

MINUTES

SUISUN RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S MEETING

HELD REMOTELY ON WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2020 AT 2:00 PM
Zoom Video Teleconference Meeting

DIRECTORS PRESENT: **Tony Vaccarella, President**
Arnold Lenk
Mike Lewis
Jim Waters

OTHERS PRESENT: Steven Chappell, SRCD
Edwin Limanto, DWR
Kelli Perez, SRCD
Melissa Riley, DFW
John Takekawa, SRCD
Jeff Taylor, SRCD

1. Call to Order ~ Mr. Vaccarella called the Suisun Resource Conservation District Board of Directors meeting to order at 2:00 PM.

2. Public Comments ~ None.

3. Open Session ~ Mr. Vaccarella opened the October 14, 2020 Board of Directors meeting and asked for consideration of agenda Item 3a.

a) Approval of the September 9, 2020 Board Meeting Minutes ~ A motion to approve the minutes from the September 9, 2020 Board meeting was made by Mr. Lewis and seconded by Mr. Lenk; all were in favor and the motion carried on a roll call vote. The next SRCD Board meeting is currently scheduled to be on Wednesday November 11th, which is Veteran's Day holiday. The Board directed SRCD staff to move the November Board meeting to Thursday, November 12th at 2PM.

4. Financial Reports ~

a) Approval of Vendor Claims for September 2020 ~ Mr. Chappell reported that the September 2020 General Fund vendor claims totaled \$68,644.93. Expenses were normal operational expenses including payroll with pointing out a claim to DFW for lease of SRCD offices, storage, and parking for the year. Mr. Chappell reported the September 2020 Lower Joice Island vendor claims for \$13,723.94 of normal operational expenses including claim #2021-20 for spray-drone phragmites treatment reimbursable under a Solano County grant. Mr. Chappell reported the September 2020 Water Managers Department of the General Fund vendor claims totaling \$30,442.82 for normal operational expenses. Mr. Lenk made a motion to approve the September 2020 vendor claims as presented, and Mr. Waters seconded the motion; all were in favor and the motion carried on a roll call vote.

5. Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) Report ~ The DFW report was presented by Ms. Melissa Riley. **Elk Hunts:** The 2020 elk hunts have concluded, and we can now happily move onto Waterfowl Season. Our hunters had a safe and fun season, all but 2 spike hunters were able to harvest a nice animal this season. **Wildlife area:** Staff is busy completing the final items that need to be done before the opener of waterfowl season. Last minute road work, replacement of hunter/equipment crossings, and gate repairs. Seasonal staff is busy cleaning blinds out and placing blind stakes and signs, hunters should have an easy time finding all our blinds this year. **Flood Up:** Flood up is well under way minus a few water delivery issues, (seems like we fix one issue and another pops up) everything is moving along fairly smoothly. Last year we had major issues keeping water in pond 12 due to the fire in late October. As previously reported, all the necessary pipes have been replaced by our crew and the Pond 12 closed zone will be flooded this season. For the first time in several years, all our blinds in Pond 11 will be hunttable on opening weekend. We do have a couple hunt units that are struggling to get full water, but hopefully they will gain enough in the next week and a half to have a few hunters utilize them. **Phragmites Project:** For the second year in a

row about 1,700 acres of phragmites on the wildlife area has been sprayed with the use of helicopters. Paired with the spraying, we successfully mowed several ponds and burned 3 others, clearing them of the old dead stalks. I am sure that some of our hunters will be a little unhappy with the removal of the tall vegetation in the ponds, but so far, the project is moving along nicely.

6. Department of Water Resources Report ~ Mr. Edwin Limanto provided the DWR Suisun Marsh briefing packet. For the month of September, there was no salinity standard. Salinities in the Marsh ranged from 8.5 to 15.5 mS/cm. At the end of September, net Delta outflow was 4,576 cfs. The salinity standard for October was 19 mS/cm, and salinity values on October 11th were 8.7 to 19.3 mS/cm, while Delta outflow was 3,914 cfs. Reservoir capacity ranged from 41-70% in the northern Sierra and in the southern Sierra 21-94%. Precipitation year to date was 31.7% of normal in the northern Sierra and 24.6% in the southern Sierra.

Staff continued to coordinate with Delta Field Division (DFD) about maintenance and debris removal at the inlet of the Goodyear Slough Outfall. Staff worked with DFD to develop a plan to fix the sheet piles surrounding the inlet. Levees are monitored after extreme high tides. For the Suisun Marsh Salinity Control Gates, tidal operations began on October 9th. Water levels and levees in the Roaring River Distribution System continued to be monitored with minor levee work through November with dredging of the intake basin proposed for 2021 or 2022. Morrow Island Distribution System intake gates were opened to 8 inches on September 29th, and levee maintenance has been ongoing. 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 (DWR DES Branch Chief) requesting payment of SRCD outstanding reimbursement invoices. A letter was transmitted to the DWR Director on October 2nd drafted by the SRCD's counsel. DWR indicated that the Director will be meeting with DWR Deputy Directors and will be responding to the letter. Mr. Chappell was informed 4 of 5 outstanding invoices were processed for payment. DWR also processed 6 of the PAI cost share packages for landowners totaling \$222K. But it will still take some time to get these payment checks cut and delivered to SRCD from the State Controllers Office. SRCD remains concerned that DWR is backing away from future costs reimbursement under the SMPA PAI program, but immediate concerns seem to be addressed. Mr. Chappell and Ms. Perez have completed a comprehensive summary of the SMPA PAI program delivery. This summary includes information through the current 2020 work season, and it showed 109 projects have been delivered.

This year, 11 landowner projects withdrew because of the potential funding shortfalls and will be moved into next year's program. Discussion ensued.

b) Suisun Marsh Plan Update ~ There have been no changes with the Suisun Marsh Plan Implementation. The compliance team meeting was held on September 18th including an acreage tracking workgroup for the 5000-7000 acres of tidal restoration and managed wetland enhancement for the year-end compliance report. October 8th was the monthly Principals meeting. On September 28th, Wings Landing completed their tidal restoration project, by breaching exterior levees and restoring it to tidal marsh. On October 27th, Phase 1 of Montezuma Wetlands restoration Project will be complete and the Exterior levee breached.

c) USACE Permits -- RGP3 & LOP Permit Update ~ There were no landowner work applications received in September. Only one application for dredging was received and processed by SRCD this year. BCDC has been extremely slow in completing the authorization. The landowner year-end work season letter was sent out today for initiating the RGP 3 year-end report.

d) Water Manager Program Update ~ Mr. Takekawa reported on the Water Manager Program. No work packages were submitted in September. The final dredging permit is still being processed by BCDC that should be completed this week. Mr. Taylor distributed a letter for the 2020 RGP 3 post construction reporting work completed and a reminder on diversion reporting. The Water Managers have been contacting individual clubs on the Delta Watermasters delinquent list to advise them to complete their annual diversion reports. The 2020 Pumping Program resulted in 2,897 hours of portable pump use with a peak in April of 947 hours. Under Covid-19, pumping use was reduced by 50% from the average 5,791 hours used in the 4 years of 2016-2019.

Ms. Jesirae Collins and the water managers were down to the last 9 clubs to update their individual management plans. We have completed 114 club meetings with 7 scheduled tomorrow that just leaves 2 remaining to complete the total 123 club updates. We are now working on the final IMP drafts -- 17 drafts were sent to landowners with 10 responding, and 10 reviews are in final editing. The update will be extended a month or so to complete these reviews. The SRCD Fall Landowner Workshop was held on September 16th by Zoom. The workshop presentations provided were appreciated by over 108 people in attendance.

Mr. Chappell, Mr. McKinney, and Mr. Takekawa joined several landowners on calls for the Roaring River Distribution System flood-up. The flood-up has gone well, and water levels have been very good this year. Mr. Edmunds provided weekly updates to landowners along King Cut for flood-up, which has also gone smoothly. Mr. Taylor and Mr. McKinney coordinated flood-up and assisted with water quality monitoring in the

western Marsh. The fish screen cleaning was completed in September, and the refurbished boom truck worked well. DU initiated work under the Essential Fish Screen Project with work installing a new pipe at #634 initiated today. SRCD staff completed a staff gauge survey and established a benchmark in the concrete near the Grizzly Island Wildlife Area office for future calibration. The salinity station maintenance work with Mr. Edwin Limanto was executed under the DWR Support Contract, and we updated our RTK GPS survey equipment for completing an elevation survey at Collinsville.

On September 17th, Mr. Takekawa attended a call with DWR and Chico State about vegetation analyses and GIS presentation. On September 24 and October 8, some of the Water Managers attended the online Interagency Ecological Program presentations on Suisun Marsh. On September 29th, Mr. Takekawa attended a call about the Delta Stewardship Council science action agenda. On October 1st, he worked with the Salt Marsh Harvest Mouse team to respond to review questions on our 2020 NFWF proposal submitted for the second phase of Salt Marsh Harvest Mouse work to complete a range-wide survey in 2021. On October 3rd, Mr. Takekawa worked with Science Fellows Richelle Tanner and two students to conduct a waterbird survey on Tule Red. On October 6th and 8th, Ms. Collins and Mr. Takekawa I attended calls with Brett Harvey at DWR and Ramona Zeno of ICF to discuss analyses of fish response to zooplankton production from managed wetlands. Discussion ensued.

e) Lower Joice Island Update ~ Mr. Takekawa provided the Lower Joice Island update. All fieldwork was completed in early September including the NAWCA work in the northeast corner establishing a ditch through the swale by the fish screen and roughing out a new pond. Mr. Mouton had some challenges pulling the equipment out from the field, but with the assistance of staff and that of neighboring landowner Mr. Greg Daniel our equipment is once again moving successfully. The equipment was cleaned, and the fuel was topped off with stabilizer added to prepare it for the winter. Mr. Mouton flooded the south unit in mid-September followed by drainage of the unit to prevent larval mosquito hatching coordinated with Mr. Damon Gray with SCMAD. He then initiated flooding in the north unit which was drained into the south unit. He will reflood both units to shoot level starting at the end of this week. Upgrades to the septic system and regular maintenance were completed. We cleaned the clubhouse on October 5-7 and conducted the clubhouse walkthrough with the hunt group president and 3 members on October 9th.

f) Summary of Past & Future Meetings, Tours, and Presentations ~ Mr. Chappell indicated that the District has met all obligations with meetings while maintaining Covid-19 measures, and all the meetings have been virtual Zoom. Discussion ensued.

8. Suisun Resource Conservation District Committee Reports ~

- a) Agency Committee ~ No report.
 - b) Legal Committee ~ The board noted that the legal counsel did a good job on the letter to DWR.
 - c) Personnel Committee ~ No report.
 - d) Finance Committee ~ Ms. Perez noted that the SRCD audit is scheduled to start with Cropper next week.
 - e) Associate Directors Committee ~ No report.
- 9. Adjourn** ~ A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Mr. Waters and seconded by Mr. Lenk; all were in favor and the motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 2:49 PM.