

**DRAFT MINUTES**

**SUISUN RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT  
BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S MEETING**

HELD ON WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 11<sup>th</sup>, 2024 AT 2:00 PM  
SOLANO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISOR'S CHAMBERS  
675 TEXAS STREET  
FAIRFIELD, CA 94533

**DIRECTORS PRESENT:** Kent Hansen  
Mike Lewis  
Dick Vanderkous  
Jim Waters

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Laureen Barthman-Thompson, DFW  
Steven Chappell, SRCD  
Kelli Perez, SRCD  
Kevin Clark, DWR  
John Eudy, SRCD Assoc. Director  
Marina Guzman, SRCD  
Jim Levine, Montezuma Wetlands  
Cassie Pinnell, Montezuma Wetlands  
Melissa Riley, DFW  
Orlando Rocha, DFW  
Jamel Stewart, DWR  
Dajanae Stitts, DFW  
John Takekawa, SRCD  
Randy Weinrich, DFW

**1. Call to Order** ~ Mr. Waters called the Suisun Resource Conservation District Board of Directors meeting to order at 2:00 PM. He acknowledged the anniversary of 9-11 with a moment of silence.

**2. Public Comments** ~ There were no public comments.

**3. Open Session** ~ Mr. Waters opened the September 11, 2024, Board of Directors meeting. Mr. Waters asked for consideration of agenda Item 3a.

a) Approval of the August 14, 2024, Board Meeting Minutes ~ Mr. Waters asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the August 14, 2024 Board meeting. A motion was made by Mr. Hansen and seconded by Mr. Vanderkous to approve; all were in favor and the motion carried.

**4. Financial Reports** ~

a) Approval of Vendor Claims for August 2024 ~ Mr. Chappell reported the August 2024 SRCD General Fund vendor claims totaled \$95,219.38. All expenses are regular general fund operations, salaries, or contractual reimbursable expenses. Mr. Chappell reported the August 2024 Lower Joice Island vendor claims totaled \$7,776.22. All expenses were normal LJI operational and salary expenses. Mr. Chappell reported the August 2024 Water Managers Program vendor claims totaled \$30,349.88. All expenses were normal Water Managers operational and salary expenses. Mr. Chappell reported the August 2024 Special Revenue claims totaling \$6,829.73. These claims were for pump program maintenance and repairs. Mr. Lewis moved to approve the vendor claim summaries as presented, Mr. Hansen seconded the motion, All others were in favor, and the motion carried.

**5. Montezuma Wetlands Project Update & Introduction of the Montezuma Carbon Sequestration Project** ~ Jim Levine and Cassie Pinnell. Mr. Levine presented his talk at the beginning of the meeting to allow board meeting materials to arrive. Mr. Levine summarized the history of the Montezuma Wetlands Project, the use and placement of dredge spoils, and the current site conditions after Phase 1 tidal restoration and Phase 2 continues spoils placement. Mr. Levine then presented a proposal to establish a carbon capture project at the site to store carbon dioxide underground, since the region has been reported as suitable for this purpose. The carbon dioxide would be obtained from refineries in the upper estuary, and transported to the site in an underwater pipeline, and injected into underground depleted natural gas formations. Discussion ensued.

**6. Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) Report** ~ Mr. Orlando Rocha provided the DFW report.

**Elk Season:** The fundraiser Tag hunt officially ended on September 1st, the hunter spent 24 days in the field waiting for the right animal, he ended up taking a large bull of 8 x 10 that weighed 678 lbs. Though he shot a nice animal, he didn't get his number one targeted animal, so he said he plans to be back to hunt next year. Regular hunts resumed on September 5<sup>th</sup> with 6 spikes for that period. Five out of 6 hunters were successful. During this period, a lone hunter believed he may have shot and lost his animal, but after a little help, we were able to locate the elk before it spoiled in the hot sun. It was his first elk after mainly hunting deer. He was very grateful for the help he received. We've seen a total of 12 animals harvested to this point, with 23 left throughout the rest of this month.

**Grizzly Island Wildlife Area:** CDFW's Suisun group has completed 300 vegetation surveys in support of the Triennial Vegetation Survey. We would like to thank California Waterfowl Association, Mallard Haven, Tule Bell, and North End Duck Club for allowing us access and survey their properties.

CDFW has filled 2 seasonal positions, Emily Mancheno as our first environmental scientific intern and Kathy Su as an environmental scientific aid. They will be assisting with trapping, surveys, and working at the check station throughout the summer, fall, and winter. Kathy is currently in her last year at UC Davis. Emily is a recent graduate of UC Davis, they majored in WFCB and minored in environmental policy analysis and planning.

**Flood up:** Flood up continues to go as planned, and we currently have about 700 acres flooded on the Wildlife Area with more being added daily. Flooding up areas before others in the Marsh has its benefits, when we add water, the ducks just show up. Pond 12 G in Pond 12 has consistently had 4-5K birds on it.

**Pumps:** We continue to have some pump issues, when started the pond 12 pump to begin flooding the closed zone, sparks shot out, this turned out to be a pair of rats that built their nest in the starter motor housing and chewed wires, so the motor had to be pulled to have the starter motor replaced. Luckily, we have a new redundant flooding system and we were able to switch to our newly installed pump and pull water from a connecting ditch and stay on our flood schedule.

**Island Slough:** All the projects at Island Slough are completed, we have operational pumps and a repaired intakes. We need to clean a small section of the intake ditch and we will begin flooding the unit soon after.

**7. Department of Water Resources Report** ~ Mr. Jamel Stewart presented the DWR Suisun Marsh briefing packet. For the month of August, there were no salinity standards for the Marsh. The Progressive Daily Mean (PDM) salinities in the Marsh ranged from 3.3-9.4 mS/cm. At the end of August, net Delta outflow was 9,594 cfs. There are no

salinity standards for the month of September. As of September 9<sup>th</sup>, salinities in the Marsh ranged from 1.8-10.8 mS/cm, and Delta outflow was at 10,228 cfs.

The Roaring River Distribution System (RRDS) levee inspections were conducted by DWR staff and Delta Field Division (DFD) conducted fish screen cleaning. For the Morrow Island Distribution System (MIDS), DWR conducted levee inspections. Levee inspections also were conducted at Goodyear Slough Outfall (GYSO), and DFD conducted debris clearing and began annual maintenance with permit submitted for the Fleet monitoring station. At the Suisun Marsh Salinity Control Gates (SMSCG), 60 days of SMSCG operations began on September 6<sup>th</sup>. Flashboards will remain installed this summer, and out of water work will begin this month. Gate 2 remains out for refurbishment but will be reinstalled this fall. A vegetation update will be provided in November.

California reservoir capacity in July ranged from 72-89% of average in the northern Sierra and 49-99% in the southern Sierra. For the new water year, precipitation year to date was 91.0% of average in the northern Sierra and 83% in the southern Sierra. Discussion ensued.

## **8. Suisun Resource Conservation District Reports ~**

- a) 2015 Suisun Marsh Preservation Agreement ~ Mr. Chappell reported that DWR is proposing to move forward to replace Ibis water quality monitoring station with the Cygnus station, which will require an amendment of the Suisun Marsh Preservation Agreement and SRCD may have some items we would like updated, so this will likely be a larger effort. The PAI program likely will be revised, pooling funding from the joint use to 75/25 AND 50/50 projects. The quarterly ECAT meeting was held on September 10<sup>th</sup>.
- b) Suisun Marsh Plan Update ~ There have been no changes with the Suisun Marsh Plan Implementation. The AMAT meeting was held on August 13<sup>th</sup>, and the quarterly ACT Meeting was held on August 20<sup>th</sup>. Sept 12<sup>th</sup> will be the monthly SMP Principal's meeting. SRCD, DWR, DFW and USBR have completed a new Biological Assessment (BA) under the Suisun Marsh Plan to provide Section 7 Endangered species take authorization from USFWS consultation longfin smelt which is being listed. Changes to existing permits requirements may occur and landowners will be updated at the Spring Landowner Workshop. Discussion ensued.
- c) RGP 3 & LOP Permit Update ~ SRCD continues to administer the RGP 3 and Letter of Permission Dredging permits with a new Army Corps staff member (Zach Simmons). The 2024 July application package approval was delayed. The July-August landowner application packages were combined and approved on September 4<sup>th</sup> and landowner were notified on September 5<sup>th</sup>. These change in

agency staff and delays in processing authorizations, reinforces the need for landowners to submit permitting applications early, to allow adequate processing time. The State Lands Commission 10-year lease was executed on September 4<sup>th</sup>, allowing BCDC's levee maintenances and fish screen dredging permits to become effective. The year, BCDC issued a 3-year dredging permit for all 13 fish screen sites. Discussion ensued.

- d) Water Manager Program Update ~ Mr. Takekawa presented the Water Manager Program update. The Water Managers began meeting with landowners to coordinate fall flood-up schedules, and they finished distributing chemicals for the 2024 pest-weed program. On August 15<sup>th</sup>, Mr. Chappell, Ms. Guzman, and Mr. Takekawa attended the first 2024 Roaring River Distribution System flood-up coordination call which are held weekly until the hunting season begins. Also, Mr. Chappell and Mr. Takekawa met with Emily Read and the Fish Restoration Program staff to discuss Phragmites treatment proposed for the Tule Red Restoration.

Mr. Edmunds assisted the Blue Iron contractor working on the fish screen renovation project with their access issues. He repaired the pressure washer trailer and initiated cleaning fish screens. He worked with Intake Screens, Inc. staff to repair the fish screen at 525E. He assisted Island Club 501 with pump removal, and he responded to BCDC questions to complete a fish screen dredging permit. He worked on obtaining chemicals for treatment of Phragmites at the DWR Tule Red Restoration.

Mr. Taylor submitted the July package to the USACE and added August projects for a combined application package. The approval for this package was received from the Corps on September 4<sup>th</sup> and sent to landowners on September 5<sup>th</sup>. He worked on fall flood-up coordination and prepared water quality monitoring sondes for deployment which were installed in Boynton Slough on August 20<sup>th</sup> and Goodyear Slough on August 22<sup>nd</sup>. He conducted site inspections at 3 clubs for completed PAI projects, and he submitted drought response paperwork for 3 additional clubs. He completed repairs on the pipe trailer for new tires and hub maintenance. He coordinated mailing of SCMAD cost-share letters on August 26<sup>th</sup>. On August 29<sup>th</sup>, he obtained final signatures for the BCDC permit for dredging.

Ms. Guzman met with several landowners about their completed fall work, and she obtained post construction photos for the Delta Conservancy projects. She completed a few PAI post-project inspections. Ms. Guzman and Mr. Takekawa completed a vegetation survey at the Family Club 423 on September 6<sup>th</sup> for their wetland mitigation project.

Ms. Collins and Mr. Takekawa submitted a grant proposal for Blue Carbon studies with USGS to the Delta Stewardship Council Delta Research Awards on August 26<sup>th</sup>. We also submitted a pre-proposal for renovation of the remaining 9 fish screens to the San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority; that pre-proposal will be discussed with the grant managers on September 13<sup>th</sup> with a due date of October 4<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Collins renewed our Leica contract for RTK GPS surveys on September 9<sup>th</sup>, and she assisted Purdue University with communications about their Phragmites control landowner survey. She helped coordinate with Phragmites socioecological study team members to meet to prepare for the special session accepted for the Bay Delta Science Conference set for September 30<sup>th</sup>. She sent out the notices and the draft agenda for the upcoming Fall Landowner Workshop on September 18<sup>th</sup>. She continued work on Suisun Fish biomass analyses and requested corrected data from DWR.

Ms. Brandon completed extracting data for the mouse occupancy model. She wrote code to conduct an analysis on the fish biomass project. She initiated work on developing a standard procedure to use a camera trap for recording water levels at staff gauges remotely. She sent an outline to the mouse team for the Phase 2 final report.

On August 19<sup>th</sup>, I met with Mr. Jason Hagani to review our analysis of the extent of historical Phragmites. On August 21<sup>st</sup>, Mr. Chappell and the water managers had the annual fall flood up coordination meeting with the Solano County Mosquito Abatement District staff.

- e) Lower Joice Island Update ~ Mr. Takekawa provided the Lower Joice Island update. Mr. Mouton continued to maintain the facilities and habitats on the island. He cored a rodent hole and repaired ~ 300 yards of exterior levee in the south unit, regraded the levee crown and replaced the splashcap. He worked extensively on the south unit on ditch cleaning including the Harrison blind ditch, mowing, and disking. He eradicated a patch of Russian thistle in the south unit, and a helicopter Phragmites treatment was completed on the north unit. On September 4-5, Mr. Mouton worked with Ms. Guzman, Mr. Takekawa, and Mr. Taylor to install a 20' bulkhead to protect an area of levee erosion on Montezuma Slough. Mr. Mouton built 2 interior plywood flapgates for 2 water control structures along Montezuma Slough that were installed on September 5<sup>th</sup> to prepare the south unit for flood-up. He assisted lease club members improve the habitat conditions near a north blind. The Polaris Pro XD 2000D UTV acquired a noise in the transmission that required service, so on August 30<sup>th</sup>, we barged the UTV to the dock and put it on a trailer for service at United Rental in Benicia. The repair work should be completed this week. The bulldozer

had an electrical problem, so we set an appointment with a mechanic to fix it on September 12<sup>th</sup>. The old Massey-Ferguson 4255 tractor was sold at the Ritchie Brothers auction on September 10<sup>th</sup> for \$7,000 less a 15% commission and our transport cost of \$750.

- f) Summary of Past & Future Meetings, Tours, and Presentations ~ Mr. Chappell attended the Central Valley Joint Venture subgroup meeting on September 9<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Chappell and Mr. Vanderkous visited the Potrero Landfill today to learn about their daily operations and Phase 2 expansion status. The Fall Landowner Workshop will be on Sept. 18<sup>th</sup>. Discussion ensued.

#### **9. 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 Director's Committee ~ No report.

- 10. Meeting Adjournment** ~ A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Mr. Vanderkous seconded by Mr. Hansen; all were in favor and the motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 3:30 PM.