

MINUTES

SUISUN RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S MEETING

HELD ON WEDNESDAY, MARCH 12th, 2025 AT 2:00 PM
SOLANO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISOR'S CHAMBERS
675 TEXAS STREET
FAIRFIELD, CA 94533

DIRECTORS PRESENT: Mike Lewis
Dick Vanderkous
Jim Waters

OTHERS PRESENT: Laureen Barthman-Thompson, DFW
Dennis Becker, SRCD Assoc. Dir.
Steven Chappell, SRCD
Kevin Clark, DWR
Tim Edmunds, SRCD
John Eudy, SRCD Assoc. Dir.
Marina Guzman, SRCD
Fred Riedel, Fleetside Club
Melissa Riley, DFW
Orlando Rocha, DFW
Jamel Stewart, DWR
Dajanae Stitts, DFW
John Takekawa, SRCD
Jeff Taylor, SRCD
John Telfer, SRCD Assoc. Dir.
Randy Weinrich, DFW

1. Call to Order ~ Mr. Waters called the Suisun Resource Conservation District Board of Directors meeting to order at 2:03 PM.

2. Public Comments ~ There were no public comments.

3. Open Session ~ Mr. Waters opened the Board of Directors meeting for March 12, 2025. Mr. Waters asked for consideration of agenda Item 3a.

a) Approval of the February 19, 2025, Board Meeting Minutes ~ Mr. Waters asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the Board meeting of February 19, 2025. A motion was made by Mr. Vanderkous and seconded by Mr. Lewis to approve; all were in favor and the motion carried.

4. Financial Reports ~

a) Approval of Vendor Claims for February 2025 ~ Mr. Chappell reported the February 2025 SRCD General Fund vendor claims totaled \$85,647.54. All expenses were regular general fund operations, salaries, the annual audit, or reimbursable contract expenses. Mr. Chappell reported the February 2025 Lower Joice Island vendor claims totaled \$9,204.33. All expenses were normal LJI operational and salary expenses. Mr. Chappell reported the February 2025 Water Managers Program vendor claims totaled \$35,903.86. All expenses were Water Managers operational and salary expenses with claim #46 for repairs to Water Manager program trailers. Finally, there was a single claim under Special Revenue for \$1,058.12 for gravel for the pump storage area. Mr. Lewis moved to approve the vendor claim summaries as presented, Mr. Vanderkous seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion carried.

b) Fiscal Year 2023-2024 SRCD Audit Update ~ Mr. Chappell provided an update of the 2023-2024 audit. The fieldwork is scheduled to start Monday March 24th, and the staff is pulling together all the requested information and financial reports for the completion of the audit.

5. Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) Report ~ Ms. Dajanae Stitts presented the DFW report.

Joice Island Pig Hunt: DFW has held two wild pig hunt weekends so far. The Junior hunt weekend was very successful 3 of the 4 junior hunters harvested a pig. This past weekend, 1 pig was taken between the hunters but all hunters put in a great effort. According to their comments, all the hunters had a great time in the field, seeing lots of sign and pigs that they could not get close enough for a shot. When looking at the number of pigs taken last season, no pigs were harvested between the second and

ninth hunt last year; so, we hope to see at least one pig every weekend for this season. The period 2 pig hunt application window will close in a few days on March 15th, and period 3 application window is now open. This hunt application window will close on April 12th.

Wildlife Area: DFW staff on the island are working on finishing up ditch cleaning as well as beginning the initial draw downs and completing leach cycles where possible. As soon as the weather permits (i.e. dryer conditions), we will begin mowing the levees and spraying for noxious weeds.

Projects: The Montezuma Slough Fish Screen Installation project is moving from planning to the implementation phase. DFW and DU are meeting with the contractor tomorrow to discuss the planned schedule of work for this summer and fall. DFW staff have been assisting with completion of Rail survey's and are a little over halfway through at this point in the season. No Ridgway's rails have been detected. It also is the time of year to begin pheasant crow count surveys. These surveys will be completed twice a week. We will begin Tule Elk surveys later this month.

Nutria: The Nutria eradication team is getting back into properties that were closed off to them during the waterfowl season. They have been locating nutria from Hill Slough to Denverton, down to Benicia and Martinez, and to Sherman Island in the Western Delta. During the last week of February, they had the dog team from Maryland to help assist in specific locations across Suisun Marsh and into Napa Sonoma Wildlife Area. No detections were made in Napa, but they did detect scat at Denverton. This dog team is contracted to come out every 6 weeks to assist in detections. Currently, the team is catching nutria on the tidal side of Hill Slough. They will soon start trapping at Mallard Farms, Joice Island, and the Military Ocean Terminal Concord. Their goal is to make connections between rivers and channels that help them to understand specific nutria patterns which will lead to more efficient nutria capture.

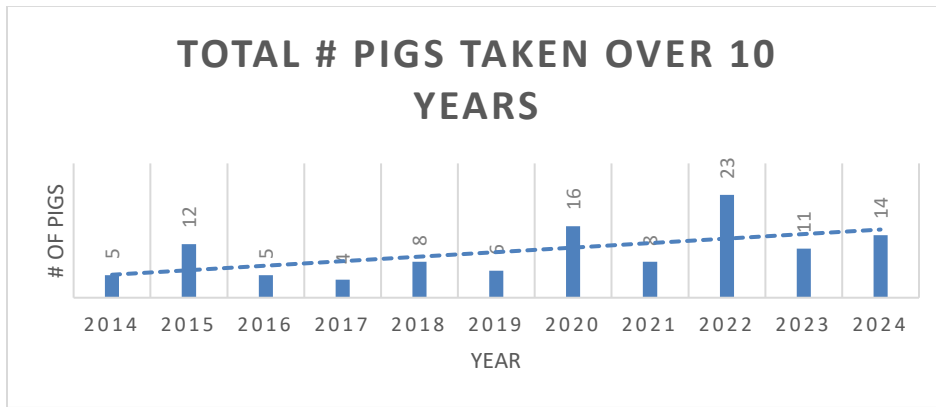


Fig. 1: Graph depicting the total number of pigs taken during the Joice Island Pig Hunt each season, over the past 10 years. It shows a positive trend line indicating that the number of pigs harvested each year has increased. In 2022, the number of hunts per season increased from 8 to 13.

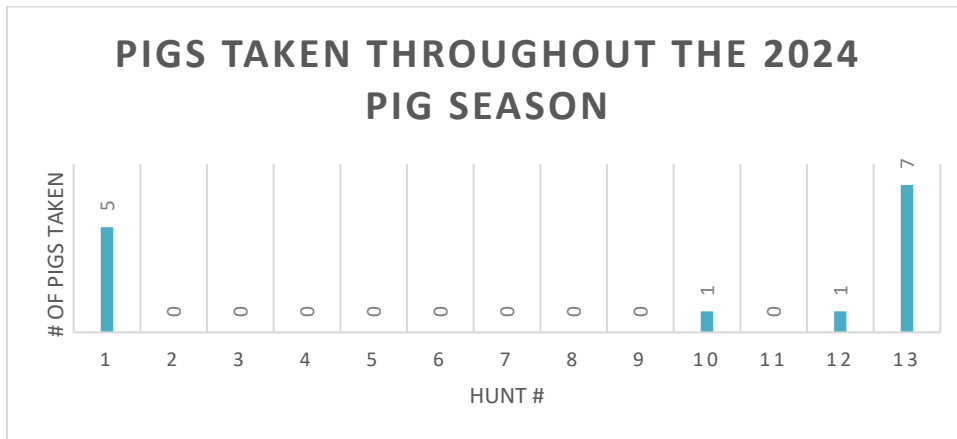


Fig. 2: Graph indicating the number of pigs harvested during each hunt of the 2024 Joice Island Pig Hunt. 12 out of the 14 pigs harvested that year were harvested during the first and last hunt of the season.

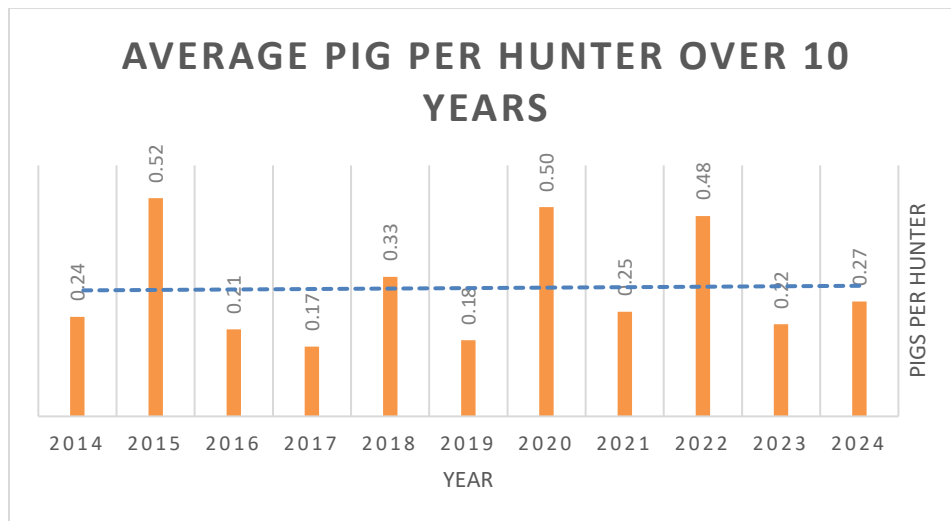


Fig. 3: Graph depicting the average number of pigs taken during the Joice Island Pig Hunt each season, over the past 10 years. It shows a constant trend line indicating the number of pigs per hunter has remained the same.

6. Department of Water Resources Report ~ Mr. Jamel Stewart presented the DWR Suisun Marsh briefing packet. For the month of February, the salinity standards for the Marsh were 8.0 mS/cm for eastern and western stations. The Progressive Daily Mean (PDM) salinities in the Marsh ranged from 0.2 – 4.4 mS/cm. Salinity monitoring station S-97 remained offline while Cygnus was at 2.3 mS/cm. At the end of February, net Delta outflow was 119,578 cfs. As of March 9th, salinities in the Marsh ranged from 0.2 - 3.4 mS/cm, and Delta outflow had decreased. Suisun Marsh salinity standards in March are 8.0 mS/cm for the eastern and western marsh stations.

Levee inspections were conducted for Roaring River Distribution System (RRDS), and USACE RGP3 authorization was obtained on February 18th for annual maintenance on RRDS, the Morrow Island Distribution System (MIDS), and Goodyear Slough Outfall (GYSO). The Suisun Marsh Salinity Control Gates are operating in tidal mode. Levee inspections were conducted at MIDS, and environmental staff assisted CDFW with February California Ridgway's rail surveys. At GYSO, environmental staff assisted CDFW with California Ridgway's Rail surveys, levee surveys were conducted, and a low dissolved oxygen (DO) level was investigated which was later determined to be unrelated to managed wetland or DWR operations. Russian thistle has become more prevalent in RRDS and MIDS. Discussion ensued.

California reservoir capacity in December ranged from 70-87% of average in the northern Sierra and 58-98% in the southern Sierra. For the new water year, precipitation year to date was 114% of average for the northern Sierra and 68% for the southern Sierra.

7. Suisun Resource Conservation District Reports ~

- a) 2015 Suisun Marsh Preservation Agreement ~ Mr. Chappell reported that there have been no changes in the 2015 Suisun Marsh Preservation Agreement. Mr. Chappell requested an SMPA Coordinator's Meeting, with all four signatory agencies of the SMPA participating to discuss the federal funding issue further. No meeting has been set. Yesterday was the quarterly Environmental Compliance Team meeting and all compliance tasks and reporting were on time. Discussion ensued.
- b) 2025 PAI Program Update ~ Mr. Chappell provided an update of the PAI programs. We have not received any applications to date, but the first application deadline for the 2025 PAI program is March 28th. Discussion ensued.
- c) Suisun Marsh Plan Update ~ There have been no changes with the Suisun Marsh Plan Implementation. Mr. Chappell reported that he will participate tomorrow in the monthly Principal's meetings. The Adaptive Management Advisory Team met on March 11th. The Applicant's Compliance Team meeting was held in late February. All required environmental reporting is current.
- d) USACE Permits ~ RGP3 and LOP updates. SRCD continues to administer the RGP 3 permit. A March RGP 3 package was submitted for approval. The draft Letter of Permission dredging permit remains under review. USFWS is working on the updated Biological Opinion with information on the Longfin Smelt. SRCD received the 401 water quality certification on March 10th with an effective date of 1 July 2025. The dredging volume surcharge has increased greatly to \$0.92 per yard, and the fee's now will be paid in arrears. We are investigating a different fee category for ecological enhancement, and the program in Suisun Marsh should be under that definition. We hope to see the final Permit issued this spring.
- e) Water Manager Program Update ~ Mr. Takekawa presented the Water Manager Program update. In February, the Water Managers continued working with landowners on RGP3 permits and PAI applications. Mr. Edmunds replaced the boards on the pressure-washer trailer and remounted the equipment. He installed boat motor and battery on the new gate monitoring hull. He worked on submitting USACE RGP3 permits for landowners and helped them with PAI applications. He completed a gate monitoring survey on March 10th.

Mr. Taylor submitted the February package to the USACE on March 1st with 15 applications, and he completed a gate monitoring survey and distributed a report on compliance for 3 surveys. He sent a letter to landowners on the 2025 dredging program, and he submitted a California Hazmat annual report on March 3rd. He organized a meeting with CWA and DFW to discuss 2025 RGP3 permitting, and he attended a water quality meeting to discuss a low dissolved oxygen event observed

in the spring monitoring dataset that was determined to be a system-wide fluctuation unrelated to landowner local management actions.

He also advised clubs on 2025 PAI projects and installed a pump for drainage on a club. On February 25th, he organized work on 3 tow pumps by Les Schwab. He oversaw delivery of gravel at the DFW yard to resurface the pump storage area. He also helped to collate a draft landowner questionnaire associated with the upcoming spring workshop and development of the next 5-year SRCD plan.

Ms. Guzman met with clubs and worked with 4 landowners to submit RGP3 permits. She assisted in preparing the new boat hull and drove it for gate monitoring and an inspection at the Wing's Landing levee. She completed the download of water logger data and storage on the network drive. She cleaned the office yard and pump area, and she refilled pumps. She attended an online survey meeting with Purdue University, and she worked on the newsletter draft.

Ms. Collins completed several budget and administration tasks. She assisted Audubon California in implementation for the Bird Returns project by attending weekly meetings and completing 7 of 18 planned site verification visits. She finished drafting the final report and lessons learned for the San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority essential fish screen project. She helped to organize the final team meeting of the Delta Stewardship Council's Phragmites Socioecological study on February 21st with the goal of drafting the final report draft by the end of March. She completed Geomark updates for the landowner's Individual Management Plans and worked on updates to submit to BCDC for 35 plans. She also distributed an announcement for the Spring Suisun Marsh Landowner Workshop that will be held on April 23rd at the Pete Smith Equipment warehouse.

Ms. Brandon worked on a revised analysis for the NFWF mouse project that would use a logistic regression model to examine habitat selection, and she drafted a new manuscript introduction. She inspected the levees at Tule Red and Wing's Landing Restoration sites.

On February 20th, Mr. Chappell and Mr. Takekawa met with the Central Valley Joint Venture to discuss the top concerns for Suisun Marsh. On February 26th, Mr. Takekawa attended the Delta National Heritage Area board meeting in Isleton. On March 4th, Mr. Chappell and Mr. Takekawa attended a meeting at UC Davis to discuss upcoming work and a proposal on the importance of fish food production in managed wetlands.

- f) Lower Joice Island Update ~ Mr. Takekawa provided the Lower Joice Island update. Mr. Mouton continued to maintain the facilities and habitats on the island. On February 25th, Mr. Chappell and Mr. Takekawa met Mr. Mouton and club president

Mr. Phil Green to conduct the clubhouse end-of-season walkthrough and checkout. Mr. Mouton fixed a broken driver's door hinge on the Tahoe, and he replaced the trailer boards in an ATV trailer. He replaced 2 bad GFI outlets on the main dock and installed 2 security cameras facing Montezuma Slough. He installed new light fixtures in the clubhouse dining room, and he added a valve and showerhead to stop leakage in the clubhouse shower. He installed water to a new sink on the back porch of the clubhouse. He worked with a vendor to service the generator and repair the automatic start for the solar system. He conducted maintenance on the UTV and finished bucking up the eucalyptus that had fallen in the yard. He also provided transportation for a USGS crew to read sediment erosion tables that were installed as part of the blue carbon project.

- g) Summary of Past & Future Meetings, Tours, and Presentations ~ Mr. Chappell reported on meetings. The next board meeting will include an update of the annual Individual Management Plans. There will be a resolution for Ms. Kelli Perez to recognize her upcoming retirement this summer with a presentation at the spring landowner workshop on April 23rd. The 5-year Strategic Plan update is underway, and we will be updating the questionnaire for the landowners. We are asking the Directors and Associate Directors for comments. 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 Director's Committee ~ No report.

- 9. **Meeting Adjournment** ~ A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Mr. Vanderkous seconded by Mr. Lewis; all were in favor and the motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 2:54 PM.