

MINUTES OF MEETING  
COLORADO RIVER BOARD OF CALIFORNIA  
Wednesday, September 11, 2024

A meeting of the Colorado River Board of California (CRB or Board) was held on Wednesday, September 11, 2024, at the San Diego County Water Authority, 4677 Overland Avenue, San Diego, CA 92123.

Board Members and Alternates Present:

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

Board Members and Alternates Absent:

Castulo Estrada (CVWD Alternate)	Delon Kwan (LADWP Alternate)
Christopher Hayes (DFW Designee)	Peter Nelson (CVWD)
Eric Heidemann (SDCWA Alternate)	Brad Robinson (PVID Alternate)
Jordan Joaquin (Public Member)	

Others Present:

Steven Abbott	Jessica Neuwerth
Nick Bahr	Shana Rapoport
Dennis Davis	Carrie Scott
JR Echard	Alexi Schnell
Alan Flint	Tina Shields
Lorrie Flint	Joseph Vanderhorst
Daniel Gaytan	Fraser Wyatt
Ned Hyduke	Jerry Zimmerman
Eric Katz	
Laura Lamdin	
Aaron Mead	
Yuanyuan Myint	

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Hamby announced the presence of a quorum and called the meeting to order at 10:07 a.m.

**WELCOME FROM SAN DIEGO COUNTY WATER DISTRICT**

Vice Chairman Madaffer welcomed everyone.

**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.

**NEW BOARD MEMBER**

Chairman Hamby swore in Michael Camacho, the new alternate board member representing the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California.

**SPECIAL PRESENTATION – Applying the Basin Characterization Model by the California Department of Water Resources**

The Board heard a special presentation from Ms. Lorrie Flint and Ms. Alan Flint, directors of Earth Systems Modeling at Earth Knowledge, Inc. The presentation, organized and introduced by Member Jones, was entitled “Tools to Characterize Impacts of a Warming Climate on the Hydrologic System: Examples from California”. Dr. Lorrie Flint reviewed changes in climate and hydrology in California, across a range of hydrologic parameters. She noted that in California’s major water supply basins precipitation has decreased and air temperature increased since 1896, emphasizing that air temperature has been particularly high in the past two decades. Focusing on key areas in the Sierra Nevada, she explained that the fraction of precipitation as snow has been decreasing steadily since 1950, that there are fewer but more extreme precipitation events, and that warmer temperatures increase evapotranspiration, which collectively result in less precipitation runoff to streams and reservoirs. Dr. Lorrie Flint discussed water supply forecasting tools. She mentioned that Earth Knowledge does both near term operations-oriented forecasts as well as long-term projections with climate data. She also discussed several related opportunities for collaboration with western states, including those in the Colorado River basin, noting that tools discussed are under development for both the Colorado River basin and the Great Basin.

Vice Chair Madaffer asked what the impacts of a continued decline of runoff from the Sierra Nevada mountains to the Delta would be on the Colorado River. Ms. Flint responded that in California more compressed winter seasons results in more runoff that is not captured by reservoirs. She noted that this is less of an issue in the Colorado River, because water ends up in reservoirs. She also noted that water supply from the Delta is less certain, since while runoff from the Central Sierra Nevada is expected to decrease, runoff in the Sacramento River shows an increase in most future projections.

Member Pettijohn asked how the data is collected. Ms. Flint answered by listing the data sources for most of the major parameters used in their model, including climate data (PRISM), soils (NRCS), streamflow data (USGS) and other data from local and state sources. She also noted the use of satellite data and Airborne Snow Observatory (ASO) data for snowpack measurements. Mr. Flint added by explaining that they focus on physically based models calibrated to observed data.

Ms. Flint noted that one of Earth Knowledge's staff, Mr. Fraser Wyatt, was present at the meeting. Mr. Wyatt stated that he would be available to answer questions after the meeting.

Mr. Jerry Zimmerman asked about the Colorado River Basin. Ms. and Mr. Flint responded that they have developed a hydrologic model for the Colorado River with the USGS and that they are working to calibrate it. Mr. Zimmerman asked if changes in the Colorado River Basin are consistent with what they have seen in California. Ms. Flint responded that it is a different system, but that it is still similarly snow dominated and that they have seen similar declines in snowpack, particularly in the Lower Basin. Mr. Flint indicated that they have seen differences between the Upper Basin and Lower Basin and that they are working to understand the differences and are developing the model with more detail now.

Acting Executive Director Neuwerth indicated the importance of better predictions of runoff in the Colorado River Basin and thanked Ms. Flint and Mr. Flint for their presentation.

## **ADMINISTRATION**

### **2024 Board Meeting Schedule update**

Acting Executive Director Neuwerth reported that the board meeting date changed from November 13, 2024, to November 14, 2024, because there would be a full-day tour from 8am to 5pm on November 13, 2024. The tour may include various sites such as Imperial Dam, Quechan Indian Tribe and Bard Water District projects, and Lower Colorado River Multi-Species Conservation Program projects.

Vice Chair Madaffer asked whether the dinner would be on November 12<sup>th</sup> or November 13<sup>th</sup>. Acting Executive Director Neuwerth confirmed that there would be a dinner on November 13, 2024.

Acting Executive Director Neuwerth also reported that the December meeting was changed to December 4, 2024. The 2024 Colorado River Water Users Associations (CRWUA) conference was scheduled from December 4, 2024, to December 6, 2024, and the CRB meeting has been held historically on the first day of the CRWUA conference.

Chairman Hamby asked if there was any objection from the Board of the meeting schedule changes. Hearing none, Chairman Hamby stated that the Board would move forward with the November 14, 2024, and December 4, 2024, meeting dates.

#### 2024 Board Work Plan Update

##### *Establish an Interactive Annual Strategic and Budget Planning Process*

Acting Executive Director Neuwerth stated that staff plan to provide to the Board in November 2024 an annual calendar that includes State Budget change deadlines.

Member Cordero offered to host a future retreat for the Board at Gene Camp facility of the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California.

##### *Develop a Plan, Resources, and Tools to Ensure Effective and Ongoing Communications and Outreach*

Acting Executive Director Neuwerth reported that staff was working on updating content and structure of CRB website, including a new “California Colorado River Story” section. Staff has met with the Deputy Secretary of Communications of the California Natural Resources Agency to discuss strategy for adding CRB communications staff. Staff was also developing a duty statement for a mid-level Information Officer. She asked for the Board’s input for specific public outreach goals or activities.

Chairman Hamby suggested to get agency managers and public affairs individuals from our agencies together to discuss.

Member Jones suggested having an exhibit at the 2024 Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA) fall conference and 2024 Colorado River Water Users Association (CRUWA) conference this year. The content created for CRB website updating could also be used for an exhibit.

### Review Options to Optimize Board Meeting Frequency and Location

Acting Executive Director Neuwerth reported that maintaining monthly board meeting schedule and meeting in central location with occasional tours to allow maximum flexibility. January, April, July and October meetings were normally cancelled.

Chairman Hamby asked the staff to prepare some alternatives for the meeting locations.

Member Jones suggested doing an event for communication outreach for the months typically were cancelled.

Chairman Hamby asked the Board to email suggestions to staff for future board meeting.

### Establish a Calendar for Special Presentations and Speakers at Board Meetings

Acting Executive Director Neuwerth reported the special presentations line-up from September to November this year. Staff suggested establishing a CRB CRWUA planning committee to prepare California CRWUA event. She encouraged everyone to email staff with suggested 2025 presentation topics.

Member Jones commented that the conference date for ACWA and CRWUA overlap this year. She suggested thinking about something that could be done for audiences of ACWA and CRUWA.

Chairman Hamby stated that we have presented a great California story at CRWUA last year and there were many highlights that we could mention at the CRWUA meeting this year. The lower basin use of the Colorado River collectively was consistently low within the last two years, which was a good point to emphasize at CRUWA. He also suggested a lower basin breakfast event at CRWUA.

Vice Chair Madaffer commented that California had a great story to tell. For the month that the board meetings were typically cancelled, we could take the opportunity to share how California conserve water.

Member Codero concurred the idea to share California story at CRWUA.

Acting Executive Director Neuwerth stated that staff have a draft special presentation list for 2025 available to the Board to review at the end of 2024.

### Coordinate to Appropriately Reestablish Agency Managers' Meetings

Acting Executive Director Neuwerth asked the Board's input on the goals, frequency, venue and core focus for agency managers' meetings.

Chairman Hamby suggested to ask general managers' preference.

Member Pettijohn suggested getting input from Jerry Zimmerman, the advisor to CRB, and commented that we used to have more frequent agency managers' meetings in the past.

Mr. Zimmerman confirmed that the agency managers' meeting used to be conducted at least every quarter.

Acting Executive Director Neuwerth stated that agency managers' meetings would be a great venue to have discussions among the agencies.

#### *Evaluate and Optimize the Functions of the Six Agency Committee and the Colorado River Authority*

Acting Executive Director Neuwerth reported that the staff was working on compiling a list of suggested changes to the Six Agency Committee (SAC) and the Colorado River Authority (CRA) rules and functions. SAC would need amendment by July 2025 and could include some changes at that point. Sha also stated that the staff suggested to have SAC and CRA agencies in November or December to discuss goals and possible modifications.

Member Pettijohn suggested to have attorney from the agency be involved with these discussions.

Member Fisher suggested that the agency managers' meeting might be a better forum to discuss this.

Chairman Hamby suggested to have a meeting with agencies' attorney in November 2024 to get a plan.

#### *Explore Future Opportunities for State Funding*

Acting Executive Director Neuwerth reported that staff were investigating the timeline and process for requesting State funding and asked the Board's input on potential goals and needs to be met by the State funding.

Member Jones commented that the fiscal year 2025 will be short and there would be administration challenge for requesting State funding due to the deficit in next two years.

#### *Ensure Regular Opportunities for Board Self-Evaluation*

Acting Executive Director Neuwerth reported that staff were incorporating self-evaluation into annual strategic and budget planning processes such as annual survey and annual workshop to discuss the Board's priorities and goals.

Chairman Hamby suggested to build on the questions from previous survey and further discuss in Board retreat. He thanked Acting Executive Director Neuwerth's update on the workplan.

### **LOCAL AND STATE WATER SUPPLY AND OPERATIONS REPORTS**

Member Jones, representing the Department of Water Resources (DWR), reported on the close of Water Year (WY) 2024, noting that some areas of the State received average precipitation, while some areas, such as the Southern Sierra experienced drier conditions which may impact runoff conditions in the future.

Member Cordero, representing The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MWD), reported that, as of September 1<sup>st</sup>, MWD's reserve storage was 88% of capacity. She added that the Colorado River Aqueduct will be on a seven-pump flow through the end of the year. The 2024 diversion target is 956,000 AF as of September 6<sup>th</sup> and MWD has diverted 583,651 AF. Member Codereo reported that for the first seven months of the year, deliveries were 85% of average and the 2024 delivery target for the Desert Water Agency and Coachella Valley Water District is 335,000 AF.

### **COLORADO RIVER BASIN WATER SUPPLY AND OPERATIONS REPORT**

Acting Executive Director Neuwerth reported that as of September 9<sup>th</sup>, the water level at Lake Powell was 3,580.21 feet with 9.31 million-acre feet (MAF) of storage, or 40% of capacity. She reported that the water level at Lake Mead was 1,063.64 feet with 8.70 MAF of storage, or 33% of capacity. She reported that the total system storage system was 25.51 MAF, or 44% of capacity, which is 64 KAF less than system storage at this time last year.

Acting Executive Director Neuwerth reported that as of September 9<sup>th</sup>, the WY-2024 observed inflow into Lake Powell is 8.1 MAF, or 84% of normal. She reported that the observed April to July inflow into Lake Powell is 5.33 MAF, or 83% of normal. She stated that the observed inflow into Lake Powell for August was 89% of normal and the September inflow forecast was 99% of normal. She reported that WY-2024 precipitation to date 103% of average.

Acting Executive Director Neuwerth reported on the monthly precipitation conditions for July and August 2024. She reported that conditions in July were dry throughout the Basin while conditions August were above average in the northern Colorado River Basin.

Acting Executive Director Neuwerth reported on the August 24-Month Study for Lakes Powell and Mead. She stated that the August 24-Month Study sets Lake Powell's operating tier and Lake Mead's shortage condition. She reported that Lake Powell is projected to be in the Mid-Elevation release Tier for January 1, 2025, which sets the release from Lake Powell at 7.48 MAF.

She explained that this release would likely cause Lake Mead's elevation to decline. She reported that Lake Mead's elevation on January 1, 2025, is projected to be 1,062 feet, which is a Level 1 Shortage Condition, with the Lower Basin and Mexico contributions of over 600,000 AF.

Acting Executive Director Neuwerth reported that through the end of August, the Brock and Senator Wash regulating reservoirs captured 75,546 AF and 50,138 AF respectively. She also reported that excess deliveries to Mexico were 18,209 AF, compared to 23,061 AF at this time last year. She stated that saline drainage bypass to the Cienga de Santa Clara is currently about 93,912 AF.

## **COLORADO RIVER BASIN PROGRAMS STAFF REPORT**

### **Glen Canyon Dam Adaptive Management Program**

Staff Member Rapoport reported that the Adaptive Management Work Group (AMWG) of the Glen Canyon Dam Adaptive Management Program (GCDAMP) held a meeting on the south rim of the Grand Canyon from August 21 to 22.

Staff Member Rapoport reported that the day before the meeting started the tribes hosted a program to help AMWG members learn more about the canyon and tribal relationship to the canyon. Staff Member Rapoport showed a picture of a painting depicting the Zuni origin story in the Colorado River watershed.

Staff Member Rapoport reported that the AMWG passed a triennial work plan and budget (TWP) recommendation to the Secretary of the Interior. The TWP funds both the U.S. Geological Survey's Grand Canyon Monitoring and Research Center and Reclamation for the three years of the work plan. The next step is for the Secretary of the Interior to pass or amend the recommended TWP. There is an annual review process during each year the TWP is implemented.

Staff Member Rapoport reported that Reclamation is relining the river outlet works at Glen Canyon Dam. The tubes have not been relined since they were installed. The bypass tubes will be relined one at a time, taking approximately two months for each tube. The work will not interfere with any of the ongoing experimental releases from the dam. It will also not address the cavitation issues that we experienced last year during the High Flow Experiment (HFE). There will continue to be operating restrictions pertaining to the tubes.

Staff Member Rapoport reported that the Long-Term Experimental and Management Plan (LTEMP) that guides how the GCDAMP is run requires a ten-year review of the program that will take place in 2027. Reclamation is discussing how the review will be conducted. The LTEMP document requires a scientific review of how research is progressing, what has been learned, what gaps need to be filled, and how the needs for the resources that were identified are being



addressed. Reclamation will include a broader review as well to evaluate how the program is functioning and where there is room for improvement. Staff Member Rapoport added that she would be happy to pass along any input from the Board.

Staff Member Rapoport reported that Reclamation has been continuing to run experimental smallmouth bass flows, releasing cold water through the bypass tubes in hopes of deterring smallmouth bass from establishing a population below Glen Canyon Dam. The temperature goals that have been targeted are being achieved and are cooling the river. Thus far, no age zero smallmouth bass have been seen, nor have any signs of breeding of smallmouth bass below the dam been identified. Staff Member Rapoport added that this is a change from previous years and is excellent news.

Staff Member Rapoport reported that 183 smallmouth bass have been captured to date in 2024 with the furthest downstream capture the same as it was last month, 6.9 miles downstream of Glen Canyon Dam.

Staff Member Rapoport stated that the National Park Service (NPS) reported that that it does not see a need to implement a chemical treatment to remove invasive non-native fish from the river this summer as there is no evidence of breeding.

Staff Member Rapoport reported that the smallmouth bass flows are intended to be an interim measure and are not intended to be a long-term measure. The experimental flows are very expensive for hydropower with an estimated cost of \$7-15 million to hydropower to run this year's experiment.

Staff Member Rapoport reported that the NPS is in the process of conducting a National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) evaluation to potentially modify that the slough located twelve miles above Lees Ferry, a known breeding ground for smallmouth bass and other warmwater invasive non-native fish. They are looking to modify the area to better connect the slough to the river to allow more flow through and cool the water more so that it is a less desirable breeding location. Staff Member Rapoport added that the NPS anticipates that a draft environmental assessment will be available for public comment by September 23.

Staff Member Rapoport reported that the other potential long-term project being considered to deter invasive non-native fish growth is the potential installation of a thermal curtain above Glen Canyon Dam. Reclamation is evaluating the potential for a curtain that would both prevent fish in the upper levels of the dam from passing through the hydropower tubes and cool the river by filtering cooler water through the dam. This option is under preliminary evaluation. Any implementation would be far in the future.

## Lower Colorado River Multi-Species Conservation Program

Staff Member Rapoport reported that Senator Padilla is introducing legislation today to the Subcommittee on Water and Power to help the Lower Colorado River Multi-Species Conservation Program (LCR MSCP) to fix a funding issue with the program. The program is funded fifty percent by federal partners and fifty percent by the state partners. A Funding and Management Agreement is in place for the fifty-year period of the program. The payment of the non-federal funding to the program does not always match with the timing of the construction projects. Reclamation holds the non-federal funds in an account that cannot bear interest, which is typical for federal accounts.

Staff Member Rapoport stated that the legislation Senator Padilla is introducing today would, if passed, direct the U.S. Treasury to allow an interest-bearing account to be established. There is about \$60 million in the account, accruing interest would retain some of the purchase power of the funds moving forward. Staff Member Rapoport added that the program will need the funds, and that similar legislation will be introduced in the House by Representative Calvert.

Acting Executive Director Neuwerth reported that she received an email this morning that purchase of the Gabrych property has closed as of 10:00 this morning.

## **MEMBER AGENCY REPORTS**

### California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW)

Member Vigil reported on CDFW's water efficiency project at the Palo Verde Ecological Reserve (PVER). He reported that three main related tasks had been completed: to replace 9,000 feet of concrete ditches with a pipe system with valves; level and grade approximately 500 acres in a waterfowl pond; and grade and resurface the parking lot for the pond and add some new islands to the waterfowl ponds. Member Vigil also noted other miscellaneous work, emphasizing that the work has generally been completed quickly.

### Imperial Irrigation District (IID)

IID representative Tina Shields reported about IID's On-Farm Program, noting that this was reported during the last Board meeting, but that it had just started then. Ms. Shields reported that the program went into effect August 13<sup>th</sup>, after requisite permitting. She reported that 155,000 acres of Kleingrass, alfalfa, and Bermuda grass have now been dormant with no irrigation for 45 to 49 days. She noted that this is less than the requisite full 60 days due to the late start and that next year the program will span June through September. Ms. Shields reported that this has resulted in 170,000 acre-feet of water savings, subject to verification of compliance

and contracting. She noted that the verification process has started, with 9,700 pages of contracts to over 800 entities.

Ms. Shields reported that IID submitted a revised water order to Reclamation, documenting 170,000 acre-feet of conservation under the On-Farm Program and 50,000 acre-feet of water transferred to San Diego County Water Authority under the QSA. She reported that IID is working to execute the agreements with SDCWA and MWD. She noted that Reclamation has not yet approved their water order revision, but that IID's water use forecast takes the revision into account.

#### California Department of Water Resources (DWR)

Member Jones reported that DWR has a small grant program for installing new or re-establishing old stream gauges.

Member Jones discussed the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA), noting that this is its 10-year anniversary and expressed optimism about its progress to-date. She noted that initially there was debate about whether or not the goal of establishing Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs) would be fully met, but that all required GSAs have now been established. She noted that some additional work remains.

Chairman Hamby asked Member Jones to summarize the SGMA. Member Jones did so, noting that the SGMA legislation set a timeline for development of GSAs and related management plans for medium and high priority basins, with plans due in 2020 and 2022. She noted that pre-SGMA there were about two dozen entities that had some kind of groundwater management and that post-SGMA there are now around one hundred additional basins that have a groundwater management plan. She also noted that the GSAs have 40 years, or 2040 and 2042, to come into full compliance with their plans, and that the state is required to do a 5-year review of plan implementation progress.

#### San Diego County Water Authority (SDCWA)

Vice Chairman Madaffer reported on SDCWA's August 22, 2024, board meeting. He first noted that the SDCWA board welcomed MWD Chair Adán Ortega. He also noted that MWD Interim General Manager Deven Upadhyay was also present to report on MWD's Climate Action Plan. He generally discussed the strong relationship between SDCWA and the value of that relationship.

Vice Chairman Madaffer then reported that CRB's former Executive Director Harris attended the last SDCWA board meeting, noting that SDCWA's board passed a resolution in honor of his service to the CRB. He elaborated on comments from Mr. Harris to the SDCWA board,

including noting Mr. Harris's advice on the importance of continuing to pursue collaboration and consensus-based solutions rather than litigation with basin partners.

### Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MWD)

Member Cordero recognized the presence of her fellow MWD director, Marty Miller, and MWD director Michael Camacho.

Member Cordero reported that the new state regulations for public water systems that implement direct potable reuse of wastewater will go into effect on October 1<sup>st</sup>. She noted that the new regulations will have implications for Pure Water Southern California as it will enable MWD to explore and test alternative approaches to delivering purified recycled water.

Member Cordero reported that MWD staff participated in an event last week with the City of San Fernando to highlight San Fernando's return to use of groundwater supplies instead of MWD deliveries. She emphasized that this shows MWDs support for local water supply projects.

Member Cordero reported about MWD's Climate Action Master Plan. She noted that this week MWD will host its first public forum to solicit input about future water uncertainties.

Finally, Member Cordero reported that MWD just launched a digital marketing and social media advertising campaign called "Water Conservation is a Team Sport", noting the context of the upcoming 2028 Olympics to be held in Los Angeles. She noted that the campaign, an animated series, has received more than 4 million impressions, generating 20,000 visits to MWD's [bewaterwise.com](http://bewaterwise.com) website.

### **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

#### Post-2026 Process Update

Acting Executive Director Neuwerth reported that the Basin States representatives are still meeting regularly. The Lower Basin states continue to refine elements of the Lower Basin proposed alternative, particularly provisions related to storage of conserved water in Lake Mead. The Lower Basin alternative would create a new storage program for Lake Mead, but rules must also be developed for the use of existing storage post-2026. Acting Executive Director Neuwerth reported that discussions with the Upper Basin states on a consensus alternative have not been fruitful.

## Proposed Northeast Arizona India Water Rights Settlement

Acting Executive Director Neuwerth reported that the Basin States and others have been meeting regularly to discuss the proposed Northeastern Arizona Indian Water Rights Settlement. The settlement between Arizona, the Navajo Nation, Hopi Tribe, San Juan Southern Paiute Tribe, and non-Indian parties in northeastern Arizona would allocate 44,700 AF/yr of Arizona's Upper Basin apportionment to the Navajo Nation and 2,300 AF/yr to the Hopi Tribe, along with some mainstream Priority 4-6 water and local surface and groundwater. Acting Executive Director Neuwerth noted that the settlement would utilize most of Arizona's 50,000 AF Upper Basin apportionment.

Acting Executive Director Neuwerth reported that the settlement includes the transfer of Arizona Upper Basin water into the Lower Basin portion of Arizona, including the Lower Basin mainstream, and the transfer of Arizona Lower Basin water into the Upper Basin portion of Arizona. The settlement also includes the diversion of Arizona Upper Basin water through New Mexico for delivery to Arizona. Acting Executive Director Neuwerth noted that the settlement would require approximately \$5 billion for capital improvement and infrastructure projects associated with the delivery of water.

Acting Executive Director Neuwerth reported that the movement of water between basins and states raises a number of accounting questions, which a group of Basin States representatives has been working to address. Acting Executive Director Neuwerth noted that her priority is ensuring that California's interests aren't harmed by any changes to how Lakes Mead and Powell operate and how shortages are distributed in the Lower Basin. Acting Executive Director Neuwerth noted that the settlement is moving quickly, with the goal of securing a Senate hearing in the next several weeks.

## Salton Sea Conservancy

Acting Executive Director Neuwerth reported that a California Senate bill is moving forward that would establish a Salton Sea Conservancy under the California Natural Resources Agency. The conservancy would operate in consultation and coordination with the existing Salton Sea Authority to support implementation of the state's restoration projects, overseeing O&M and management of completed projects, and other activities.

## Washington, D.C. Report

Acting Executive Director Neuwerth reported that the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Subcommittee was meeting that day to consider several bills related to the Colorado River. Acting Executive Director Neuwerth reported that the bills include the LCR MSCP funding account introduced by Senator Padilla, the Help the Hoover Dam Act introduced by Senator

Sinema, and an extension of the Upper Basin System Conservation Pilot Project through 2027, introduced by Senator Hickenlooper.

Acting Executive Director Neuwerth also reported that the House Subcommittee on Water, Wildlife, and Fisheries held an oversight hearing focused on water abundance, opportunities, and challenges in California. Acting Executive Director Neuwerth noted that additional information on the hearing in the Executive Director's Report.

### **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

Chairman Hamby reported that he had recently spoken at the NADBank conference on California's historic and current efforts on the Colorado River. The conference included participation by the U.S. and Mexico.

Chairman Hamby reported that the California Natural Resources Agency had issued an invitation to the Board and California stakeholders to attend a groundbreaking event at the Salton Sea on October 15<sup>th</sup> to celebrate the release of the remainder of the \$250 million allocated to the Salton Sea as a result of IID's participation in the Lower Basin Plan. Chairman Hamby noted that the funds would allow for the expansion of the Species Conservation Habitat to its full 7,800-acre size.

Chairman Hamby reported that recent Basin State discussions have not been encouraging, but the states are continuing to meet.

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

The Board entered Executive Session at 12:12 p.m.

Pursuant to Section 11126, subdivision (a)(1) of the Government Code, an Executive Session was held to discuss the search for the Executive Director.

### **REGULAR SESSION**

The Board resumed the regular session at 12:40 p.m.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Chairman Hamby announced the next Board meeting will be on October 9, 2024, at Palm Desert, CA.

With no further items to be brought before the Board, Chairman Hamby adjourned the meeting at 12:40 p.m.