

Meeting Summary
Oroville Dam Citizens Advisory Commission
Meeting #16: March 1, 2024
10:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.
Southside Community Center, Oroville, CA

This summary provides an overview of the March 1, 2024, Oroville Dam Citizens Advisory Commission (OCAC) meeting and focuses primarily on capturing the comments and questions posed by commissioners and members of the public. It is organized by agenda topic to assist readers in cross-referencing the meeting materials. This document is not intended to serve as minutes of the meeting or a transcript of the discussion. Related materials, including the slide deck and a video recording, are available on the [OCAC Website](#).

Meeting Agenda

- Welcome and opening remarks
- State Water Project prioritization and selection of projects
- Oroville 2024 budget and investment forecast
- State emergency preparedness coordination and use of weather forecasts in emergency response
- Public comment and questions

Action Items

Action Items from Meeting 16

- Institutionalize regular communication between DWR State Water Project leadership and Oroville Mayor and City Manager (e.g. daily texts on operational activities) to ensure that it continues beyond the current occupants of those positions.
- Schedule a small-group meeting before Meeting 17 with DWR staff, Commissioner Robert Bateman, and Matt Mentink to dive more deeply into how DWR assesses risk, including:
 - Reviewing Meeting 16 presentations 1 and 2.
 - Discussing how likelihood was determined in the Risk Matrix.
 - Discussing studies and how they are funded.
 - Reviewing budget and role of the Division of Safety of Dams.
- Agendize a follow-up presentation for Meeting 17 to update the Meeting 16 discussion on project prioritization and budget.
- Institutionalize an annual update of this presentation on prioritized projects that:
 - Reviews a list of projects at the Oroville Facility for the current year and those being considered in the upcoming years and addresses:
 - Do we understand the risks at the facility?
 - Have we identified and prioritized projects to address those risks?
 - Is there enough funding for those projects?

Rollcall

As mandated by the requirements set forth in Senate Bill 955 (2018, Nielsen), the Commission comprises representatives from the following agencies and public bodies. Attendance at Meeting 16 on March 1, 2024, is noted in the table below.

Agency or Public Body	Commissioner (or Alternate)	Attendance
California Natural Resources Agency	(Chair) Secretary Wade Crowfoot	Yes
California State Senate	Senator Brian Dahle (represented by Bruce Ross)	Yes
California State Assembly	(Vice Chair) Assemblymember James Gallagher (represented by Juleah Cordi)	Yes
Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR)	Director Armando Quintero (represented by Superintendent Matt Teague)	Yes
Department of Water Resources (DWR)	Director Karla Nemeth	Yes
California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES)	Chief Deputy Director Tina Curry (represented by Deputy Director Lori Nezhura)	Yes
Oroville City Council	Mayor David Pittman	Yes
Oroville City Council	Vice Mayor Eric Smith	No
Butte County Board of Supervisors	Supervisor Tod Kimmelshue	Yes
Butte County Board of Supervisors	Supervisor Bill Connelly	Yes
Representative on behalf of Butte County Board of Supervisors	Robert Bateman	Yes
Yuba County Board of Supervisors	Supervisor Seth Fuhrer	No
Yuba Office of Emergency Services	OES Manager Oscar Marin	No
Sutter County Board of Supervisors	Supervisor Mat Conant	Yes
Sutter County Board of Supervisors	Supervisor Nick Micheli	Yes
California Highway Patrol	Lieutenant Commander Marc Stokes (represented by Mark McNabb)	Yes
Butte County Sheriff's Office	Sergeant Brian Evans	Yes
Yuba County Sheriff's Office	Lieutenant Brandon Spear	No
Sutter County Sheriff's Office	Deputy Andre Licon	No

Welcome and Opening Remarks

Wade Crowfoot, California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA) Secretary, welcomed Commissioners, presenters, and the public to the sixteenth meeting of the Oroville Dam Citizens Advisory Commission (OCAC). He briefly discussed the purpose of the Commission and reminded everyone about the Action Item Tracker.

Secretary Crowfoot acknowledged Vice Chair Gallagher and Senator Dahle for their contributions to the OCAC meetings and welcomed the addition of a new Commission member, Sutter County Supervisor Nick Micheli.

Karla Nemeth, California Department of Water Resources (DWR) Director, welcomed attendees and provided an update on weather conditions, noting an incoming snowstorm and the healthy snowpack for this time of year in California. Director Nemeth discussed Oroville Dam operations, explaining that reservoir capacity is at 84% and releases are being made to make space for anticipated precipitation from incoming storms.

Director Nemeth introduced DWR's Acting Deputy Director, Laura Hollendar, who will oversee DWR's Division of Flood Management. The United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) is expected to release the Draft Water Control Plans in Summer 2024; the draft Plans will include the incorporation of forecasts and analysis from the Yuba-Feather FIRO Pilot Study, along with a decision about what type of environmental impact review will be required for the WCM update.

Commissioner Robert Bateman provided an update on the Commission's involvement in the WCM progress since the last meeting. Several Commissioners submitted questions to the USACE, which confirmed receipt and responded that staff needed time to consider responses. Commissioner Bateman emphasized that he thinks the WCM update should incorporate data from recent floods and modern forecasting science, as well as the need for clear communication on WCM updates with downstream communities. Commissioner Bateman invited commissioners and others, particularly those with farming interests, to contact him or Supervisor Connely if they want to participate in a meeting, he plans to schedule with the USACE this Spring. He noted that meeting participants will include Commissioners, Comprehensive Needs Assessment Ad-Hoc Committee members, Oroville Recreation Advisory Commission members, emergency planning officers, directors of flood control agencies, and others. The goal will be to ask questions and learn more about WCM revisions.

Oroville Mayor David Pittman welcomed attendees to his City and introduced Brian Ring, the new City Administrator. Mayor Pittman thanked Ted Craddock, Deputy Director of the State Water Project (SWP), for providing daily reports of runoff conditions to City staff via text message. He noted the positive impact these transparent communications have across City departments and the resulting increased overall awareness of current conditions. He requested that DWR institutionalize these updates to ensure that whoever comes after him as Mayor continues to receive them during the rainy season.

Secretary Crowfoot invited people to sign up for OCAC and Oroville Dam monthly e-newsletters via the DWR website for similar updates.

State Water Project process for prioritization and selection of projects

John Yarbrough, Assistant Deputy Director for the SWP, presented an overview of the SWP's planning process, including the criteria for project selection and examples from among Oroville Dam's safety projects. The SWP has over 100 programs across seven divisions and offices. Mr. Yarbrough acknowledged the complexity of the process and aimed to provide a general understanding of the selection approach.

Mr. Yarbrough explained that the SWP has a long-term planning, multi-year approach to project selection noting that work currently underway was first conceptualized and planned many years in advance. SWP has a 5-year multi-year refinement planning process to prioritize our work plan as well as a systematic annual process to support the update to this 5-year outlay. This planning process involves scoping the project, securing resources, and eventually finalizing a detailed plan for implementation. For example, the work being inputted into the planning process now may reach the implementation phase around 2029. Unplanned work can influence the work plan

throughout the planning and implementation prioritization process. Examples of unplanned work are the identification of an asset that needs replacement through inspection or an emergency incident (e.g. winter storms).

SWP begins with a foundation of "annual activities" — the essential maintenance tasks performed every year — and then identifies additional projects through proactive assessments, like construction needs evaluations, risk studies, and asset management principles. These additional projects are planned years in advance of the projects being performed. Once a project is identified, the project will go through a larger systematic prioritization process to refine the scope and resource needs, and then eventually land on a work plan of each project is clearly defined.

The steps include:

- Each July, SWP program/project managers in the seven divisions and offices identify and prioritize projects in their portfolios.
- Staff develop a draft work plan program that requires approval from the SWP Deputy and aligns with common goals and the upcoming annual budget.
- Projects are reprioritized in October in advance of final approval.
- Plans are approved in December to be executed in the new year.
- Work plans are communicated to external interested parties through Bulletin 132 and are presented to the California Water Commission, as well as at OCAC meetings.

Prioritization relies heavily on risk assessment, an activity that relies on stepping through a risk matrix based on Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) guidelines that DWR uses to categorize risks as tolerable or non-tolerable.

Likelihood														
10 times in a year	10													
w/in 1 year	9													
w/ in 3 years	8.5													
w/ in 10 years	8													
w/ in 30 years	7.5													
w/ in 100 years	7													
w/ in 1,000 years	6													
w/in 10,000 years	5													
w/in 100,000 years	4													
w/in 1,000,000 years	3													
w/in 10,000,000 years	2													
> 10,000,000 years	1													
Consequence Category		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11		
		Insignificant	Minor	Moderate	High	Major	Extreme	Catastrophic						
Public Safety														
Financial Impact														
Personnel Safety														
Compliance														
Flexibility & Reliability - Water Delivery														
Flexibility & Reliability - Other SWP Purposes														
Reputation														

The matrix rows represent the likelihood of something failing (on a scale from something that occurs regularly to a failure only likely on a once in a 10,000,000-year timescale), and columns represent the severity of potential consequences. Consequences are evaluated across seven categories: public safety, financial impacts to the community at large, personnel safety, compliance, flexibility and reliability for water delivery, flexibility and reliability for other SWP

purposes (e.g. ability to generate power), and reputation (including public trust in DWR's ability to manage the project). Each category carries a different weight in the overall risk score. For instance, public safety has a broader risk scale compared to water reliability. Ultimately, public safety holds the highest weight in the risk informed decision-making process. The goal is to move risks from red (high risk) to green (low risk) through mitigation efforts.

The SWP has more potential projects than could ever be accomplished in any given year. To prioritize effectively, DWR leverages asset management principles to prioritize the work through the assessment of risk reduction and resource identification.

Examples of how risks are identified and addressed through the planning process include:

- Potential flooding of Hyatt Powerplant due to erosion of the unlined portion of the Emergency Spillway that blocks the Feather River Channel. The SWP implemented improvements to seal off the plant in case of such an event, significantly reducing this risk.
- Potential cavitation damage during high spillway releases, leading to a breach at the Flood Control Outlet Structure. Four years of extensive research was conducted, and new modeling techniques were employed to assess the risk. The studies concluded there was no mechanism for this type of problem to occur, effectively eliminating the risk from the watchlist.

Mayor Pittman complimented Mr. Yarbrough's staff's impressive efforts to emergency sandbag the powerplant in the past. Mr. Yarbrough noted that the risk assessment process can help reduce the need for emergency actions like this in the future.

Mr. Yarbrough reviewed project prioritization after the risk assessment phase, which uses the "ABC" Ranking method for projects to be completed: "A" projects ranked as top priority, "B" as second ranked priority, and "C" ranked as last priority. Projects ranked "B" and "C" are considered less urgent and can occur further out in the future if need be.

After the risk assessment, "ABC" ranking, and resource planning (i.e., identifying the appropriate staff, equipment, and financial resources needed to complete the scoped work) are finished, a finalized workplan is developed with a list of activities for the next two years, including the resources assigned and cost estimate for each activity. The cost determines the bill rates that get sent to SWP public water agency contractors. Between 2024 and 2025, there are 327 planned projects, 62 of those at Oroville. Of the 62 projects listed in the final work plan for Oroville, there are six "A" projects, 29 "B" projects, and 27 "C" projects. The cost of these projects totals \$125 million over the next two years. The six "A" ranked projects include Oroville Dam Flood Control Outlet Spillway Maintenance, Oroville Dam Grout Gallery Piezometer Installation, McCabe Cove Cultural Resources Project, Oroville River Valve Outlet System project, Electrical Vehicle Charging Station Installation (a mandated project), and Feather River Fish Hatchery Water Treatment Upgrades.

Butte County Supervisor Bill Connelly asked how the risk assessment process has changed since the powerhouse burned down, the river valve mistake, and the spillway failure. Supervisor Connelly emphasized the importance of safety for the Oroville community and asked about the issue of funding. He acknowledged the prioritization system and asked, given limited resources, if DWR is adequately funded to address all identified risks and planned and critical repairs at Oroville and other facilities.

Mr. Yarbrough explained that the Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA) utilized a similar approach to assessing risk as the Level 2 Risk assessment, for Oroville Dam that was required of DWR and overseen by FERC, process was a nationwide pilot program. In examining water supply and life safety issues, the tool gives priority to public safety. Resources, time, etc. are directed to the issue with the greatest public safety risk. Mr. Yarbrough stated that the CNA provided a systematic risk assessment process and determined if there are any risks present at the Oroville facility that must be addressed.

Secretary Crowfoot reiterated the Supervisor's remarks, noting that the historic concern has been whether a specific life safety risk would not get funded because the SWP has needs elsewhere in the system, including for water supply. Supervisor Connelly asked for reassurance that this updated risk evaluation process is superior to previous processes and that safety would always be prioritized.

Mr. Yarbrough stated that life safety risk will always weigh more in a risk assessment and therefore life safety projects would be prioritized and funded as needed.

Supervisor Tod Kimmelshue reiterated Supervisor Connelly's concerns about public safety due to Oroville Dam's proximity to the immediate community. He requested a list of the current priority projects and if any of these projects would be south of the Delta.

Mr. Yarbrough stated that the next presentation would include part of the list of prioritized projects, noting about 20% of the "A" priority projects in the Oroville area. The factors involved in the ranking process such as mandated projects (e.g., due to regulatory mandates), risk-based projects, and value-based projects.

Supervisor Mat Conant inquired about piezometers and requested an update on the discussion of an alternate spillway and lowering water levels in the reservoir before major storm events. Secretary Crowfoot requested that we go through the remainder of the presentation and the subsequent presentation that Dave Sarkisian, DWR Dam Safety Program Manager, will provide and then go through some questions.

Director Nemeth shared that recent legislation gave DWR new contracting tools and permit streamlining abilities, which will improve asset management efficiency. She acknowledged that DWR will sometimes face a workload exceeding available resources and emphasized that continued support is crucial to ensure DWR has the resources needed to prioritize public safety during statewide rehabilitation projects.

SWP Dam Safety Examples

Dave Sarkisian, DWR Dam Safety Program Manager, provided an overview of SWP projects that prioritize safety, describing examples of the different types. He discussed broad improvements within the Dam Safety Program and how dam safety investments are prioritized throughout the state, which includes all 26 SWP dams. The implementation of a new risk analysis approach is a significant improvement. This system, driven by both FERC and DWR after the spillway incident, utilizes a risk matrix with cost estimates to guide decisions about resource allocation for dam safety projects. Additionally, the program received new staff positions in 2018–19, allowing for further programmatic improvements.

Mr. Sarkisian explained how the piezometers installed during the spillway reconstruction are constantly monitored, with data available online daily. He explained that the piezometer

replacements were identified as a need during the CNA, which flagged outdated and abandoned instrumentation.

Piezometers installed under the flood control monoliths and in the toe of the dam have shown data that aligns with observed conditions, indicating they are performing as expected and confirming the integrity of the spillway. Mr. Sarkisian acknowledged the need for additional piezometers within the core blocks of the dam itself; however, installing them requires specific safety precautions mandated by regulators, including that the reservoir levels need to be lower than 780 feet elevation before drilling can occur. Mr. Sarkisian noted that current high-water levels might prevent installation from happening this year.

Supervisors asked how many piezometers were originally installed and how DWR will determine if more will eventually be needed.

Mr. Sarkisian said that eight or nine piezometers are planned for installment, with some placed in the abutment grout galleries, some within the dam's core foundation, and one in the embankment. These strategically placed instruments will provide a clearer understanding of water pressure across various dam zones. Further assessment regarding the need for additional piezometers or other monitoring equipment will involve external review by regulatory agencies.

Mr. Sarkisian continued the presentation by providing an example of an “A,” a “B,” and a “C” project.

- **Example “A” Project: Oroville Dam Flood Control Outlet Spillway Maintenance**
The spillway is inspected every year. In 2022, spillway inspections indicated the need for specialized maintenance work through a contractor. Repairs included joint sealant replacement, minor concrete repairs, and underdrain inspections. Mr. Sarkisian explained why the spillway is a high priority for repairs: In 2023 about 2.3 million acre-feet of water passed through the spillway, with peak outflow hitting 36,000 cubic feet per second (CFS) in March 2023, and the spillway is crucial to maintain diversion flows while the Hyatt Powerplant is periodically taken offline for the River Valve Outlet System rehabilitation. He noted that there are limited times of the year when work can be done on the spillway due to high water levels.
- **Example “B” Project: Oroville Dam Emergency Spillway Studies**
These studies deal with the risk associated with further erosion downstream of the existing apron. Mr. Sarkisian displayed the consequence table indicating “damage state” potential failure modes in the amber-colored zone. FERC requested further study of emergency spillway performance in 2022, and studies are ongoing. Ultimately, risk will be reassessed based on study results, and DWR, along with the regulators, will determine actions from there.
- **Example “C” Project: Palermo Canal Lining Improvements**
This project was identified through the CNA and currently has funds to be completed; however, the urgency of this project is low, so it would be de-prioritized if resources became scarce. This project involves improving canal lining to reduce leakage, potential for landslides, and instability above the Hyatt Powerplant switchyard and other facilities. Construction for this project will begin pending FERC approval.

Mayor Pittman noted that the canal relining and reduction of risk from landslides also protects the South Feather Water and Power Agency power plant downstream. That agency is thankful for this improvement project.

Mr. Sarkisian discussed project readiness and how important it is for his staff to present scopes, budgets, and schedules to develop a well-defined understanding of the project before it is launched and funded. This sets up the project for success because all staff involved are equipped with a level of confidence that the project will be executed to plan.

Commissioner Bateman explained that he was dissatisfied with the CNA follow up due to lack of thorough responses to Commissioner inquiries. He requested a follow-up meeting with Mr. Sarkisian for a more in-depth discussion and to get detailed responses to Commissioner questions.

Mr. Sarkisian explained that the CNA was conducted by a group of consultants and DWR participants. The current risk process with FERC, like the Oroville Level 2 Risk Analysis, relies on external subject-matter experts to provide estimates; FERC oversees the process to ensure it follows their guidelines. This broader group participation ensures a wider range of perspectives are being considered. Moving forward, the external experts will continue to be consulted in future needs assessments.

Secretary Crowfoot confirmed that a follow-up meeting would be arranged to delve deeper into risk and need assessments. He emphasized the complexity of risk evaluation, which involves extensive data analysis and prioritizes public safety above all else, including water delivery. He also acknowledged the importance of transparency advocated by the OCAC and supported annual updates on Oroville Dam operations and maintenance decisions.

Supervisor Connelly suggested including individuals beyond DWR and former DWR staff in the risk assessment process. He proposed including Commissioner Bateman or knowledgeable individuals whose insights and concerns could be valuable. He concurred with the need for a follow-up meeting involving these parties.

Oroville 2024 budget and investment forecast

Hong Lin, SWP Financial Manager, provided an overview of SWP finances. The SWP has an annual revenue of over \$1 billion, primarily sourced from the 29 SWP contractors, cost-sharing with other agencies, power revenues, and the State General Fund. These funds are used for SWP operation and maintenance, debt service, and capital projects. On average, capital project planning costs approximately \$300 million annually with most limitations due to the capacity of resources.

Ms. Lin reviewed the SWP historical costs over the past decade, highlighting the high costs in 2017 and 2018. She noted that the costs represent the SWP bonded costs and do not include FEMA reimbursement costs. Ms. Lin noted that power costs, or variable costs, are planned separately from the rest of the SWP annual cost planning.

The SWP operates on a two-year rolling budget, which means that the current year's budget was planned two years in advance. Bills for water contractors for 2025 are being prepared now (March 2024) based on plans established in 2023. These bills must be sent out by July 1st.

There are two key processes within each year's budget cycle: preparing the water contractor bills and planning the project program for future years.

The SWP Financial Management Enhancement Program (FMEP) has significantly improved the budget process since 2014. Key milestones include:

- Implementing a department-wide planning system (SAP Budgeting and Planning - SBP) in 2019 to coordinate planning, budgeting, and project management (including SWP) aligned with the Governor's Budget.
- Launching the Portfolio and Project Management/Resource Management (PPM/RM) system in 2020. This central hub provides project information like risk evaluations, status updates, budget details, and resource allocation, serving as a critical resource for SWP project managers.
- Implementing the Cost Allocation and Billing (CAB) system in 2022. This system enhances cost allocation and billing accuracy across SWP projects, facilitating accurate cost distribution, generating contractor bills, and providing robust quality control for transparency and accountability.
- Currently, the SWP is transitioning to the new billing provisions under the Contract Extension Amendment (CEA). This extends SWP contracts from 2035 to 2085, relieving cost compression issues by providing the ability to issue long-term bonds beyond 2035, a significant financial milestone.
- The final FMEP phase, Business Intelligence/Cross Module Reporting (BI/CMR), is under development. This system will improve communication tools for program managers, internal teams, external stakeholders, and the public. Phase 1 is expected in 2025 with a second phase potentially extending to late 2025.
- A budget policy outlining program manager roles and responsibilities for effective resource allocation was completed in 2023.

Regarding Oroville Dam expenditures, annual outlays were presented for calendar years 2020-2023 with planned expenditures for 2024 and 2025 at \$95.3 million and \$90.1 million respectively.

Ms. Lin stated that the SWP is committed to continuous improvement in its annual planning process to meet budget goals and provide better long-term capital forecasts. DWR will also maintain clear communication with the public regarding SWP planning and financial management.

Secretary Crowfoot expressed his appreciation to Ms. Lin for the presentation. He then highlighted three crucial questions that require consistent answers moving forward. These questions are:

1. Do we have a comprehensive understanding of the risks associated with Oroville Dam?
2. Are we prioritizing projects that effectively address the identified risks?
3. Is there sufficient funding allocated to complete these prioritized risk-mitigation projects?

Secretary Crowfoot proposed annual updates within the Oroville Citizens Advisory Committee (OCAC) forum that address these questions. He believes this annual update process will ensure local leadership has a clear understanding of the risks at Oroville Dam, the projects prioritized to address those risks, and the funding allocated to complete them.

Commissioner Bateman proposed expanding the agenda for the extra meeting with DWR. He suggested including two key topics related to risk management: dam safety study funding and the Division of Safety of Dams programs budget.

Objectives State emergency preparedness coordination and use of weather forecasts in emergency response

Lori Nezhura, Deputy Director at California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (CalOES), presented on emergency management and coordination in the State of California. All levels of government, from local to State, use the Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS). This unified framework emphasizes local leadership ("all disasters start and end at the local level") but ensures coordinated response across all levels. Deputy Director Nezhura explained that a wide array of partners are involved in statewide emergency management, including partners from federal, State, and local Governments, Special Districts, private sector organizations, nongovernmental organizations, community-based organizations, and Tribes.

Deputy Director Nezhura reviewed how CalOES uses collaboration to prepare for natural disasters statewide, including:

- **Planning:** CalOES reviews and approves dam emergency action plans (EAPs) and collaborates with DWR on dam safety. They also work with counties on emergency operation plans (EOPs) and develop statewide emergency plans. Additionally, they conduct catastrophic planning for large regional disasters with extensive community partner involvement.
- **Training:** CalOES offers specialized training for emergency response professionals, law enforcement, firefighters, and volunteers through the CA Specialized Training Institute.
- **Exercises:** CalOES partners with other agencies to conduct emergency response exercises, including annual notification exercises and local government exercises upon request.
- **Community Outreach:** CalOES works with community-based organizations (CBOs) to reach vulnerable populations and with private sector/NGOs to prepare businesses and organizations. They also support ListosCalifornia, a grant program that educates communities on disaster preparedness. Additionally, they provide technical assistance and training to the more than 450 Community Emergency Response Teams (CERTs) across the state.

When a disaster occurs, CalOES activates a State Operation Center (SOC) with representatives from various state agencies. This allows for efficient resource allocation and decision making during the crisis. The agency also deploys specialized units like the Priority Populations Task Force and Business Operations Center.

California is divided into three CalOES Regions, with Butte County (home to Oroville Dam) falling under the Inland Region. Each region has assigned emergency services coordinators who act as liaisons, ensuring counties receive the resources they need during disasters. Additionally, CalOES maintains three mutual aid systems — for fire, law enforcement, and emergency management — to facilitate coordinated response across these critical services.

CalOES supports disaster recovery efforts through various initiatives, including initial damage assessments, training for disaster response personnel, local assistance center setup, safety assessment programs, joint field operations with FEMA, grant programs to mitigate future

disasters (e.g., Hazard Mitigation Grant Program). Deputy Director Nezhura reiterated that CalOES plays a vital role in keeping California prepared and resilient before, during, and after disasters, with the goal to help keep the state safe in preparation for future disaster scenarios.

Public Comment

Speaker 1, Chris Fritz from Sutter Butte Flood Control Agency (on behalf of Executive Director Michael Bessette), provided an update to the Commission regarding inundation maps for the City of Oroville area. Funded by a DWR grant, the agency is analyzing and mapping potential flooding from various high-flow releases at Oroville Dam. Over the past month, they've met with county and city stakeholders to understand the extent of 1997 flooding, which informs the model for these maps. Positive feedback has been received, and draft maps are expected within the next month for further review and public input. The agency looks forward to future discussions as this work progresses.

Secretary Crowfoot requested that updates on inundation mapping be added to future OCAC agendas. Mayor Pittman thanked Mr. Fritz for the update and all the work being done to update the Oroville inundation maps.

Speaker 2, Matt Mentink, expressed appreciation for today's presentations, believing it addressed many commissioner concerns. He particularly welcomed the transparent discussion regarding the financial management program, given prior uncertainties about past funding allocations. Mr. Mentink was surprised to learn that human resources pose a greater limitation than anticipated and expressed concern about political restrictions on additional human resources funding.

Mr. Mentink provided two comments in reference to the Water Control Manual Update:

1. Mr. Mentink asked whether DWR retains the right under the new 50-year contract to charge water contractors for the infrastructure projects DWR has identified as necessary. Since the contracts are for a 50-year period, he proposed DWR look at how to fund the infrastructure needed to support the Project for the next 50 years. He used one of the packages proposed under the Comprehensive Needs Assessment as an example: Package 4 was a \$2.5 billion collection of improvements, which funded by bonds, should only require be a 2% cost increase to the SWP contractors spread over 50 years.
2. Mr. Mentink expressed concern that the Draft Water Control Manual does not reflect lessons learned from the 1986 and 1997 floods. He feels like downstream input is crucial and suggests collaboration to incorporate these lessons before finalizing the objectives and alternative plans.

Director Nemeth clarified that DWR retains the authority to identify and fund necessary projects, with those costs reflected in water contractor charges. This applies even under extended contracts. Regarding staffing concerns, Director Nemeth emphasized that DWR has increased staffing by 10%, adding 150 new personnel to address these needs. This staffing increase, combined with new tools like design-build, construction management, and streamlined permitting processes, will equip the state to meet its needs and prioritize investments in the system, always prioritizing public safety.

Commissioner Bateman requested that Mr. Mentink's questions be answered before the meeting he is organizing with USACE occurs. Secretary Crowfoot expressed his support for this meeting.

Adjournment

Secretary Crowfoot reviewed action items captured throughout the meeting and reminded attendees to provide feedback on the action item tracker by March 29.

Commissioners commented on the productive outcomes of OCAC Meeting 16 and thanked DWR staff and Secretary Crowfoot for their continued efforts to improve these meetings for the sake of public transparency and safety.

Secretary Crowfoot and Director Nemeth adjourned the meeting by thanking the public, the presenters, and Commissioners for their engagement at OCAC Meeting 16. The next Commission Meeting is scheduled for Friday, August 2, 2024.