

MINUTES

SUISUN RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S MEETING

HELD ON WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2022, AT 2:00 PM
SOLANO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISOR'S CHAMBERS
675 TEXAS STREET
FAIRFIELD, CA 94533

DIRECTORS PRESENT: **Tony Vaccarella**
Terry Connolly
Mike Lewis
Jim Waters

OTHERS PRESENT: Laureen Barthman-Thompson, DFW
Dennis Becker, SRCD Assoc. Dir.
Steven Chappell, SRCD
Kelli Perez, SRCD
Jamel Stewart, DWR
John Takekawa, SRCD

1. Call to Order ~ Mr. Vaccarella called the Suisun Resource Conservation District Board of Directors meeting to order at 2:06 PM.

2. Public Comments ~ There were no public comments.

3. Open Session ~ Mr. Vaccarella opened the February 9, 2022, Board of Directors meeting and asked for consideration of agenda Item 3a.

a) Approval of the January 12, 2022 Board Meeting Minutes ~ A motion to approve the minutes from the January 12, 2022 Board meeting was made by Mr. Waters and seconded by Mr. Connolly; all were in favor and the motion carried.

4. Financial Reports ~

a) Approval of Vendor Claims for January 2022 ~ Mr. Chappell reported the January 2022 General Fund vendor claims totaled \$174,189.69. These claims included normal operational expenses with Claims 70-74 for landowner reimbursements for the PAI Program and Claims 80, 81 and 84 were for SRCD vehicle maintenance. Mr. Chappell also reported that the January 2022 Lower Joice Island vendor claims totaled \$7,402.83. All expenses were normal operational expenses at the Island. Mr. Chappell reported the January 2022 Water Managers Program vendor claims totaled \$24,189.07. These were all normal operational expenses. Finally, Mr. Chappell reported the January 2022 Special Revenue claims totaled \$2,399.87 for portable pump repairs. Mr. Connolly moved to approve the vendor claim summaries as presented, Mr. Waters seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion carried.

5. Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) Report ~ The DFW report was provided by Ms. Lauren Barthman-Thompson.

Joice Island Pig Hunt: Pig hunt applications are due February 14th by 4:00PM. Applications are being taken online again this year. GIWA was able to increase the number hunts for this season to 52 hunters, and the pig hunts will now run from the first weekend in March until the last weekend in May. Last year, there were 32 hunters, this year they will draw 52 hunters. The free applications for wild pig hunts are a hot commodity and at this point DFW has received over 1,000 online applications from all parts of the state. With plenty of time left before the deadline and the rate that people are applying, DFW is expecting around 1,500 applications for 52 opportunities.

Wildlife Area: The crew is busy servicing all equipment and beginning to do some vegetation management since the weather has been so nice. DFW will be continuing with our phragmites control project, plan to conduct spring burns, and continue with mowing dead stands. Spraying of new phragmites areas will continue this year. DFW has many projects planned for this season, and several grant applications being submitted for future work. The major projects we have for this season will be the continued enhancement of Pond 12, the Field 13 native grass project which includes pollinator plantings, and the Field 14 native grass project. This will be the start of a multi-year project to enhance 300 acres of upland ground, both the Field 13 and 14 projects are in response to the fire that we had in 2019 which left about half of our upland fields damaged. Slowly we are gaining ground on big ticket items around the wildlife area.

Ducks:

JUNIOR HUNT WEEKEND COMPARISON

Date	# OF JR. HUNTERS	# OF DUCKS	WATERFOWL AVERAGE	#1 Species	#2 Species
2021-2022					
2/5	13	14	1.08	AMWI	NOPI
2/6	10	16	1.60	NSHO	AMWI
2020-2021					
2/6	7	26	3.71	AGWT	AMWI
2/7	2	2	1.0	NSHO	-

2020-2021

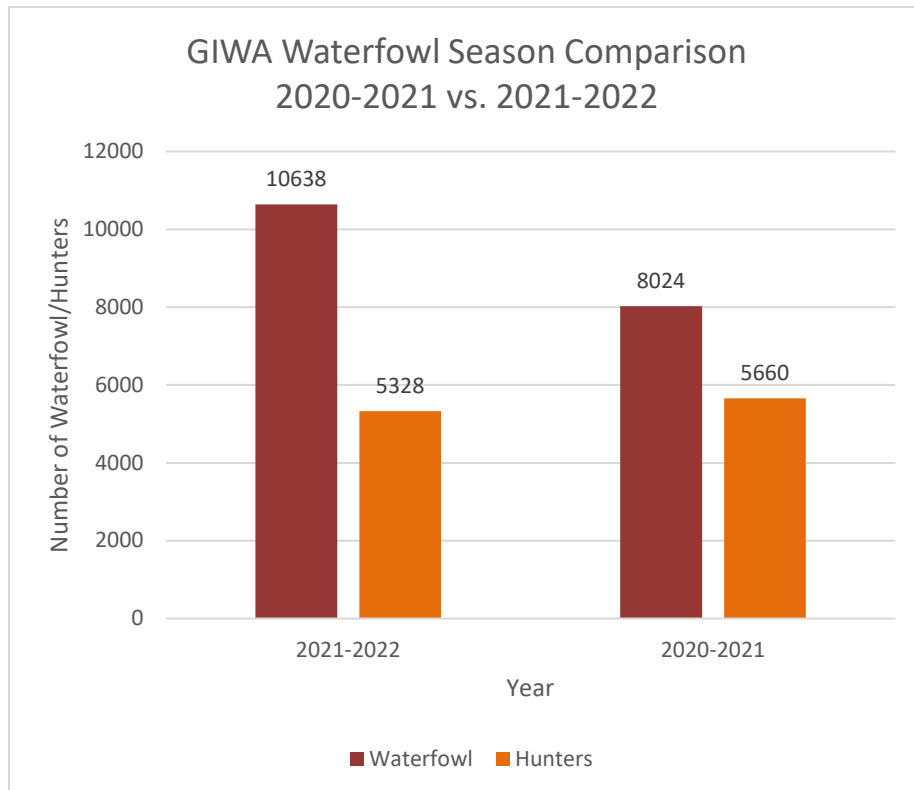
--Other Numbers--

Total Pheasants: 32 (wild), 57 (planted)

Total Pheasant hunters: 98 (0 juniors)

Total Adult Hunters: 5401 (242 juniors)

Average Ducks (without geese & coots): 1.39



2021-2022

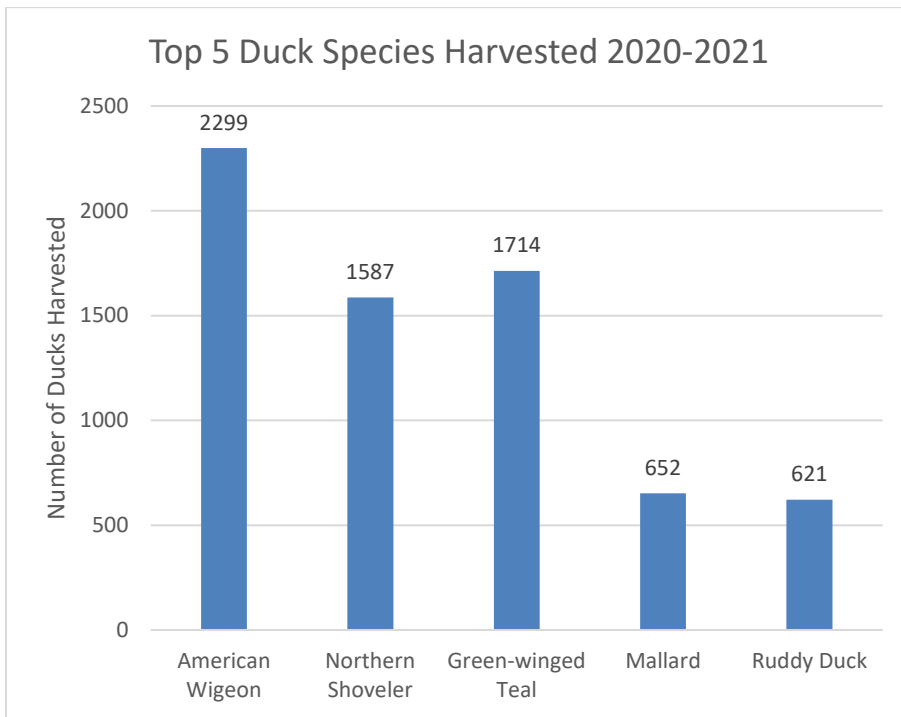
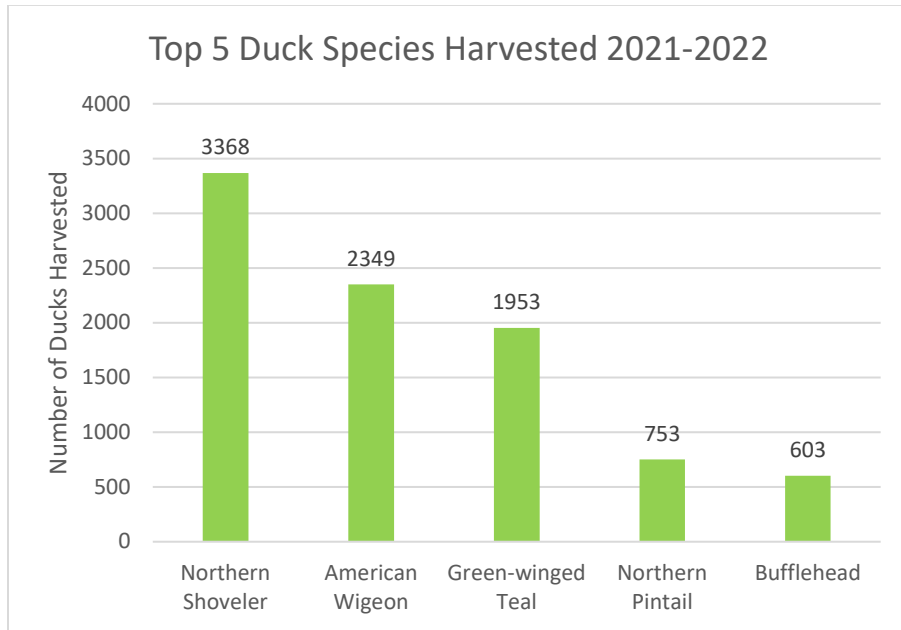
--Other Numbers--

Total Pheasants: 13 (wild), 52 (planted)

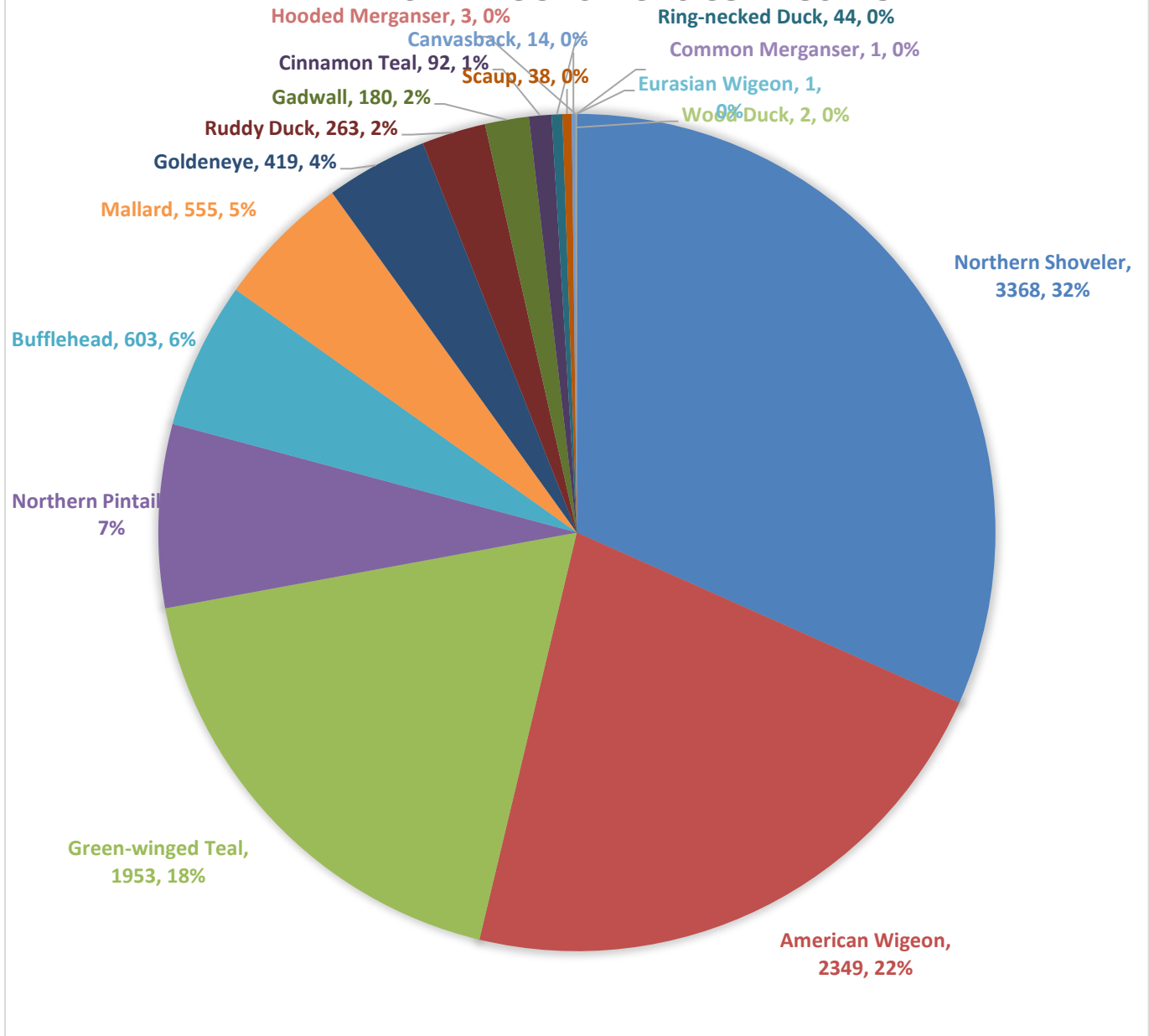
Total Pheasant hunters: 57 (1 juniors)

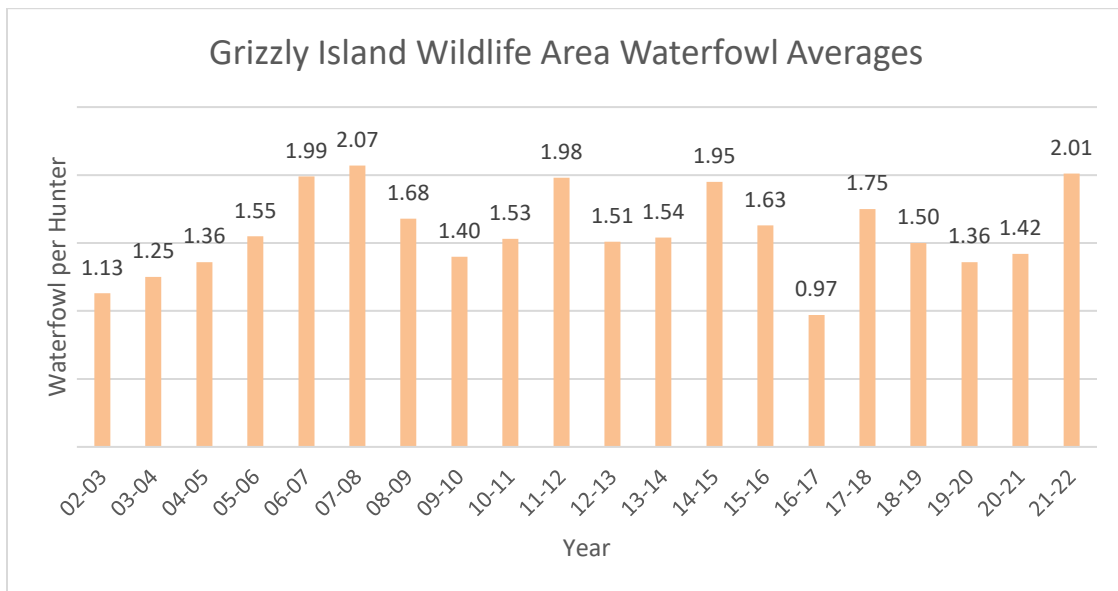
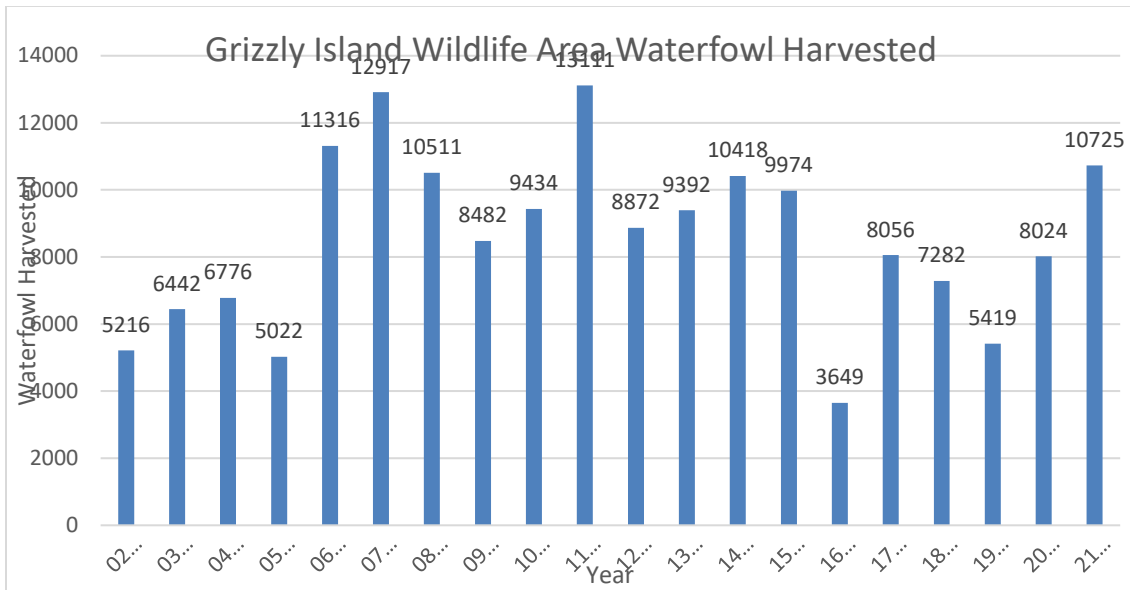
Total Adult Hunters: 5199 (209 juniors)

Average Ducks (without geese & coots): 2.0



HARVESTED DUCK SPECIES COMPOSITION





6. Department of Water Resources Report ~ Mr. Stewart provided the DWR Suisun Marsh briefing packet. For the month of January, the salinity standard is 12.5 mS/cm for eastern stations (8.0 mS/cm in February) and 15.6 mS/cm for western stations. The Progressive Daily Mean (PDM) Salinities in the Marsh ranged from 1.2 to 7.8 mS/cm and did not exceed the salinity standards. At the end of January net Delta outflow was 10,084 cfs. The February 6th salinities ranged from 1.6 to 10.2 mS/cm. Delta outflow was 11,614 cfs, and Belden's Landing salinity monitoring station remains under construction through this month and not collecting salinity readings.

The Roaring River Distribution System (RRDS) maintenance activity plans for 2022 are ongoing, as are plans for ditch clearing and dredging at the Hammond Pond intake pond for 2023-2025. Levees are being monitored after high tides. Planning for the routine maintenance for 2022 was ongoing. The RGP3 application was sent to SRCD at the end of January. Morrow Island Distribution System (MIDS) routine maintenance planning for 2022 is ongoing. Levee monitoring continues after high tides with monitoring for Russian thistle. The RGP3 work application for 2022 was sent to SRCD at the end of January.

Goodyear Slough Outfall (GYSO) coordination 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 2022 RGP3 work application was sent to SRCD at the end of January. The Suisun Marsh Salinity Control Gates (SMSCG) operation was started on November 29th and suspended on December 21st due to low salinity conditions. One gate is out for refurbishment.

A report was provided on invasive vegetation control efforts, including Russian Thistle, Phragmites, and Alligator Weed. A second report was provided on defining the Deficiency Period and the levels triggering or ending the event.

California reservoir capacity ranged from 31-66% in the northern Sierra and in the southern Sierra 27-74%. All reservoirs remained near or below historical averages. Precipitation year to date was 107% of normal in the northern Sierra and 94% 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. The DWR support contract is scheduled to expire 30 June 2022, DWR has agreed to process a no-cost time extension of this existing contract. The Principal's met on 13 January and will do so again on 10 February. On February 8th, Mr. Chappell attended the AMAT team meeting. The 5-year review of the SMPA is progressing, and the plan is to have a draft soon. Some possible proposed amendments may include removal of some existing salinity monitoring stations. Changes to the drought response program, due to changes in the climate has occurred since the time it was negotiated. The deficiency period has been triggered three times since 2015 and drought response twice. Funding may need to be increased to reflect the increased area of the Marsh from increased salinities and areas on Suisun Slough being excluded. Also, the

biological monitoring component for wintering waterfowl SMPA has not been implemented for many years. SRCD believes radio marking of waterfowl can serve as a surrogate to bird counting and provide alternative information. SRCD prepared the SMPA 2022/23 projected budget and requested the second-year payment of the drought funds.

- b) 2021 PAI Program Update ~ Mr. Chappell provided a summary of the 2022 PAI Program. SRCD staff met in mid-January to review the program. Two deadlines were added for proposal submittals early enough to allow for timely project review. DWR confirmed that they budgeted for the 2022 PAI program, and they reviewed the landowner notification and the grant package which was sent to the landowners on February 1.
- c) Suisun Marsh Plan Update ~ There have been no changes with the Suisun Marsh Plan Implementation. There is a SMP Principal's meeting in March and the annual tidal restoration compliance report is being prepared by DWR.
- d) USACE Permits – RGP 3 & LOP Permit Update ~ SRCD continued work on the 2022 RGP 3 permit administration. Mr. Taylor and Mr. Chappell had a call with Mr. Will Connor and the new USACE permit administrator, Mr. Jayme Ohlhaber. This season SRCD will be providing digital copies for monthly application administration, this will be a change to the RGP 3 renewal next year. The 2022 RGP 3 yearly application was sent to the landowners on January 13th including their permit fees. Letters were sent out for Ridgway Rail and Spring Salmon closure, spring burning, and 2022 LOP dredging.

Water Manager Program Update ~ Mr. Takekawa reported on the Water Manager Program. The Water Managers worked on the final 2021 USACE annual report which Mr. Taylor submitted. Mr. Taylor worked on repairs of the boom truck toolbox, and Mr. McKinney requested final Air Resource Board recertification. The Water Managers completed winter salmon gate monitoring and spring water quality data compilation. They initiated meetings with clubs, conducted inspections, and provided permitting assistance. They installed pumps at several clubs and requested service for one pump. On February 1st, we distributed a letter reviewed by DWR to implement and accept applications for the 2022 PAI Cost-share Program.

Mr. Chappell and Mr. Takekawa had several meetings to continue development of a work plan for a new DWR Fish Restoration Program contract. On January 18th, they attended a meeting of DWR restoration staff and Manager Chris Drake from Solano County Parks to discuss BCDC mandated Suisun Marsh Public Access funding for improvements at Belden's Landing. On January 21st, Mr. Takekawa met with Ms. Gina Darin and Ms. Madison Thomas to discuss assistance with Phragmites control for the

Blacklock Restoration Project. On February 1st, Mr. Chappell, Mr. Hagani, and Mr. Takekawa attended a fieldtrip with DWR, DFW, and Westervelt staff to discuss management needs at the Tule Red Tidal Restoration Site.

Mr. Takekawa worked with Ms. Collins and Mr. Hagani on the final report for the Essential Fish Screen Assessment Project. Mr. Hagani developed draft signage required by the program for posting along Grizzly Island Road. Mr. Edmunds worked on completing the final 2 solar system installations at 426 and 424. On February 4th, we learned that we unfortunately were unsuccessful with our Phase 2 proposal to obtain funding to renovate the remaining 13 essential fish screens. We hope to resubmit the proposal to different grants or to the annual Measure AA grants next year.

On January 19th, Mr. Takekawa met with USGS biologists to discuss a lesser scaup satellite tracking migration paper. On January 21st, Ms. Collins and Mr. Takekawa met with Mr. Randy Mager at DWR to initiate development of an interim plan and advisory committee for Mein's Landing. On January 24th, our Phragmites Control Study Team met to discuss ongoing work and analyses. Ms. Collins led our preparations for the revegetation project, working with Utah State on site prep for mid-February and planting in mid-March. The study team met with the Delta Stewardship Council to discuss progress on February 4th. On January 27th, Mr. Hagani and Mr. Takekawa met with Dr. Chris Potter of CASA2100 to discuss historic Phragmites remote sensing analyses. And on the same day we met with USGS to plan the blue carbon studies at Lower Joice Island. Mr. Hagani worked on a summary paper of our spray-drone work and completed a draft at the end of January.

On February 2nd, Ms. Collins attended a webinar for the DFW Prop 1 grant series due on March 4th. We are discussing possibly submitting a proposal if time allows. She continued work printing the final Individual Management Plan updates for all landowners. Ms. Collins also assisted Ms. Perez with several administrative tasks including time sheet updates, budgets, and auditor reviews.

On February 4th, Mr. McKinney finished the latest West Wind Newsletter and mailed it out with assistance of all staff. Mr. Takekawa had a call with USGS to discuss salt marsh harvest mouse sampling for contaminant analyses during the upcoming summer range wide survey. Also on February 4th, Mr. Chappell, Mr. Takekawa, Mr. Rocha from DFW, and Mr. John Lazarik from Valero spoke with BCDC to discuss permit requirements for a pilot project to examine beneficial reuse of dredge material from the Valero Benicia docks for levee maintenance at Lower and Upper Joice Islands this coming summer.

On February 5th, Mr. Hagani met with Dr. Katie Smith to work on salt marsh harvest mouse data and habitat analyses. He also prepared initial maps of wetland complexes

for site selection. On February 7th, we had our annual office holiday luncheon in Benicia, and a good time was had by all. This morning, Good Samaritan Electric finished light installation in our new storage shed and estimated the cost to move an overhead electrical line from our office to a sewage pump south of the garage.

e) Lower Joice Island Update ~ Mr. Takekawa provided the Lower Joice Island update. Mr. Mouton continued to maintain the facilities on the island and removed a load of trash for disposal. The solar system continued to have issues, and he filled the propane tanks 2 times during the late portion of duck season. Mr. Chappell acquired a used set of batteries for the interim which Mr. Mouton was able to install in the solar system at the end of January. We now hope to install a new bank of higher capacity lithium batteries to replace the lead-acid batteries in the system in the spring. Last week Mr. Andy Twiss came out to the island, and he and Mr. Mouton completed repairs and battery replacements on the 2005 Suzuki ATVs. These are exceeding their useful life, and maintenance costs are rising to keep them running. Also, fiberglass panels on the machine shed roof were damaged during a windstorm in January, so we will be discussing repairing or replacing them in the coming spring.

On January 31st, the regular season completed a good year of hunting. The club had 141 hunter days, and a total of 412 ducks were taken. There was an average of 4.8 hunters per shoot day, 13.7 ducks harvest per shoot day, and a 2.86 ducks per hunter-day average. The harvest included 162 spoonbills, 127 teal, 72 wigeon, 21 mallard, 13 gadwall, 9 sprig, and 8 divers. The harvest was lower than the 15-year average of 500 but the second highest over the past 5 years (241-544 ducks harvested annually) and 22% greater than last year (338 ducks). Following the end of the regular season, We expect a few hunters for the Veteran's hunt. Mr. Mouton has been assisting the club with post-season activities in removing their gear from the island for the summer.

g) Summary of Past & Future Meetings, Tours, and Presentations ~ Mr. Chappell reported on meetings including several with the DWR Fish Restoration Program. We attended the BCDC commissioner meeting and there were three comments. The hearing is continued to February 17th to allow public comment before a final vote on approval. The plans will be distributed to each duck club after that meeting approval. The SCF needs to make an official report to the Board, and that will happen at the next Board meeting by Mr. Doug Bartman. In addition, a spring SCF meeting will need to be set.

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. Connolly met with the SRCD staff this morning and discussed the detail of the indirect or overhead cost estimate. We accepted Fechter Accountancy as our auditor for the District's next audit of the financial statements, In-person fieldwork on the audit will be done in early April.
 - e) Associate Directors Committee ~ No report.
- 9. Adjourn** ~ A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Mr. Waters and seconded by Mr. Lewis; all were in favor and the motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 3:07 PM.