



Meeting Minutes

Meeting of the California Water Commission
Wednesday, September 18, 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 9:37 a.m.

2. Roll Call

Executive Secretary Kimberly Muljat called the roll. Commission members Teresa Alvarado, Andy Ball, Carol Baker, Maria Herrera, Armando Quintero, and Matt Swanson were present, constituting a quorum. Commissioner Danny Curtin arrived during item 5. Commissioner Joseph Byrne was absent.

3. Closed Session

The Commission did not hold a closed session.

4. Approval of August 27, 2019 Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Baker moved to approve the August 27, 2019 meeting minutes. Commissioners Alvarado, Baker, Ball, Herrera, Quintero, and Swanson voted in favor.

5. Executive Officer's Report

Executive Officer Joe Yun reported that staff has completed the synopsis of the two Water Portfolio Initiative listening sessions held by the Commission. It has been submitted to the California Natural Resources Agency. Mr. Yun attended the Climate Change Vulnerability Adaptation Summit with the Chair and Vice Chair. Mr. Yun and the Commission discussed the Commission meeting schedule for 2020.

8. Director Karla Nemeth, Department of Water Resources (DWR)

This item was taken out of order. DWR Director Karla Nemeth presented DWR's 2018 Strategic Plan and Delta conveyance. The strategic plan is updated twice a year. Some of the core values featured are world class safety, partnership development and transparency, and science-driven decision making. Director Nemeth discussed some of the 21 goals in the strategic plan, including investing in State Water Project (SWP) Infrastructure and restoring ecosystem functions through multi-benefit projects. The SWP Asset Management Program has been expanded and incorporates business practices across all SWP divisions. The Department is planning for a changing climate and evolving water management needs. Goal 15 includes

pursuing large scale multi-benefit projects that reduce flood risk and contribute to the recovery of fish and wildlife populations.

Director Nemeth discussed environmental planning for new Delta conveyance and some of the progress that has occurred this year. Governor Newsom announced his intention to pursue a one-tunnel conveyance instead of the planned two-tunnel project. DWR withdrew all permits and approvals associated with the WaterFix project and is launching a new environmental review process for a single tunnel project and alternatives. Director Nemeth summarized governance structure and responsibilities for the project. Next steps include releasing the notice of preparation for California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) planning and initiation of AB52 consultation, public outreach, and early design and engineering and preparation of environmental documents.

Commissioner Ball asked if DWR is planning a new route for the proposed tunnel. Director Nemeth stated that the route will be determined after further information collection and environmental review. Commissioner Swanson asked how single-tunnel flows compare to two-tunnel flows. Director Nemeth stated the planned WaterFix capacity was 9,000 cubic feet per second (cfs) and the single tunnel will have a capacity of 3,000 to 7,500 cfs. Executive Officer Yun asked Director Nemeth for her perspective on the relationship between the Commission and DWR. Director Nemeth envisions more frequent updates from DWR's executive team and hopes to reinvigorate the partnership between DWR and the Commission on various topics.

6. Commission Member Reports

Commissioner Alvarado had a social lunch with John Varela of Santa Clara Valley Water District. Commissioners Baker and Quintero attended the Climate Change Vulnerability Adaptation Summit. Commissioner Quintero also reported he met with Department of Water Resources (DWR) Director Karla Nemeth to discuss coordination.

7. Public Testimony

There was no public testimony.

9. Action Item: Proposed Del Puerto Reservoir Project

Anthea Hansen, General Manager of Del Puerto Water District, and Andy Neil, Project Manager, provided information on the proposed Del Puerto Canyon Reservoir Project and requested the Commission find the project consistent with Proposition 1 for the purpose of the federal Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation (WIIN) Act eligibility requirements. A finding of consistency would allow Del Puerto Water District to seek WIIN Act funding for 25% of the total planning costs for the project. Ms. Hansen described the proposed project and its benefits. She also described how the project is consistent with Proposition 1, including increasing regional self-reliance and helping adapt to climate change impacts.

Commissioner Alvarado asked about the project's groundwater and environmental benefits, as well as the risks associated with an earth filled dam. Mr. Neil stated that the project would relieve groundwater pumping and the primary environmental benefits will result from partnering with wildlife refuges. Del Puerto Water District is performing a dam inundation study, working with DWR's Division of Safety of Dams, and assessing seismic risk. Commissioner Ball asked if staff has reviewed this project for consistency with Proposition 1. Mr. Yun stated

staff is not reviewing the projects as they did with the Water Storage Investment Program (WSIP) applications. This process is designed for project proponents to present information so the Commission can determine if projects are consistent with the general aims of Proposition 1.

Commissioner Curtin moved to find the Del Puerto Canyon Reservoir consistent with Proposition 1. Commissioner Alvarado seconded the motion. All Commissioners present voted in favor of the motion.

11. Oroville Recovery Effort

This item was taken out of order. Mike Inamine, Oroville Emergency Recovery Program Manager, updated the Commission on DWR's recent progress recovering from the February 2017 Oroville spillways incident. DWR used the main spillway for the first time in April 2019 under extensive surveillance and the spillway performed as expected. Lake Oroville is a major recreation feature for the community, so DWR committed to providing early, safe access. The area is still an active construction site and requires new security measures, but DWR has provided public access to facilities with a phased approach. Construction will be completed in 2020 and will be followed by rehabilitation of the surrounding hillside. Commissioner Ball asked about what appear to be leaks in pictures of the spillway. Mr. Inamine stated that water seeps through engineered features intended to relieve groundwater pressure.

Sergio Escobar, Oroville Dam Safety Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA) Project Manager, provided an overview of the CNA. The purpose is to identify and prioritize potential dam safety enhancement needs and risk reduction measures. The final product of the CNA is a report documenting an existing conditions assessment that identifies current dam safety risks at the Oroville Dam complex, opportunities to reduce risk, and a set of alternative plans that DWR could consider for future implementation for risk reduction. Mr. Escobar discussed the CNA workplan and management structure. DWR is using risk informed decision making in this process. To assess existing conditions, DWR considered Potential Failure Modes, specific scenarios, and conditions. Mr. Escobar provided an overview of the CNA Independent Review Board and community involvement.

Commissioner Curtin asked if anything relative to the operations of the dam came from the study. Mr. Escobar stated DWR will evaluate and run operational scenarios when alternative plans are developed.

10. County Drought and Water Shortage Contingency Planning

This item was taken out of order. Nirmala Benin, Senior Engineer with DWR, discussed DWR activities related to implementing AB 1668 and SB 606, which were enacted in 2018 to make water conservation a way of life. The legislation directed DWR to identify small suppliers and rural communities at risk of drought and water shortage vulnerability and develop recommendations for improving drought contingency planning in those areas. The Countywide Drought Advisory Group (CDAG) will inform and advise DWR during implementation. The CDAG includes a variety of stakeholders and has two workgroups. DWR has conducted a literature review of findings relevant to the topic and developed drafts of the two deliverables for the CDAG to review.

Julia Ekstrom, Climate Change Specialist at DWR, discussed the project's first deliverable: a list of small water suppliers and communities at risk of drought. DWR organized risk factors into a disaster risk framework that includes exposure to hazardous conditions and vulnerability to exposure to determine risk. The four main components DWR is including in its analysis are exposure to hazard related to climate change, current and recent hazard conditions, supplier physical vulnerability, and supplier social vulnerability. The next steps for the project are to complete scoring and analysis, validate the results, conduct management review, construct risk profiles, and release the list.

Commissioner Alvarado asked how stakeholders perceived the idea of risk profiles describing their communities and how water agencies perceived the effort in relation to their autonomy. Ms. Ekstrom and Ms. Benin stated that DWR's actions have not been directive and may be helpful to local water suppliers. Commissioner Baker asked if the legislation covers residents with individual domestic wells. Ms. Ekstrom stated that households reliant on domestic wells are included in the analysis for rural communities.

The Commission took public comment. Jonathan Young, with the California Municipal Utilities Association, expressed appreciation for DWR's inclusion of stakeholder input and discussed the need to improve technical capacity.

12. Consideration of Items for Next California Water Commission Meeting

Agenda items at the next meeting will include briefings on the Commission's draft strategic plan, State Water Project construction, and the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act, and considering the proposed South North Intertie Pipeline Project's consistency with Proposition 1.

13. Adjourn

The Commission adjourned at 12:18 pm.