

MINUTES

SUISUN RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S MEETING

HELD ON WEDNESDAY, MAY 10, 2023, AT 2:00 PM
SOLANO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISOR'S CHAMBERS
675 TEXAS STREET
FAIRFIELD, CA 94533

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

OTHERS PRESENT: Steven Chappell, SRCD
John Eudy, SRCD Assoc. Director
Kent Hansen, SRCD Assoc. Director
Rhiannon Klingonsmith, DWR
Kelli Perez, SRCD
Melissa Riley, DFW
Jamel Stewart, DWR
John Takekawa, SRCD
Dick Vanderkous, SRCD Assoc. Director

1. Call to Order ~ Mr. Vaccarella called the Suisun Resource Conservation District Board of Directors meeting to order at 2:05 PM.

2. Public Comments ~ There were no public comments.

3. Open Session ~ Mr. Vaccarella opened the May 10, 2023, Board of Directors meeting and asked for consideration of agenda Item 3a.

a) Approval of the April 12, 2023, Board Meeting Minutes ~ Mr. Vaccarella asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the April 12, 2023, Board meeting. A motion was made by Mr. Waters and seconded by Mr. Lewis; all were in favor and the motion carried.

4. Financial Reports ~

a) Approval of Vendor Claims for April 2023 ~ Mr. Chappell reported the April 2023 SRCD General Fund vendor claims totaled \$134,037.06. Most of these claims were normal SRCD operational expenses with claim #143 to Gum Tree Farms for a 2022 PAI project. Mr. Chappell reported the April 2023 Lower Joice Island vendor claims totaled \$7,569.46. All expenses were normal LJI operational expenses. Mr. Chappell reported the April 2023 Water Managers Program Department of the General Fund vendor claims totaled \$26,627.84. Claims were normal operational expenses and salaries for the program. Mr. Waters moved to approve the vendor claim summaries as presented, Mr. Lewis seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion carried.

b) Board Approval of Draft FY 21/22 SRCD Audit ~ Mr. Chappell presented the revised draft FY 21/22 SRCD Independent Auditor's Report. The first draft audit was shared with the Board at the March meeting. Comments raised by Mr. Connelly were addressed and reconciled in this revised draft. Mr. Chappell reviewed and summarized the audit findings, and the auditor expressed a clean opinion. The Board was asked to accept the audit as presented. Mr. Waters made a motion to accept and approve the FY 21/22 SRCD audit, Mr. Lewis 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 and read by Ms. Melissa Riley.

Joice Island Wild Pig Hunt: This is the final month of Joice Island wild pig hunts. Since the last Board meeting, DFW has hosted 41 pig hunters, with 10 of them successfully harvesting one pig each. The current success rate is 24%. The Joice Island pump has had the chance to catch up after all this spring rain, and we've been able to grant vehicle access to all the parking lots to our hunters again. Hopefully this will help improve access and success for the remaining hunters.

Elk: We have begun receiving calls about our 2023 tule elk hunts. The Big Game Hunting Digest is available online and has all the information to apply for not only our

elk hunts, but all big game hunts in the state. The application deadline is June 2nd. DFW will be issuing 33 elk tags again, the same number of tags as last year.

Wildlife Area:

Work around the Wildlife Area is a little behind where we were compared to this time last year due to the amount of rain, but the upland nesting fields look great. USGS has completed 3 nest searching days (238 acres), so far, they have found 12 MALL, 3 GADW, and 1 CITE nest. This is a good start; nest efforts seem late not only on Grizzly but in Sacramento Valley as well. USGS is also searching for nests at other wildlife areas, Gray Lodge, Upper Butte, and Sac NWR, but Grizzly currently has the most nests to date. Orlando Rocha is now seeing a lot of drake mallards grouping up and gadwall courtship flights over the fields. Hopefully the next nest searching cycle will show a good number of new nests on the ground.

Pump replacements: Pump 3 at the shop is being repaired and the entire pump platform in preparation for its return later this month, Pump 7 rebuild is finished and reinstalled. The entire pump platform will be rebuilt at that time, the pump should be re-installed by the end of July.

Spraying for perennial pepperweed across the wildlife area is continuing. As the water dries up, we will continue our native grass planting project by conducting another round of spraying for weeds. The field will then get disked again in preparation for more weed control and then final preparation and planting will hopefully occur later this fall.

6. Department of Water Resources Report ~ Mr. Jamel Stewart and Ms. Rhiannon KlingonSmith presented the DWR Suisun Marsh briefing packet. For the month of April, the salinity standards in the Marsh were 11.0 mS/cm for the eastern stations and 14.0 mS/cm for the western stations. The Progressive Daily Mean (PDM) salinities in the Marsh ranged from 0.2 to 3.4 mS/cm. At the end of April, net Delta outflow was 75,281 cfs. As of May 8th, salinities ranged from 0.1 to 2.4 mS/cm with a salinity standard of 11.0 (east) to 12.5 mS/cm (west). Delta outflow was 62,173 cfs.

The Roaring River Distribution System USACE maintenance package was submitted on March 14th and approved on April 10th. Some levee areas still have sandbags and plastic on them that will be maintained in the summer. Levees continue to be monitored with extreme tides and rain events.

DWR received authorization for the RGP 3 work application for the Morrow Island Distribution System routine maintenance and levee repairs. Levee monitoring continues after high tides and rain events. The Morrow Lane Bridge construction has been completed and project close-out is pending. A fallen tree was cleared from the M-line levee on April 11th. Goodyear Slough Outfall (GYSO) and routine maintenance dredging

2023 RGP 3 application was authorized. Dredging sediment from the intakes and ditch clearing is planned for 2023 in the summer coordinated with SRCD (May 17th), and a variance was granted for working during the California Ridgway's Rail breeding season. DWR submitted a LOP dredging application on April 26th. Levees continued to be monitored after high tides and rain events. The Suisun Marsh Salinity Control Gates tidal operations remain suspended due to low salinity conditions, and Gate 1 remains out for refurbishment. A summer fall Suisun Marsh Salinity Control Gates operations for habitat requirement was discussed and there are proposals to start the action August 15th to late October. However, DWR has refurbishment activities underway, and the timing of the installation of the flashboard risers still needs to be resolved. Discussion ensued.

Invasive weeds are continued to be monitored and there are some control efforts that are going to be implemented including Phragmites spraying in tidal water at Blacklock Restoration and monitoring for Russian Thistle. It looks like the drought-response fund will not be triggered. Five salinity stations have been closed for safety reasons. California reservoir capacity in March ranged from 37-88% in the northern Sierra and in the southern Sierra 44-99%. Most reservoirs are above historical averages. Precipitation year to date was 127% of normal in the northern Sierra and 168% in the southern Sierra. Discussion ensued.

7. Conduct a Public Hearing in accordance with 14 CCR 11210 to consider a Minor Amendment to the SRCD Local Protection Program updating 34 Individual Ownership Adaptive Habitat Management Plans and SRCD Board Resolution 2223-3 ~

Mr. Chappell provided a PowerPoint presentation to the SRCD Board introducing the proposed minor amendment to the SRCD Local Protection Program updating 34 Individual Ownership Adaptive Habitat Management Plans (IOAHMP). Mr. Chappell described the annual updates process and content for 2021 and 2022 IOAHMP's. Mr. Chappell also described the previously completed CEQA Notice of Exemption for this action filed with the State clearinghouse through Solano County. Mr. Chappell read a draft Board resolution approving this minor amendment and the findings in the record. On a roll call vote from the Board, there were three ayes were provided which unanimously passed the resolution.

8. Suisun Resource Conservation District Reports ~

- a) 2015 Suisun Marsh Preservation Agreement: Mr. Chappell reported that the SMPA agreement programs continue to be administered. Monthly calls continue with DWR Branch Chief Mr. Dean Messer including updates on monthly payment of SRCD contract expenses. Mr. Chappell requested the Board consider the 2022 Drought Response Program Landowner Funding Allocation for the second year it was

triggered. The drought response was triggered in 2021 and 2022, and funding continues for one additional year. From the 2021 allocations, 3 properties were removed from the list of 2022 based upon salinity exceedance maps provided by DWR. Mr. Chappell requested a motion to approve the 2022 Drought Response Program Landowner Funding Allocation amount and eligible landowners, Mr. Waters made the motion, Mr. Lewis seconded it, all were in favor and the motion passed.

- b) 2023 PAI Program Update ~ Mr. Chappell provided an update for the PAI Program. Fifteen 2023 projects were received by SRCD and submitted to be reviewed on April 6th by the Technical Review Panel. The technical review panel recommended 8 projects for DWR for approval while 7 required added information. There is one remaining 2022 project for reimbursement. All other 2022 landowner PAI reimbursements have been processed for payment.
- c) Suisun Marsh Plan Update ~ There have been no changes with the Suisun Marsh Plan Implementation. Regular monthly meetings for the SMP Principals continues. The next Principal's meeting will be May 11th.
- d) USACE Permits – RGP 3 & LOP Permit Update ~ SRCD continued to administer the RGP 3 permit. SRCD processed all landowner applications submitted in the monthly package. The April package was submitted and approved by the USACE. The LOP dredging permit deadline was moved up this year, requiring landowner permit requests to be submitted earlier. Also, the State Lands Commission 10-year dredging lease is expiring, SRCD has begun the renewal process. SRCD has also processed a special RGP 3 application package for the DFW Grizzly Ditch fish screen rehabilitation project.
- e) Water Manager (WM) Program Update ~ Mr. Takekawa provided the Water Manager program update. The Water Managers continued submitting monthly RGP3 work applications. They also continued meeting with clubs on infrastructure work and tended to SRCD portable pumps.

In April, Mr. Takekawa attended several organizational meetings of the Central Valley Joint Venture Science Workshop. Jason and I continued to work finalizing a manuscript on Salt Marsh Harvest Mouse habitat selection with LiDAR imagery, and he continued to work on finalizing the range wide SMHM survey data for further analyses. On April 14th, the water managers conducted gate monitoring. On April 18th, Mr. Chappell and Mr. Takekawa attended a monthly call with the DWR Fish Restoration Program.

On April 19th, SRCD hosted the Suisun Marsh Spring Landowner Workshop and 60th anniversary of the Suisun Resource Conservation District at Pete Smith Equipment

warehouse. The workshop included presentations by Mr. Chappell and Director Mike Lewis on the 60-year history of SRCD and by the staff on different SRCD projects. On April 21st and 27th, Mr. Takekawa and Ms. Collins continued working with Brett Harvey on analyses relating fish biomass with their proximity to managed wetland drains. Also on April 21st, Mr. Takekawa met with a group of several cooperators to consider development of a proposal on salinity conditions and development of zooplankton and blue carbon in the Inland Delta region.

On April 25th, Mr. Takekawa met with the RCD group coordinating climate adaptation. On April 26th, Mr. Takekawa, Mr. Edmunds, and Mr. Takekawa attended the RD 2112 Schafer-Pintail annual meeting. On April 27th, Mr. Chappell and the water managers attended the annual Suisun Marsh Seeno Luncheon. From April 27th to May 2nd, Mr. Hagani assisted the Phragmites revegetation team with fieldwork to measure plants at Lower Joice, Meins Landing, and Montezuma Duck Clubs. Several members of the team attended the spring workshop.

On May 1st, Mr. Hagani completed the final practical exam for crane truck operation and passed certification. On May 2nd, Mr. Chappell and Mr. Takekawa met with the SFB Restoration Authority project managers who are helping us with the Phase 2 Essential Fish Screen project grant. On May 4th, Mr. Hagani and Ms. Guzman inspected the Wings Landing levee and made repairs on some of the jute mesh covering the slope. On Saturday May 6th, Mr. Edmunds attended the RD 2136 Grizzly West annual levee maintenance tour. On May 9th and 10th, Mr. Chappell, Mr. Hagani, and the water managers attended and provided logistical support for the Central Valley Joint Venture Science Workshop.

- 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. Marque continued to maintain the facilities and habitat on the island. He installed a new set of stairs on the clubhouse boardwalk, and he completed the first round of mowing of the exterior levee. He completed repairs on the UTV and installed a new gearshift arm. He completed a leach cycle and lowered the water for sampling research plots at the end of April. On April 28th, he provided transport and logistical support for the Phragmites revegetation project crew and the USGS blue carbon crew to sample at Lower Joice Island.
- g) Summary of Past & Future Meetings, Tours, and Presentations ~ Steve's term on the SFBRA Advisory Committee ended and so he is no longer attending meetings. The Spring Landowner Workshop and SRCD 60th Anniversary celebration was held April 19th with a fieldtrip from 9-11 AM on April 20th starting at Hill Slough. Mr. Chappell and Director Lewis presented the draft 60 years of SRCD history for the upcoming workshop. SRCD Board members provided input and additions to the workshop anniversary presentation.

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 Directors Committee ~ We had an Associate Director coordination call on May 12th to debrief on the spring landowner workshop.

10. 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 3:33 PM.