California
WATER COMMISSION

# Meeting Minutes

Meeting of the California Water Commission
Wednesday, April 17, 2019
State of California, Resources Building
1416 Ninth Street, First Floor Auditorium
Sacramento, CA 95814
Beginning at 9:30 a.m.

**1. Call to Order**
Chairman Quintero called the meeting to order at 9:45 a.m.

**2. Roll Call**
Executive Secretary Kimberly Muljat called the roll. Commission members Carol Baker, Andy Ball, Joe Byrne, Maria Herrera, Armando Quintero were present, constituting a quorum. Commission member Danny Curtin was absent.

**3. Closed Session**
The Commission did not hold a closed session.

**4. Approval of March 20, 2019 Meeting Minutes**
Commissioner Baker moved to approve the March 20, 2019 meeting minutes. Commissioners Baker, Ball, Byrne, and Quintero voted in favor, approving the minutes. Commissioner Herrera abstained because she did not attend the March meeting.

**5. Executive Officer's Report**
Executive Officer Joe Yun reported the first invoice for Water Storage Investment Program (WSIP) early funding, for the Los Vaqueros Reservoir Expansion Project, has been paid. Third quarterly reports are due from WSIP applicants at the end of April. Staff is planning a stakeholder meeting regarding the WSIP contracts for public benefits for the end of May. Rancho California Water District requested to present to the Commission at the May meeting. The purpose is to seek a consistency finding with Proposition 1 to be eligible for WIIN Act funding from the federal government for the Vail Dam Project. The Commission agreed to add this item to the May agenda.

**6. Commission Member Reports**
There were no Commission member reports.

**7. Public Testimony**
There was no public testimony.

**8. 2018 State Water Project Annual Review**

Jennifer Ruffolo, Assistant Executive Officer, provided a summary of the final draft 2018 State Water Project (SWP) Annual Review. The key themes of the review are that aging infrastructure and climate change are driving the Department of Water Resources (DWR) to change its approach to managing the SWP. Ms. Ruffolo discussed the proposed findings in the review, including findings related to managed aquifer recharge, organizational changes, steps to address climate change, and repairs to the Lake Oroville spillways. The review includes proposed recommendations focused on DWR continuing to update the Commission on all issues pertaining to the SWP.

**9. Stormwater Capture and Aquifer Recharge**

Jeffrey Albrecht, Unit Chief for the State Water Resources Control Board Stormwater Strategy Unit, provided a brief presentation on the Strategy to Optimize Resource Management of Stormwater (STORMS). Mr. Albrecht discussed the background of STORMS, including the vision for stormwater to be sustainably managed and utilized to support water quality and availability. STORMS has identified 23 ongoing projects that meet the four guiding principles of the program. Mr. Albrecht provided details on several of the projects. The program continues to explore the potential impact of water rights on stormwater capture and use; funding barriers and opportunities; and ways to improve data quality, quantity, and access.

Heather Cooley, Director of Research with Pacific Institute, gave a brief presentation on the opportunities and costs related to capturing urban runoff. The Pacific Institute is working to prove the runoff is an asset not a liability. When considering levelized costs of water supply alternatives, stormwater capture is one of the more affordable sources of new supply. There are many benefits, as well as co-benefits, including providing wildlife habitat, saving energy, and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The Pacific Institute analyzed 50 projects to compare costs of stormwater capture with and without co-benefits, taking special interest where these programs would benefit disadvantaged communities, and found that including co-benefits decreases cost per acre-foot (AF). Implementation barriers to implementing urban stormwater capture include inadequate funding and incomplete and inconsistent consideration of co-benefits.

Commissioner Ball asked how stormwater is captured for direct reuse. Ms. Cooley stated that water can be diverted from impervious surfaces to areas it can infiltrate into soil or rainwater tanks can be used. Commissioner Quintero asked if the Pacific Institute is evaluating incentives. Ms. Cooley said they are starting to evaluate incentives for communities and commercial and industrial properties. Commissioner Herrera asked if they are evaluating stormwater capture in unincorporated communities. Ms. Cooley said they are not currently, but it would be useful to evaluate other opportunities.

Keith Lilley, Assistant Deputy Director for Stormwater Planning for the Los Angeles County Department of Public Works, discussed stormwater capture and recharge in Los Angeles County. The Los Angeles County Flood Control District was created to reduce flood risk and capture and conserve stormwater for local water supply. Mr. Lilley provided an overview of LA

County's water supply conservation infrastructure, including soft-bottom channels, inflatable dams, and spreading grounds for water infiltration. LA County spreading grounds take an average 200,000 AF of stormwater annually, as well as imported and recycled water. Mr. Lilley summarized improvements to enhance stormwater capture and recharge, including the Tujunga Dam Seismic Retrofit Project, Tujunga Spreading Grounds Improvement, and seawater barriers to prevent saltwater intrusion into local groundwater. Mr. Lilley also discussed future opportunities and challenges, including climate change impacts and regulatory obstacles.

Commissioner Baker asked about the different agencies they work with in relation to regulatory barriers they face. Mr. Lilley stated they work with California Department Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), as well as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Don Bunts, Deputy General Manager for Santa Margarita Water District, provided a short presentation on the San Juan Watershed Project. The project's goal is to utilize the local groundwater basin as a reservoir to store stormwater and recycled water to increase local water supplies by 17, 240 AF per year. This project's benefits include water quality improvements, ecological enhancements, and water storage. Mr. Bunts provided an overview of the phases of the project, including the components, costs, timelines, and anticipated new water supplies. Phase 1 involves installing rubber dams to capture and filter stormwater using existing facilities. Phases 2 and 3 will add recycled water for additional storage in the basin and incidental recharge. Mr. Bunts talked about the California Environmental Quality Act process, permitting, and various challenges, including funding, multi-agency permitting, and cost/benefit allocations.

Commissioner Ball asked about when rubber dams are inflated and how long they stay inflated. Mr. Bunts stated they are kept inflated until a large storm is expected to cause water to overtop them. Commissioner Baker asked how the water district ensures they have water rights for the water they are infiltrating and extracting. Mr. Bunts responded that they have the rights to the recycled water that is stored in the basin, but the stormwater rights are unique for each basin. The question of water rights is one of the reasons a regional approach is beneficial.

**10. Feather River Fish Hatchery**

Eric See, Chief of DWR's Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) License Coordination Branch, and Jason Kindopp, Chief of DWR's Feather River Program Section, provided a brief presentation on the Feather River Fish Hatchery (FRFH), which is part of the SWP. The FRFH was constructed as part of the Oroville Dam complex to mitigate loss of salmon and steelhead spawning with the dam's construction. The fish hatchery is a major attraction for tourism in Oroville and works to benefit Central Valley Steelhead and spring and fall-run Central Valley Chinook Salmon. CDFW operates the hatchery while DWR maintains and funds the hatchery. Mr. Kindopp discussed the requirements for the Hatchery and Genetic Management Plan (HGMP) for Spring-Run Chinook Salmon and the timeline for plan development. The HGMP will move the hatchery from focusing on mitigation and production to conservation. The roles and responsibilities of this program are divided between DWR, CDFW, and National Marine Fisheries Service. The HGMP contains defined objectives and includes major goals to have more

natural origin fish, eliminate mixing of spring and fall-run salmon, and reduce straying. The program has 18 standards to outline goals. After the FERC license is issued a segregation weir operation will begin to separate the spring and fall-run in the river. Potential impacts to SWP operations include increased demands for pulse flows, increased cost, and increased coordination with other agencies.

Commissioner Quintero asked if any of the program funding comes from fishing licenses. Mr. Kindopp said it is all SWP funds.

**11. Consideration of Items for Next California Water Commission Meeting**
In May, the Commission will meet in Kerman, California. Agenda items at the next meeting will include a presentation on the Modesto Irrigation District's in-lieu recharge program, a presentation on DWR's Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment, and a presentation on a Public Policy Institute of California study on the future of water in the San Joaquin Valley.

**12. Adjourn**
The Commission adjourned at 12:09 p.m.