

## **MINUTES**

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

HELD ON WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2022 AT 2:00 PM  
SOLANO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISOR'S CHAMBERS  
675 TEXAS STREET  
FAIRFIELD, CA 94533

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

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Dennis Becker, SRCD Assoc. Director  
Steven Chappell, SRCD  
Tim Edmunds, SRCD  
John Eudy, SRCD Assoc. Director  
Marina Guzman, SRCD  
Nimal Jayasundara, DWR  
Orlando Rocha, DFW  
Jamel Stewart, DWR  
John Takekawa, SRCD  
John Telfer, SRCD Assoc. Director  
Vaish Tripuraneni, Purdue Univ.  
Dick Vanderkous, SRCD Assoc. Director  
Larry Wyckoff, DFW

**1. Call to Order** ~ Mr. Connolly 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. Connolly opened the December 14, 2022, Board of Directors meeting and asked for consideration of agenda Item 3a.

a) Approval of the November 9, 2022 Board Meeting Minutes ~ Mr. Connolly asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the November 9, 2022 Board meeting. A motion was made by Mr. Waters and seconded by Mr. Lewis; all were in favor and the motion carried.

b) Consider changing SRCD's MasterCard carrier ~ Mr. Chappell discussed the problems working with our current credit card vendor (Bank of America). The turnaround period for the invoice is very short. He presented the possibility to change to a new vendor (Wells Fargo) that is used by the County to allow for a direct wire transfer. He requested that a new account be allowed to be open before we terminate the old account. A motion was made by Mr. Connolly to approve the change, it was seconded by Mr. Waters; all were in favor and the motion carried.

**4. Financial Reports** ~

a) Approval of Vendor Claims for November 2022 ~ Mr. Chappell reported the November 2022 SRCD General Fund vendor claims totaled \$223,561.96. Most of these claims were normal SRCD operational expenses or claims which are grant reimbursements, such as, claims 57, 59, and 67 (fish screen grant, claim 61 was to UC Davis for SMHM genetics work, and claims 58 and 66 were for DWR Mein's Landing maintenance. Mr. Chappell also reported the November 2022 Lower Joice Island vendor claims totaled \$9,572.13. All expenses were normal LJI operational expenses including claim 28 for propane. Mr. Chappell reported the November 2022 Water Managers Program Department of the General Fund vendor claims totaled \$23,030.27. Claims were normal operational expenses. Mr. Connolly moved to approve the vendor claim summaries as presented, Mr. Waters seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion carried.

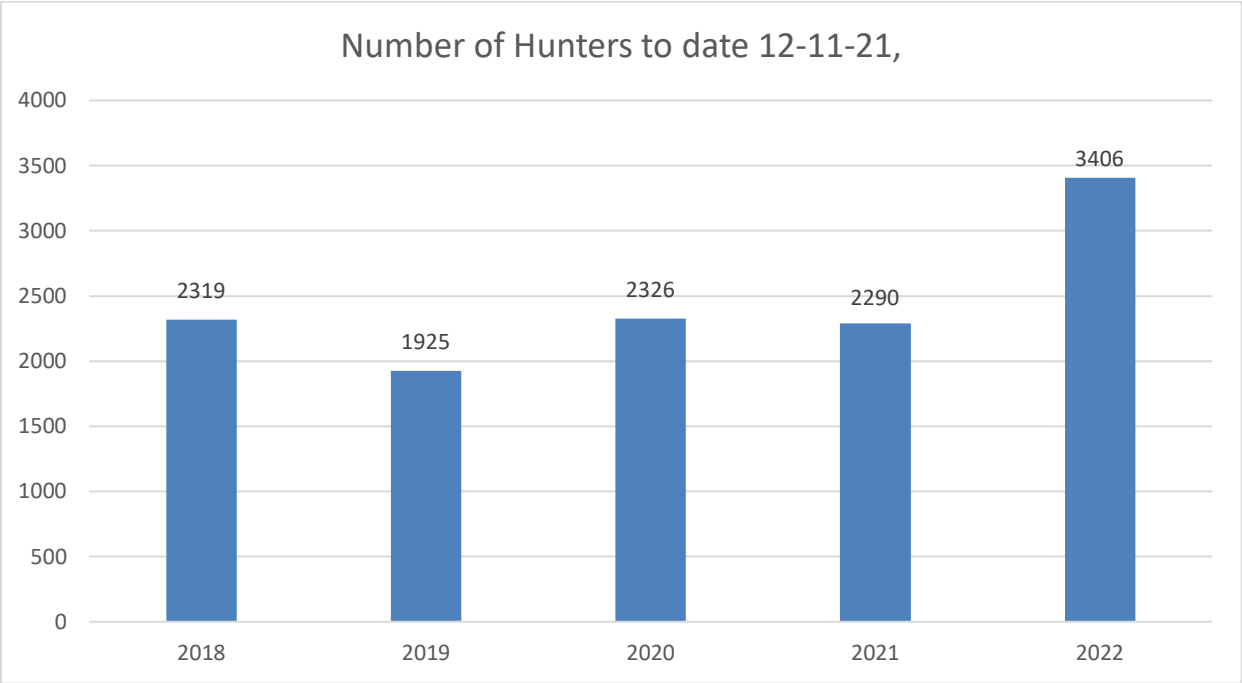
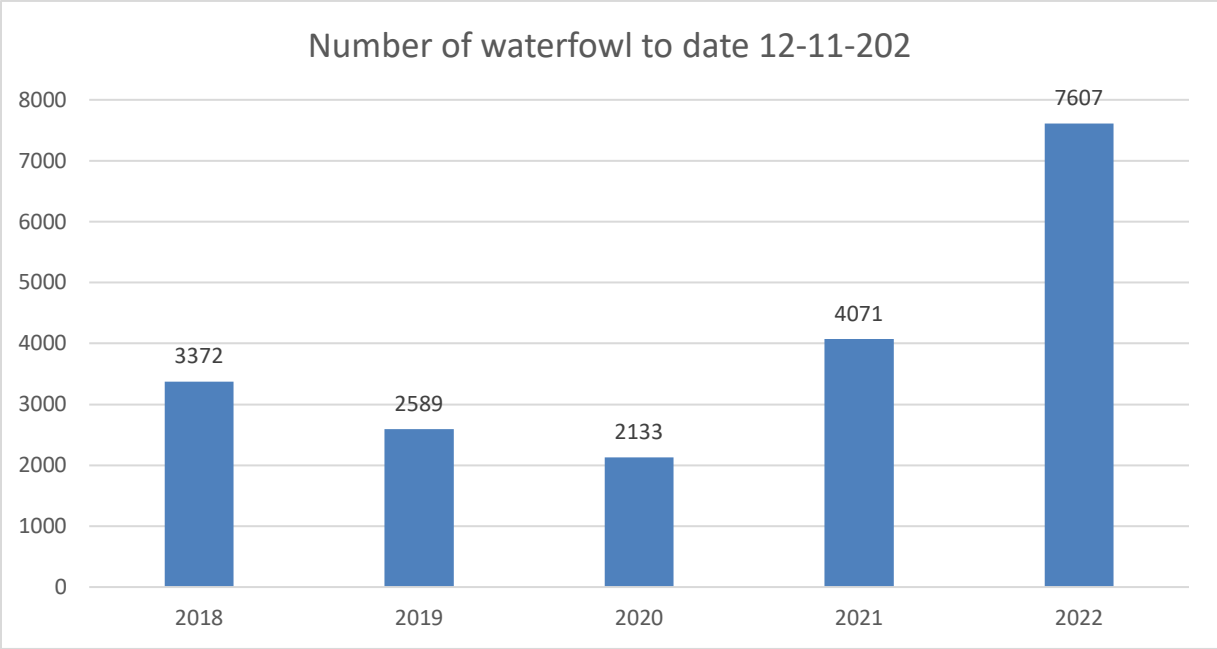
**5. Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) Report** ~ The DFW report was provided by Mr. Orlando Rocha. Mr. Rocha provided a waterfowl harvest comparison of the number of birds to date. There have been more hunters this year with 3,406 vs. 2,209 in 2021. The Marsh is shooting very well with 7,607 taken this year compared with 4,071 taken last year. The hunter average of 2.23 this year vs. 1.78 in 2021. Anything over 2 birds is pretty good. The top 5 species spoonbills (2,991), wigeon (1,766), green-winged teal (998), mallards (386), and pintail (317).

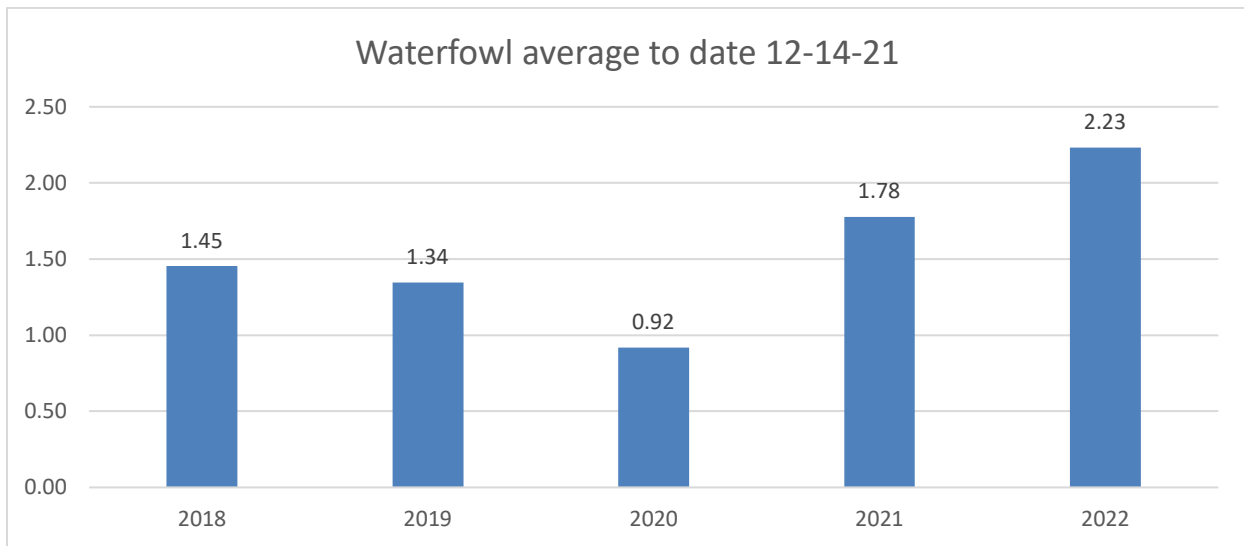
Date	# OF HUNTERS	# OF DUCKS	# OF GEESE	# OF WATERFOWL	AVERAGE DUCK	AVERAGE GEESE	#1 Species	#2 Species
12/7/2022	112	264	3	267	2.36	0.03	NSHO	AMWI
12/10/2022	185	583	4	587	3.15	0.02	NSHO	AGWT
12/11/2022	111	211	0	211	1.90	0.00	NSHO	AMWI
Stats to Date	3406	7575	32	7607	2.22	0.01	NSHO	AMWI
12/1/2021	82	207	7	214	2.52	0.09	NSHO	AMWI
12/4/2021	159	282	2	284	1.77	0.01	NSHO	AMWI
12/5/2021	73	103	1	103	1.41	0.01	NSHO	AMWI
Stats to Date	2290	4050	21	4071	1.77	0.01		
12/2/2020	86	50	3	53	0.58	0.03	AGWT	MALL
12/5/2020	127	96	3	99	0.76	0.02	MALL	AGWT
12/6/2020	83	67	0	67	0.81	0.00	LESC	MALL
Stats to Date	2326	2105	28	2133	0.90	0.01		
12/4/2019	58	122	4	126	2.10	0.07	AMWI	NSHO
12/7/2019	93	242	0	242	2.60	0.00	AMWI	GOLD
12/8/2019	80	95	1	96	1.19	0.01	AMWI	GOLD
Stats to Date	1925	2552	37	2589	1.33	0.02		
12/5/2018	95	207	0	207	2.18	0.00	AMWI	MALL
12/8/2018	281	281	0	281	1.00	0.00	AGWT	AMWI
12/9/2018	132	132	7	139	1.00	0.05	MALL	NSHO
Stats to Date	2,319	3351	21	3372	1.45	0.01		

### Top 5 Birds

2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
1. 880 NSHO	1. 950 NSHO	1. 606 NSHO	1. 1466 NSHO	1. 2991 NSHO
2. 784 MALL	2. 569 MALL	2. 422 MALL	2. 1120 AGWT	2. 1766 AMWI
3. 741 AGWT	3. 329 AGWT	3. 395 AGWT	3. 464 AMWI	3. 998 AGWT
4. 175 NOPI	4. 231 GOLD	4. 200 AMWI	4. 334 MALL	4. 386 MALL
5. 136 GADW	5. 188 AMWI	5. 99 GOLD	5. 177 NOPI	5. 317 NOPI

NSHO – Northern Shoveler, AMWI – American Wigeon, AGWT – Green-winged Teal, MALL – Mallard, NOPI – Northern Pintail, GADW- Gadwall, GOLD – Goldeneye





Joice Island: DFW had 2 hunt days on Joice Island so far as it opened in December. Joice was always known as a mallard hot spot, but that is no longer the case. Our hunters have adapted and are still having great success on more typical Suisun Marsh species. On the opener we had 24 adult hunters and 1 junior hunter, and they shot 54 ducks for a 2.16 bird per hunter average with NSHO and MALL being the top two species. For the second hunt day, we had 12 adult and 1 junior hunter, and they shot 47 ducks for 3.62 bird per hunter average with AMWI and NSHO being the top two species.

Pheasants: Like most areas in the state, wild bird harvest continues to be poor. To date, our Grizzly hunters have harvested 13 wild birds, one more than last year at this time, and 48 planted birds have been taken as well. Interesting, we have had our hunters report 34 snipe taken. In 2021: 12 wild birds and 56 planted birds had been taken to this point. In 2020, 26 wild birds and 53 planted birds had been taken up to this point of the season. In 2019, 56 wild birds and 96 planted birds were harvested to this point in the season. DFW is moving forward with major upland field improvements, the goal is to improve these numbers by providing better nest cover and food availability. We were able to successfully have two planted bird pheasant hunts on the 19th of November, junior only in the morning and a family hunt in the afternoon. Both hunts were safe and fun for our participants, and a few birds were taken by participants.

Wildlife Area: This time of year, most of our staff time is spent operating the hunter check station, the remaining time is spent checking water, picking up trash and reposting areas with signs, along with end of the year permit reporting.

**6. Department of Water Resources Report** ~ Mr. Jamel Stewart provided the DWR Suisun Marsh briefing packet. For the month of November, the salinity standards were 15.5 mS/cm for the eastern stations and 16.5 mS/cm for the western stations. The

Progressive Daily Mean (PDM) salinities in the Marsh ranged from 10.3 to 20.6 mS/cm. At the end of November, net Delta outflow was 5,626 cfs. As of December 11<sup>th</sup> salinities ranged from 9.4 to 18.3 mS/cm with a salinity standard of 15.5 (east) to 15.6 mS/cm (west). Delta outflow was 13,409 cfs.

The Roaring River Distribution System routine maintenance was completed on December 5<sup>th</sup>. Morrow Island Distribution System maintenance was delayed with the Morrow Lane Bridge repairs. Levee monitoring continues after high tides and rain events. Planning is continuing for MIDS ditch clearing in 2023. Goodyear Slough Outfall operations continued with removing debris at the intake and routine maintenance including mowing and grading levee roads. Dredging sediment from the intakes and ditch clearing is planned for 2023. Levees continued to be monitored after high tides and rain events. The Suisun Marsh Salinity Control Gates tidal operations have been ongoing due to high salinity conditions, and Gate 1 is out for refurbishment. The S-97 salinity station exceeded the drought trigger value of 20.0 mS/cm at the end of October, but there is no trigger value for November. Kramer Fish Sciences is conducting survey work from their research vessel at Mein's Landing associated with flooding to reduce Russian Thistle.

California reservoir capacity ranged from 24-61% in the northern Sierra and in the southern Sierra 16-62%. All reservoirs are below historical averages. Precipitation year to date was 102% of normal in the northern Sierra and 118% in the southern Sierra.

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

Mr. Chappell introduced three Suisun Marsh landowners who are new SRCD Associate Directors, Mr. John Telfer, Mr. Dick Vanderkous, and Mr. John Eudy. Mr. Dennis Becker was also acknowledged as an Associate Director. Mr. Chappell also stated that Mr. Larry Wyckoff with DFW announced his retirement.

- 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 contract expenses. The quarterly environmental compliance meeting was held Dec. 13<sup>th</sup>. The 5-year review of the SMPA is progressing with regular meetings, the last on December 13<sup>th</sup>. A draft for review should be ready by the end of the year.
- b) 2022 PAI Program Update ~ Mr. Chappell provided an update for the 2022 PAI Program. Most of the completed projects have submitted invoices and receipts for reimbursement. Post-construction inspections are finished by the Water Managers, and three bills have been submitted DWR.

- c) Suisun Marsh Plan Update ~ There have been no changes with the Suisun Marsh Plan Implementation. We are on task for the plan. There was a principal's meeting on 10 November.
- d) USACE Permits – RGP 3 & LOP Permit Update ~ SRCD continued to administer the 2022 RGP 3 permit. We are awaiting the renewal of the USACE permit hopefully around the first of the new year before it expires the end of February 2023. The RWQCB submitted a draft 401 certification for SRCD review. SRCD requested BCDC staff complete the consistency determination this week. WE are hopeful there will be a new permit early in January. 2022 actual work completed reports are being collected from landowners to prepare the annual compliance reports. Dredging continued through the end of November under the Letter of Permission. DFW and a few clubs conducted dredging and will be reporting in December.
- e) Water Manager (WM) Program Update ~ Mr. Takekawa provided the Water Manager program update. The Water Managers continued work on obtaining end of year reports from their landowners for managed wetland maintenance and dredging reports for the Army Corps of Engineers, BCDC, USFWS, DFW and NOAA Fisheries. Mr. Taylor is working on the DFW incidental take permit and water quality monitoring reporting. Gate checks were conducted on November 29<sup>th</sup> and December 12<sup>th</sup> with good compliance. Mr. Edmunds completed his continuing education training for Department of Pesticide Regulation certification and finished installations on 3 fish screen solar systems. The Water Managers also moved and covered the pumps to prepare regular winter maintenance.

Mr. Hagani finished cleaning mouse eDNA stations and completed a draft Phragmites remote sensing paper. He conducted the November inspection of the Tule Red levee, and he completed the initial draft of the final report for Phase 1 of the essential fish screen project. He assisted Mr. Edmunds in surveying elevations for a water logger at Mein's Landing. Ms. Collins helped to prepare and distribute the fun shoot donation letters to contributors to the Suisun Conservation Fund. She also began work with the Water Managers on the annual updates of the Individual Management Plans including entry in Geomارش and conversion of the IMP maps with Mr. Hagani from ArcMap to ArcPro.

On November 10<sup>th</sup>, Mr. Chappell and Mr. Takekawa met with Brett Williams to discuss planning details for Phase 2 of the Essential Fish Screen rehabilitation project. On both November 10<sup>th</sup> and December 14<sup>th</sup>, Mr. Hagani and Mr. Takekawa met with the Mouse Range-wide Survey team and worked on preparing the final draft report for the Phase 1 funding grant of that project. Also, on November 10<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>, Mr. Takekawa met with the Central Valley Joint Venture subcommittee planning a waterfowl science workshop for the spring.

On November 14<sup>th</sup>, Mr. Hagani and Mr. Takekawa attended the Phragmites Socioecological Study team meeting, and on November 15<sup>th</sup>, Mr. Chappell and Mr. Takekawa met to coordinate with the DWR Fish Restoration Program team. On November 17<sup>th</sup>, we held our fall triannual staff meeting and review. After the meeting, Mr. Chappell and Mr. Takekawa attended a call with staff at Ducks Unlimited to discuss permitting for repairing the Grizzly Island Wildlife Area Grizzly Ditch fish screen. On November 18<sup>th</sup>, Mr. Takekawa spoke with Lisa Crowley at Valero to discuss the pilot sediment placement project at Lower Joice Island. Also on November 18<sup>th</sup>, Mr. Chappell, Ms. Collins, and Mr. Takekawa met with Dr. Vaish Tripuraneni from Purdue University to help her schedule in-person interviews with landowners discussing Phragmites control efforts in Suisun Marsh for her visit from November 28<sup>th</sup> through December 16<sup>th</sup>. On November 21<sup>st</sup>, Mr. Chappell and Mr. Takekawa attended Mr. Dan Smith's PhD exit seminar to listen to the results from his study of seed production of plants in Suisun Marsh.

On November 23<sup>rd</sup>, Mr. Edmunds and Mr. Takekawa met with Dr. Krista Hoffmann, pest weed coordinator at the Department of Fish and Wildlife to initiate development of a Suisun Marsh Russian Thistle treatment plan. On December 1<sup>st</sup>, Mr. Takekawa attended the Board meeting of the Delta National Heritage Area, and on December 6<sup>th</sup>, Mr. Chappell and Mr. Takekawa attended the drought interagency coordination meeting. On December 8<sup>th</sup>, SRCD hosted a gathering of biologists to celebrate the success of the range-wide mouse survey project team which we helped to lead.

- f) Lower Joice Island Update ~ Mr. Takekawa provided the Lower Joice Island update. Mr. Mouton continued to maintain the facilities and habitat on the island. For the November 9<sup>th</sup> through December 10<sup>th</sup> hunt, the total bag for 52 hunter days was 187 birds including 85 spoonbills, 74 teal, 12 wigeon, 6 mallards, 6 sprig, and 4 divers. For the period, the average was 3.6 birds/hunter day which is higher than the previous month's average of 2.6 birds per hunter day and the 2021 average of 1.9 birds/hunter day. On November 29<sup>th</sup>, Mr. Chappell, Mr. Taylor, and Mr. Takekawa worked with Mr. Mouton to prepare to dispose garbage on Lower Joice Island. We worked to tear down an old trailer near the barge slip and separated metal waste for recycling. We also hauled 2 non-working refrigerators and a freezer to Pierce Harbor, and Mr. Mouton and Mr. Takekawa disposed of them the next day at the landfill. The weather forecast included several days of rain, so we delayed rental of a dumpster to take away the garbage until later in the winter.
- g) Summary of Past & Future Meetings, Tours, and Presentations ~ Mr. Chappell reported on our meetings. Mr. Waters attended the Delta Conservancy Board meeting. Mr. Chappell will be attending the SFB Restoration Authority meeting on December 16<sup>th</sup>. Our fish screen grant resubmittal or Phase 2 was recommended for SFBRA Board approval. Mr. Chappell is preparing a comment letter on the Delta Conveyance Project. Also, the Coast Guard is considering a request from the



railroad to eliminate the swing bridge located over Cordelia Slough railroad tracks, which allows marine access to clubs located above the bridge. 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 ~ Mr. Connolly mentioned the Delta Levee Strategy Report, which increased areas of Suisun Marsh from High Priority to Very High Priority. Mr. Chappell worked with the Delta Stewardship Council staff and salinity impact to water supply and protection endangered species habitat may have been a major contributor to the designation upgrade from 2017 draft report to the 2022 final report. Discussion ensued.

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 2:59 PM.