

MINUTES

SUISUN RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S MEETING

HELD REMOTELY ON WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 13, 2021 AT 2:00 PM
Zoom Video Teleconference Meeting

DIRECTORS PRESENT: Terry Connolly
Arnold Lenk
Mike Lewis
Jim Waters

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

1. Call to Order ~ Mr. Waters called the Suisun Resource Conservation District Board of Directors meeting to order at 2:02 PM.

2. Public Comments ~ The Board welcomed to Dan Lehman as a new SRCD Associate Director.

3. Open Session ~ Mr. Waters opened the January 13, 2021 SRCD Board of Directors meeting and asked for consideration of agenda Item 3a.

a) Approval of the December 9, 2020 Board Meeting Minutes ~ A motion to approve the minutes from the December 9, 2020 Board meeting was made by Mr. Lenk and seconded by Mr. Connolly; all were in favor and the motion carried by a roll call vote.

4. Financial Reports ~

a) Approval of Vendor Claims for December 2020 ~ Mr. Chappell reported that the December 2020 General Fund vendor claims totaled \$87,507.24. He also reported the December 2020 Lower Joice Island vendor claims for \$6,757.65 for normal operational expenses. Mr. Chappell reported that the December 2020 Water Managers vendor claims total was \$28,051.09 of normal operational expenses. All three vendor claim summaries included 3 payroll periods for SRCD staff salary expenses. Mr. Connolly moved to approve the claims, Mr. Lenk seconded the motion, all were in favor and the motion carried by a roll call vote.

5. Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) Report ~ The DFW report was submitted by Mr. Orlando Rocha and read by Ms. Lauren Barthman-Thompson.

Joice Island Pig Hunt: DFW will hold the annual wild pig hunt on Joice Island. Pig hunt applications are due by February 14th at 4:00 pm. Applications will be taken online again this year. The pig hunt is planned for Saturday-Sundays beginning March 6th and ending Sunday April 25th. The first weekend is for Junior hunters only. 4 hunters are allowed per weekend for 8 weeks, meaning 32 lucky hunters will get a chance to participate in the Joice Island wild pig hunt.

Wildlife area: This past month has been quiet, as the hunt program continues. DFW are preparing USACE permits for the upcoming work season and discussing priorities of projects around the Wildlife Area. DFW has active, NAWCA Duck Stamp and WCB grant projects planned around the Wildlife Area this summer in addition to normal maintenance so look forward to a busy and productive summer.

Ducks: Birds have been sporadic (weather is probably the real cause there), but

overall, it has been consistent for our regular hunters. We have seen many first-time hunters as well as people who have not previously been to Grizzly Island Wildlife Area. It is good to see so many new hunters, and hopefully, they will continue to hunt after we can all get back to regular life. The table provides a breakdown of the bird numbers up until January 6th in comparison to last year. Overall, we have 1,349 more hunters than this time last year and have also shot 1,564 more ducks and 34 more geese. American Wigeon (AMWI) and Green-winged teal (AGWT) continue to be the top two birds harvested with Northern Shoveler (NSHO) third. Hopefully, we finish the season out strong and our hunters continue to bring in plenty of birds.

Date	# OF HUNTERS	# OF DUCKS	# OF GEESE	# OF WATERFOWL	AVERAGE DUCK	AVERAGE GEESE	#1 Species	#2 Species
1/6/2021	151	269	4	273	1.78	0.03	AMWI	NSHO
1/9/2021	174	368	4	372	2.11	0.02	AMWI	AGWT
1/10/2021	93	129	0	129	1.39	0.00	AMWI	AGWT
Season Totals	4366	5432	74	5506	1.24	0.02	AMWI 1237	NSHO 1212
1/8/2020	70	199	0	199	2.84	0.00	AGWT	AMWI
1/11/2020	131	222	2	224	1.69	0.02	AGWT	AMWI
1/12/2020	83	61	0	61	0.73	0.00	AMWI	NOPI
Season Totals	3017	3868	40	3908	1.28	0.01	NSHO 1,165	AGWT 725

Top 5 birds to date 2020/2021 season:

1. 1237 AMWI
2. 1212 NSHO
3. 937 AGWT
4. 561 MALL
5. 341 RUDU

6. Department of Water Resources Report ~ Mr. Edwin Limanto provided the DWR Suisun Marsh briefing packet. For the month of December, the salinity standard for compliance stations was 15.5 mS/cm. Salinities in the Marsh ranged from 10.0 to 17.8 mS/cm. At the end of December, net Delta outflow was 6,833 cfs. There also was no salinity standard for January 12.5 mS/cm. Salinity values on January 10th were 9.7 to 16.0 mS/cm, while Delta outflow was 5,469 cfs. The continued dry conditions will likely trigger the SMPA Drought Response Program and trigger a deficiency period under the SMPA. This is currently looking like it will be a dry year with the final determination by May-June. Reservoir capacity ranged from 32-68% in the northern Sierra and 21-93% in the southern Sierra. Precipitation year to date was 41% of normal in the northern Sierra and 31% in the southern Sierra.

DWR staff coordinated with DWR Delta Field Division (DFD) on routine Roaring River Distribution System (RRDS) levee maintenance, which has been completed. Planning continued for ditch clearing and dredging at the embayment, intake, and Hammond Pond in 2021 or 2022. Levees are being monitored after extreme high tides. Morrow Island Distribution System (MIDS) routine maintenance has been completed with 2021 planning ongoing for submitting an RGP3 application to SRCD by January 20th. Levees are being monitored after extreme high tides. Goodyear Slough Outfall (GYSO) continues plans to fix the sheet piles around the inlet and handling debris removal in the summer of 2021. Debris currently is removed as needed at the inlet, and routine maintenance is complete with monitoring after extreme high tides and planning ongoing for 2021 including RGP3 permits. The Suisun Marsh Salinity Control Gates (SMSCG) have tidal operations still in effect. DFD has removed and is refurbishing Gate 3 with reinstallation May to November 2021. 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 support for projects. Two outstanding invoices have been paid, and 2 invoices were received from DWR with 1 outstanding bill left (3 projects) for the PAI project and 2 bills for the Water Managers Program in Oct-Nov which are not late. This year is dry, and the SMPA Drought Response Program may be triggered. Discussion ensued.
- b) 2021 PAI Program Update ~ Mr. Chappell provided an update on the 2021 PAI program. Last season DWR requested a delay implementation of projects that could wait until 2021. The delayed projects total is estimated to cost \$350,000 for DWR's cost share, and DWR has budgeted for those projects in 2021. DWR may not have funds for new 2021 projects. SRCD has requested a DWR determination in a letter confirming the funding shortfall (2021-2022). Typically, the RGP3 letter is sent in January and the PAI program letter is done in February. The last 3 years have averaged about ~\$700,000 per year in PAI funded projects. Discussion ensued.
- c) Suisun Marsh Plan Update ~ There have been no changes with the Suisun Marsh Plan Implementation. There was a Principal's meeting December 10th and January 14th. Reports are being completed on the progress of the update.
- d) USACE Permits -- RGP3 & LOP Permit Update ~ The 2020 work season has ended, and actual work reports are completed. Work is beginning on the 2021 permit applications. The 2021 USACE maintenance applications will be sent out in early January. The dredging permit letter will be 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 preparing the 2021 USACE work permits. He completed the DFW Incidental Take Permit report and drafted the report for the water quality monitoring program which is now being reviewed for final submittal. Gate monitoring was completed on December 10th, December 29th, and January 12th. Water Managers continued work on winterizing and repairing equipment including pumps and trailers. The oil filter crusher installation in the garage was completed during the first week of January, along with the welding repairs needed on the ATV trailers.

Ms. Collins and the Water Managers continued work on the Individual Management Plan updates: 85 plans are drafted and 11 are in progress. Of the drafted plans: 16 are final, 18 have been edited by the landowners, 28 are under landowner review. The Public Resource Code requires a public meeting to finalize major changes in the SRCD Local Protection Plan including the IMPs, so Mr. Chappell has been working with Solano County Counsel to review the approval process including holding a special session online in February or March and obtaining a Board resolution approving the IMP's updates.

On December 10th, Mr. Chappell, Mr. Edmunds, and Mr. Takekawa worked with electrician Russell Dorsey from Good Samaritan Electrical to review costs to renovate the solar system electrical for the Essential Fish Screen project. We will work with a solar expert to complete the plans in the next 2-3 months. Also, on December 10th, Mr. Takekawa met with USGS biologists to develop a Wildlife Conservation Board Pacific Flyway proposal for determining the optimum arrangement of brood ponds and wintering sanctuaries for ducks in Suisun Marsh. We submitted a pre-proposal for the project on December 15th.

Also, on December 15th, the Solano County Board of Supervisors formally endorsed Belden's Landing as a site on the SF Bay Water Trail at their Board meeting. Mr. Takekawa had a call with USGS project partners on December 17th to discuss re-submittal of a proposal to examine soil salinity for habitat management that is due in mid-February. Also, December 17th Ms. Collins, and Mr. McKinney re-surveyed and corrected the staff gauge elevations at St. Germain 803 and Sprig Farms 804, and Ms. Collins continued to work on the final report and flood animation.

On December 21st, the winter 2020-2021 diversion restriction letter was sent out

and posted on the SRCD website. On December 22nd, Mr. McKinney completed the quarterly SRCD newsletter and mailed it out. Through December, Ms. Collins continued work with DWR and ICF on the salmon study on managed wetland zooplankton contributions.

On January 4th, Mr. Edmunds and Mr. Takekawa submitted a \$2,500 proposal to the Solano County Parks Fish and Wildlife Propagation grant series for a survey drone to inspect levees and map habitats. Mr. Edmunds has completed his drone pilot course and is registering to take the test for certification. On January 5th, the National Park Service Delta National Heritage Area committee met to initiate the project. The Delta NHA includes Suisun Marsh, and Mr. Takekawa was asked by the Delta Protection Commission to participate in future meetings as an ex-officio advisory committee member.

On January 6th, Mr. Takekawa attended a training session for the Wetland Project Tracker system and revised our entry for the Essential Fish Screen project. On January 7th, he had a second meeting with university partners on a Delta Stewardship Council proposal to develop a regional Phragmites Control Plan for Suisun Marsh. Our letter of intent was submitted in mid-December and approved for a full proposal due on February 12th. Also, January 7th, Mr. Takekawa met with the project investigators of our NFWF Mouse team to discuss progress and next steps.

On January 8th, Ms. Collins and Mr. Takekawa worked with Chris Potter from CASA2100 on maps for a summary manuscript on use of drones in control of invasive plants, and on January 11th, Mr. Chappell, Ms. Collins, and the Water Managers met with BCDC to discuss our IMP progress and practices for updating of the Geomارش map of water control structures.

- f) Lower Joice Island Update ~ Mr. Takekawa provided the Lower Joice Island update. Mr. Mouton continued to work on clean-up and organization of the sheds at the island. He put together a bin set for organizing small parts. He obtained and set new traps to handle an increase in nuisance rodents and also handled maintenance on the septic system. On January 4th, he refilled all the propane tanks which should last the rest of the season.

The hunting season continued with steady success. The club bagged 130 ducks during 56 hunter days from December 9th to January 9th for an average of 2.32 birds per hunter-day. The bag included 3 mallards (2.3%), 7 sprig (5.4%), 8 gadwall (6.3%), 50 teal (38.5%), and 42 spoonbills (32.3%).

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

Mr. Chappell indicated we have met all our meeting obligations while maintaining Covid-19 measures. All the meetings have moved to online meetings. December was quiet with no updates. 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 ~ No report.

e) Associate Directors Committee ~ No report.

9. Adjourn ~ A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Mr. Lenk and seconded by Mr. Lewis; all were in favor and the motion carried by a roll call vote. The meeting was adjourned at 2:47 PM.