

Minutes of Meeting
COLORADO RIVER BOARD OF CALIFORNIA
Wednesday, August 12, 2015

A meeting of the Colorado River Board of California was held on Wednesday, August 12, 2015.

Board Members and Alternates Present

Stephen Benson	David Pettijohn
Brian Brady	Michael Touhey
Dana Bart Fisher, Jr., Chairman	David Vigil
Peter Nelson	Doug Wilson
Glen Peterson	Jeanine Jones

Board Members and Alternates Absent

James Hanks	Chris Hayes
John Powell Jr.	
Henry Kuiper	

Others Present

Steve Abbott	Angela Rashid
Brandon Alexander	Eric Ruckdhschel
Robert Cheng	Tom Ryan
Mark Cook	Jack Seiler
Karen Donovan	Tina Shields
Rich Eastland	Peter Silva
Christopher Harris	Gary Tavetian
Bill Hasencamp	Tanya Trujillo
Joanna Smith Hoff	Joe Vanderhorst
Michael Hughes	Meena Westford
Ned Hyduke	Suzanna Webb
Mark Johnson	Donnell Wilcox
Lori Jones	Jerry Zimmerman
Tom Levy	
Lindia Liu	
Kara Mathews	
Jan Matusak	
Doug McPherson	
Jessica Neuwerth	
Vic Nguyen	
Autumn Plourd	

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 wished 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

Consideration and Approval of the Minutes

Chairman Fisher asked for a motion to approve the June 10th meeting minutes. Mr. Pettijohn moved that the minutes be approved, seconded by Mr. Wilson. Chairman Fisher asked if there were any additions or corrections. Hearing none, and by unanimous support, the June 10th meeting minutes were approved.

Consideration of Application for an Allocation of Water from the Lower Colorado Water Supply Project

Ms. Trujillo reported that the CRB technical staff reviewed an application from an individual in San Bernardino County. The applicant is seeking to utilize up to one acre-foot of water for current use and up to two acre-feet of water for future use. The CRB technical staff recommended that the Board adopt a resolution in support of the application.

MOTION: Chairman Fisher asked for a motion to approve the resolution. Mr. Wilson moved that the resolution be approved, seconded by Mr. Pettijohn. Chairman Fisher asked if there was any discussion regarding the motion. Hearing none, and by unanimous support, the resolution was approved.

Presentation regarding Hoover Dam Hydropower Issues

Mr. Mark Cook, Hoover Dam Manager with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation's Lower Colorado Regional Office, started his presentation to the Board by explaining the hydropower fundamentals associated with operations at Hoover Dam, explaining how water travels through the generators, spinning the turbines to generate energy. He explained that 56% of the power generated at Hoover Dam is currently allocated to contractors in California. Additional contractors will be receiving allocations when the next round of Hoover Power contracts are finalized in 2017. Mr. Cook also explained the direct correlation between declining lake elevations and power output from the powerplant. He stated that the current elevation, which hovers close to the first trigger elevation of 1,075 feet, produces an output of approximately 1,563 megawatts, instead of

the maximum output of 2,008 MW. Mr. Cook explained that the published minimum energy generation is at 1,050 feet, but Reclamation will be changing the minimum to an elevation of 950 feet, at which elevation the dam could produce approximately 700 MW of power. Mr. Cook further explained the effects of lower lake elevation and reduced power output, including maintenance issues such as cavitation and reduction of revenues to the Lower Colorado River Basin Development Fund.

Mr. Cook explained the various efficiency and modernization improvements that have been made to the Hoover powerplant to increase power output and improve operations. One major improvement to the powerplant includes the replacement of turbines to low-head turbines that can handle lower reservoir levels. Mr. Cook stated that the improvements have allowed the powerplant to increase the amount of megawatt hours even though the reservoir levels are declining. Chairman Fisher asked at what lake elevation will power generation cease. Mr. Cook stated that Hoover will be able to produce some energy all the way down to dead pool, albeit, the power generated will be significantly reduced. Board member Benson asked whether payments by current power contractors cover the cost of administration and maintenance of the plant and whether energy rates will change as reservoir elevations decline. Mr. Cook responded that those costs are budgeted into the powerplant's ten-year plan. Rates are set once it is known how much it will cost to operate Hoover Dam, by looking at the power-plant operating costs and how much power it is anticipated to generate. There is no profit generated. Mr. Cook added that the Western Area Power Administration (WAPA) sets the rates for contractors. Ms. Trujillo remarked about the close communication and coordination that Reclamation and WAPA maintain in order to meet energy and downstream water supply demands. Mr. Cook agreed and stated that Hoover powerplant operators receive feedback about the facility's energy output every 4 seconds, and that this allows the system to readily respond, for example, to California's energy market needs that are updated approximately every 15 minutes.

Colorado River Basin Water Reports

Ms. Trujillo reported that the hydrology has increased significantly since May 2015 and the water supply conditions have improved. As of August 4, 2015, the water level at Lake Powell was 3,612 feet with 12.98 million acre-feet of storage, or 53% of capacity, while the water level at Lake Mead was at 1,079 feet with 9.89 million acre-feet of storage, or 38% of capacity. The total system storage was 31.36 million acre-feet, or 53% of capacity, and about 920,000 acre-feet more than that of last year. The April-July 2015 unregulated inflows into Lake Powell were observed to be 94% of average, which is much greater than the 42% of average forecasted value reported back in May 2015. It was noted that the Upper Basin reservoirs (except Lake Powell) are generally at near full capacity and some of them have been spilling.

Ms. Trujillo reported that Reclamation is expected to release the August 24-Month Study report on August 17, 2015. The results of this study will be used to set the operational tiers for the coordinated operation of Lake Powell and Lake Mead during 2016 pursuant to the 2007 Interim Guidelines. Based on the hydrology and projected

elevation at Lake Mead on January 1, 2016, a shortage declaration in 2016 for the Lower Basin is not expected. However, the latest modeling runs indicated there is a 47% probability of a shortage in 2017.

The second consultation meeting regarding the 2016 Colorado River Annual Operating Plan (AOP) was held on July 28, 2015. Section 5 of the 2007 Interim Guidelines also requires that California report to the Secretary on its progress in implementing California's Colorado River Water Use Plan (also known as the "4.4 Plan"). During the meeting, Ms. Trujillo updated the group regarding the implementation of the Quantification Settlement Agreement and other water storage, sharing, and conservation activities in place over the past few years to ensure that California continues to be able to stay within its basic mainstream apportionment of 4.4 million acre-feet per year. The third consultation meeting for the 2016 AOP will be held on September 2, 2015, in Las Vegas, Nevada.

State and Local Water Reports

Ms. Jeanine Jones, of the California Department of Water Resources, reported that local events including monsoon rains have increased the percent of average precipitation in some regions in Southern California, but the overall percent of average is still below normal. The California Drought Task Force recently met and it was noted that planning for and responding to drought and flooding can occur simultaneously as noted by the failure of a bridge on Interstate 10 caused by recent flooding. Reservoir storage in California is generally below normal as expected during the summer and some levels are even approaching the lows seen during the 1977 drought period. Ms. Jones noted that extraordinary operations at Shasta, Folsom, and Oroville Dams were being implemented to provide for cold water releases for salmon. The temporary emergency salinity barrier installed in the Delta to repel salinity and lessen the need to release water from upstream reservoirs is expected to be removed in mid-November 2015 prior to the flood season.

Mr. Peterson reported that MWD's total reservoir capacity is at 45%, and that the water deliveries to member agencies have been reduced in the last couple of months due to conservation efforts in response to the State Water Resources Control Board's water restrictions.

Mr. Benson suggested that other Board agencies could provide reports to update the Board on activities such as transfers and the on-farm conservation program. He reported that the IID Following Program kicked off again in July 2015, and next year will be the last year of a 15-year following program to conserve water for delivery to the Salton Sea to meet mitigation requirements. IID is working on the Salton Sea Restoration and Renewable Energy Initiative to use renewable energy projects to provide base-load power and some peaking capacity, and is requesting comments on a recently issued Draft White Paper. Mr. Benson reported that IID's underrun is currently estimated at about 170,000 acre-feet due partly to recent significant rain events that had reduced

water sales for several days. Mr. Benson described how the shift in crops and cropping patterns could also affect water usage.

In response to a question about Brock Reservoir, it was noted that during the July 28, 2015 AOP consultation meeting, Reclamation provided an update that reported that both Brock and Senator Wash reservoirs have year-to-date accumulated a total of about 75,000 to 80,000 acre-feet of savings each, and excess flows to Mexico have been reduced to about 11,000 acre-feet. It was recommended that the status of Brock and Senator Wash storage and excess flows to Mexico be reported at future Board meetings. Ms. Jones mentioned that Senator Wash at one time had been under consideration for dam safety repairs and asked about the current status of those repairs. Ms. Trujillo noted that the Yuma Desalting Plant could also be utilized.

Mr. Wilson reported that within his local agency, the conservation target of 20% for June and July 2015 were exceeded with actual conservation at 28% and 39%, respectively. Mr. Wilson believed that conservation goal of 20% was also met across San Diego County. Mr. Nelson noted that within the Coachella Valley Water District, the conservation amount has been improving from 14% in May, to 21% in June, and finally to 41% in July. Mr. Benson added that the City of Brawley conservation was at 41%.

Update Regarding the California Drought

Ms. Trujillo reported that 46% of California remains in the Exceptional Drought category with no relief in sight. A Governor's state of emergency has been declared in response to the large number of wildfires that are occurring. On July 30, 2015, the SWRCB reported that the 25% conservation reduction required in the Governor's Executive Order was met on a statewide basis despite record high temperatures throughout the state in June 2015.

Ms. Jones stated that the U.S. Drought Monitor was not the only method to monitor drought conditions in California and cautioned about the adverse impact on conservation messages that could occur due to media coverage of El Nino, noting that El Nino years have historically been wet, dry, or average. She indicated that the driest year on record in 1977 was classified as an El Nino year. DWR continues to plan for the possibility of a dry 2016.

Review Status of the Basin States Drought Contingency Programs

Ms. Trujillo reported that the Central Arizona Project's Intentionally Created Surplus proposal is undergoing review and approval by various agencies. CVWD voted to support of CAP's proposal and it is expected that other agencies will be taking action in the September and October timeframes. The Colorado River System Conservation Pilot Program is also moving forward. Reclamation is finalizing some additional contracts for this Program and anticipates that it would fully allocate the available funds within the fiscal year.

Review status of the implementation of Minute 319 and Binational Discussions

Ms. Trujillo reported that there was little activity with respect to the implementation of Minute 319 during the past month. Initial discussions among a small negotiating team have started on the potential for a successor minute by evaluating potential expansion of components of Minute 319.

Review status of the Salinity Control Forum, Workgroup, and Advisory Council Revised Agenda

Last month's Executive Director's report provided detailed information on the July Salinity Work Group meeting held in Salt Lake City, Utah. One of the primary updates was on the status and progress of the Paradox Well Replacement EIS and are focusing on the technical analysis of the potential alternatives, including an additional well, a replacement well, evaporation ponds, and the no action alternative. The Work Group will meet in September in Colorado, and the Forum will meet in October in Arizona.

Glen Canyon Dam Adaptive Management Work Group and Long-Term Experimental and Management Plan EIS

Staff member Neuwerth reported on a Grand Canyon river trip attended by stakeholders of the Glen Canyon Dam Adaptive Management Program on July 17-27. The trip provided stakeholders of the program an opportunity to see and experience the resources in the canyon, particularly in light of the upcoming Long Term Experimental and Management Plan (LTEMP) EIS, which will change the operations at Glen Canyon Dam. Ms. Neuwerth described some of the issues explored on the trip, including cultural resources preservation, native fish management, sediment conservation, and aquatic ecology.

Ms. Neuwerth reported that a draft of the LTEMP EIS was released to cooperating agencies and that cooperating agencies had until September 30th to submit comments. The draft includes seven alternatives, including a "hybrid" alternative that is the presumed preferred alternative and contains aspects of alternatives proposed by the Basin States and the Department of the Interior. Ms. Neuwerth noted that the hybrid alternative has comparatively hydropower-friendly operational patterns while preserving flow experiments meant to benefit native fish, sediment, and the aquatic food base. Additionally, the hybrid alternative includes fixed October through December monthly volumes that will not affect the January 1 operating tier determinations at Lake Powell pursuant to the 2007 Interim Guidelines.

Lower Colorado River Multi-Species Conservation Program

Ms. Trujillo reported that the Lower Colorado River Multi-Species Conservation Program (LCR MSCP) recently released its Final Implementation and Accomplishments

Report for Fiscal-Year 2014 and the proposed work-plan and budget for FY-2016, which details the past, current, and future activities for the program. Ms. Trujillo also noted that the acquisition of the Planet Ranch property for the Program had been subject to litigation and that the Supreme Court of Arizona was set to begin a review of the case in September.

Deputy Director Harris reported that a large fire in the Mojave Valley and on Havasu National Wildlife Refuge (HNWR) started on August 8 and was extinguished within several days. While the fire did not affect the LCR MSCP's Beal Lake Conservation Area on HNWR, the fire did destroy a number of occupied southwestern willow flycatcher nests in saltcedar habitat adjacent to Beal Lake. On a positive note, Mr. Harris noted that the burned areas might provide a good opportunity for future native vegetation habitat restoration activities.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further items to be brought before the Board, Vice Chairman Wilson asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Upon the motion of Mr. Pettijohn, seconded by Ms. Jones, and unanimously carried, the meeting was adjourned at 12:00 p.m.