

MINUTES

SUISUN RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S MEETING

HELD REMOTELY ON WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2021 AT 2:00 PM
Zoom Video Teleconference Meeting

DIRECTORS PRESENT: **Tony Vaccarella**
Terry Connolly
Arnold Lenk
Mike Lewis
Jim Waters

OTHERS PRESENT: Laureen Barthman-Thompson, DFW
Steven Chappell, SRCD
Tim Edmunds, SRCD
Kent Hansen, SRCD Assoc Dir.
Dan Lehman, Pintail Ranch, SRCD Assoc. Dir.
Edwin Limanto, DWR
Kelli Perez, SRCD
Melissa Riley, DFW
Orlando Rocha, DFW
John Takekawa, SRCD
Jeff Taylor, SRCD
Larry Wyckoff, DFW

1. Call to Order ~ Mr. Vaccarella called the Suisun Resource Conservation District Board of Directors meeting to order at 2:01 PM.

2. Public Comments ~ There were no public comments.

3. Open Session ~ Mr. Vaccarella opened the February 10, 2021 Board of Directors meeting and asked for consideration of agenda Item 3a.

a) Approval of the January 13, 2021 Board Meeting Minutes ~ A motion to approve the minutes from the January 13, 2021 Board meeting was made by Mr. Lenk and seconded by Mr. Lewis; all were in favor and the motion carried by a roll call vote.

4. Financial Reports ~

a) Approval of Vendor Claims for January 2021 ~ Mr. Chappell reported the January 2021 SRCD General Fund vendor claim summary totaling \$218,403.10. Claims #80 through #91 were for PAI cost share program landowner reimbursements for DWR approved projects. Mr. Chappell reported the January 2021 Lower Joice Island Department of the General Fund vendor claim summary totaling \$5,316.59. These were normal operational expenses for the operation of the island. Mr. Chappell reported the January 2021 Water Managers Program Department of the General Fund vendor claims summary totaling \$24,583.30. These were all normal operational expenses for the Water Managers Program. Mr. Connolly moved to approve the claim summaries as presented, Mr. Lenk seconded the motion, all were in favor and the motion carried by a roll call vote.

b) SRCD 2nd quarter fiscal year 20/21 budget summary ~ Mr. Chappell reported on SRCD's 2nd quarter budget summary, taken from Solano County IFAS report. Mr. Chappell presented current fiscal status for all SRCD departments, including salaries and operational expense for SRCD General Fund, Water Managers program, Lower Joice Island, fish screen maintenance, the NFWF grant, mosquito abatement, Pest-weed control, DWR Meins Landing, DWR Support grant, PAI cost share, and Portable Pump program. Discussion ensued.

5. Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) Report ~ The DFW report was submitted by Mr. Orlando Rocha. **Joice Island Pig Hunt:** The hunt will start next month with applications due February 14th at 4pm. Last year's pig hunting season was very good.

Wildlife area: The equipment on the wildlife area is being serviced and work is being readied for ongoing Phragmites control efforts. Work will be ongoing on Joice Island Pond A to fix fire damage from 2018. DFW has active NAWCA, Duck Stamp, and WCB projects planned around the wildlife area this summer in addition to normal maintenance, so they look forward to a busy productive summer. **Ducks:** The veteran's

hunt weekend is coming up Feb. 13th and 14th. During the previous weekend's Jr. hunt, there was a total of 9 juniors who harvested a 3.11 duck average. Overall, for the 20/21 waterfowl season, there were more hunters this season shooting 2,503 more ducks than last year and 57 more geese. The adult average was 1.39 vs. 1.34 last year. The top 2 birds this year shifted to American wigeon (2,299) and northern shoveler (1,587) followed by green-winged teal (1,714) and then mallards (652), and ruddy ducks made the top-5 list with 621. Indications are that there were many new hunters with 5,401 adult hunters (242 juniors) in 2020-2021 compared with 3,725 adult hunters (267 juniors) in 2019-2020. Other birds in 2020-2021 included pheasants (32 wild, 57 planted) by 98 hunters (no juniors) compared with 2019-2020 with pheasants (80 wild, 110 planted) by 100 hunters (28 juniors).

Date	# OF HUNTERS	# OF DUCKS	# OF GEESE	# OF WATERFOWL	AVERAGE DUCK	AVERAGE GEESE	#1 Species	#2 Species
2020-2021								
Youth	9	28	0	28	3.11	0.00	AGWT	AMWI
Season Totals	5643	7867	97	7964	1.39	0.02	AMWI 2,299	NSHO 1,587
2019-2020								
Youth	7	17	0	17	2.43	0.00	BUFF	NSHO
Season Totals	3992	5364	40	5404	1.34	0.01	NSHO 1,408	AGWT 1084

Difference

1651 2503 57 2560

6. Department of Water Resources Report ~ Mr. Edwin Limanto provided the DWR Suisun Marsh briefing packet. For the month of January, the salinity standard was 12.5 mS/cm for eastern compliance stations and 15.6 mS/cm for western compliance stations. Salinities are high but mostly below the standard. Salinities in the Marsh ranged from 9.7 to 16.4 mS/cm. At the end of January, net Delta outflow was 8,056 cfs. The salinity standards for February were the same as January. Salinity values on February 7th were 3.6 to 14.6 mS/cm, while Delta outflow was 13,622 cfs.

Staff coordinated with Delta Field Division (DFD) on routine Roaring River Distribution System (RRDS) maintenance. Levees are being monitored after extreme high tides. The RGP3 application for DWR facilities was submitted in January for 2021. PG&E lost

power on February 1st to the Roaring River intake gates, while open. So, the West Drain was opened for a day until lower water levels were restored. Planning continues for ditch clearing and dredging at the embayment, intake, and Hammond Pond in 2021 or 2022.

Morrow Island Distribution System (MIDS) routine maintenance 2021 planning is ongoing with an RGP3 January 2021 application. Levees are monitored after extreme high tides, and intake gates were closed on January 21st. Goodyear Slough Outfall (GYSO) work continues on planning for routine maintenance and a plan to fix the sheet pile wall around the inlet and debris removal in the summer of 2021. The Suisun Marsh Salinity Control Gates (SMSCG) continue tidal operations and Gate #3 has been removed is being refurbished with reinstallation between May and November 2021. If this water year is determined to be Dry or Critical (based on March 15, 2021 DWR forecast), there will be no summer SMSCG gate operations to benefit delta smelt.

This month briefing package included a new summary page addressing salinity conditions that define and trigger a Deficiency Period:

- 1) a Critical Year following a Dry or Critical Year.
- 2) a Dry Year following a year when the Sacramento Valley Water Year Sum was <11.35 MAF; and
- 3) second consecutive Dry Year after a Critical Year.

The prior year's water type and forecast for the following year is used to establish the status reported in DWR Bulletin 120 during the second week of Feb through May. Detail was provided on the specific conditions which can trigger a deficiency period. Since the Water Year 2020 was classified as Dry and the February 1st forecast for Water Year 2021 is currently projected to be Critical, we are now in a Deficiency Period. The 2015 SMPA Drought Response Fund could be triggered depending on 3 sets of conditions, which seems likely this year. Reservoir capacity ranged from 29-61% in the northern Sierra and in the southern Sierra 23-93%. Most reservoirs are below historical averages. Precipitation year to date was 52% of normal in the northern Sierra and 57% in the southern Sierra. Discussion ensued.

7. Suisun Resource Conservation District Reports ~

- a) 2015 Suisun Marsh Preservation Agreement Update and 2020 PAI Grant Program Update ~ Mr. Chappell reported that the SMPA agreement and grant program continued to be administered. Mr. Chappell and Mr. Waters have continued weekly calls with Mr. Dean Messer (Division Branch Chief) at DWR to request continued support of reimbursement to landowners for approved projects. An outstanding PAI invoice has recently been paid by DWR with two more invoices still needing to be paid, which will complete the 2020 program. DWR is current on payment of SRCD Water Managers Program invoices.

- b) 2021 PAI Program Update ~ Mr. Chappell provided an update on the 2021 PAI program. Due to DWR funding constraints, SRCD requested that landowners delay implementation on some approved 2020 projects until 2021. The delayed projects were reported to DWR totaling ~\$310,000 of cost-share. DWR has budgeted for those projects in the 2021 fiscal year. DWR has provided SRCD a letter indicating there are no funds for new PAI projects for fiscal year (2021-2022). SRCD will be drafting a PAI 2021 program letter to be sent out mid-February indicating there will be no funds for new PAI projects. SRCD has request \$700,000 for the PAI Program in FY 2021/2022 budget projection. This is the average cost share amount for Past PAI cost share program expenses. Discussion ensued.
- c) Suisun Marsh Plan Update ~ There have been no changes with the Suisun Marsh Plan Implementation. There was a SMP Principal's meeting January 14th and February 11th.
- d) USACE Permits -- RGP3 & LOP Permit Update ~ The 2021 RGP3 maintenance work applications were sent to the landowners in mid-January. The dredging program Letter of Permission applications will be sent to landowners at the end of February or early March.
- e) Water Manager Program Update ~ Mr. Takekawa reported on the Water Manager Program. Mr. Taylor is working on the 2021 USACE RGP3 permits. We already have received the January permit approvals. The annual water quality monitoring report preparation and review has been completed and the report was submitted to the Regulatory Agencies at the end of January. The landowner notification letters will be sent out for spring marsh burning, portable pump and PAI cost share programs, and permit restrictions for California Ridgway's rail and salmon closures.

The oil changes were completed on all the portable pumps and the pump mechanic came and completed a pre-season. Flood boards were installed, and final repair work completed on the pipe transport trailer. Gate monitoring will resume on the February 22nd. This week, Mr. McKinney assisted new landowners in a exterior levee inspections at property #219 and will be preparing for a BCDC permit and worked on repairing the website which had been updated. The Water Managers expect portable pump installations to significantly increase of the next few weeks.

Ms. Collins and the water managers continued work on the Individual Management Plan updates: 40 plans are drafted and 57 are in progress with 27 left to complete. Of the drafted plans: 16 are final, 22 have been edited by the landowners, and 18

are still under landowner review. A special Public Hearing for Board consideration of the approval of these completed plans will be organized for later this spring. We will continue to provide updates on the timing.

On January 14th, Mr. Takekawa attended the Solano County Parks Commission Meeting and presented the SRCD Fish and Wildlife Propagation Grant application proposal. Also, he met with partners two to three times weekly through the month to complete a Delta Stewardship Council socioecological proposal on effective Phragmites control and a Department of Fish and Wildlife science proposal on soil salinities. Several other groups are developing proposals for work on Suisun Marsh, and Mr. Takekawa worked with Mr. Chappell to provide letters of support for their efforts.

On January 22nd, Ms. Collins submitted a final report and flood animation to Sprig Farm and St. Germain. She also assisted with proposal development and sections for a spray-drone paper. On February 2nd, Ms. Perez and Mr. Takekawa spoke with AT&T business specialists about cell phone and data services. They provided us with an option for a special program that reduce monthly cost and will provide us with voice and data priority. We are currently moving forward to implement these changes in service agreement. On February 3rd, Mr. Takekawa attended the Delta Stewardship Council Adaptive Management Forum and with Ms. Collins, presented a short talk on the Individual Management Plan update. Mr. Chappell attended the same forum on February 4th and provided a summary of the Adaptive Management Advisory Team.

On February 5th, Mr. Takekawa was asked to participate on the Resource Stewardship Task Group and attend their meeting in early March as an ex-officio advisory committee member of the Delta National Heritage Area led by the Delta Protection Commission. On February 9th, Mr. Chappell and Mr. Takekawa met with Mr. Brett Williams at DU to schedule assessment work on low tides for the SFB Restoration Authority Essential Fish Screen project. Also, on February 9th, Mr. Edmunds passed his FAA 107 certification to be a drone pilot. He is now working on the Department of Pesticide Regulation training to take the test this spring for unmanned aerial application.

- f) Lower Joice Island Update ~ Mr. Takekawa provided the Lower Joice Island update. Mr. Mouton finished up waterfowl season supporting facilities for the club without

any problems. The last days of the hunting season in January were good. The club bagged 81 ducks during 32 hunter days from January 13th to January 31st for an average of 2.53 birds per hunter-day. The bag included 6 mallards (7.4%), 4 sprig (4.9%), 1 gadwall (1.2%), 33 teal (40.7%), 13 spoonbills (16.0%), 1 bluebill (1.2%), and 1 goldeneye (1.2%). For this year, the club bagged 338 ducks for a 2.11 ducks per hunter day average. This total was higher than the 3 years from 2016 through 2018 which ranged from 241 to 313 birds, but 38% (206) fewer than in 2019 when 544 birds were harvested. The greatest differences were 93 fewer mallards and 56 fewer pintail harvested this year compared to last year.

g) Summary of Past & Future Meetings, Tours, and Presentations ~

Mr. Chappell indicated we have met all of SRCDD's permitting, reporting and landowner support obligations, while maintaining Covid-19 protective measures. All the meetings have moved to online meetings. January was quiet with few updates. We have our post hunt season meetings set up for the hunt group check-out at LJI, staff meeting, and the spring landowner meeting on Wednesday April 21st which is likely going to be held remotely. Discussion ensued.

8. Suisun Resource Conservation District Committee Reports ~

a) Agency Committee ~ No report.

b) Legal Committee ~ No report.

c) Personnel Committee ~ No report.

d) Finance Committee ~ Kelli provided a brief update on the audit which is in progress with a report scheduled for the next board meeting.

e) Associate Directors Committee ~ No report.

10. Adjourn ~ A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Mr. Lenk and seconded by Mr. Waters; all were in favor and the motion carried by a roll call vote. The meeting was adjourned at 3:04 PM.