harris noted that a web-tool was under development, which would be available to the public and allow for creation and comparison of different operational strategies for Lakes Powell and Mead.

Washington D.C. Updates

Executive Director Harris reported that Deputy Secretary Beaudreau from the United States Department of the Interior has resigned and will be leaving at the end of October. Executive Director Harris noted that Deputy Secretary Beaudreau was very helpful with the SEIS process and putting together the May 2023 Lower Basin Interim Period Plan.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Chairman Hamby reported that Member Joaquin and Member Cordero both participated in the most recent Federal-States-Tribes meeting. Chairman Hamby remarked that the meetings have been productive and that they were a welcome forum for closer coordination.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Board entered Executive Session at 1:38 p.m.

Pursuant to provisions of Article 9, commencing with Section 11120, of Chapter 1 of Part 1, Division 3 of Title 2 of the Government Code and Sections 12516 and 12519 of the Water Code, an Executive Session was held to discuss matters concerning interstate negotiations with representatives from other states or the federal government.

REGULAR SESSION

The Board resumed the regular session at 2:40 p.m. No action was taken.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further items to be brought before the Board, Chairman Hamby adjourned the meeting at 2:44 p.m.