

MINUTES

**SUISUN RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S MEETING**
HELD ON WEDNESDAY, APRIL 10th, 2024, AT 2:00 PM
SOLANO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISOR'S CHAMBERS
675 TEXAS STREET
FAIRFIELD, CA 94533

DIRECTORS PRESENT: Tony Vaccarella
Kent Hansen
Mike Lewis
Dick Vanderkous
Jim Waters

OTHERS PRESENT: Lauren Barthman-Thompson, DFW
Steven Chappell, SRCD
Kevin Clark, DWR
Tim Edmunds, SRCD
John Eudy, SRCD Assoc. Director
Fred Riedel, Fleetside Club
Orlando Rocha, DFW
Jamel Stewart, DWR
John Takekawa, SRCD
Jeff Taylor, SRCD
John Telfer, SRCD Assoc. Director

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

2. Public Comments ~ There were no public comments.

3. Open Session ~ Mr. Vaccarella opened the April 10, 2024, Board of Directors meeting. Mr. Vaccarella asked for consideration of agenda Item 3a.

a) Approval of the March 13, 2024 Board Meeting Minutes ~ Mr. Vaccarella asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the March 13, 2024 Board meeting. A motion was made by Mr. Lewis and seconded by Mr. Waters; all were in favor and the motion carried.

4. Financial Reports ~

a) Approval of Vendor Claims for March 2024 ~ Mr. Chappell reported the March 2024 SRCD General Fund vendor claims totaled \$98,665.85. All expenses are regular general fund operational expenses with claim #109 for the SRCD current audit expense, claim #113 for a landowner drought response reimbursement, and claim #114 is for SRCD annual insurance policy. Mr. Chappell reported the March 2024 Lower Joice Island vendor claims totaled \$7,043.12. All expenses were normal LJI operational and salary expenses including equipment maintenance. Mr. Chappell reported the March 2024 Water Managers Program vendor claims totaled \$23,225.77. All expenses were normal Water Managers operational and salary expenses. Mr. Waters moved to approve the vendor claim summaries as presented, Mr. Lewis seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion carried.

b) Review SRCD Draft Audit for FY 2022-2023 ~ Mr. Chappell provided a summary of the SRCD draft audit and asked the Board for any comments or questions. The Board package included a cover memorandum from Mr. Chappell outlining elements of the audit. The auditor will attend the May Board meeting to make a presentation of the final audit. Within the audit, there are two sets of financial reports. One financial report is Government-wide Financial Statement, including depreciation and future liabilities (like retirement obligations). The Second financial report is the Government Fund Financial Statement, which is a more realistic depiction of SRCD financial position during the audit period. For the last fiscal year, SRCD's net position increased by \$113,000. The net position changed from the previous year by \$307K. This is primarily attributed to the one time post pandemic Covid support grant. Discussion ensued. Mr. Hansen, asked about the SRCD Special Revenue enXco Fund, which was a windmill settlement agreement with enXco and terms for a development setback of 1/4-mile from the boundary of the Secondary Marsh.

c) Disposal of Fixed Asset ~2017 Polaris Ranger, VIN 3NSRMA579HE773915 ~ Mr. Chappell reported the need for the disposal of the 2017 Polaris Ranger. The engine failed and the mechanic indicated that it was not cost effective to repair. Mr. Waters made a motion to approve disposal, and Mr. Vanderkous seconded the motion; all were in favor and the motion carried.

5. Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) Report ~ Orlando Rocha provided the DFW report which was reported by Rayna Fitzgerald.

Joice Island Pig Hunt: Wild pig hunts are continuing on Joice Island. Since the last board meeting, we've had 15 pig hunters and 0 harvested pigs. That brings our total harvest this year to 5, which is slightly lower than the harvest at this time last year. Hunters are still leaving positive comments and seeing pigs.

Joice Island Bridge: The last Ridgeway Rail survey was completed on 03/19/2024 and after approval from USFWS work on the Joice Island bridge resumed on 04/04/2024. They will need 2-3 weeks to finish.

Wildlife Area: We've continued our drawdown process across the Wildlife Area. We've completed one leach cycle in the Crescent units and are in the process of completing a second one. General mowing, discing, and maintenance across the Wildlife Area continues between rain events. As a part of the *Phragmites* control program, we completed two controlled burns this spring on the Wildlife Area. In collaboration with CWA, we burned 50 acres of *Phragmites* in pond 22C on 03/20/24 and 8 acres of *Phragmites* in pond 22A on 04/3/2024. We are planning to burn 50 acres more in pond 22A this next week, if weather conditions allow.

Projects: The Island Slough main intake and pump replacement is completed. For the first time in a long while, the intakes are not leaking, and we now have the ability to pump Island Slough efficiently.

Nutria: The nutria program is going strong, and techs are out surveying on private and public lands throughout the Marsh, currently they have caught just over 220 animals in the Marsh and the number will continue to climb as ponds are drained and the animals are concentrated in the remaining water. The Nutria program will be giving a full update at the Landowner Workshop.

6. Department of Water Resources Report ~ Jamel Stewart and Kevin Clark presented the DWR Suisun Marsh briefing packet. For the month of March, salinity standards were 8.0 mS/cm in the east and the west. The Progressive Daily Mean (PDM) salinities in the Marsh ranged from 0.2-2.5 mS/cm. At the end of March, net Delta outflow was 64,183 cfs. As of April 8th, salinities ranged from 0.2-2.1 mS/cm with

Delta outflow had dropped to 45,816 cfs and a salinity standard of 11.0 mS/cm at the eastern and western stations. Salinity monitoring station S-97 remains offline, and Cygnus station S-33 is being used instead of Ibis S-97. No drought response fund triggers were exceeded. Discussion ensued.

The Roaring River Distribution System levee inspections were conducted. Delta Field Division staff repaired levee erosion at mile marker 11.6, and environmental staff conducted a site visit to clear proposed trenching work to be conducted in April. For the Morrow Island Distribution System, DWR conducted levee inspections, and environmental staff assisted CDFW in California Ridgway's rail surveys at MIDS at the outfall of the M- and C- lines. Levee inspections were conducted at Goodyear Slough Outfall (GYSO), and Ridgway's rail surveys were conducted by CDFW assisted by environmental staff at the outfall and a report was prepared. At the Suisun Marsh Salinity Control Gates, gates were in the open position with the low salinities, and Gate two remains out for refurbishment. Environmental staff was notified of a bird nest on a boat lock arm but found that it was abandoned. A vegetation monitoring work plan including invasive species remains in development. Discussion ensued.

California reservoir capacity in March ranged from 66-85% of average in the northern Sierra and 65-100% in the southern Sierra. For the new water year, precipitation year to date was 95% of average in the northern Sierra and 89% in the southern Sierra. Discussion ensued.

7. Suisun Resource Conservation District Reports ~

- a) 2015 Suisun Marsh Preservation Agreement: Mr. Chappell reported that the SMPA agreement programs continue to be administered. Monthly calls continue with DWR Management including updates on monthly payment of SRCD contract expenses. The ECAT meeting was held on March 19th, and the Delta Stewardship Council Salinity Management workshop was held on March 28th. On April 11th, SRCD participated in the SMPA 5-year review meeting. Discussion ensued.
- b) PAI Program Update ~ Mr. Chappell provided an update for the PAI Program cost share program. Final payments were received for two 2023 PAI projects. The 2024 PAI panel review was held on April 9th for 8 projects submitted by the 31st first application deadline. The second deadline is June 30th with panel review on July 8th. Discussion ensued.
- c) Suisun Marsh Plan Update ~ There have been no changes with the Suisun Marsh Plan Implementation. An ECAT meeting was held March 19th and the Principal's meeting will be April 11th at 9AM. Discussion ensued.

- d) USACE Permits – RGP 3 & LOP Permit Update ~ SRCD continues to administer the RGP 3 permit. The 2024 March landowner application packages were processed and approved today. SRCD is preparing the LOP Dredging Permit application renewal, and a second draft was prepared for internal review. Submittal of the renewal package should be in the late spring of 2024. There will be a need for endangered species consultation on western pond turtle and longfin smelt if they are added as endangered species. Discussion ensued.
- e) Potrero Hills Landfill Update ~ Mr. Chappell provided an update on the Potrero Hills Landfill SRCD Government Service Fee. He provided a PowerPoint presentation on the history of the agreement for fees for service and what types of Suisun Marsh conservation or enhancement projects could be funded. Potrero Hills Landfill has offered a field trip to the landfill to review site operations. If more than two Board members would like to attend, we will have to schedule a Special SRCD Board meeting and make the site visit open to the public.
- f) Water Manager (WM) Program Update ~ Mr. Takekawa presented the Water Manager Program update. During the last month, the SRCD staff worked on updating the nearly 20-year-old Suisun Marsh Vegetation Guidebook which was sent to the printer on Monday. The new Guidebook will be handed out at the Spring Workshop next Wednesday, April 17th. The printing of the updated guidebook was supported by a Solano County Fish and Wildlife Propagation Fund grant and the Suisun Conservation Fund.

The Water Managers submitted the March RGP 3 package to the Corps of Engineers on April 4th with 33 applications and 2 amendments. The final draft of the dredging Letter of Permission renewal application was submitted on April 10th, and the dredging 401 Water Quality Certification was drafted for the Regional Water Board and is under internal review. Currently, Mr. Taylor has received 6 applications for 2024 dredging program this year. Mr. Edmunds completed three 2024 PAI applications. He assisted in installing 3 pumps for leach cycles. Mr. Taylor installed 3 pumps for landowners, met with 9 clubs on their management needs, and submitted four 2024 PAI applications. He assisted with boat driving for the Wings Landing levee inspection and completed gate monitoring on March 19th for Spring Salmon and on April 3rd for Smelt restrictions, and the navigation boat steering box is under repair.

Ms. Guzman completed three BCDC permit applications with detailed drawings and project descriptions. These included two projects that are part of our Delta Conservancy grant to improve drainage efficiency and assess climate resilience. She met with several landowners, updated two 2023 PAI projects, and coordinated with 3 clubs on pumping. She arranged to supply a landowner with an inflatable pig

to block a pipe for conducting infrastructure work. She worked with Steve to discuss coordination with the Fairfield Suisun Sewage District. She worked on a draft of the quarterly West Wind Newsletter.

Ms. Collins continued to assist Ms. Perez in supporting and completing administrative tasks on contracts and grants. She worked on the 2023 Individual Management Plan updates which were approved through an SRCD Board resolution and will be sent to BCDC for final approval. She worked on updating the website, and she re-ran analyses for the fish biomass analysis study with DWR. She worked on the Phragmites socioecological project reports and coordinated with Chapman University. She organized a Mein's Landing habitat advisory panel meeting on March 21st, and a final report from that meeting is in development. She worked with Suisun Fire Protection District on updating Suisun Marsh emergency maps and contacts. She helped to organize the Spring Landowner's workshop.

Ms. Brandon continued work on salt marsh harvest mouse studies, including finalizing a dataset on locations of eDNA bait stations. She initiated work on delineating marsh boundaries for analyses, and on April 5th, she met with the primary mouse investigators to discuss the scope and timing of reporting. Also, she and I met with Steve Andrews to continue progress on presenting levee breaches and salinity modeling results. Her laptop was reformatted, and the battery was replaced.

Mr. Takekawa discussed an upcoming multispectral imagery image being taken of the Delta and Suisun Marsh with Shruti Khanna at DFW on March 14th. The SRCD staff held the triannual staff meeting with Mr. Mike Lewis in attendance on March 15th. On March 18th, Mr. Takekawa and Mr. Chappell attended an update meeting of the Fish and Fowl project led by UC Davis. This project is aimed at identifying the value that seasonally managed wetlands provide in terms of fish and bird invertebrate food. On March 19th, Mr. Takekawa and Mr. Chappell attended a monthly with the DWR Fish Restoration Program. On March 20th, Mr. Takekawa met with Judy Chen at UC Davis about her dissertation work on Suisun Marsh invertebrate studies. On March 26th and 27th, Mr. Chappell and Mr. Takekawa attended the online Salinity Management Workshop hosted by the Delta Stewardship Council. On April 9th, Mr. Takekawa hosted the 2024 PAI grant program review panel where we assessed 8 projects that were submitted..

- f) Lower Joice Island Update ~ Mr. Takekawa provided the Lower Joice Island update. Mr. Mouton continued maintaining the facilities and habitat on the island. He mowed the spring growth around the clubhouse and on the north levee. The Massey-Ferguson tractor began to overheat and stalled when he was mowing the south levee, so we called our mechanic to come and work on it and the dozer which has a

problem engaging into gear. Marque is working with Mr. Cody Suire, an hourly extra help to assist Mr. Mouton in catching up on island deferred maintenance. On Monday, he received a propane refill and hauled the shipping tanks to the island to refill the storage. We ordered a 40-yard dumpster delivered to our dock at the Family Club on Tuesday to remove garbage and debris from the Island. Mr. Mouton and Mr. Suire filled the barge, pushed it into Pierce Harbor, and used the Family Club Gradall to load the dumpster.

- g) Summary of Past & Future Meetings, Tours, and Presentations ~ Mr. Chappell provided an update on meetings. Mr. Waters attended the last Delta Conservancy Board meeting. The Suisun Marsh Spring Landowner Workshop will be on April 17th. Discussion ensued.

9. Suisun Resource Conservation District Committee Reports ~

- a) Agency Committee ~ Mr. Hansen recommended that we develop a position on California Forever and that we have a discussion. It will be placed on the agenda for May. Discussion ensued.
- b) Legal Committee ~ Mr. Waters asked about direction for legal counsel on use of funds from the Potrero Landfill settlement. Discussion ensued.
- c) Personnel Committee ~ No report.
- d) Finance Committee ~ No report.
- e) Associate Director's Committee ~ No report.

- 10. Meeting Adjournment** ~ A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Mr. Waters and seconded by Mr. Vanderkous; all were in favor and the motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 3:47 PM.