

MINUTES

SUISUN RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S MEETING

HELD ON WEDNESDAY, APRIL 13, 2022, AT 2:00 PM
SOLANO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISOR'S CHAMBERS
675 TEXAS STREET, FAIRFIELD, CA 94533

DIRECTORS PRESENT: Mike Lewis
Jim Waters

OTHERS PRESENT: Laureen Barthman-Thompson, DFW
Steven Chappell, SRCD
Tim Edmunds, SRCD
Melissa Riley, DFW
Orlando Rocha, DFW
Jamel Stewart, DWR
John Takekawa, SRCD
Jeff Taylor, SRCD

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

2. Public Comments ~ There were no public comments.

3. Open Session ~ Mr. Waters opened the April 13, 2022, Board of Directors meeting, noting we did not have a quorum of SRCD Board Members, so any action items on today's agenda, would be moved to the May 11, 2022 Board Meeting, for Board consideration.

a) Approval of the March 9, 2022 Board Meeting Minutes ~ Lacking a quorum of SRCD Board Members, the approval of the minutes from the March 9, 2022 Board meeting was postponed until the May 11th Board meeting.

4. Financial Reports ~

a) Approval of Vendor Claims for March 2022 ~ Lacking a quorum of SRCD Board Members, the consideration of the March 2022 General Fund vendor claims was postponed until the May 11th Board meeting.

b) Board Consideration: Disposal of a Fixed Asset~ Kioti Tractor #K2403, SN# 823500115 ~ Lacking a quorum of SRCD Board Members, the consideration of the disposal of the Kioti Tractor from Lower Joice Island was postponed until the May 11th Board meeting.

5. Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) Report ~ The DFW report was provided by Mr. Orlando Rocha.

Joice Island Pig Hunt: Wild pig hunts have continued on Joice Island. Since the last Board meeting, we've had 19 hunters, 7 of them were successful, with a total of 10 pigs harvested over the last month, bringing our total to 13. Hunters have reported seeing a lot of pigs during their hunt, so we are optimistic for the remaining 28 hunters.

Wildlife Area: DFW continues drawdown process across the Wildlife Area prioritizing areas with upcoming projects. We've run multiple leach cycles in the Crescent Units and plan to drain them later this month. As we finish up discing in the 14 fields, we concluded the first phase of our pollinator and upland enhancement project. Moving forward, we'll be targeting perennial pepperweed in preparation for planting in the fall. With the help of CWA, DFW successfully completed 2 burns this spring targeting *Phragmites* in Ponds 19 and 21. General mowing, discing, and maintenance across the Wildlife Area continues, and we will begin ramping up our spraying efforts in the upcoming weeks.

Elk: In coordination with Region 4 unit biologists, our crew was recently successful in capturing and translocating 6 additional elk from the San Luis National Wildlife Refuge.

With this last group of animals, we finished relocation efforts, totaling 20 individuals. The 20 animals were captured in 8 capture events with no major injuries or complications. Some of these new animals have moved off the Wildlife Area and on to private property in the Marsh. Discussion ensued.

6. Department of Water Resources Report ~ Mr. Stewart provided the DWR Suisun Marsh briefing packet. Stating for the month of March, the salinity standard was 8.0 mS/cm for eastern stations and 15.6 mS/cm for western stations. The Progressive Daily Mean (PDM) Salinities in the Marsh ranged from 2.4 to 9.8 mS/cm. At the end of March, net Delta outflow was 9,538 cfs. The April 10th salinities ranged from 4.0 to 11.1 mS/cm. Delta outflow was 5,609 cfs, and April salinity standards are 11.0 mS/cm for eastern stations and 14.0 mS/cm for western stations. The Belden's Landing salinity monitoring station remained under construction and is now remotely reporting salinity readings, but the tide stage heights are not accurate. Based on the year being a critical year and values exceeded control station S-35 Drought Response trigger values for February and March, the SMPA Drought Response Fund has been triggered for this water year.

The Roaring River Distribution System (RRDS) maintenance activity plans for 2022 are ongoing including ditch clearing and dredging and at the Hammond Pond intake pond for 2023-2025. Levees are being monitored after high tides. Morrow Island Distribution System (MIDS) routine maintenance planning for 2022 is ongoing. Levee monitoring continues after high tides. Goodyear Slough Outfall (GYSO) operations continued by removing debris at the intake as needed. Planning for 2022 routine maintenance is ongoing. Levees continued to be monitored after high tides. The Suisun Marsh Salinity Control Gates (SMSCG) have been in tidal mode since April 7th, and one gate is out for refurbishment. The gate operations were initiated based on the station readings.

California reservoir capacity ranged from 32-69% in the northern Sierra and in the southern Sierra 29-70%. All reservoirs are below historical averages. Precipitation year to date was 72% of normal in the northern Sierra and 64% 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. Bi-monthly calls continue with DWR Branch Chief, Mr. Dean Messer including updates on monthly payment of SRCD expenses, which are currently up to date. Last week, Mr. Chappell drafted a comment letter about the reconsideration of existing Biological Opinions letter for the State and Federal water projects diversions and potential impacts on the Suisun Marsh must be considered. The 5-year review of the 2015 SMPA is progressing with discussion of removal of some of the existing salinity monitoring stations (requiring an amendment to the agreement). Mr. Chappell believes the SMPA Drought

Response Program funding may be inadequate and may need to be increased to reflect the area of the Marsh impacted by increased salinities and areas on Suisun Slough being excluded (east of Suisun Slough). Under the PAI fund, there is a fund for the 75/25 and 50/50, and a separate fund for the Joint Use Facility. The 75/25 and 50/50 fund is being depleted much more quickly than the Joint Use Fund. Mr. Chappell may suggest amending the agreement to combine the funding into a single fund. Also, biological monitoring component for wintering waterfowl monitoring has not been implemented for many years. SRCD believes GPS marking of waterfowl can serve as a surrogate to bird counting and provide valuable information on waterfowl habitat selection in the Marsh. SRCD prepared and submitted the requested for the second-year payment of the Drought Response Funds for 2022.

- b) 2022 PAI Program Update ~ Mr. Chappell provided a summary of the 2022 PAI Program. The program was announced on February 1st with submittal deadlines on March 31st and June 30th. SRCD had 22 landowner proposals submitted for consideration, with total project costs of about \$834K with a need for \$609K in PAI cost share funding. The technical review panel met on April 11th, and all 22 projects were reviewed with a report about funding by early next week.
- c) Suisun Marsh Plan Update ~ There have been no changes with the Suisun Marsh Plan Implementation. There is a SMP Principal's meeting on April 14th and the tidal marsh restoration acreage is continuing to be calculated for the annual report.
- d) USACE Permits – RGP 3 & LOP Permit Update ~ SRCD continued to administer the 2022 RGP #3 permit. The monthly USACE approvals have been very rapid this year. The 2022 dredging permit application was sent to landowners with an application deadline in mid-May. A few dredging applications have been received, SRCD continues to work on drafting the RGP 3 permit renewal applications and hope to have it submitted in Mid-May.
- e) Water Manager Program Update ~ Mr. Takekawa provided the Lower Joice Island update. Mr. Taylor sent the RGP #3 work request approvals for February to landowners on March 15th, and he submitted the March package on April 4th. The March maintenance package were approved on April 12th, and he also sent exterior reports to the agencies. Mr. Taylor prepared the first draft to renew the 5-year RGP #3. He also organized servicing of fire extinguishers for the facilities and vehicles. Mr. Taylor also downloaded and processed water quality data from Montezuma Slough.

The Water Managers and Jason completed gate monitoring on March 14th and 28th and April 13th. The Delta Watermaster reported that there were about 40 outstanding Suisun Marsh diversions, which had not reported. Water Managers are contacting

these landowners to get these reports filed. Pump installations continued in March for several clubs to perform leach cycles. Mr. Edmunds worked with Intake Screens in mid-March to update brush cleaning equipment on 5 solar fish screens. Mr. Hagani completed the final draft of the fish screen project sign that will be posted along Grizzly Island Road. The plan is to complete most initial solar fish screen work in April but extend the project through the end of the calendar year to use remaining funds for added improvements in the summer and completing the final report.

On March 10th, we completed our second staff triannual review with Mr. Mike Lewis in attendance. On March 14th, repairs to the boom truck were completed, by installation of a new power takeoff cable. On March 14th and April 11th, Jason and I led coordination calls for the NFWF salt marsh harvest mouse project. Jason worked on LiDAR data to analyze vegetation structure in habitat use. On March 15th, I attended a DWR call on public access support for Solano County Parks at Belden's Landing, and on March 17th, Mr. Chappell, Ms. Collins, and Mr. Takekawa attended the BCDC Commission meeting where they certified the update of the Individual Ownership Adaptive Habitat Management Plans. Ms. Collins and Mr. McKinney worked on printing of the IMPs to distribute at the Spring Landowner Workshop on April 20th, and all staff assisted with preparations for the workshop.

Ms. Collins worked on a DWR Mein's Landing Interim Management Plan by collating notes from the habitat advisory team. She also continued to work on administrative tasks including grant hours tracking, DFW quarterly reporting and DWR monthly reports, quarterly grant billing and business card vendor claims. From March 11-16 and on April 4th, Ms. Collins, Mr. Hagani, and Mr. Takekawa assisted Dr. Adrienne Ernst from Utah State along with investigators and students from Santa Clara and Chapman University to conduct the plantings for the Phragmites revegetation fieldwork. Mr. Hagani continued to analyze historic imagery of Phragmites to examine rates of spread.

On March 21st, Mr. Taylor and Mr. Takekawa worked with Ms. Diana Samuel from Solano County Parks to install two new signs and a new sign kiosk at Belden's Landing. On March 30th, I attended a meeting of the Suisun Marsh Native Fish Working Group to discuss zooplankton production and sampling in managed wetlands, and I attended 3 Purdue University postdoctoral candidate interviews for the Phragmites socioecological study. An offer was made and accepted by a candidate finishing her doctorate from the University of Wisconsin.

At the end of March, the Water Managers assisted landowners in submitting 22 proposals for PAI projects. The projects were reviewed by the technical panel on April 11th, and the results will be presented to BOR and DWR for their approval. On April 6th, I attended a fieldtrip to discuss erosion along the Wings Landing Tidal

Restoration Project levee with Walnut Creek Gun Club. The meeting with DWR, the Western Lands Group, and Walnut Creek was productive and resulted in an approach to improve the levee with our assistance.

- f) Lower Joice Island Update ~ Mr. Takekawa provided the Lower Joice Island update. Mr. Mouton continued to manage the habitat and maintain the facilities on the island. He has mowed the levees twice, conducted preventative maintenance on 3 small engines, and filled and equalized the solar system batteries. He assisted with transport and logistics for fieldwork for two projects – Phragmites revegetation work and blue carbon sampling studies. We have had the mechanic out two more times in March to repair problems with the control unit and wiring on the John Deere bulldozer damaged by rats and salt corrosion.

Water levels were lowered to accommodate fieldwork in advance of our marsh management burn. On March 16th, Mr. Hagani assisted Dr. Adrienne Ernst in completing planting for the Phragmites revegetation fieldwork. On March 18th, USGS completed plot elevations for the blue carbon study, which Ms. Collins processed to obtain final elevation data, and they set plots and sampled gases on March 22-23. On March 24th, we initiated a marsh burn on two areas of about 25 acres in the North Unit of the island with assistance from USGS staff. The weather was excellent as we followed the advice from BAAQMD meteorology on the best day to burn, and the burn was conducted successfully. Immediately following the burn, Mr. Mouton added water to initiate a second leach cycle. The water will be drained early next week for Phragmites fieldwork.

On March 28th, Mr. Chappell and Mr. Takekawa worked with Mr. Mouton to successfully repair the fish screen flap-gate and repaired 3 other flap-gates on Montezuma Slough. On March 31st and April 8th, Mr. Takekawa attended coordination meetings for the Lower Joice Island blue carbon project. At the end of March, Mr. Takekawa submitted diversion reports for Lower Joice Island intakes. On April 4th, he submitted a BCDC administrative permit application for the pilot beneficial sediment reuse project to obtain Valero maintenance dredging material in the summer to reinforce island levees. The remainder of the sediment will be used by the Joice Island Wildlife Area on their levees.

- g) Suisun Conservation Fund ~ Annual Fiscal Report: Mr. Chappell reported that this was an Agenda Item from the April Board Meeting and there was no report.
- h) Summary of Past & Future Meetings, Tours, and Presentations ~ Mr. Chappell reported he had a March meeting and fieldtrip with a deputy (Nina Hawk) of the Metropolitan Water District. Mr. Chappell attended the next SF Bay Restoration Authority meeting on March 18th and the Delta Conservancy Board meeting on

March 23rd. The spring landowner workshop will be held next Wednesday, April 20th.

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 ~ Mr. Chappell reported that the fiscal year 2020/21 audit has started with auditors in the office from Monday-Wednesday.

e) Associate Directors Committee ~ No report.

9. Closed Session ~ 1) Real Property Negotiations: Property Lower Joice Island in unincorporated Solano County. District negotiators: Steven Chappell. The closed session was postponed, lacking a quorum of SRCD Board Members, until the May 11th Board meeting.

10. Reconvene ~ Report of action from Closed Session (if applicable). There was no report, since the closed session was postponed.

11. Adjourn ~ A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Mr. Lewis and seconded by Mr. Waters; all were in favor and the motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 3:03 PM.