

Minutes of Regular Meeting
COLORADO RIVER BOARD OF CALIFORNIA
Wednesday, February 15, 2012

A Regular Meeting of the Colorado River Board of California (Board) was held in the Vineyard Room, at the Holiday Inn Ontario Airport, at 2155 East Convention Center Way, Ontario, California, Wednesday, February 15, 2012.

Board Members Present

Dana B. Fisher, Jr., Chairman
John V. Foley
W. D. 'Bill' Knutson
Henry Merle Kuiper
David R. Pettijohn

John Palmer Powell, Jr.

Jeanine Jones, Designee
Department of Water Resources

Board Members and Alternate Absent

John Pierre Menvielle
James Cleo Hanks

Christopher G. Hayes, Designee
Department of Fish and Game

Others Present

Steven B. Abbott
Autumn Ashurst
James H. Bond
John Penn Carter
J.C. Jay Chen
David Fogerson
Leslie M. Gallagher
Christopher S. Harris
William J. Hasencamp
Eric M. Katz
Michael L. King
Thomas E. Levy
Jan P. Matusak

Carrie Oliphant
Glen D. Peterson
Halla Razak
Steven B. Robbins
Ed W. Smith
Catherine M. Stites
Mark Stuart
Gary E. Tavetian
Joseph A. Vanderhorst
Mark Van Vlack
Bill D. Wright
Gerald R. Zimmerman

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Fisher announced the presence of a quorum and called the meeting to order at 10:06 a.m.

OPPORTUNITY FOR THE PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE BOARD

Chairman Fisher asked if there was anyone in the audience who wanted 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

Approval of Minutes

Chairman Fisher requested the approval of the December 14th meeting minutes. Ms. Jones moved the December 14th minutes be approved. Mr. Pettijohn seconded the motion. Unanimously carried, the Board approved the December 14th meeting minutes.

2012 Revised Board Meeting Schedule

Mr. Harris reported that the revised Board meeting schedule was included in the Board folder, reflecting the cancelled meeting in January.

PROTECTION OF EXISTING RIGHTS

Colorado River Water Report

Mr. Harris reported that precipitation from October 1st to February 2nd was 82 percent of normal, and to January 1st it was 77 percent of normal. The snow water equivalent was 68 percent of normal. Reclamation's projections of unregulated inflow into Lake Powell were 5.050 million acre-feet (maf) for April through July 2012, or 71 percent of average; and water year projections from October 1, 2011 through September 30, 2012 were 8.484 maf, about 79 percent of average. Last year, though much wetter than normal late in the season, was considered a La Niña year. This year also is considered by climatologists to be the second La Niña year in a row, and started out dry but ending with about normal precipitation and snow.

Mr. Harris reported that as of February 5th, the storage in Lake Powell was 15.61 maf, or 64 percent of capacity. The water surface elevation was 3,636.6 feet. The storage in Lake Mead was 15.03 maf, or 58 percent of capacity, and water surface elevation was 1,134.2 feet. Total System storage was about 38.28 maf, or 64 percent of capacity. Last year at this time, there was 32.06 maf in storage, or 54 percent of capacity. There was about six million acre-feet more in storage than this time last year.

Mr. Harris reported that Reclamation's estimated consumptive use (CU) during calendar year 2012 for the State of Nevada to be 300,000 acre-feet; and Arizona's estimated CU to be 2.8 maf; and California is expected to be below its basic entitlement of 4.4 maf (4.175 maf). The total Lower Division States CU is estimated to be 7.275 maf. In 2011, the Lower Basin CU was about 7.348 maf.

State and Local Water Reports

Mr. Mark Stuart, of the California Department of Water Resources, reported on the climate in California. Mr. Stuart reported that usually the Los Angeles Civic Center rain gage recorded about five inches as of January 31st, where the average is eight inches. Each day without rain, this year's precipitation falls by about two tenths of an inch from normal. Mr. Stuart reported that statewide precipitation is about 60 percent of average. Runoff, or stream flow, from 31 rivers in California is about 40 percent of average, however, reservoir storage is about 110 percent of average. Mr. Stuart reported that the Sacramento River Index was about 54 percent of average. December

was one of the driest on record. Mr. Stuart reported that the snow water equivalent, as of February 13th, in the Northern Sierra was 35 percent of normal, in the Central Sierra the snow water equivalent was 28 percent of normal, and in the Southern Sierra it was 34 percent of normal. Mr. Stuart reported that the State Water Project surface water storage north of the Delta was about 2.67 maf, or 73 percent of capacity, south of the Delta SWP storage was about 1.62 maf or 88 percent of capacity.

Mr. Foley, of The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MWD), reported that as of February 1st, MWD's combined reservoir storage of Lakes Skinner, Mathews, and Diamond Valley, was about 980,700 acre-feet, or about 95 percent of capacity. As of February 1st, Lake Mathews had about 155,200 acre-feet, or 85 percent of capacity. Lake Skinner had about 38,900 acre-feet or about 88 percent of capacity. Diamond Valley Lake had about 786,600 acre-feet in storage, or about 97 percent of capacity. Mr. Foley reported that total deliveries for calendar year 2011 were about 1.6 maf, or 75 percent of the ten year average. Total reserves, both surface and ground water, are up to 2.4 maf.

Mr. Pettijohn, of the City of Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP), reported that as of February 1st, the Eastern Sierra Snow Survey results are very low. The Mammoth Pass Snowpack are close to the driest year on record. If the Eastern Sierra Snowpack doesn't improve before the end of the season, the LADWP will need to purchase about 100,000 acre-feet more than was purchased last year from MWD.

Colorado River Operations

2012 Annual Operating Plan for Colorado River System Reservoirs

Mr. Harris reported that the Final 2012 Annual Operating Plan (2012 AOP) was approved by the Secretary of the Department of the Interior. The Final 2012 AOP was posted on Reclamation's websites for Reclamation's Upper and Lower Colorado Regions. The Lower Colorado Region website is: <http://www.usbr.gov/lc/region/g4000/aop/AOP12.pdf>.

Status of the Colorado River Basin Water Supply and Demand Study Report

Mr. Harris reported the on November 29, 2011, Reclamation announced initiation of Phase 4 of the Colorado River Basin Water Supply and Demand Study. Phase 4 is the Development and Evaluation of Opportunities for Balancing Water Supply and Demand. Reclamation and the Study Team sought public input and suggestions associated with a broad range of options and strategies to help resolve future water supply and demand imbalances. Proposed options and strategies were solicited by Reclamation through February 1, 2012. All of the submitted options, strategies, and suggestions are being evaluated by the Project Team, and is scheduled to be discussed at series of meetings, beginning with the next meeting in Phoenix, Arizona, on February 28th. The Colorado River Basin Water Supply and Demand Study Report is still on schedule to be published in July 2012.

Reclamation's Approval of Revised Calendar Year 2011 Diversions for IID, CVWD, and MWD

Mr. Harris reported that material in the Board folder included three letters dated December 30, 2011, from Reclamation's Lower Colorado Regional Office approving the revised Calendar Year 2011 diversions for the Coachella Valley Water District (CVWD), the Imperial Irrigation District

(IID), and the MWD. The CVWD revised consumptive use of 318,735 acre-feet and an approved diversion of up to 326,820 acre-feet. The IID revised consumptive use of 2,803,420 acre-feet and an approved diversion of 2,871,285 acre-feet. The MWD revised consumptive use of up to 643,874 acre-feet and an approved diversion of up to 646,874 acre-feet.

Reclamation's Approval of IID's 2012 Plan for Creation of Extraordinary Conservation Intentionally Created Surplus

Mr. Harris reported that in a letter dated December 30, 2011, Reclamation approved IID's 2012 plan for the creation of Extraordinary Conservation Intentionally Created Surplus (EC ICS) during Calendar Year 2012. The IID plan is expected to create EC ICS from the IID on-farm fallowing program and its Main Canal Seepage Interception System.

Reclamation's Approval of Southern Nevada Water Authority's 2012 Plans for the Creation of Tributary Conservation ICS and Imported ICS

Mr. Harris reported that on December 30, 2011, Reclamation approved the Southern Nevada Water Authority's (SNWA) plans for the creation of Tributary Conservation Intentionally Created Surplus (TC ICS) and Imported Intentionally Created Surplus in Calendar Year 2012. The SNWA plans to create 37,000 acre-feet of TC ICS through its conservation programs, on the Muddy River, up to 20,000 acre-feet, and Virgin River, up to 17,000 acre-feet. The SNWA plans to create 7,000 acre-feet of imported ICS through its program in Coyote Springs Valley. Total TC ICS and Imported ICS would be about 44,000 acre-feet.

Basin States Discussion

Status of U.S./Mexico Binational Discussions and Negotiations

Mr. Zimmerman reported that in early December 2011 Mexico provided the U.S. a complete draft Minute 319. He indicated that there were significant differences between the conceptual approach that the U.S. had provided Mexico and Mexico's draft of Minute 319. After considering the significant differences, it was decided that instead of a comprehensive Minute 319 that extended to the year 2026, that Minute 319, as presented by Mexico, needed to be implemented in phases. The first phase, Minute 319, would be five years, through 2016. The second phase would be implemented through a subsequent minute. During the first phase, all of the supporting governing documents that would guide implementation and operations under a comprehensive minute would be developed. Considerable time was taken to craft the elements contained in the draft Minute 319. Initially two assurance letters were considered: one from the Basin states; the other from the federal government, the Departments of Interior and State. The State Department has agreed to write a single letter recognizing that the Basin states must be in full agreement before Minute 319 can be executed. Mr. Zimmerman added that several domestic documents and agreements, such as a Forbearance Agreement, are needed before execution of Minute 319 could be acceptable to the states.

Ms. Halla Razak asked if there was a schedule or critical path for the development of the agreements required to support Minute 319. Mr. Zimmerman responded that a schedule has not yet been developed, but the required supporting documents and guidelines are being identified. One of the documents that need to be developed is the agreement of the funding partners for the pilot project contained in Minute 319, which would entail a conversion of ICMA to ICS. Ms. Razak asked

whether it is anticipated that someone will be working on these documents before Mexico responds to the current draft; or will we wait for Mexico to officially respond. Mr. Zimmerman responded that there isn't enough time to wait for Mexico to officially review and respond to the draft Minute 319; ideally we would have those agreements now. To date, we don't even have a Basin states' agreement on how surplus water, under high reservoir conditions, can be provided to Mexico; yet it is contained in the draft of Minute 319 that has been transmitted to Mexico. The Basin State's Technical Work Group is currently working on this issue and all of the other domestic documents. Chairman Fisher added that participation from the highest levels of the Secretaries Office and the State Department has been given, showing significant flexibility from Federal branches of both the U.S. and Mexico.

There was discussion regarding recent changes that were made to the current draft of Minute 319, and whether the anticipated assurance letters would adequately address their concerns, plus additional documents and agreements that would implement actions of a future Minute with respect to the water rights holders of the Colorado River.

Colorado River Environmental Issues

Basin States' Letter – Scoping Comments on the Adoption of the Long-Term Experimental and Management Plan for Glen Canyon Dam

Mr. Harris reported that the Basin states submitted a letter to Reclamation providing scoping comments associated with Reclamation's preparation of the Long-Term Experimental and Management Plan (LTEMP) Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Mr. Harris reported that the primary scoping comments included: 1) Discussion of the legal framework for the LTEMP EIS analysis; 2) Consistency of Glen Canyon Dam (GCD) operation and the 2007 Interim Guidelines; 3) Geographic scope of the LTEMP EIS; 4) Impacts to existing species conservation and recovery; 5) Ensuring clear distinction between experimental and management actions associated with operations at Glen Canyon Dam; 6) Ensuring development of alternatives that are realistic and comply with existing laws and regulations; and 7) Comments associated with actual process of developing the LTEMP EIS. Mr. Harris added that this is an ongoing National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Environmental Endangered Species Act compliance process that Reclamation is completing, associated with an outlook toward the next ten to twenty years of operations at Glen Canyon Dam. The intent of the collaboration is for Reclamation to be clear in its distinction between management based on existing laws and regulations and experimental actions with defined terms of criteria based on water year, sediment inputs, species habitat conservation, with an expectation of benefits recognizing pre-existing obligations and responsibilities. The LTEMP EIS is an ongoing process and other federal agencies are participating. It may be eighteen months to two years before the LTEMP EIS is completed.

Basin States' Letter – Comments on the Final Environmental Assessment for the Development and Implementation of a Protocol for High-Flow Experimental Releases from Glen Canyon Dam, 2011-2020

Mr. Harris reported that the Basin states continue to work on finalizing a joint-letter to Reclamation's Upper Colorado Regional Office associated with the release of the final Environmental Assessment for the High Flow Experimental (HFE) Releases Protocol for Glen Canyon Dam. Mr. Harris reported that the primary purpose of the HFE Releases Protocol is to test

and evaluate short-duration, high-volume dam releases during sediment-enriched conditions during a ten-year period of experimentation from 2011 to 2020. Mr. Harris reported that a meeting/conference call was held February 7th among the state and federal representatives to discuss issues associated with the HFE Protocol. Mr. Harris reported that the primary issues discussed on February 7th included: 1) ensuring a clear distinction and/or demarcation between management actions versus experimental actions; 2) Decision-making process, and the relationship between the HFE protocol and the goals and objectives of the Glen Canyon Dam Adaptive Management Program and the desired future conditions for the Grand Canyon ecosystem; 3) The HFE Protocol monthly release determinations must be consistent with the 2007 Interim Guidelines; and 4) Reclamation to clearly articulate process and steps for coordinating and integrating the HFE Protocol with the LTEMP EIS process.

OTHER BUSINESS

Next Board Meeting

Chairman Fisher announced that the next meeting of the Colorado River Board will be held on Wednesday, March 14, 2012, at 10:00 a.m., at the Holiday Inn Ontario Airport, at 2155 East Convention Center Way, 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. Knutson, seconded by Mr. Powell, and unanimously carried, the meeting was adjourned 10:46 a.m. on February 15, 2012.

/S/

Christopher S. Harris
Acting Executive Director