## OROVILLE DAM CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMISSION Meeting on 11/20/2019

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4	STATE OF CALIFORNIA
5	OROVILLE DAM CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMISSION MEETING
6	WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 20, 2019
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1	PROCEEDINGS
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3	MR. CROWFOOT: Thank you very much everyone
4	here today for joining us. My name is Wade Crowfoot,
5	and I serve as secretary of The California Natural
6	Resources Agency. And by a law passed by Senator
7	Nielson, I served as chair of the Oroville Dam citizen's
8	Advisory Commission. This is our second meeting. We're
9	very glad to be here, and thank all those who are on the
10	commission for your attendance here today, and your
11	service. And we have many members of the community here
12	today, too, that we look forward to hearing from. Let's
13	start this meeting by stating the Pledge of Allegiance.
14	So I'd ask you to stand up while we do that.
15	(Pledge of Allegiance was recited.)
16	MR. CROWFOOT: So at our first meeting, which
17	was about two months ago, we started the meeting by
18	asking everybody to introduce themselves. I think in
19	subsequent meetings we will simply do a roll call. But
20	I think because I'll speak for myself I'm still
21	certainly getting to know everybody. We can just do the
22	same thing, which will serve as roll call. And
23	supervisor start with Supervisor Conant. And if you
24	could just introduce yourself and your affiliation.
25	MR. CONANT: I'm Matt Conant. Supervisor for

- 1 Sutter County, District 5.
- 2 MR. FLORES: I'm Dan Flores. Sutter County
- 3 Supervisor, District 2.
- 4 MR. DOWLING: Steve Dowling. Assistant Chief
- 5 California Highway Patrol out of Valley Division.
- 6 MS. WIDENER: Genoa Widener. Appointee for
- 7 Butte County.
- 8 MR. CONNLEY: Bill Connelly. Supervisor, Butte
- 9 County.
- 10 MR. GALLAGHER: James Gallagher. State
- 11 Assemblyman.
- 12 MR. NIELSEN: Jim Nielsen. Fourth Senate
- 13 District.
- MS. NEMETH: Karla Nemeth. Director of
- 15 Department of Water Resources.
- MR. TEAGUE: Matt Teague. District
- 17 Superintendent for State Parks. I'm sitting in today as
- 18 a designee for Director Lisa Mangat.
- 19 MR. COLLINS: Steve Collins from the town of
- 20 Butte County Sheriff's Office.
- 21 MR. REYNOLDS: Chuck Reynolds. Mayor of
- 22 Oroville.
- MR. MILLION: Joe Million, lieutenant, Yuba
- 24 County Sheriff's Department.
- MR. BRADFORD: Gary Bradford. Yuba County

- 1 Supervisor, Fourth District.
- 2 MR. PITTMAN: Oroville City Councilman David
- 3 Pittman.
- 4 MR. LICON: Andre Licon. Sutter County
- 5 Sheriff's Office.
- 6 MR. CROWFOOT: Thanks so much. And again,
- 7 thanks for your service on this commission. In just a
- 8 moment I'll ask the senator and assemblyman to open up
- 9 our meeting with some remarks. But I just want to go
- 10 over some necessary announcements as we begin.
- Just first of all, safety announcement. You
- 12 see the exits around you. If we need to evacuate,
- 13 please take note. Ask you to mute your cell phones
- 14 while we have this meeting. That goes for us up here,
- 15 as well as folks out in the audience.
- This is a public meeting, subject to open
- 17 meeting laws, which is quite important. And that
- 18 includes getting an agenda up in advance, sharing
- 19 information in a transparent way. It also means that
- 20 there is a transcript being developed for the meeting
- 21 and meeting summary notes. As we talked about in our
- 22 last meeting, the process of creating a meeting summary
- 23 involves members of the commission so that we could make
- 24 sure that the meeting summaries are accurate.
- We also have a web page dedicated to this

- 1 commission at our Natural Resources Agency website. You
- 2 should just feel free to Google the name of the
- 3 commission and -- and the Natural Resource Agency, and
- 4 you'll see an updated website dedicated to the work of
- 5 the commission. Goes without saying, but as we share
- 6 comments and observations with each other, just ask you
- 7 to be direct and respectful. And then obviously give
- 8 each other time and space to talk. We have
- 9 two-and-a-half hours for today's meeting, and we want to
- 10 make sure we hear from members of the community and
- 11 members of the public.
- We have a little bit of the housekeeping to do
- 13 organizationally first. The bulk of the meeting is
- 14 really the discussion of winter operations and
- 15 discussion of the safety of our winter operations. So
- 16 we've asked for several presentations, and members of
- 17 the commission will have an opportunity to ask questions
- 18 and share observations. Also critical are opportunities
- 19 for the public or members of the community to comment.
- 20 Many of us had an opportunity to get up to the dam
- 21 before this meeting, and to get an overview and actually
- 22 eyes on what we're talking about.
- Important to note that comments were not being
- 24 recorded during that tour. So if you had some comment
- or a question, you should be encouraged to ask it here

- 1 on the record just so it's part of the record of our
- 2 discussion. And we'll make sure that there's enough
- 3 time for that comment. So let me turn it over to
- 4 Senator Nielsen and then Assemblyman Gallagher just for
- 5 your opening thoughts.
- 6 MR. NIELSEN: Well, Senator Crowfoot, my
- 7 opening thought is thank you to the agency, to Karla, to
- 8 your participation. This is a dream yet again realized.
- 9 I've spoken about the Sacramento River Conservation Forum
- 10 that I statutorily created in the '80s. And Jane
- 11 Dowman, the current head of that, is here with us. And
- 12 that is still around after some 35 years.
- And the whole purpose is the same purpose that
- 14 we have here, to inform and involve the communities, the
- 15 elected officials in decisions related that affect their
- 16 lives. To involve the state and federal agencies so
- 17 that they can speak and talk together. And as this
- 18 thing developed, Senator Gallagher and I, and others of
- 19 the office, felt that we needed to do a lot of things
- 20 that were sustaining and long run. And this is that,
- 21 for our purposes related to the operation, the state
- 22 water project. Hugely important.
- 23 And I just deeply appreciate the cooperation
- of the agencies, including having Parks and Recreation
- 25 now engaged in the talk, because they have a big

- 1 footprint in what we're doing here, too. So this
- 2 involves all of those agencies, all of the local
- 3 governments, state government, federal government, and
- 4 the citizens. And I believe what I -- the feedback I'm
- 5 getting is people are liking this, they're aware of it,
- 6 and it's working. And again, I thank the administration
- 7 for all hands on deck, for their coordination and their
- 8 best serve to be able to coordinate these meetings.
- 9 But it also ensures that the information gets
- 10 to all of those who need to make decisions that affect
- 11 all our lives. Wade, thank you for your leadership. We
- 12 are honored to work with you.
- MR. CROWFOOT: Thank you much.
- MR. GALLAGHER: I will just say thank you to
- 15 everybody for making the time here this morning. This
- 16 is an important commission. I'm really looking forward
- 17 to the work that we're going to do together. And with
- 18 that, I'll say, hey, let's get down to business.
- 19 MR. CROWFOOT: Good.
- 20 MR. GALLAGHER: Mr. Chairman?
- MR. CROWFOOT: Well, thanks so much. So the
- 22 first order of business is adopting a commission
- 23 charter, which is, in essence, the rules that we use to
- 24 conduct these meetings, and conduct our work. If you
- 25 recall that our first commission meeting, we were

- 1 presented a charter, straightforward, really based on
- 2 the principals and the requirements of the senate bill
- 3 that formed this commission. There was one question, a
- 4 request for clarification as it relates to terms of
- 5 members of this commission. And so rather than
- 6 approving at that first meeting, we ask for more time to
- 7 resolve that question.
- I want to ask Nick to just come to the
- 9 lectern. As you remember, if you were joined the first
- 10 meeting, we have a consultant that is helping us
- 11 facilitate this meeting. I just want to ask you again
- 12 about the specific clarification that was made regarding
- our terms, which was the single question that got asked
- 14 about the charter at the last meeting.
- MR. SAFFOLD: Thank you, Secretary. And
- 16 again, my name is Nick Saffold. I'm with Kearns and
- 17 West. So as you'll recall at the first meeting in
- 18 September, this commission reviewed and presented
- 19 details -- was presented details -- a detailed overview
- 20 of the draft charter.
- 21 Once again, this charter derives largely from
- 22 Senate Bill 955. The version of the chart that we're
- 23 seeking to adopt today has been slightly modified since
- 24 the first meeting, specifically adding some clarifying
- 25 language around Section 80. So I'm just going to read

- 1 that now. And so we've added the second sentence to
- 2 sectioning in terms of the terms. "The term of office
- 3 of all commission members shall be three years, except
- 4 those who are members of the legislation representing the
- 5 city of Oroville, who shall serve for the duration of
- 6 their term in office. Removal or replacement of the
- 7 commissioner is up to the discretion of the appointing
- 8 authority consistent with their own rules and policies."
- So that's the only change to the charter since the first meeting. So, Secretary, I think at this time,
- if there are no questions or comments, if you want to
- 12 ask for a motion.
- 13 MR. CROWFOOT: Yeah. First I would ask if
- 14 they are any questions regarding the existing proposed
- 15 charter? And if not, I would ask for a motion to
- 16 approve the charter.
- 17 MR. NIELSON: I move to adopt the charter.
- 18 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I'll second the motion.
- 19 MR. CONANT: Right. And can that be -- can
- 20 this vote be taken by voice, or do we need to do a role
- 21 call?
- MR. SAFFOLD: We can do a voice vote.
- 23 MR. CONANT: Okay. So then let's do a voice
- 24 vote. All in favor of the commission charter as
- 25 proposed, please say "aye."

1 (Unanimous Agreement.) 2 MR. CROWFOOT: All opposed? Any abstensions? 3 Thank you. We will consider the charter. Okay. 4 MR. SAFFOLD: So I am going to pass this 5 around now. This is the final version of the charter. If you are a commissioner, please sign it. If you are 6 7 not, if you are a designated alternate, please refrain from signing it, and we will get the commissioner's 8 9 signature after the fact. And then we're going to post 10 the final version online, on the website. 11 MR. CROWFOOT: Okay. Good. So if you are a 12 named member of the commission, sign. If you're an 13 alternate, please hold off and we'll get the named 14 member to sign. So now we're into the real meat of the 15 meeting. And that is an updated presentation on this 16 coming winter's operations of the dam and reservoir, with the specific focus on safety. 17 18 It's clear that there remain, you know, a range of concerns around safety of the facility and the 19 20 facilities. And that was voices at our first meeting. 21 I think we collectively decided to use this next meeting 22 to really talk about going into the winter, going into 23 flood season, how The Department of Water Resource and related agencies plan to operate the facility. And we 2.4 25 actually moved up our planned meeting, actually, to take

- 1 place now before, what we hope to be, a wet season.
- 2 So I wanted to introduce Gary Lippner and the
- 3 Department of Water Resources staff. We've got about
- 4 three presentations. And after each -- or even during
- 5 each -- if there are commission members that have
- 6 questions, simply raise your hand, and we'll -- we want
- 7 to make it as interactive as possible. And, of course,
- 8 members of the community and public will have an
- 9 opportunity to raise questions or observations when they
- 10 speak during public comment. Gary?
- 11 MR. LIPPNER: Great. Thank you.
- MR. CROWFOOT: And just so -- so there's a
- 13 screen behind us. And for commission members, there's a
- 14 small screen in front of us, too.
- MR. LIPPNER: Secretary Crowfoot, members of
- 16 the commission, and members of the public, my name is
- 17 Gary Lippner, and I am the newly appointed deputy
- 18 director of flood management and dam safety at the
- 19 Department of Water Resources. Thank you for the
- 20 opportunity to share an overview of the Feather River
- 21 flood management system. Here's a road map of what I'll
- 22 be covering in today's overview of the Feather River
- 23 system.
- 24 And the first section, the history and
- 25 flooding, and our response to flood losses has directly

- 1 led to our collective roles and responsibilities to work
- 2 together to manage and prepare for future flooding. So
- 3 it really is important to grab the history that lends
- 4 itself to the roles and responsibility of how the
- 5 Feather River system is managed today. I want to share
- 6 recent flood risk reduction projects, some of the
- 7 maintenance activities that are undertaken on the
- 8 Feather River, certainly share some flood preparedness
- 9 activities, and then share about looking into the future
- 10 and future activities we have, and information we would
- 11 like to share. The Feather River system consists of the
- 12 Oroville complex, including Lake Oroville, the
- 13 Thermalito Afterbay, and the waterways in between. That
- 14 is up in the top portion of this graphing where it says
- 15 "State Water Project," between the two top red lines.
- 16 The -- then downstream, it consists of rivers
- 17 with many miles of levees and channels that make up the
- 18 flood management system. Water is released from the
- 19 Oroville complex, as well as the New Bullards Bar
- 20 Reservoir, and works it way through a system of levees
- 21 and channels down through the system. The focus of my
- 22 presentation today will be on the flood management
- 23 system on the Feather River, downstream of the Oroville
- 24 complex. John Leahigh will follow with a presentation
- and present on Lake Oroville flood operations

- 1 specifically.
- 2 Again, history of flooding in the central
- 3 valley has certainly shaped our roles and
- 4 responsibilities. I would like to describe the history
- 5 in a series of errors each defined by a different
- 6 approach to managing flood risk. These approaches have
- 7 slowly evolved over time. Before the gold rush and
- 8 statehood, periodic floods would inundate large
- 9 portions of the central valley into what has referred
- 10 to by historians as the vast inland sea. Evidence of
- 11 meandering rivers and lost (unintelligible) remains
- 12 hidden under today's Red Rivers and levees.
- In the next error, the focus was lead by local
- 14 landowners to build levees to protect their homes and
- 15 farms from frequent flooding. While these efforts had
- 16 successes and failures, there was little coordination
- 17 and almost no involvement with the state and the federal
- 18 government to manage floods. Then came the large floods
- 19 of 1907 and 1909. And that illustrated that something
- 20 more was needed kneed than just a system of levees
- 21 itself.
- 22 By 1910, Captain Jackson of the United States
- 23 Army Corps of Engineers embraced the concept of
- 24 utilizing river bypasses with the levee system to
- 25 protect communities near rivers. The first major weirs,

- 1 which are entrances to the bypass systems, was completed
- 2 by the City of Sacramento in coordination with the
- 3 United States Army Corps of Engineers in 1917. This
- 4 started the system -- started our flood system that is
- 5 managed by, both the levees, as well as the flood
- 6 bypass, the Sutter bypass, as well as the Yolo bypass
- 7 system. By the 1940s, it was recognized the dams and
- 8 reservoirs would be needed to provide water supply for a
- 9 growing population.
- The flood management community quickly
- 11 recognized the dedicated flood control space in the
- 12 winter months these reservoirs could provide additional
- 13 protection to the region's levees. And many
- 14 multipurpose reservoirs were built during this era.
- 15 Moving forward to the current era, the 60s to the
- 16 present. In this current era, we have experienced
- 17 record-setting droughts and floods. These events
- 18 highlight the need for increased coordination between
- 19 both water supply, and flood management communities, and
- 20 between local, state, and federal entities to move
- 21 forward.
- 22 An absolute critical piece of flood management
- is the fact that residual risk cannot be eliminated, and
- 24 we must always be prepared for floods. With that in
- 25 mind, I will summarize our current Yuba/Feather flood

- 1 management roles and responsibilities. And at the top
- 2 level it's very important to note, in California, flood
- 3 management is a shared responsibility among federal,
- 4 state, and local agencies. At the federal level, we
- 5 have the United States Army Corps of Engineering, the
- 6 United States Bureau of Reclamation, the National
- 7 Weather Service, and FEMA, the Federal Emergency
- 8 Management Agency.
- 9 I'd like to describe in a little more detail
- 10 about the role of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers,
- 11 which I'll refer to as The Corps. Most of the levees
- 12 along the Feather River are designated by Corps
- 13 standards. These levees are periodically inspected to
- 14 make sure that these standards are being met. These
- 15 standards are also subject to change as a society.
- 16 Lessons learned from New Orleans and Hurricane Katrina
- 17 influenced how we construct and maintained levees here
- 18 in California.
- 19 The Corps also owns the flood storage space in
- 20 Lake Oroville, as well as New Bullards Bar Reservoir.
- 21 John will talk more about the Oroville and how it's
- 22 operated. But it's important to recognize the
- 23 partnership between the reservoir owners and The Corps.
- 24 The Corps is also the lead agency for repairing damage
- 25 to federal levees through its Public Law 8499 program.

- At the state level, we have, of course, DWR, Department 1 2 of Water Resources, the Governor's Office of Emergency Services, and the Central Valley Flood Protection Board. 3 4 The Central Valley Flood Protection Board 5 plays an important role in oversight and coordination 6 between local, state, and federal management agencies. 7 There is ample opportunity to watch and attend the board's monthly meetings and work with people working on 8 9 levees, river forecasts, and emergency response in the 10 These meetings help DWR with many of the local agencies I'll talk about in a minute to outline the 11 12 Central Valley Flood protection plan and its 2017 update. In addition to the cities and counties at the 13 14 local level, we also have several levee districts, 15 reclamation districts, the Marysville Levee Commission, 16 Three Rivers Levee Improvement Authority, and Yuba 17 County Water Agency as partners in the Feather/Yuba 18 flood management system. 19 During the past 15 years, DWR has been working 20 with the Sutter Butte Flood Control Agency, Three Rivers 21 Levee Improvement authority, as well as the Marysville 22 Levee Commission to build and improve critical levees

over \$900 million has been invested by state, local

along the Feather, Yuba, and Bear rivers. Collectively,

agencies, and the United States Army Corps of Engineers.

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- 1 This also includes smaller projects underway for smaller
- 2 communities in the region as well. Collectively, our
- 3 work has improved flood protection for other 147,000
- 4 citizens, as well as reduced flood risk for 8.4 billion
- 5 in assets within the region. And this table shows the
- 6 three big projects that we've been working on with the
- 7 benefits and status that I've mentioned in terms of
- 8 protecting.
- 9 One key thing to know, these projects take a
- 10 long time. So, for instance, in the Sutter basins,
- 11 we -- these 40 miles, when finished, will represent
- 12 200-year level of protection. And it has taken a long
- 13 time to go through the design and construction. We have
- 14 35 miles done, and a little -- five miles to go on that.
- 15 About a few more miles to go on the Yuba Basin, and in
- 16 Marysville as well. The length of these projects is
- 17 very lengthy. But when all of the project is completed,
- 18 those miles of levee will, again, bring 200-year level
- 19 of flood protection in the urban areas.
- 20 This graphic is for the three big projects
- 21 that I previously mentioned the slide. You can see the
- 22 Feather River region where these projects are located.
- 23 There's the Marysville Ring Levee that protects the city
- 24 of Marysville itself. The Sutter Butte levee
- 25 improvement projects and flood improvement projects that

- 1 go north-south along the waterways. And then the Yuba
- 2 Basin project is highlighted in green here. And it's
- 3 also important to note that these are large improvement
- 4 projects.
- We also, after the winter storms of 2017, made
- 6 many repair projects to the existing levee systems.
- 7 There were about \$14 million spent on nine repair
- 8 projects in the region that repairs were needed after
- 9 the winter storms of 2017. In addition to improving the
- 10 levees, DWR also serves to maintain some of these
- 11 levees. The Feather River and its major tributaries
- 12 have 225 miles of levees, with one 160 being the state
- 13 plan of flood control. Those were authorized by Corps
- 14 of Engineers.
- The proper maintenance of the levee system is
- 16 key in reducing flood risk. DWR and local agencies
- 17 continue our collective efforts in investing in
- 18 operation and maintenance of the flood control
- 19 facilities and the basins, including recent maintenance,
- 20 improvements, and investments in Maintenance Area 3, 7,
- 21 and 16 on the Feather River to improve 22-and-a-half
- 22 miles of levee in that area. The operation and
- 23 maintenance activities consistent of a variety of
- 24 actions, as shown in the slide. And these actions are
- 25 taken by maintainers to ensure a system is in good

- 1 condition before every flood season. Even after
- 2 improving levees and maintaining levees, mother nature
- 3 will throw new and powerful storms our way.
- 4 So I said it in the first few slides, we
- 5 always need to be prepared for future floods. And we
- 6 should learn from the successes and failures of the
- 7 other areas in addressing flooding. With that in mind,
- 8 flood preparedness is really about practicing
- 9 partnerships. DWR's flood preparedness role in the
- 10 region, DWR stockpiles flood fight materials in various
- 11 places for ease and quick access during flood
- 12 emergencies. The quick access availability of these
- 13 materials on-site plays just a critical role in
- 14 successfully fighting erosion boils and other levee
- issues during high water events that could potentially
- 16 result in a levee failure if it were not fixed quickly.
- DWR continues to work with local agencies to
- 18 enhance flood preparedness so we can respond to the
- 19 threats of floods quickly. In addition to flood
- 20 preparedness, we also encouraging homeowners to purchase
- 21 flood insurance, which is not included in most insurance
- 22 policies. Few of the other DWR programs and activities,
- 23 we have flood emergency response grants, awarded with
- 24 Butte, Sutter, and Yuba County. And they fund things
- like, for instance, the flood safety plan that you see

- 1 in the slide here.
- We have flood fight training classes provided
- 3 in Butte, Sutter, and Yuba Counties as well. We also,
- 4 as I mentioned, have flood fight material stockpiles
- 5 within or near Butte, Sutter, and Yuba Counties to be
- 6 prepared when mother nature bring us that large storm
- 7 event. One example of flood preparedness partnerships
- 8 is the forecast coordinated operation program. We've
- 9 learned that rain is not evenly distributed under
- 10 watersheds, one river can be hit very hard while
- 11 neighboring watersheds may still have some capacity to
- 12 slow down and store some peak runoff.
- The forecast coordinated operations program is
- 14 based off the principle that if everyone uses the same
- information, they can make shared decisions that help
- 16 everybody. You were looking at the graphic of a shared
- 17 user interface of reservoir operations, and the graphic
- 18 here, the larger graphic, that interface for reservoir
- 19 operations, river forecast, and U.S. Army Corps of
- 20 Engineer reservoir regulatory team uses that. The
- 21 smaller graphic on the bottom right is an example of
- 22 forecast precipitation that will include both rain and
- 23 snow, recent and forecasted runoff flow for each
- 24 specific location. So the point here is if one
- 25 reservoir operation makes a change and releases,

- 1 everyone can remotely see the entire system so they can
- 2 collectively discuss what the best option is moving
- 3 forward.
- 4 Participating agencies in the flood
- 5 coordinated operations in this basin include the
- 6 Department of Water Resources, State Water Project's
- 7 Operation Scheduling Team, DWR River and Reservoir
- 8 Forecasters, Yuba County Water Agency, Army Corps of
- 9 Engineer Water Management Section based in Sacramento.
- 10 The Army Corps (unintelligible) Engineering Center is
- 11 really the think tank of the United States for model
- 12 development, and is located in Davis, as well as NOAA,
- 13 The National Weather -- NOAA's national weather service
- 14 in the California-Nevada River forecast center. The
- 15 Yuba Feather forecast coordinated program has
- 16 contributed to many actions to enhance flood management
- 17 along the Yuba Feather River, including installing
- 18 gauges, gauges for rainfall, snow, river stage,
- 19 developing new forecast runoff models, developing new
- 20 reservoir modeling tools, improvements in the National
- 21 Weather Service and Alert products, conducting annual
- 22 training and exercises between partner agencies. The
- 23 Departments of Water Resources and its partners have
- 24 been using forecast coordinated program effectively for
- 25 the last decade. DWR has now initiated work on forecast

1 informed reservoir operations, which is an innovative 2 use of improved runoff forecasting that John Leahigh 3 will share more about in the next presentation as well. 4 Looking to the future, DWR will coordinate its 5 cooperation department agencies in sharing essential 6 data, securing funds for improvements and maintenance of 7 the flood management system, and enhancing both natural and human environment. DWR will continue to provide 8 9 updates on the Feather River flood management 10 activities, including silent briefings, visits, and 11 briefings. In closing, a couple of final thoughts, the 12 flood of 1997, many of us remember that was only a 13 hundred-year event. The risk of a larger flood always 14 exists, and management of floods will continue to be a 15 challenge for all of us in the partnership that we have 16 to manage the flood systems in the Yuba Feather River 17 area. 18 We need to continue our partnership to improve 19 and maintain the flood management system and its 20 operations. We need to enhance our flood emergency 21 preparedness and response to better -- be better 22 prepared and continue to educate people about the flood 23 risk in the region. Also, we need to have better land 24 management policies to ensure existing people at risk of 25 flooding are properly insured with flood insurance.

- 1 Thank you, again, for the opportunity to share flood
- 2 management overview of the system. I thought it was
- 3 just important to kind of set the history, the stage,
- 4 the roles and responsibilities, some of the programs,
- 5 the improvements and activities that we are conducting.
- 6 Don't know if there's any questions at this time. Thank
- 7 you.
- 8 MR. CROWFOOT: Thank you so much, Gary. At
- 9 this time, we do want to entertain any questions or
- 10 thoughts. Maybe I'll start off and ask you a question
- 11 about emergency planning, giving that we're headed into
- 12 the winter. Is it the Department of Water Resources or
- the State Office of Emergency Services that
- 14 would be responsible for things like emergency drills,
- or tabletop exercise -- exercises with local
- 16 authorities; to what extent are we're doing those?
- 17 MR. LIPPNER: Yeah, great question, Secretary
- 18 Crowfoot. And thank you. Again, it's a partnership.
- 19 We worked absolutely hand-in-hand with Office of
- 20 Emergency Services and prepare for flood season in
- 21 September and October. We -- the department works with
- 22 locals as kind of the facilitator to conduct flood
- 23 preparedness meetings to get the communications going to
- 24 get the proper phone numbers at all of the local areas,
- 25 the local counties. We work with the Governor's Office

- of Emergency Services on that. We also work at the
- 2 local levels. And we will, during the months of
- 3 September and October, really get out to all of the
- 4 locals to make sure we are all on the same page, we are
- 5 all prepared, we know the communications, we know the
- 6 amounts of supplies on the ground, and stockpile to be
- 7 more prepared for the flood season insurance. So it's
- 8 absolutely a partnership is how we work with the
- 9 governor's office, and OES, and DWR, and the locals.
- 10 MR. GALLAGHER: Real quick, I'll just add a couple
- 11 of things to your overview as I was listening to it.
- 12 One is the bypass system, I always like to point out,
- was initially envisioned by Will Green, a Colusa native
- 14 and layman. And I think that points to the bedrock of
- this commission that it's really, you know, ultimately
- 16 Captain Jackson adopted that method of improving flood
- 17 infrastructure and reducing flood risk. But it was
- 18 really, you know, a layman who, based on his experience
- 19 living on the Sacramento River, had said, hey, this is
- 20 what we need to do.
- 21 And ultimately the engineering community
- 22 adopted that. Army Corps was hesitant to do so at
- 23 first, but that's where I think a lot of our discussion
- 24 of people who have experienced this river, in addition
- 25 to the experts who are working on this every day, can

- 1 help better inform how we do things in the future. So I
- 2 think that's one part of the history that I think is
- 3 worth mentioning for our purposes today. I also point
- 4 out, you know, I think you used the word "record
- 5 floods, "certainly we've had some big flood, '97 being
- 6 the biggest one.
- 7 I always like to point out that '97 was double
- 8 the size of what we experienced in 2017. So 2017 wasn't
- 9 anywhere close to what we have seen, but 1862, which I
- 10 don't think we could -- we ever measured, but historical
- 11 accounts talk about that being from one mountain range
- 12 to the other. The coastal to the Sierra Nevadas, that
- 13 was a huge event. And that shows us that we know, as
- 14 you said, this system can produce a lot of water down
- 15 that watershed. And we must always be on-quard
- 16 accordingly for those events. So I think that -- you
- 17 know, as we're talking about these things, you know,
- 18 putting them in that big historical context as you've
- 19 done, I think, are important.
- 20 And forecast-based operation, which I think we
- 21 are going to be hearing more about, I think, is
- 22 important. And in the 2017 event, one of the reasons we
- 23 didn't, at least, additionally -- initially, DWR didn't
- 24 think we were getting emergency spillway is because the
- 25 forecast that we were looking at didn't show us having

- 1 the kind of inflow that would reach emergency spillway.
- 2 That turned out to be wrong. So the more, you know,
- 3 increase that we can have in technology, and better
- 4 forecast, you know, what the wetness is, and what the
- 5 inflows are going to be, the better we can be prepared
- 6 in the future. So I think that's another -- that's a
- 7 probably very pressing issue for. And I know John will
- 8 be getting into that next, so thank you.
- 9 MR. LIPPNER: Thank you so much.
- 10 MR. NIELSEN: Thank you. There's a great book
- 11 about this history. It's more a history book than a
- 12 water book, but it's called Battle of the Inland Sea,
- 13 written many years ago. It's worthy of perusing.
- One thing I would bring to our attention that
- is not often talked about, but it is an integral part of
- 16 this Colusa Basin drain. I authored legislation many
- 17 years ago to create the drainage district for that
- 18 Colusa Basin drain at (Unintelligible) down in
- 19 (Unintelligible) County. It is worthy of some
- 20 consideration, and -- just keep that in mind.
- 21 Another thing is the problems of the homeless
- 22 population. They have gravitated now to our levees. I
- 23 took a boat tour here several weeks ago on the Yuba
- 24 River and Feather River. I was somewhat surprised by
- 25 the volume of residence on these levees, and how they

- 1 are living on these levees, and the degradation that is
- 2 beginning to be asserted on those levees, which I think
- 3 is in danger of weakening them.
- 4 This is complicated, but it is something
- 5 that's worthy of our attention. And lastly, the bypass
- 6 system. I'm a big student of bypasses levees, and I
- 7 like to emphasize that bypasses are storage facilities.
- 8 They are not havens for habitat, and parks, and
- 9 walkways, and recreation.
- 10 If you ever needed to emphasize the magnitude
- of that, would be the Yellow Bypass. Many years ago,
- 12 the County of Yellow coveted that bypass and wanted to
- 13 buy it and convert it all kinds of lovely uses totally
- 14 inappropriate for the purpose of that bypass. And one
- of the great examples is driving between Davis and
- 16 Sacramento on I-80, and you have a railroad trestle, you
- 17 have I-80, and framing that you have the wildlife area.
- 18 Now, that's a wonderful thing, but that is the tail end
- 19 of the bypass, and you put a cork in it.
- 20 Of all of these impediments where silt can
- 21 accumulate, stags can accumulate in that are. You
- 22 cannot have too many problems down there thus far, but
- even the community of Davis has begun to worry about it.
- 24 These are other elements of the system is, and you have
- 25 to look at it system-wide. Thank you.

- 1 MR. NIELSEN: Yes, thank you for your report.
- 2 You mentioned the '97 event, and, you know, we almost
- 3 had -- if I remember correctly -- uncontrolled flows of
- 4 the Oroville Dam. And that system -- if I remember
- 5 correctly -- was forecasted almost a week before. And I
- 6 know it was bigger than they had planned on originally,
- 7 but that just goes to show the need for alternate
- 8 spillway that's slower. And I know that we're still
- 9 going to look at that, but I just want to emphasize that
- 10 point that, if we would have been able to release the
- 11 water out of the reservoir, a lot of water earlier,
- 12 maybe we wouldn't have had that almost catastrophic
- 13 event. We only dodged that by, like, two hours. Thank
- 14 you.
- MR. CROWFOOT: Thank you. Gary, just really
- 16 quick on the Senator's question regarding the homeless
- 17 population, homeless encampments on the levees.
- 18 Obviously, a complicated topic. But thoughts from a
- 19 flood protection standpoint or a Department of Water
- 20 Resources standpoint?
- 21 MR. BRADFORD: Yeah, I mean, it's absolutely
- 22 on our radar. It is a very sensitive topic. We feel
- 23 for those people, their needs, and so forth. From --
- 24 also, though, from a technical perspective, from an
- 25 engineering perspective, and public safety, it is an

- 1 encroachment on the levees, and can affect the integrity
- of the levees. So I don't have any answers, but we need
- 3 to work through solutions for that to address that
- 4 issue.
- 5 MS. WIDENER: And simply to add, the Central
- 6 Valley Flood Protection Board is really digging into
- 7 that issue in particular. And I know they've done a
- 8 couple of levee sight tours. Because, to me, it is a
- 9 quintessential area where it's going to be a state and
- 10 local partnership to be dealing with the effects of
- 11 homeless populations into the levees. Again, I don't
- 12 think we've identified what the exact strategy is, but
- they're not a member of this body, but the Central
- 14 Valley Protection Board is absolutely our partner in
- 15 this discussion.
- MR. FLORES: Just to add really quickly as --
- 17 I know you and Sutter County have just passed ordinances
- 18 saying, you know, prohibiting -- you can't be on the
- 19 levees themselves. So that's -- the locals are working
- 20 on it in conjunction with the state.
- 21 MR. BRADFORD: Let me add to that, too, what
- 22 we need is protection from the legal action that will be
- 23 coming as we're passing those ordinances. Because, you
- 24 know, we do believe it's in the name of public safety,
- 25 and especially with the protection of the levees. But

- 1 we're already getting letters and, you know, we're about
- 2 to get sued, I'm sure. So I don't know how we can get
- 3 those protections in place when we're doing this for the
- 4 good of public safety for both the homeless population,
- 5 and for all of the surrounding population. If there's
- 6 anything that can be done through our partnerships, that
- 7 can be really, really helpful.
- MR. CROWFOOT: That's helpful to understand.
- 9 Councilmember?
- 10 MR. PITTMAN: Thank you. Gary, I appreciate
- 11 your conversation and presentation. I come from
- 12 management -- fire management field, and in California
- 13 we have two facilities called north ops and south ops.
- 14 And that's how we manager the fire resources up and down
- 15 the state. Does flood management or your office have
- 16 something similar to that in terms of an office, or
- 17 center, or maybe it's a desk in OES. Something like
- 18 that that we often look at. Because you've got a huge
- 19 job in coordinating -- I mean, you've got hundreds of
- 20 agencies to look at. And I'm looking from the small
- 21 local government perspective.
- Some place that we can go to, to find out, you
- 23 know, the numbers, the expectations, the projections,
- 24 whatever the case may be. But also to be able to
- 25 operate like we do in the fire service with north ops

- 1 and south ops, those are, you know, our critical.
- 2 That's how we move our resources around. I'm just
- 3 curious if you have something like that, or something
- 4 similar.
- 5 MR. CROWFOOT: Yes. Great. Thank you for
- 6 asking. It's all about being prepared. And Department
- 7 of Water Resources has the flood operation center that
- 8 is in Sacramento. And it's at the joint operation
- 9 center facility.
- 10 So the National Weather Service is there,
- 11 there's federal partners, and then there's also state
- 12 partners there. And in any high water event, we might
- 13 activate the facility, the flood operation center, to be
- 14 activated during monitoring and worse flood events. We
- 15 certainly have an entire incident command team. As you
- 16 well know from managing fires, the incident command team
- 17 follows the (unintelligible) scale of nature.
- We have three complete teams that can operate
- 19 the flood operation center. In addition to that, we put
- 20 flood expert at the state operation center any time
- 21 there's a -- at a certain level of activation. So we
- 22 work the department -- Governor's Office of Emergency
- 23 Services, and have the representative from flood at the
- 24 state operation center. And then going out a little bit
- 25 further, as you mentioned the north and south, it's a

- 1 very large state.
- 2 The Department of Water Resources staffs six
- 3 incident command teams throughout the state of
- 4 California that is tied into the flood center to be able
- 5 to work with the locals. And if the locals -- if it's a
- 6 flood issue or activity, that can be handled at the
- 7 local level, then they will work with locals to contact
- 8 the flood operation center to bring in more state
- 9 resources. So we have many resources out there. And
- 10 really, it's our flood operation center at the joint
- 11 operation center that is akin to that -- one of the key
- 12 core pieces to have that central command, if you will,
- 13 of information and so forth, and then can scale out
- 14 throughout the state of California, depending on the
- 15 level of emergency, and depending on what local needs
- 16 there might be.
- 17 MR. PITTMAN: Well, I appreciate that. And
- 18 his comments about the '97 event, I was -- in the fire
- 19 service, I was the coordinator when evacuations were
- 20 done in Oroville that night. And he is very right. We
- 21 were a couple of hours from a big problem. And we did
- 22 empty the town in about four hours, 12,000 people. But
- 23 one of the reasons that we did that is we had
- 24 face-to-face communications with the local DWR folks.
- 25 And that was a big help for us, because, you know, we

- 1 didn't have a picture of what was going on with the
- 2 reservoir, other than what was coming up every hour.
- 3 And that was a big help. So having these other
- 4 coordination teams throughout, I think is going to be
- 5 the big asset to all our local governments to be able to
- 6 contact folks, and get the information. So thank you.
- 7 Appreciate that.
- 8 MS. NEMETH: I would offer for the
- 9 commission's consideration, DWR would be glad to provide
- 10 a tour of the joint operations center if people have an
- 11 interest in seeing that, how that operates.
- MR. PITTMAN: Absolutely.
- MR. CROWFOOT: Yeah, and I'll just say, I
- 14 mean, I had a chance to do that when I worked with
- 15 Governor Brown, and it's impressive. It's like a state
- operation center that OBS runs, but for flood. So I'd
- 17 recommend we do that. An open invitation, do a tour as
- 18 soon as possible in 2020. And then maybe actually have
- 19 the leaders of incident command team for this region and
- 20 join us in that.
- 21 MR. LIPPNER: Absolutely thank you for that
- 22 opportunity and asking for that. I think that would be
- 23 wonderful, and we will facility that.
- MR. CROWFOOT: Good. Other questions? Then
- 25 let's move on to John. And John is going to give us an

- 1 overview of flood operations actually within the
- 2 reservoir, or at the reservoir.
- 3 MR. LEAHIGH: Yes. Good morning, cochairs,
- 4 commissioners. Yes, again, my name is John Leahigh. I
- 5 am with the Department of Water Resources, state water
- 6 projects operations manager. And I am going to dig in
- 7 more specifically on the Lake Oroville operations as it
- 8 relates to reducing flood risk.
- 9 So an overview of what I am going to provide
- 10 this morning is just kind of basic reservoir flood
- 11 control operations one-on-one, if you will. Kind of
- 12 what The Corps' role is in terms of overseeing the flood
- 13 control benefits of the dam. We are going to talk a
- 14 little but more specifically about what we have in place
- 15 for this coming year in terms of an enhanced flood pool.
- 16 I am going to then touch on the forecast and reservoir
- 17 operations, and then how that might relate to other
- 18 activities into the future.
- 19 So for any flood control reservoir, the basic
- 20 function is to reduce those flood flows to downstream.
- 21 So, you know, especially this Feather basin, as we've
- 22 already talked, we see very high inflow events from
- 23 atmospheric rivers through the winter. The purpose
- 24 for vacant -- part of the federal government's
- investment in the dam was to hold 11 to 22 percent of

- 1 that lake vacant during the most at-risk months during
- 2 the winter. So essentially, the December -- well,
- 3 starting late November, the three most critical months
- 4 are December, January, February, and then start tailing
- 5 off in April, May. But that -- the purpose of this
- 6 space is to absorb these very large inflow events so
- 7 that we can maintain the outflow out of this facility
- 8 within the channel capacities downstream.
- 9 MS. NEMETH: If the levee is 22 percent, how
- 10 many acres does that equal out to?
- 11 MR. LEAHIGH: Yeah, that is anywhere from to
- 12 375,000 cubic feet to 750,000 cubic feet. What I have
- in front of you right now is a graph of historical
- 14 Oroville inflows. And the calendar is a little bit
- 15 skewed here, starting in April, if you will, April, May
- 16 to June and July. But what you can see is that it is
- 17 these atmospheric river events that produce the big
- 18 inflow events.
- 19 You see the big one there in December,
- 20 January, February periods. And those are going to be --
- 21 the very highest events are going to be based on very
- 22 warm atmospheric rivers that the entire watershed would
- 23 be covered by the precipitation fall as rainfall. So
- 24 you get the direct runoff from the entire watershed.
- 25 There is some aspect of snow, there's snow covers.

1 Some of the snow will come off in those big 2 Those look to be about ten to 15 percent of 3 adding to the total of those big events. But the 4 primary reason is that the entire watershed is covered 5 with rainfall, rather than a mix of rain and snow. 6 you can see, as you get into kind of the late spring 7 periods at the beginning of this graph, April, May, 8 that's where we start to see reduced risk in terms of 9 these atmospheric rivers. 10 We still do see a potential for snow, snow melt into the reservoir. But those rates of snow melt 11 12 are much less than what we would get from an atmospheric 13 river. So it's a very small percentage of what we see 14 from the very large events. And those can more than be 15 met capably by the outflow of facilitates of the dam. 16 So this is the flood control diagram that we have been referring to this morning. And under Lake 17 18 Oroville, is what's called a Section 7 Dam under the 1944 Federal Flood Control Act, where the Corps engineer 19 has the flood control oversight of the facility. As I 20 21 said, they did invest in that space. And this is the 22 actual diagram from the 1970 water control management 23 that shows that everything from 375,000 to 750,000 cubic 2.4 feet of required vacant storage. 25 Now we will encroach into this space during a

- 1 flood event, a large flood event. By the nature of it,
- 2 that is the attenuation of those peak inflows.
- 3 MR. CROWFOOT: And, John, this is a unique
- 4 looking graph. So can you walk us through what we are
- 5 actually looking at?
- 6 MR. LEAHIGH: Yeah. And so this is the -- on
- 7 the left-hand -- it's hard to see. Again, this is the
- 8 actual -- the actual print taken from the water control
- 9 manual. So on the left-hand axis is the amount -- I
- 10 don't know if you can make it out very well, but that
- 11 does show you the flood control space that needs to be
- 12 vacant. And that does very -- at the top end line,
- 13 that's 375,000 all the way to 750,000 at the very
- 14 bottom.
- So that represents the space that needs to be
- 16 left vacant to absorb very large storms during the
- 17 high-risk months. You can see months across the X-axis
- 18 there. And so starting, actually, in October --
- 19 starting in October, we would need to start providing
- 20 that space. Now, that's typically not an issue in
- 21 October because the lake is typically well below these
- 22 levels as we are today.
- So, you know, the lake today is about
- 24 777 feet. The very bottom of this is 848 feet. So we
- are well below the bottom that's required currently.

- 1 And the reason this varies is that it's based on the
- 2 wetness -- what's called wetness index of the watershed.
- 3 So the more saturated the soil is in the water basin --
- 4 for a like amount of -- the more saturated it is, the
- 5 more runoff is expected.
- 6 So if we've seen a lot of recent rains, we
- 7 need to increase that vacant space to absorb bigger
- 8 storms. That's why this varies. And the numbers here
- 9 are the wetness parameters that dictate how much space
- 10 is required. As we get into March, the threat of the
- 11 atmospheric rivers lessens, and so we can then start to
- 12 refill the reservoir with that snowmelt through the
- 13 snowmelt process for water supply, recreational benefits
- 14 as we get into late spring, early summer. This next
- 15 graphic actually might help -- help show this little.
- MR. CROWFOOT: Can you -- just briefly,
- 17 when -- this has been in effect since what year?
- 18 MR. LEAHIGH: 1970.
- MR. CROWFOOT: Got it. Older than me.
- 20 MR. LEAHIGH: The lake -- this is actual
- 21 storage in Lake Oroville. So for this last year, last
- 22 water year -- which, water year is from October 1st
- 23 through September 30th -- the solid blue line is the
- 24 actual storage in the lake. So this is a full
- 25 3.5 million here on the Y-axis. And what's shown here

- 1 in the dash lines, the black dash lines, that's the same
- 2 space that I showed you in the previous diagram. And
- 3 this red line tells us on any given day what the
- 4 required vacant storage is required in the lake.
- 5 So that's based on that wetness index, as I
- 6 indicated. So this tells us, then, around somewhere in
- 7 late November, we had enough rain that it started
- 8 triggering the requirement for more vacant space. So
- 9 you can see how that goes down, and it goes down to the
- 10 maximum here by the time we got to late January. It was
- 11 a wet year last year, so there was a long period where
- 12 we were required to allow for the maximum amount of
- 13 vacant space. Right here at April is -- you can see
- 14 that we started to encroach. We were -- at that point,
- 15 we were unable to manage the inflows with just the
- 16 high -- power plant at that point.
- 17 And so in order to get out of that
- 18 encroachment, that's when we triggered -- that triggered
- 19 the use of the gated spillway. And that was the first
- 20 use after reconstruction. So that was -- this shows you
- 21 visually what was going on in terms of -- of what
- 22 triggered the use of that. So if we stay below the red
- 23 line there as we went, you can see a pretty dry spring.
- 24 We did have a decent snowpack, so that was providing the
- 25 good inflows which allowed us to refill the lake,

- 1 essentially, as we got an early summer.
- 2 MR. CONNELLY: If I may? This would be a much
- 3 more effective chart for the public if you had the
- 4 elevations on the other side of the chart, from 900 feet
- 5 down.
- 6 MR. LEAHIGH: That's a very good suggestion.
- 7 Okay. We'll look and see if we can add that. And this
- 8 is a chart that is available. It is posted. So we can
- 9 look to make that.
- 10 MR. GALLAGHER: And, John, just really
- 11 quickly, the lower -- the lowest dotted line is showing
- where we actually adjusted the flood bumper; right? For
- 13 this last ops year. So normally, you would have to keep
- 14 it below that -- that second line, but we kept it even
- 15 below that third line this last year. Can you explain
- 16 that?
- 17 MR. LEAHIGH: Yeah. I haven't introduced that
- 18 yet, it's later in the presentation. But you're right,
- 19 Assemblyman. This is actually includes the enhanced
- 20 flood pool that we put into place this last year, and
- 21 which we are -- will do this coming winter as well.
- The actual 1970 flood control diagram you see
- 23 right here at about just below 2.8 million, it flatlines
- 24 across the entire winter until we get to this point here
- 25 in April. So this also shows the enhanced flood pool

- 1 that DWR has done unilaterally going through the proper
- 2 approval processes through the Corps to provide some
- 3 enhancement to that flood protection. And so that is
- 4 depicted here. I am going into that little bit more
- 5 detailed later in the presentation. So this is just to
- 6 look at, again, that continuation of the inflows.
- 7 So look at some comparisons here to historical
- 8 events, and then what's called the standard project
- 9 flood, which is essentially the design flood for sizing
- 10 that flood pool. And so you can see that an inflow of
- 11 close to -- that design flood has a peak inflow of close
- 12 to 450,000 acre feet. And so the design is to be able
- to absorb a flood of that magnitude and have a release
- of only 150,000 from the lake. So that's the
- 15 attenuation that that space is designed to serve in
- 16 terms of the risk reduction. This you can see here,
- other years, prior to the construction of the dam, what
- 18 came in through the dam in 1955 was 200,000 cfs inflow.
- 19 Of course there's no dam, so we had 200,000 cfs down the
- 20 channel.
- 21 Post Oroville, you can see the continuation
- 22 effects that have occurred to make use of that vacant
- 23 space. 1964, '86, we talked a lot here about '97 peaked
- 24 at over 300,000. The lake was just over 150,000. And
- 25 then here in 2017, we had a peak close to 200,000. The

- 1 most we released was 100,000 out of lake. So that shows
- 2 you the attenuation effect of that vacant space.
- 3 Here's another graphic just putting in context
- 4 what these storms look like. So this is hours of the
- 5 event on the bottom. This is the inflow in hundreds of
- 6 thousands of CFS. The design event I was about, the
- 7 standard project flood, is in red here, and that shows
- 8 it peaking out at about 450,000 CFS. To put in context,
- 9 the yellowish line here is the 1997 event that we've
- 10 been talking about that peaked at 300,000. Somewhat
- 11 unusually shaped hydrograph in that it did plateau out
- 12 at that 300,000 CFS mark.
- Here's the 2017 event, February, in blue. And
- 14 so as Assemblyman correctly pointed out, '97 event, much
- 15 larger event than what we saw in 2017. And design flood
- is even larger, still, than what we saw in 1997.
- 17 MR. GALLAGHER: And, likewise, it would be
- 18 helpful, if you could, to not include the reservoir
- 19 elevations on this, too.
- MR. LEAHIGH: So that -- unfortunately, the
- 21 flood control picture is even more complicated than
- 22 that. Because, if it was just one reservoir we were
- 23 managing to, it would be pretty cut-and-dry in terms of
- 24 what I just presented. There's another element to it in
- 25 that it is a system, it is a Yuba Feather system that

we're talking about. So, most important benefit of --1 2 flood control benefit of these dams is to minimize the 3 flow downstream, not exceed these channel capacities. What's shown here is also part of our flood 4 control manual at the core. Do not exceed these --5 6 these flow rates at various locations downstream. Just 7 upstream of Yuba City on Feather River, on the Yuba River, there are also downstream controls. Downstream 8 9 of the confluence with the Yuba, 300,000. So the flood 10 control operations for Oroville and Bullards Bar are 11 definitely integrated in terms of, we have a shared 12 responsibility in maintaining those levee capacities 13 downstream. 14 Now, this is -- this is an important item in 15 terms of that coordination. In the original 1970 flood 16 control manual, there was an assumption that Marysville Dam would be built, which would have been a flood 17 18 control reservoir, would add part of its purpose as flood control, which would have been able to manage all 19 the branches -- I apologize, the other branches in the 20 21 Yuba River didn't come up very well on the slide. 22 essentially, the Bullards Bar only manages one of three 23 major branches of the Yuba River. The other two will essentially be unregulated flows. And so because of 24 25 that, the fact that it's a Yuba water agency, or those

- 1 other flows are not controlled, we would need to cut
- 2 back on releases to the Feather River to ensure that the
- 3 downstream control below the confluence at 300,000 is
- 4 maintained. And so although the 1970 manual did
- 5 contemplate Marysville Dam to be built, it also had some
- 6 alternative flood routings that assumes it was not
- 7 built. And that cutback on releases from Oroville were
- 8 causing surcharge of the lake because we can't store
- 9 water above (unintelligible) for a big flood event. But
- 10 that would activate the emergency spillway in a process
- 11 such as that. So I'm giving you that background because
- 12 that feeds into what we've talked -- to what I've just
- 13 talked about earlier, the enhanced flood pool. So
- 14 because of the -- because of the work that is being done
- on the Marysville spillway during the recovery process,
- 16 we had a need to limit the risk of that surcharge-type
- 17 operation. So in recognition of the fact that
- 18 Marysville Dam does not exist, we wanted to be able to
- 19 pass that standard project flood without activation of
- 20 the emergency spillway. And so that requires digging a
- 21 little deeper in that flood pool in order to maintain
- 22 that same level of flood risk that -- absent to
- 23 Marysville Dam. And so what we put in place, as you can
- see here, we just added in red, we have further drawdown
- 25 of the -- so black is the 1970 flood control

- 1 requirements. Again, this is the dry watershed. This
- 2 is the wet watershed down here. And so we added
- 3 several -- about a 170,000 in feet to the wet
- 4 requirement, and a lesser amount here on the dry. But
- 5 it has the same sort of progression from a -- the dry
- 6 wetness index to a wet index, especially to compensate
- 7 for the fact that Marysville Dam is not there to ensure
- 8 the same level of risk and not activate the emergency
- 9 spillway under that standard project flow. So now I am
- 10 going to talk a little bit about the --
- 11 MR. CROWFOOT: Maybe just go back. So then --
- 12 so then, essentially, that standard curve been in place
- 13 for 45, 50 years was adjusted, in part, because of the
- 14 emergency -- or the standard spillway was being
- 15 reconstructed. So ultimately, is this the expectation
- 16 going forward, or would it be modified back now that
- 17 we're back to normal operation?
- 18 MR. LEAHIGH: Yeah, I'm sorry. So that was
- 19 during construction. So we have recent improvements on
- 20 the emergency spillway. Thus meaning those improvements
- 21 and performance has been assessed as part of this
- 22 comprehensive needs assessment program. We don't have
- 23 an analysis yet. So we are going to continue to operate
- 24 with this enhanced flood pool until we get more
- 25 information on the risk assessment.

- 1 MR. CROWFOOT: Got it.
- 2 MR. CONNELLY: I got to point out
- 3 historically, though, if the Marysville dam was built in
- 4 the original operations, the lake would have been held
- 5 lower, and Oroville Lake wouldn't have been held as high
- 6 because you wouldn't have the water delivery pressures
- 7 that were promised under the Bond Act. So there is an
- 8 another backstory to this. I mean, without the
- 9 Marysville dam, the new norm became attainable at
- 10 900 feet. And if you read way back, it was right at the
- 11 Spillway 813. There's water delivery pressures. People
- 12 mind this.
- 13 MR. LEAHIGH: I can only speak as to as far as
- 14 how it was treated (Unintelligible) water. Excuse me.
- 15 So now I am going to touch a little bit on the Yuba
- 16 Feather forecast informed water operations initiative.
- 17 So this would represent the third official FIRO project.
- 18 The Corps has officially endorsed and adopted this FIRO
- 19 program. There are two other -- Lake Mendocino was the
- 20 first lake to start down this path for (Unintelligible)
- 21 reservoir operations. And Lake Prado down in southern
- 22 California is a dry dam essentially, by they've --
- 23 that's the second dam. So the Yuba Feather system is
- 24 kind of unique because it is a coordinated system. And
- 25 looking for the use of that FIRO project, you can see --

- 1 the agencies of the leads are the Department of Water
- 2 Resource, Yuba Water Agency, and other major partner is
- 3 Scripps Institute, and there's Center for Western
- 4 Weather and Water Extremes. Dr. Marty Ralph is one of
- 5 the foremost experts in atmospheric rivers, so he's one
- of the co-chairs of this Yuba Feather FIRO project. And
- 7 you can see the other members here with the Corps, we
- 8 have both on their engineering and research development
- 9 side of the house, plus our operations folks who are the
- 10 ones that develop water control manuals. For NOAA, we
- 11 have National Weather Service, and we also have National
- 12 Marine and Fishery Service. So they are involved in the
- 13 process and are aware of it as it moves forward. And,
- 14 of course, the water -- state water project operations.
- 15 Yes, we have Sonoma County is part of team here to
- 16 provide some insight from some of their experience in
- 17 the Mendocino FIRO program. And to me, what it really
- 18 boils down to is two components of FIRO; one is to
- 19 invest in the instrumentation and research into
- 20 improving those forecasts. That was pretty much a
- 21 no-brainer. The second component is can our skill level
- 22 at forecast be applied to operational changes in how we
- 23 manage the dam in terms of how we get more out of the
- 24 flood control and water supply benefits that the dams
- 25 provide. And so I think the jury's still out on that

- 1 one. We need to go through the process. But certainly,
- 2 I think there's a lot of potential there. Lake
- 3 Mendocino has demonstrated that, at least for their
- 4 reservoir, it's potentially a good fit. And -- so Yuba
- 5 Water Agency in Bullards, I'm very interested in it as
- 6 it related to their new infrastructure that they are
- 7 looking at. And there certainly would be some aspect
- 8 related to any update of the water control manual as it
- 9 relates to Lake Oroville as well.
- 10 MR.GALLAGHER: Just a question as it relates to 2017, because
- 11 it sounds like the concern has been that we didn't -- we
- weren't able to anticipate that the storm was going to
- 13 be as big and move like it did, or sit over the
- 14 watershed like it did. So is one hope for this forecast
- and form reservoir operation that we're going to improve
- 16 our ability to forecast such storms?
- 17 MR. LEAHIGH: Yes. That is -- that is the
- 18 hope. I will say the operations in 2017, as we probably
- 19 know, was not -- it was an unusual, because it was an
- 20 emergency situation. We have deviations from that water
- 21 control diagram in coordination the Corps because of the
- 22 emergency on the failure of the main spillway. So we
- 23 were operating at a level much higher than -- so we were
- 24 not providing that -- that buffer. And so inherently
- 25 there was additional because of that, because we were

- 1 balancing the various risks occurring at the time. But,
- 2 generally, yes, that is correct. We are looking for
- 3 improvements in those forecasts to better manage both
- 4 the water supply benefit, and the -- certainly the
- 5 (Unintelligible) side of it.
- 6 MS. NEMETH: John, can you say a little bit
- 7 more about the no-brainer instrumentation that you were
- 8 describing, and some of the work that DWR has done?
- 9 Maybe, Ted, you could add to it. But some of the new
- 10 things we've put into place to more accurately forecast
- 11 for watershed.
- MR. LEAHIGH: Yeah. So we've already made a
- 13 number of investments in new instrumentation. So for
- 14 example, one thing that's very important in terms of the
- 15 research on these atmospheric rivers is getting a better
- 16 handle on where is the -- essentially, where's the
- 17 freezing line in the atmosphere? So the department has
- 18 invested in a couple of these upward -- upward-looking
- 19 Doppler radar that will give us a good read. We have at
- 20 Thermalito. We also have on the cost because you want
- 21 to track these things as they come inland. And this
- 22 will be a huge benefit to the research on getting a
- 23 better understanding of these -- of these systems as
- 24 they come in. And that is one -- that is probably one
- of the key uncertainties to pin down is, where is that

- 1 freezing line in the atmosphere. Because, like I said,
- 2 the biggest risk events are those atmospheric rivers
- 3 that -- where the freezing line is above the elevation
- 4 of the highest pointed watershed, and so rainfall is on
- 5 the entire watershed. So the other thing we've invested
- 6 in, the state has partnered with others -- the federal
- 7 government -- in terms of during the next few years of
- 8 the FIRO program where the Air Force flies what's called
- 9 these hurricane hunters in the -- in the -- during the
- 10 hurricane season, which is essentially June,
- 11 July through November. And fortunately for us, that's
- 12 the exact opposite time of the year of when we have the
- 13 atmospheric river risks. So we are funding these
- 14 hurricane hunters to act as atmospheric river hunters,
- if you will, on the west coast. So we have a number of
- 16 flights that will be getting ocean observations that
- 17 will be flying into these atmospheric rivers as they
- 18 develop over the Pacific. So that's just a couple of
- 19 examples. We are also going to be funding new
- 20 monitoring within the watersheds in both the Yuba River,
- 21 and the Feather River, soil moisture climate station
- 22 facilities. So all of these will be benefits as part of
- 23 that program.
- 24 MR. GALLAGHER: Just really quick on that. I mean, so this
- 25 -- this should significantly improve the data and

information we have that -- that we have to help kind of 1 2 see what these events are going to do that we did have 3 in 2017; right? 4 MR. LEAHIGH: That is -- that is certainly the 5 hope, yes. We talked to Dr. Marty Ralph, and he feels 6 very confident that -- that improvements can be made. I 7 personally would caution that, you know, science takes time. Takes time to get data. Takes time to utilize 8 9 that data to improve forecasts. But that is -- that is 10 certainly the -- what our expectations would be. 11 12 13 MS. NEMETH: And that's really what we'll be 14 bringing to the table when we're working with the Corps 15 to update the flood manual. We want to make sure we're 16 doing as much investment as we can now with some of 17 these new technologies. Because, ultimately, you know, 18 we need the Corps to, you know, find them, be comfortable with them. And we need their agreement to 19 20 help us use this new data to shape a new flood curve 21 that everyone has confidence in. 22 I'd like to say that Butte County MR. CONANT: 23 is really attuned to this and agree with you. The Corps has been very linear in their thoughts, and not very 2.4 25 flexible. And as the science develops, it may be that

- 1 the fluctuation of the reservoir putting public safety
- 2 first will have to be greater. So we would like to
- 3 cooperate with you in any endeavor to change the Corps'
- 4 mind by whatever means. Thank you.
- 5 MR. CROWFOOT: And, John, you mentioned, you
- 6 know, a lot of this takes a while to develop. But
- 7 then -- Director Nemeth mentioned that there's some
- 8 instrumentation that's already been put in place. So
- 9 when we have our next meeting, or the following meeting
- 10 after the wet season, it will be helpful to get an
- 11 update from DWR in terms of how that instrumentation
- 12 performed like this winter.
- MR. LEAHIGH: Absolutely.
- MR. CROWFOOT: Good. Let's move --
- MR. LEAHIGH: Just a final slide. It kind of
- 16 touches on what Karla just mentioned. So all of these
- 17 things that I just covered, the work that we've done in
- 18 terms of developing this interim flood control operation
- 19 strategy, including the enhanced flood pool. So flood
- 20 engineering went behind that. The comprehensive needs
- 21 assessment for dam safety, that program, and the FIRO
- 22 program, all of those we see as components to how
- 23 informed these -- these are components that the Corps
- 24 can use when they go through that update process at the
- 25 water control management. So we're laying the

- 1 groundwork here for The Corps to use. And we're taking
- 2 some initiatives to -- prior to an update taking place.
- 3 MR. CROWFOOT: That's really helpful. I want
- 4 to do a time check. I want to make sure we have at
- 5 least 45 minutes for public comment.
- 6 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: John, I appreciate your
- 7 discussion, especially '97. Our family have property up
- 8 at the 5,000-foot level, we have four-and-a-half foot of
- 9 snow. And then morning by 3:00, we had no snow. And
- 10 how do you, you know, track that, and how do you see
- 11 that? Now, we knew that because of a very strange
- 12 (Unintelligible). You made a -- mentioned about having
- 13 Doppler and more Doppler information. Or oville does
- 14 have a Doppler that's operated by Beale Air Force Base.
- 15 I'm wondering if maybe a Doppler, a DWR Doppler, in the
- 16 Feather River Basin watershed might be the better idea
- 17 to get more specific information. Because, when those
- 18 cells come running through -- and we all watch them when
- 19 we see the colors -- that would probably be a great way
- 20 for you to get direct information. And there's a lot of
- 21 mountaintops that probably could well be suited to that
- 22 operation.
- MR. LEAHIGH: Yeah. And I -- so that's
- 24 exactly what the, you know, purpose of these
- 25 upward-facing Dopplers is. And so that -- that

- 1 installation already occurred a couple of years ago,
- 2 both at the (Unintelligible) which is -- that's at the
- 3 direction of which the storms are coming. So that would
- 4 give us a very good idea of how much of the watershed is
- 5 going to be impacted by rain versus snow effect, which
- 6 is incorporated from The National Weather Service, and
- 7 the California Nevada Corps Cast Center in terms of
- 8 developing those forecasts. So they're looking at more
- 9 components. They're looking at snowmelt that would be
- 10 occurring during these events, as well as the direct
- 11 runoff.
- 12 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: That was a very strange
- 13 day to see all that gone in one day.
- MR. LEAHIGH: That is an area of a lot of
- 15 research is, exactly how much is the snowmelt during
- 16 these events contributing to runoff. You know, early
- indications are, there's about a 10 to 15 percent
- 18 increase in those events. But that is definitely an
- 19 area of a lot of research.
- One last question. As I understand it, we're
- 21 seeing warming winter temperatures. That means more of
- 22 our precipitation will be, you know, rain and snow over
- 23 time. So as you plan for the, you know, future of flood
- 24 protection in this watershed, are you all considering
- 25 what that trajectory looks like, you know, rain versus

- 1 snow in incoming decades?
- 2 MR. LEAHIGH: Yes. That's a big part of it.
- 3 So the Central Valley Flood Protection Plan is looked at
- 4 at the climate change effects on individual basins. The
- 5 one take home is that -- not the standard project
- 6 flood-type events. They are already making assumptions
- 7 of very warm storms and much of the watershed. So they
- 8 are already kind of on the extreme end. But it's these
- 9 more intermediate-type storms that they think they would
- 10 occur more frequently. But certainly, they still fit
- 11 within the design parameters of the flood control
- 12 diagram as it exists today.
- 13 MR CROWFOOT: Got it.
- MR. LEAHIGH: But that's an active area of
- 15 investigation as well.
- MR CROWFOOT: Thanks so much.
- MS. NEMETH: Your flood control, you know,
- 18 presentation is great. I guess the only thing that I
- 19 wonder about is how it relates to water delivery. I
- 20 think that, you know, it's such a balance between flood
- 21 control and water delivery in this reservoir. It would
- 22 be helpful for the public to understand a little bit
- 23 better how those things are managed. I know that last
- 24 spring, when we did (Unintelligible) for the first time,
- 25 there was a lot of concern from the community. You

- 1 know, rightly so; it was the first time using it. When
- 2 we were approaching that encroachment, a lot of people
- 3 in the community were wondering why releases weren't
- 4 being made -- high releases weren't being made before we
- 5 got into it. So I think it would be helpful for people
- 6 to understand that balance more of water delivery and
- 7 flood control
- 8 MR. LEAHIGH: Yeah, good -- good comment. And
- 9 I think maybe that does pretty well with the next topic,
- 10 perhaps, which is communications. But essentially, the
- 11 flood control diagram shows where that boundary is
- 12 between conservation and flood control protection.
- 13 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: That's the point there.
- 14 It's the inverse; right? Like, you're looking at,
- obviously, the flood protection. But the other side of
- 16 that is how much you're trying to keep in the reservoir
- 17 for water deliveries later in the year; right?
- 18 A. That's right, yep.
- 19 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I would just add that
- 20 in this case, you have, you know -- you know, looking
- 21 over your shoulder at the Army Corps of Engineers,
- 22 right, which has a statutory, you know, flood control
- 23 flood or flood risk reduction responsibility that's, you
- 24 know, has a reputation of being very conservative as it
- 25 relates to flood risk. So you know, the way I would put

- 1 it -- and DWR, obviously, does have a (unintelligible)
- 2 flood protection water supply, but you also have, you
- 3 know, The Federal Flood Agency ensuring that you're
- 4 operating in terms of flood safety parameters.
- 5 MR. LEAHIGH: Yeah, that's fair. I mean, that
- 6 was -- the federal investment in the dam is for flood
- 7 protection, and it's the basin storage. So that's what
- 8 they've invested in, that's what they oversee to ensure
- 9 that we operate.
- 10 MR. GALLAGHER: And I don't think anybody is
- 11 saying that you're not following those guidelines. I
- 12 don't want to be misunderstood there. But what I'm
- 13 saying is that curve that we were looking at, the first
- one, the Army Corps flood manual curve, is, one,
- 15 outdated. I think pretty much everybody up here agrees.
- 16 And if you look at that curve, what is -- you're
- measuring for that flood pool that they established;
- 18 right? But on the inverse, the other side of that,
- 19 you're managing to maximize the amount of water that you
- 20 keep in there below the flood curve for water
- 21 deliveries.
- 22 MR. LEAHIGH: That's right.
- MR CROWFOOT: So it's the inverse.
- MR. LEAHIGH: Yeah, it's important.
- 25 Multipurpose.

- Meeting on 11/20/2019 1 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I guess what the 2 Assemblyman is saying -- I'm Mr. Blunt -- we were in 3 Washington D.C. talking to the Army Corps, and they 4 were -- I think we got to change their minds about some 5 things. I mean, they're attitude was, well, if we, you 6 know, almost flood you every ten years, we're doing our 7 jobs. "Don't build in a floodplain." And I think the 8 Assemblymen tried to do an eloquent job of changing 9 their mind. I did a less than effective job of changing 10 their mind. So we did have an issue here that, as a
- 11 local representative, I think we want absolutely public
- 12 safety first. And I understand the unspoken pressures
- 13 of water delivery, because that's what this reservoir
- 14 was built for. Thank you for your question, gentleman.
- But we're going to have to work together to change the 15
- 16 Army Corps' attitude and put that safety in front of
- 17 water delivery. Thank you. How was that?
- 18 MR. CROWFOOT: So let's do this. John, thank
- 19 I want to take -- we have an update on
- communications, and I want to spend 15 minutes on that, 20
- 21 and then move to public comment, if we could.
- 22 MS. MELLON: I'll try to be efficient so that
- 23 we make sure we get enough time for public comment. I'm
- Erin Mellon. I am the assistant director of public 2.4
- 25 affairs office with the Department of Water Resources.

- 1 I came onboard soon after the February 2017 incident. I
- 2 helped out with the reconstruction communication, so
- 3 I've met many of you. And for those who I haven't met
- 4 personally, thank you for having us today, and thank you
- 5 for your participation in this. I was told how to
- 6 advance a slide, but I forgot. It's not that one. I
- 7 only have one slide, so it should have been easier than
- 8 it was. I think, you know, a lot of the information
- 9 that we provided today -- obviously, what's really
- 10 important to you all is getting that information, having
- it in an accessible, easy-to-understand way that you can
- 12 share with your communities, your constituents, and also
- 13 having a direct line of communication with the general
- 14 public. And I think we are continuing to learn about
- 15 how to do that. And we really appreciate your feedback
- 16 and guidance. Because, as we make those attempts,
- 17 sometimes we miss the mark, and it helps to hear from
- 18 you about how we can adjust that, either in how we're
- 19 talking about those things, or the tactics and tools
- 20 we're using in order to deliver those communication
- 21 tools. So I am going to give you kind of an overview on
- 22 some of the resources that we have available now. And I
- 23 am going to talk specifically about some of the
- 24 communication efforts that we want to put in place in
- 25 this -- and for every future -- wet season. I'll start

- 1 off with the slide that's up on the board. Liza
- 2 Whitmore. So before February 2017, we didn't have a
- 3 communications public affairs person in Oroville. We
- 4 created that position. We hired Liza Whitmore, who's
- 5 here raising her hand. Liza is a resident of the area.
- 6 She was a resident of Paradise. Unfortunately, lost her
- 7 home to the fire, as many of your constituents, and
- 8 friends and family, I'm sure, did, too. So now she's in
- 9 Chico. She is going to be our point person. She, I'm
- 10 sure, has met a lot of you. She's available to come to
- 11 meetings, present about DWR, or facilitate those
- 12 conversations when we need the experts like John, and
- 13 Gary, and folks. So her contact information is up on
- 14 the board. Also up there are the e-mail address and
- 15 phone number that we sent up after the February 2017
- 16 incident. We don't get nearly as many calls as we did
- over the last two years, so we're feeling a little
- 18 lonely. So if you want to pick up the line and give us
- 19 a call, that's the best way to reach us. You'll get an
- 20 automated voice mail, but we will call you back in
- 21 person. The e-mail address is also really helpful.
- 22 That's where we want to consolidate all of your
- 23 questions, because it's where we can track and make sure
- 24 that we're getting back to you. It's also where you
- 25 would -- I know there's a question on -- the topic dam

- 1 (Unintelligible) earlier today about how get
- 2 information. That e-mail address sends out weekly
- 3 updates about all things that we're doing up in Oroville
- 4 field division, it gives traffic updates. We work with
- 5 our partners at Parks, Fish and Wildlife, also the CHP
- 6 as well, and Butte County Sheriff to make sure that
- 7 we're communicating information about public safety.
- 8 It's also where we post information about operational
- 9 changes, and reservoir levels, and (Unintelligible).
- 10 That actually -- so we send that electronically every
- 11 Friday. And we are also running that information in an
- 12 advertisement in The Chico Enterprise Record, and that
- 13 comes out on the weekends. I think an important tool
- 14 that we're employing are meetings like this. And I
- 15 thank you, Senator Nielsen, for setting this up, because
- 16 I do think the most effective way is a conversation.
- 17 This kind of meeting facilitates that. There was a
- 18 question, also, at the site visit this morning about the
- 19 comprehensive needs assessment, which I know many of you
- 20 participated in as well. There's a community ad hoc
- 21 group that we meet with on a regular basis and walk
- 22 through that process of looking at that facility as a
- 23 whole. It's your point, Supervisor Conant, that's kind
- 24 of where the discussions about potential needs for
- 25 additional ways of releasing water from the reservoir

- 1 and, you know, addition outlets. That information and
- those meetings are videotaped and they're on our
- 3 website, and people can engage in the department through
- 4 that. Our website, of course, is a fantastic resource
- 5 that I really encourage you all to check out. It's
- 6 where we put our reports. We made a very significant
- 7 effort to increase our transparency, so that's where
- 8 information about use of the spillway is used, and
- 9 inspection reports, and stored information as well. We
- 10 have, obviously, press releases. And we do pretty
- 11 regular blogs, and will be doing a blog specifically
- 12 about winter operations, and have done that for the last
- 13 two years. Social media, of course, I don't have that
- on my slide, but Gary Lippner did on his. We are on
- 15 Twitter, and Facebook, and Instagram, and Linkedin, and
- 16 YouTube, and all of the instants, and things, and
- 17 filters, and whatever else it does. That's a really
- 18 handy way for us to put out short bits of information
- 19 that are maybe, you know, more timely. We also post a
- 20 lot of videos and photos, have a couple million hours of
- 21 video footage of the reconstruction effort, and things
- 22 like that. So I would encourage subscribing to our
- 23 YouTube channels. As far as the winter operations -- or
- 24 operations generally -- what we've worked on doing is
- 25 identifying what I'm calling "trigger points" of when

- 1 there's activity happening where folks are -- increased
- 2 questions about what's happening with lake levels and
- 3 operations come into play. To your point, Genoa,
- 4 allocation. That's a big thing that there's a
- 5 connection point between what's happening at the
- 6 reservoir, and decisions made about allocations. The
- 7 department tries to communicate about all these
- 8 different things. What I think we don't do well, that
- 9 we need to work on, is breaking down the silos between
- 10 these different kinds of parallel efforts. Because, we
- 11 talk about allocations, but you don't necessarily talk
- 12 about allocations as it relates to Oroville. We talk
- about our snow surveys, but we don't necessarily talk
- 14 about snow surveys and the water content in those snow
- 15 surveys as it relates to runoff into the reservoir. And
- 16 that's where I think we need to a better job of
- 17 connecting those dots. So some of those triggers, like
- 18 I said, allocations or changes to lake levels due to
- 19 either deliveries for water supply, or environmental
- 20 water quality releases. Obviously, water storms. When
- 21 we see atmospheric rivers upon the horizontal, we want
- 22 to be communicating a lot, often, early, and frequent.
- 23 Similarly, dry weather. You know, when we're seeing a
- 24 pattern of many days or months of no water, that
- 25 obviously has an impact of recreation, like ramp

- 1 availability and things like that. Another thing that I
- 2 identify as a trigger are our lake reports. So when we
- 3 are issuing a report about the performance of the
- 4 spillway, or when there's independent review of that
- 5 report, we want to make sure that we are getting them
- 6 into folks' hands so they can review it in real time. I
- 7 talked about snow surveys and snowpack, that's another
- 8 good example of trying to be more specific about how
- 9 that information informs the decisions that folks on
- 10 John Leahigh's team made for Oroville. And then
- 11 lastly -- there's a whole list of these, but one that I
- 12 will touch on is construction. I am going to steal a
- 13 bottle of water. Sorry. Thank you. Obviously, the
- 14 last two years have been a lot of construction. We've
- 15 had to make adjustments to the operations, and like John
- 16 was talking about, the enhanced flood pool, which is
- 17 related to the operations. And now, as we move into
- implementation of the comprehensive needs assessment,
- 19 and the lake that (Unintelligible) that, there may be
- 20 adjustments to lake levels. So that's another thing
- 21 that we want to make sure we're connecting those dots
- 22 on. What I've heard from you all -- and specifically
- thank you to Senator Nielsen's office, and Assemblyman
- 24 Gallagher, your staff has been very communicative about
- 25 what you guys need from us. Timeliness is really

- 1 important. Excuse me. I'm getting over a cold. We
- 2 want to be very proactive for our communication. Like I
- 3 said, we want to come out ahead of these things. We do
- 4 try to do that. We make the commitment to keep trying
- 5 to do that. Sometimes we will do it better than other
- 6 times. I think another one is "show not tell." And
- 7 some of the data that John Leahigh presented, and the
- 8 suggestion to add elevation levels, that's a really
- 9 helpful suggestion. Giving you guys that data, and not
- 10 trying to describe it, but actually just provide it and
- 11 maybe give our assessment of it and explain how we use
- 12 it. But let you guys see it as well so that you can
- 13 make your own conclusions. I also think -- excuse me --
- 14 giving you all more access to our experts. So we have
- 15 John Leahigh here in the office. We have Gary Lippner
- 16 and his (Unintelligible) team. We also have a state
- 17 climatologist. Providing more opportunities like this
- 18 to present, videotaping their presentations, pushing
- 19 that information out, doing O and As, and answering some
- of the most common questions; these are some of the
- 21 tactics that we are going to be using moving forward,
- 22 including all of the other communication tactics that I
- 23 kind of went through. So that's a broad overview of
- 24 what we're thinking about. Like I said, I'm going be --
- 25 I'm committed, and our team is very committed in

- 1 (Unintelligible) direction to open, transparent, and
- 2 frequent communication. So -- excuse me. Thank you for
- 3 this opportunity. And I'm about sorry about the cough.
- 4 MR CROWFOOT: No worries. Just one key take
- 5 away, to me, when we were up at the dam this morning,
- 6 somebody said, hey, how do I -- how can I actually sort
- 7 of stay in the loop on what the DWR is doing? And it
- 8 sounds like you have a Listserv that people can sign up
- 9 for that puts out an update every Friday?
- 10 MS. MELLON: That's right.
- 11 MR CROWFOOT: And then presumably, this
- 12 winter, if they are big storms coming through, or what
- 13 have you, and you want to provide, you know, more
- information, you'll use that Listserv?
- MS. MELLON: That's exactly right. And the
- 16 way to get logged onto that is by e-mailing that
- 17 (Unintelligible). And like I said, the Friday is like a
- 18 standing e-mail. But to your point, Secretary, as these
- 19 triggers happen, and as things change, we see weather
- 20 patterns, we will increase that communication on all of
- 21 these -- through all these platforms.
- 22 MR. CROWFOOT: Great. Thank you.
- 23 Assemblyman?
- MR. GALLAGHER: So this is big issue for me.
- 25 And I know Erin has heard plenty from me and my chief on

- 1 this issue. We have to do a better job. I am just
- 2 going to say very quickly, DWR has to do a better job of
- 3 communicating during -- you know, during the flood
- 4 season, during the winter periods. I mean, there's
- 5 several things that you brought up, but what I really
- 6 want to hear -- and I am just going emphasize that
- 7 again -- is that not that we have to communicate. I
- 8 mean, we are trying to communicate. But DWR has to
- 9 communicate, otherwise there's going to be a vacuum
- 10 that's going to get filled by something. And so I'll
- 11 just give an example. This last time, there was a lot
- of people wondering, hey, why aren't you doing more
- 13 releases? Why are you allowing the lake level to rise?
- 14 We see that there's a snowpack up there, that, you know,
- 15 this could lead to a significant situation. DWR said
- 16 nothing. There was nothing out there on social media,
- on any -- any method of communication. I had to --
- 18 ultimately, I got on the phone, I talked with you guys.
- 19 And our office literally had to relay what I got from
- 20 and you the state climatologist. We did that on May
- 21 16th. You wouldn't believe the amount of things I got
- 22 back from people like, thank you for finally somebody
- 23 saying something about what's going on, why they're
- 24 doing this. And it was just getting out factual
- 25 information. So you guys have to do that. Like -- and

- 1 I'm not looking just at you, Erin -- you have to have a
- 2 way of communicating. Here's why we're doing these
- 3 things at the dam, and explaining some of that
- 4 information in a simple way, you know, to the public.
- 5 Because when there's nothing out there then people --
- 6 you know, all they can do is speculate. You know, or
- 7 all they can do is go off what they're seeing
- 8 themselves, or maybe what somebody else is saying. And
- 9 that information may not be correct. And it could
- 10 cause, you know, kind of a hysteria. So we do need to
- 11 hear directly from DWR. Certainly, you can help us and
- 12 provide people to us. And we'll help communicate that,
- 13 too. But it has to be DWR. You guys are the ones
- 14 running, operating, maintaining, doing all the, you
- 15 know, things up there. So the communication has to come
- 16 directly to the public. So I mean, I just want to
- 17 really emphasize that point, and make sure that we do a
- 18 lot better this season on that issue.
- 19 MS. NEMETH: So I am in 1,000 percent
- 20 agreement. And sort of in that spirit, I think a lot of
- 21 what Erin described today needs to be written and known.
- 22 So to me, predictability is really important in terms of
- 23 communication so people understand more readily what
- 24 these triggers are. And we can establish more
- 25 predictable communications around these decision points,

- 1 be it an allocation, be it heading into a series of
- 2 storms, be it where we are in our flood curve in terms
- 3 of things that could, for example, activate the gated
- 4 spillway. So point noted, Assemblymember. I think
- 5 it's an excellent point, and I'm in complete agreement.
- 6 And we are going to make some continuous improvements in
- 7 that department. So thank you.
- 8 MS. WIDENER: If I could add some constructive
- 9 criticism. I get those e-mails every week. I see the
- 10 ad in the paper. A lot of it reads like an
- 11 advertisement for DWR rather than facts for the
- 12 community. It's just -- I know that there is a certain
- 13 amount of, you know, trying to get back the reputation
- 14 of DWR, but I think the best way to do that is just
- 15 simply give the people the facts and how it relates to
- 16 them.
- 17 MR. CROWFOOT: That's really helpful. I mean,
- 18 this commission is all about direct, candid feedback and
- 19 honest talks. So I appreciate that. I think we also
- 20 have an opportunity with this commission to hold
- 21 ourselves accountable. So you can let us know how we're
- 22 actually doing this winter. And then, obviously, having
- 23 (Unintelligible) on the ground here is going to be
- 24 another important improvement. So Erin, thank you very
- 25 much. I want to move to public comment, if we could.

- 1 MS. MELLON: Thank you for your comments. I
- 2 absolutely take them to heart.
- 3 MR. CROWFOOT: Good. So we have a number of
- 4 folks. What I'll ask everyone to do, if you're going to
- 5 speak is -- to keep your comment within three minutes so
- 6 we can make sure that we hear from everybody here today.
- 7 We'll start off with Tony Catalano from Feather River
- 8 Center. And following Tony will be Shawn Rohrbacker from
- 9 the Feather River Recreation and Park District.
- 10 MR. CATALANO: Hi. Thank you for seeing us,
- 11 today. I want to thank you for doing this today. My
- 12 name is Tony Catalano. I'm the executive director of
- 13 the Feather River Center. We do -- we're the concession
- 14 here at the (Unintelligible). We do boating, water
- 15 safety programs, recreational boating, field trips for
- 16 elementary kids; we served 3,000 kids this past year.
- 17 We do equipment rentals in the summer. And we're here
- 18 because we've done a lot of collaboration with Water
- 19 Resources, and the state parks, and the City of
- 20 Oroville, and Feather River Rec and Park District for
- 21 economical development, recreational development, and
- 22 educational development in this -- for the City of
- 23 Oroville. I want -- the SBF board had been great to us.
- 24 Mr. Pittman is on that board, and Chuck Reynolds is
- 25 also. They've been very helpful. We appreciate the

- 1 time that we've received from Matt Teague at state
- 2 parks, and from Eric (unintelligible) and Liza Whitmore,
- 3 and Jason (unintelligible), and Andy (unintelligible) at
- 4 Water Resources. We're working on a lot of development
- 5 projects, and they have been very helpful with those.
- 6 In fact, we have one going now on courtesy of the
- 7 supplemental benefits fund. Mr. Connelly and the board
- 8 supervisors have been very helpful. We've spoken with
- 9 board supervisors about our recreational plans.
- 10 Mr. Nielsen's office has met with us. We met with Mr.
- 11 Gallagher on a couple of occasions. We just wanted to
- 12 say we look forward to working with this committee -- or
- 13 this commission. And when you get to the point of
- 14 development of recreational projects, we will work with
- 15 you on that. Our goal is to make Oroville a recreation
- 16 destination. So when it comes time to talk about
- 17 recreation projects, we'll be at that meeting. So thank
- 18 you very much. Good luck.
- MR. CROWFOOT: Thank you very much. The tail
- 20 end of this meeting we will be talking about future
- 21 topics for this commission, one of which might be
- 22 recreation. So next, we will hear from Shawn, followed
- 23 by Tasha Levinson.
- MR. ROHRBACKER: Hello. Good afternoon.
- 25 just wanted to introduce myself as the general manager

- 1 for the Feather River Recreation and Park District here
- 2 in Oroville. And similar to Tony, any time there are
- 3 recreation-type elements tied to this commission,
- 4 especially directly downriver through the city, we
- 5 manage a trail system that's on that levee, right near
- 6 downtown, 210 Acre Riverbend Park, it's right along the
- 7 river. I was also curious if this commission plans to
- 8 address any sort of restoration of the river, downstream
- 9 of the dam, in sort of mitigation through the river
- 10 corridor for future flooding?
- 11 MR. CROWFOOT: I think it's a fair question.
- 12 And as we conclude the meeting, we'll talk about future
- 13 topics. I think we really want commissioners to
- 14 identify the topic as priorities to discuss. And so if
- our commissioners deem that as a priority, the
- 16 restoration discussion, we will certainly address that.
- 17 MR. ROHRBACKER: Thank you.
- 18 MR CROWFOOT: Thank you very much. Tasha,
- 19 followed by Hellen Dennis.
- 20 MS. LEVINSON: Hi. I'm just a local citizen,
- 21 not any particular group. And I -- while I enjoy and
- 22 appreciate this meeting, I think you've missed the main
- 23 point, which is the 2017. This was caused by poor
- 24 maintenance that had gone on for decades. You've got
- 25 all kinds of security so people can't see what's going

- on. DWR has had several life-threatening events over
- 2 the last few decades. They've refused to learn from
- 3 that to really improve their maintenance. They're
- 4 always making decision to try to please the water
- 5 contractors down south, and really not for safety of us.
- 6 I'd love to see just a different attitude towards your
- 7 jobs. Thank you.
- MR. CROWFOOT: Thank you very much, Tasha.
- 9 Helen Dunce, followed by Robert Bateman. And Hellen's
- 10 going to make her way up. If you could give her the
- 11 mic.
- MS. DENNIS: I just have a couple of questions.
- 13 One, I want to know if -- when we had the 2017 incident,
- 14 we had -- we were told that there is -- the turbines
- 15 weren't working, that most of them were down, and that
- 16 was causing flooding there in that turbine area. I want
- 17 to know if that's been fixed and it's going to continue
- 18 to be maintained so that we do not have to worry about
- 19 that flooding, and then causing damages to the dam and
- 20 our lives. Now, I know mine's as valuable as somebody
- 21 who is only 20, but there is still value, because I am
- 22 going to be a 105 or older. And then I am -- you know,
- 23 I'm going to reevaluate. So I really want you guys to
- 24 think about this. This is a very important thing for
- 25 all of us. I think about a little baby. They can't

- 1 save themselves. A child is not going to be able to.
- 2 They all think they're tough enough. We can't save
- 3 ourselves if that dam breaks, or if we have another one
- 4 of these catastrophic events, which I'm not sure we
- 5 won't in my lifetime. So I want you to really think
- 6 about that; that's important. And the other thing I
- 7 want to ask about is, you know, this secrecy that is
- 8 going on. I know there's -- I was told 9/11. But
- 9 before 2017, we didn't have all that barbed wire or
- 10 wire, whatever you call it. I felt like I was in prison
- 11 this morning up there. Even the other side of spillway
- 12 at the boat ramp, there was so much of it, it wasn't
- 13 funny. I mean, it's very -- I really have told you
- 14 quys, I feel like it's a blight on our city, because --
- 15 someone from DWR who was explaining recreation
- 16 departments, what -- what they have going on, was -- was
- 17 telling us that, oh, isn't this beautiful? Well, look
- 18 up at the dam from any place -- any place around here,
- 19 and all you see is this massive structure of cement.
- 20 It's not beautiful. It is not. And I know they
- 21 (Unintelligible), but how long is that going to take?
- 22 And I did drive through Loafer Creek at another time,
- 23 and found lots and lots of woods gone. I'm not really
- 24 for that. Woods, trees, and things to be moved or
- 25 killed off. That's what it was. They were killed off.

- 1 Just bulldozed, or cut, or whatever. And that's not --
- 2 that's not great. That was -- Loafer Creek was supposed
- 3 to be a recreational area we can go to and enjoy. In
- 4 fact, I used to swim there, and take my children all the
- 5 time for barbecues. So I don't think that's beautiful.
- 6 You know, I think DWR says, okay, we are going to make
- 7 safety our component that we're going to talk about.
- 8 But you need to do more than that. You need to think
- 9 about -- and I understand the dirt, and not being good
- 10 soil, but you need to stop and think about the picture
- 11 you get from the other end, not just the one from the
- 12 top.
- MR. CROWFOOT: Hellen, thank you. Ted, do you
- 14 mind answering the two specific questions she asked?
- 15 One on the so-called turbines, and the other is on sort
- of the barbed wire fencing around some of the facilities
- 17 that we saw up there this morning.
- MR. CRADDOCK: Yeah. Good morning.
- 19 Commissioners Ted Craddock with DWR. Helen, thank you
- 20 for the questions and comments. In regards to the
- 21 turbines and power plants, the way that plant operates
- 22 when the water is a certain in the merging pool, it
- 23 creates what's called a tailwater effect on the
- 24 turbines. So during the incident, as the water level
- 25 rised (sic), the turbines just weren't able operate

- 1 because of the tailwater level. But then in regards to
- 2 our program for maintenance on turbines, currently,
- 3 we're going through a -- basically a refurbishment
- 4 program where we're systematically going through all the
- 5 turbines. And this is, you know, a long-term process
- 6 where we'll go one by one through the turbines. We
- 7 currently have five that are operational. One is out of
- 8 service. We have the turbine being refurbished and
- 9 readied to be put back in place, I believe, later this
- 10 spring. So that hopefully addresses hat first question.
- 11 And the other question was regarding security. So after
- 12 9/11, you know, throughout the United States, there's
- been an emphasis on protecting infrastructure from those
- 14 who would like to do potential harm to the facilities.
- 15 So the Department of Water Resources' work is working
- 16 with, you know, partners in law enforcement, and the
- 17 Department of Homeland Security to identify which are
- 18 the important facilities that we need to protect. So
- 19 the fencing that's up around the radial gate structure
- 20 and the spillway is one of those key areas that it's
- 21 important for us to protect, as well as a few others.
- 22 MR. CROWFOOT: Got it. I will say that a
- 23 comment I thought was a really good one up on the dam
- 24 today that I just want to make sure gets discussed here,
- 25 and ask a question about it. Since the 2017 incident,

- 1 there have been a number of independent reviews, and
- 2 independent experts coming in and helping understand
- 3 what's needed. And what I heard is the desire to really
- 4 institutionalize those recommendations into the
- 5 operations moving forward, and continuing to have those
- 6 third party, you know, experts actually ensuring that
- 7 we're doing what we need to be doing. Can you speak to
- 8 that?
- 9 MR. CRADDOCK: Yeah. Thank you for the
- 10 question, Secretary. So, you know, as part of a DWR in
- 11 the broader dam industry in the United States, it's been
- 12 recognized that it's important for operators of dams to
- 13 bring in expert panels to really take a close look at
- 14 the facilities. So in the case of Oroville and other
- 15 parts of the state water project system throughout the
- 16 state, we bring in a panel of three to five reviewers to
- 17 look at our facilities as part of a five-year review
- 18 process. So that's an important element. You know,
- 19 after the incident, it really is highlighted an area for
- 20 all dam owners in the United States, and actually
- 21 throughout the world, to look at as the importance of
- 22 taking a deeper dive, and to really look at the
- 23 facilities from a comprehensive review. And so what
- 24 we're doing as part of the comprehensive needs
- 25 assessment is bringing another panel separate from those

- 1 five-year reviews to take a close look at the
- 2 facilities, and see what level of, you know, possible
- 3 enhancements are needed to the facility. So that's one
- 4 example of what we're doing. We're starting to expand
- 5 that throughout the rest of the state water project
- 6 system as well.
- 7 MR. CROWFOOT: Got it. It will be helpful to
- 8 hear updates on that.
- 9 MS. NEMETH: Can I add to that?
- 10 MR. CROWFOOT: Sure.
- 11 MS. NEMETH: This CNA also has an ad hoc
- 12 committee that also meets, which I'm a part of. That's
- 13 very appreciated. The CNA is a one time thing. So
- 14 looking forward, it would be nice if there could be ad
- 15 hoc committees where the community could be more
- 16 involved in those five-year studies, or, you know, those
- 17 different inspections in the future.
- MR. CRADDOCK: Yeah, thank you for the
- 19 comment, Commissioner. I think that's one of the real
- 20 benefits we see of this commission, is that it's going
- 21 to provide a forum moving forward to share that
- 22 information. So once we complete the comprehensive
- 23 needs assessment, this will be a vehicle that I think we
- 24 see, and hopefully the commission sees, as a useful tool
- 25 to help us share that information.

1 MR. CROWFOOT: And we'll have to make sure 2 that's really substantive in meetings, because it sounds 3 like the CNA had been really substantive, the ad hoc 4 group. Let's move on to Robert Bateman from Feather 5 River Recovery Alliance, followed by Shannon Long. 6 MR. BATEMAN: I'm secretary of the Feather 7 River Recovery Alliance, and a local businessman. 8 started a business here 30 years ago. And from your 9 slides, it appears that we've traded a regular 10 controllable -- more or less controllable floods for the occasional inundation, which is much more difficult for 11 12 a business to handle. We've had two of those, and we 13 want to make sure there are no more. This is actually an elephant that's not in the room -- a very big 14 15 elephant -- and that's the state-ordered contractors. 16 They -- we need to balance safety against the 17 (Unintelligible). And it's a very uneven balance of 18 people seeking (Unintelligible). State contractors are very powerful, very wealthy, have lobbying in Sacramento 19 and Washington. And we have -- until this commission, 20 21 we had a disjointed community with no money to fight 22 their battles. So this commission has a great 23 opportunity, I think, to help a lot in reconciling that balance. I would like to know what paths the commission 24 25 will be given to counteract the pressure of water

- 1 contractors, and what action it intends to take. Unless
- 2 the respective action, in that regard, the commission is
- 3 likely to be seen as a publicity relations exercise for
- 4 the DWR. Thank you.
- 5 MR. CROWFOOT: Thank you very much. Let me
- 6 just say that the secretary of our agency, you know, we
- 7 have a responsibility to protect people from flood, and
- 8 provide water. It's a balance. I think what we want to
- 9 make sure is that there's transparency on this
- 10 commission, and that the local voices representing the
- 11 commission can identify what we need to talk about, and
- 12 then actually discuss those topics. You know, from my
- 13 perspective, actually, on a lot of water topics, we're
- 14 working to get away from us versus them, and sort of the
- 15 polarization on these topics, but understand where
- 16 people are coming from. So from my perspective, let's
- 17 deal with those issues, you know, head-on on this
- 18 commission to make sure you understand how we're making
- 19 decisions within state government.
- MR. BATEMAN: May I just make one comment?
- MR. CROWFOOT: Yes.
- MR. BATEMAN: It would be helpful if the state
- 23 would order contractors who had formally involved in
- 24 this process, I would think.
- MR. CROWFOOT: Yeah, that's helpful. And, you

- 1 know, at some point, it would be helpful to actually
- 2 invite them to come and talk about their role. You
- 3 know, we work with these folks every day. They actually
- 4 look a lot like people here. They, you know, have day
- 5 jobs and families to feed. And they are not, you know
- 6 (Unintelligible) from Southern California or the Central
- 7 Valley. So it would be helpful to actually have the
- 8 conversations. And that would be -- might be a good
- 9 opportunity to hear more around what's the relationship
- 10 between the contractors and DWR.
- 11 MS. NEMETH: Yeah, and I think the gentlemen
- 12 made a great suggestion about including a more detailed
- 13 presentation about how we make decisions around Oroville
- operations as it relates to water supply as kind of a
- 15 companion piece, if you will, to the flood aspects. And
- then we can all get all that information together,
- 17 understand it better, and hopefully have more productive
- 18 dialogue. I think your point is well taken about, you
- 19 know, where the state water contractors are in all of
- 20 these discussions. And I don't think it serves anyone
- 21 to sort of have them kind of hidden or shielded from the
- 22 conversations here today. We can take that point and
- 23 think a little bit more about it.
- MR. CROWFOOT: Yeah. So, Nick, if you would
- 25 just make a note that that would be a good topic for a

- 1 future conversation. Let's hear from Shannon, followed
- 2 by Robert Armstrong.
- 3 MR. LONG: Last time I was here, I was told I
- 4 was in the wrong spot. And I just want to make it clear
- 5 that I don't think this is a conservative or liberal
- 6 issue. Ronald Raegan said in his 1984 State of the
- 7 Union Address that, "When it comes to the protection of
- 8 our environment, essentially, it's not a liberal or
- 9 conservative concern, it's common sense." What you have
- in front of you is downtown Oroville. That's directly
- 11 above the park, Bedrock Park, where our kids are
- 12 supposed to swim. People say the homeless are most
- 13 vulnerable, I disagree. I think our children are the
- 14 most vulnerable. I wasn't blessed with any of them, but
- 15 I'm sure a lot of you folks were. So that is directly
- 16 where we're supposed to recreate. The commission on
- 17 your web page says you will discuss public safety
- 18 activities at Oroville dam and its facilities. It came
- 19 to my attention that you just had a meeting with Fish
- 20 Hatchery personnel with regards to their safety because
- 21 of what's going on down in our river. First guestion,
- 22 when's the public going to be notified of that? Second
- 23 question, it also mentions that you guys deal with flood
- 24 and elements issues on the Feather River. So obviously,
- 25 that's a problem when it floods. Right now, it's up to

- 1 me and some friends to go down there and pick it up. It
- 2 took us multiple days to pick that up. My question to
- 3 you is, what is the flood management issue of garbage
- 4 being flushed down this our river have to do with this
- 5 commission? I think it's a great place to discuss it,
- 6 basically. I also would like to say, I adamantly
- 7 disagree with flood management facilities not being able
- 8 to be used as recreational facilities. Fishing is a
- 9 recreation, and it's perfectly acceptable. I don't
- 10 think that has anything to go with blocking our
- 11 waterways with trees and such when there is a flood. So
- 12 you guys can answer the questions about the public
- 13 safety. Also, I had a couple suggestions real quick.
- 14 With the heightened security at the dam, there's a ton
- of CHP officers around here. They're a fabulous force,
- 16 and they really provide security. That's why they're
- 17 securing the -- not the White House -- our capital and
- 18 also the Governor. I see them all the time. I'm also a
- 19 docent at the Feather River Nature Center, which
- 20 currently, our doors are being busted open with axes at
- 21 night. Maybe if we have those officers, on the way to
- 22 and from the dam, patrol our levees, drop into Bedrock
- 23 Park, that may make a difference just having an extra
- 24 security force there. And also, I think that Butte
- 25 County and the state should align with Yuba County and

- 1 Sutter County, and make this an issue, and unite and
- 2 stand together saying that enough is enough. It's not a
- 3 matter of homeless. It's a matter of other things that
- 4 are being done to our rivers and streams. Thank you.
- 5 MR. CROWFOOT: Thank you very much for coming
- 6 to both meetings. And let me just say that, you know,
- 7 we are a new commission. So I think we are still trying
- 8 to understand what the scope of our work is. I'm really
- 9 sympathetic to the concerns he raises. You know, at the
- 10 same time, we obviously focused on public safety in the
- 11 reservoir. But I'll just say for myself as chair, if it
- is appropriate to, you know, address, you know, some of
- 13 these public safety issues within the flood volunteer
- 14 system underneath the dam, I think that's something we
- 15 can do. It's just up to the commission to do that when
- 16 we talked about future priorities for topics. Let's
- 17 hear from --
- 18 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Deputy has a --
- MR. CROWFOOT: Oh, yeah. Sorry.
- 20 MR. LICON: I'm sorry, the gentlemen that was
- 21 just up, your name again?
- MR. LONG: Shannon.
- 23 MR. LICON: Shannon. I just wanted to touch
- 24 on what you had said. I wanted to let you know that the
- 25 issues you have here are not exclusive to Oroville. I

- 1 know -- I feel like I can speak on behalf of Yuba County
- 2 as well, we have a neighboring relationship with each
- 3 other and kind of the same issues. But it's an issue
- 4 we're working with to try to alleviate on a local level
- 5 as well. So it's something that I think is consistent,
- 6 not just in Oroville, but everywhere downstream.
- 7 MR. MILLION: If I could add to that? It was
- 8 mentioned earlier that in Yuba County we had recently
- 9 adopted an ordinance. It's not an anti-homeless
- 10 ordinance, it's a camping and storage of property not
- 11 permitted within our waterway system. And it addressed
- 12 specifically about potential damage to levee systems
- that they're camping on the levee using a 50-foot toe
- 14 from the toe of the levee. You can't camp within that
- area and 250 feet within the waterway, or any
- 16 contributory waterway, whether it's a lake or
- 17 (Unintelligible) within the river system. And it's for
- 18 that specific reason, because we have seen that.
- 19 Unfortunately, it does appear that it targets people
- 20 that are homeless in that situation because those are
- 21 the people that are down there. It's not intended for
- 22 that. The intent is to keep the quiet and keep the
- 23 river systems from having waste, biohazard waste, pushed
- into a (Unintelligible) preserve for the safety of flood
- 25 control, and that's what it's directed towards. That's

- 1 mainly affecting the Feather River and the Yuba -- the
- 2 Yuba Sutter area. So we are aware of that. To address
- 3 it -- and it's kind of not with this committee -- but in
- 4 the situation like that, we do have resources that we
- 5 frequently use down there. We do (Unintelligible)
- 6 cleanups. I think over the last year, we moved,
- 7 probably, a hundred abandoned vehicles out of our system
- 8 to prevent that from being contaminated, the oils and
- 9 everything into the system. But that also goes into how
- 10 it affects flood control. One thing we focus with the
- 11 homeless issue, and it is a flood control issue, is that
- 12 last year we had different four different high water
- events, and we had a total of 700 people live inside
- 14 that levee system in the Riverwalk area, in our area.
- 15 So we have to go down and take the personnel to go down
- 16 and help -- hope they self-evacuate. The ones that
- don't because they're stubborn, we end up doing --
- 18 arresting them. So the flooding, which is inevitable --
- 19 the levee systems work for that purpose; to prevent
- 20 flooding into the residential areas. But sometimes
- 21 people aren't recognizing. If you don't see it until
- 22 the (Unintelligible), then you see how many homeless are
- 23 in sight of the areas in the levee. But that's a direct
- 24 reflect, and that's one of the reasons why we have that
- 25 ordinance. And it is a public safety thing because, no

- 1 matter what people think, they are part of the public,
- 2 and we have to provide a safe environment for them as
- 3 well. But we also have to manage that, so that is a
- 4 direct reflect from flood control. The information we
- 5 get, the information that was provided by all the
- 6 partners joining to make sure that we have the
- 7 information to evacuate people out of those areas.
- 8 MR. CROWFOOT: That's really helpful
- 9 information. Let's hear, next, from Robert Armstrong.
- 10 And if anybody would like to speak that didn't fill out
- 11 a speaker card, please do so.
- MR. ARMSTRONG: A couple of my questions have
- 13 kind of been asked already. I'm a big -- I want to
- 14 thank you guys for all doing this, too. But I'm a big
- 15 sporting fisherman, and I also do hunting and stuff.
- 16 And since '97, I've seen the Yuba and the Sutter pretty
- 17 much kind of ruin from all the silt that washes down
- 18 with these flood controls. And every time I've asked
- 19 and talked about people about these rivers and how we're
- 20 are going to maintain them for not only recreation use,
- 21 but for water flow, I'm always told it's an
- 22 environmental issue, we're tied up, we can't get stuff
- 23 to get in there and clean it out. So that's kind of my
- 24 challenge to ask DWR to get more information out there
- 25 and, like, what their plans are to maintain that river

- 1 infrastructure, and help to kind of help allow that
- 2 water flow be easier. Because I know where I live, out
- 3 in Yuba County, we have a pretty good swap between the
- 4 two levees there that would be -- dredge that out, or
- 5 simply take it out and maintain that, you can have
- 6 actually a good flow for that extra acreage of water and
- 7 how much you can fit through there to kind of store it
- 8 between when it flows down the river. So that's kind of
- 9 my question.
- 10 MR. CROWFOOT: That's helpful. Who from the
- 11 DWR would be best to answer the questions of silting of
- 12 the river system downstream from dams? If we don't have
- 13 the right person, too, we can talk about -- Supervisor?
- MR. BRADFORD: I serve on Sutter Butte -- or
- 15 (Unintelligible) improve the levee from the outlet to
- 16 Yuba City. And we're looking for funding and guidance
- 17 to help with that problem. So you might want to call
- 18 (Unintelligible), the director there, and see where that
- 19 is. I missed the last meeting, so I don't know exactly
- 20 where we're at on that subject. But it is complicated
- 21 because there are always environmental concerns when you
- 22 enter a river. Our take on it is it's restricting and
- 23 inhibiting flood protection, right? Because it's
- 24 filling up with silt, so your freeboard is going away.
- 25 And beyond that, I know you want to get your boat up and

- 1 down the river and let the fish flow. So might try
- 2 that.
- 3 MR. LIPPNER: Question, Secretary Crowfoot.
- 4 Gary Lippner with Department of Water Resources. I just
- 5 want to say, you know, I came from a, you know, local
- 6 person's partnership. Again, the state maintains, in
- 7 terms of Department of Water Resources, about ten
- 8 percent of the system. So this is an issue that would
- 9 be with the partners, with the local, the state, and the
- 10 federal. We are typically looking at channel capacity,
- 11 so where the sediment is, isn't as -- it's a priority.
- 12 We need to understand the sediment. But if channel
- 13 capacity isn't impaired, and the levees are repaired
- 14 from flood damage, that's our primary authority that we
- 15 have to work within the system and maintain the capacity
- 16 of the system. So we focus primarily on that.
- MS. NEMETH: I also wanted to add, Senator
- 18 Nielsen, Assemblymember Gallagher, did put some money in
- 19 a budget that was passed -- I think it was about
- 20 \$5 million -- to do some sedimentation removal in this
- 21 area. And that's something that the department is
- 22 working on together with the natural resources agency as
- 23 the grant-making agency. And so that's a good example
- 24 of the department communicating with the electives that
- 25 represent this area, and coming up with solutions that

- 1 can help us actually get the work done. So thank you to
- 2 both of you for doing that.
- 3 MR. NIELSEN: There's another aspect
- 4 of the sedimentation, too, and that's snags. If you
- 5 watch high weather times that we have so many snags from
- 6 downriver. The snags hang up, and they become the basis
- 7 of a dam. That couple with the silt and other things
- 8 that come down the river, that is a problem. So now
- 9 getting snags out is really a challenge. But at least
- 10 there's a start at this. It's nothing new. It always
- 11 has been. Siltation, I represented all the Sacramento
- 12 River's watershed into north and central delta. We have
- 13 lots of problems with snags. So to me, what's happening
- 14 is an elevated attention to this issue. Other times in
- 15 history -- and I've been dealing with this for a lot of
- 16 years -- there was a lot more attention paid -- paid at
- 17 any given time, and then it kind of diminishes. Not a
- 18 problem anyone, we don't think about it. I think
- 19 they're becoming much more on minds of policy makers,
- 20 and agencies, and citizens. So I'm encouraged that
- 21 progress, at least, is being made.
- MR. CROWFOOT: Well, that's great. And I know
- 23 that, of the \$5 million that Director Nemeth talked
- 24 about, there may have been a bureaucratic snag with
- 25 working on getting that out the door that your office

- 1 reached out to us about. So let's hold ourselves
- 2 accountable at the next meeting for giving an update in
- 3 terms of where that \$5 million is in terms of silt
- 4 removal and management. Thanks so much. Let's here,
- 5 next, from Matt Mentink.
- MR. MENTINK: Matt Mentink. Yuba City resident,
- 7 four-time evacuee. A family business was flooded in
- 8 '86, took (Unintelligible) Yuba County. Laid off dozens
- 9 of employees as all machinery in Louisville was stripped
- 10 down to (Unintelligible). I appreciate the effort the
- 11 DWR has made since the (Unintelligible) incident. The
- 12 ad hoc committee was something you did not have to do,
- 13 you chose to do. I appreciate having the opportunity to
- 14 serve as a member on that. I think there's been no
- 15 expense spared in the studies and investigations that
- 16 have been done to come up with the plans going forward
- on how Oroville can sustain the next 50 years. And
- 18 that's (Unintelligible). I look forward to the
- 19 information coming up the next two meetings. But after
- 20 those meetings, I think the biggest hurdles are yet to
- 21 come. And that's the part in which public communication
- 22 and transparency has been lacking in the past. Let me
- 23 just read a few bullet points that I shared with John
- 24 here. In our previous meeting here, he asked for some
- 25 comments, you know, what's it going to take for the

- 1 public to feel that we've really crossed that hurdle of
- 2 public transparency? And yesterday I sent him off some
- 3 bullet points. And looks like today might be a good
- 4 opportunity to elaborate on some of those publicly.
- 5 When communicating the plan selections, it's equally
- 6 important to share the plans not selected, and why;
- 7 especially those that were ruled out for physical
- 8 feasibility. During the proposed state water contract
- 9 extension, state water contractor proposal asked for
- one, an increase in a contractors rate reduction to \$48
- 11 million, and two, to create the nonpublic financial
- 12 oversight committee with 50/50 membership and power
- 13 sharing to a state water contractor and DWR.
- 14 (Unintelligible) members are public membership on when
- 15 they talk to (Unintelligible). So you got to wonder
- 16 just how much influence the state water contractors have
- 17 during the plan selection process. And is there any
- 18 membership representing public interest during that plan
- 19 selection? Much of the work that -- much of the work
- 20 for the CNA and the math log of deferred
- 21 (Unintelligible) within the state water project started
- 22 before the spillway incident. And there was
- 23 appropriation of a 2016 extraordinary fund that was
- 24 going to start working on that. It'd be interesting to
- 25 elaborate on what the annual physical constraints are

- 1 that created the deed for an extraordinary fund. Why
- 2 can't these backlogs be handled on an annual basis? It
- 3 appears the backlog within the state water contractors
- 4 due to funding has created the need to privatize these
- 5 new identified issues coming out of the CNA, with
- 6 lingering issues from the past. Now, we've got known
- 7 issues in southern California, the (Unintelligible) has
- 8 probably worse issues than Oroville does. But we've
- 9 known about them for a long time. And funding seems to
- 10 be a constraint that stopped us from being current
- 11 within this. So I think what would be a good way to be
- 12 transparent about this is to provide the public with
- 13 copies of your two-year annual budget for ONM, the
- 14 five-year capital plan, and the long-term investment
- 15 plan showing where CNA landed. How far behind are some
- of our (Unintelligible) being put because, you know, the
- 17 deferred maintenance that's been created along the way?
- 18 And then within that, giving us those two-year ONM
- 19 budgets, the five-year capital of the long-term
- 20 investment, you should include the dates of when those
- 21 recommendations were first proposed. We were presented
- 22 at the CNA meeting last time, a new guick response to
- 23 identified issues to put new instrumentation within the
- 24 dam. That recommendation came out in 2009, ten years
- 25 earlier, and you're just now calling it a rush for a

- 1 quick response, action to the CNA. So when you
- 2 communicate those budges, tell us when everything on
- 3 that budget was first recommended. And that's, I think,
- 4 the type of transparency that public citizens have been
- 5 denied. In the past, I think the could get more
- 6 information on budgets and projects by going to the
- 7 state water contractor's website that I had the DWR.
- 8 And if you could explain the terms of the original state
- 9 water contractor when it comes to timely funding of ONM
- 10 and Cal expenditures, and look at where we are in the
- 11 current backlog. Was that the vision? Was that the
- 12 essence of the obligations of the water contractor to
- 13 stay current on ONM, the state of where we are today? I
- 14 don't think so. And I don't think that we should be
- 15 quick to rush into a new water contract with them until
- 16 we clearly state what the addition of maintenance is in
- 17 our system.
- 18 MR. CROWFOOT: Yeah.
- MS. NEMETH: So those are really good
- 20 comments. And I agree that the state water project, in
- 21 and of itself, is not as transparent as it needs to be.
- 22 There are a couple of changes that are underway that are
- 23 really important to me, and that is -- one important
- 24 role that the California Water Commission plays in sort
- 25 of oversight of the state water project, and that's a

- public body that meets, I believe, every month, but I'll have to double check. But that's where the department is putting out a lot more information on the operations
- 4 of the state water project, the positions of the state
- 5 water project. We have been putting together an asset
- 6 management plan for the next 20-some-odd years that
- 7 looks at the system in total. And that's going to be
- 8 really important place for us to establish some more
- 9 predictable transparency and providing information about
- 10 the decisions that are being made relative to what
- 11 essentially amounts to reinvestment in the state water
- 12 project. To the extent that we can incorporate, you
- 13 know, some of those things here I think -- Matt, one,
- 14 thank you for spending a significant amount of time with
- 15 the ad hoc committee. Because I realize we have people
- 16 who, you know, get paid to do that, but it really is
- 17 critical that we have folks from the community who are
- 18 essentially donating their time and making our product
- 19 better. So thank you for that. I probably should have
- 20 started with that. But I do think there are some issues
- 21 that we can table, potentially, for this group to take
- 22 up around, you know, more of the financial picture
- 23 associated with the state water project, in addition to
- some of the specifics around how we manage Oroville for
- 25 water supply needs as well.

1 MR. CROWFOOT: Yeah, I think -- certainly --2 well, let me just make sure you can conclude your 3 remarks, because I want to seque very soon into a 4 discussion around topics for next meeting, and it will 5 directly address what you've shared. So thank you. 6 concluding remarks? 7 MR. MENTINK: No. Just how much I appreciate the efforts that's been done since the spillway 8 9 incident. I think the independent (Unintelligible) team 10 did a very good job of lessons learned. The responses 11 to all the recommendations that were put out in that 12 area, too. DWR is like a battleship; it doesn't turn on 13 a dime but there is sincere effort being made of the 14 public. So I appreciate working with you going forward. 15 MR. CROWFOOT: Thank you so much. I appreciate 16 you acknowledging that. A lot of hard -- hard work at DWR since 2017. Let me do this, we're going to move 17 18 into our last agenda item, and we should finish this on time. But Eric Smith from the Oroville Chamber of 19 Commerce wasn't able to stay, but he ask that I read a 20 21 short statement which is: "The economic outlook for 22 Oroville is strong. Strong development, for example, is 23 preparing to break ground on 70-plus homes in Oroville. Tourism is a growing industry in our state, adding \$79 24 25 billion to the state's GDP. The Oroville Area Chamber

- of Commerce thinks that our community has a real
- 2 opportunity to significantly contribute to this
- 3 industry. This is why your work is so important to our
- 4 future. Safe damage critical to our ability to
- 5 encourage this burgeoning industry in the Oroville area.
- 6 Thanks for all you're doing. Eric Smith." So for the
- 7 last agenda item we have is a review of topics for
- 8 future commission meetings. And I've noted at least
- 9 three priorities. The first is a live discussion with
- 10 the Army Corps of Engineers to really discuss how we can
- 11 work more closely with them on the future operation of
- 12 the dam. And I think we can, from our agency, reach out
- 13 to them directly and ask them to join us in a meeting
- 14 for a deep-dive discussion. Secondly, I've heard
- 15 significant interest in understanding more about the
- 16 state water contractors, and DWR, and the funding
- 17 decisions that are made for the state water structure at
- 18 large, and how it impacts Oroville. I think it would be
- 19 great to have the general manager from the state water
- 20 contractors join us, and share her perspective on the
- 21 work and then have a presentation from DWR on the
- 22 long-term funding needs. Really getting to some of
- 23 Matt's direct questions around really what -- what is
- 24 the budget for operations of maintenance? How is that
- 25 derived? What is the level of public transparency in

- 1 those budget decisions, etc. So I think that is No. 2.
- 2 And then No. 3 would be hearing from sort of the update,
- 3 or sort of the takeaways, or the move forward at the CNA
- 4 ad hoc group recommendations, as well as the forensic
- 5 team's recommendations. So those are three topics we
- 6 could tackle in 2020. I think we should have a regular
- 7 standing item for just sort of communications and, you
- 8 know, sort of -- maybe from Liza or Erin, you know,
- 9 what you're hearing from the community on, sort of, a
- 10 weekly basis so we're up to speed. Other topics that we
- 11 want to tackle in 2020. And this isn't the only
- 12 opportunity to share those, it's kind of a rolling
- 13 agenda setting.
- 14 MR. PITTMAN: I'd like to add the
- issue of the powerhouse and mechanics of the facility,
- 16 both at the high powerhouse, and maybe the
- 17 (Unintelligible) powerhouse, just so that the commission
- 18 has a first person awareness of it. Bill and I, we went
- 19 there in high school on tours to those facilities. And
- 20 I'm not suggesting you're going to open it up for tours,
- 21 but maybe a video tour so that you have an understanding
- 22 of the turbines, the valves, and the whole menagerie of
- 23 things. And I think it's important for (Unintelligible)
- 24 to understand that. Would be a great presentation to
- 25 have.

1 That's great. So why don't we MR. CROWFOOT: 2 consider that as recommendation? A tour, if possible, 3 and/or some type of presentation. Let me also suggest 4 as a follow-up, an invitation to the counsel members --5 commission members, I should say -- this winter to tour 6 the flood operation center in Sacramento. I think you 7 will find it really illuminating, particularly those public safety members on our commission. So let's go 8 9 ahead and set that up as well. Any other topics moving 10 into 2020? 11 MR. CONANT: So I was hoping we can also, when we do the mechanics of the infrastructure possible 12 13 improvements to the project itself, like an alternate 14 spillway. And also, somewhere online, we need to really -- because the 2017 may have caused you siltation 15 16 problems in the river, which haven't been removed. And I don't know if that's really up our belly way, but 17 18 somewhere along the way, I'd address that. And possibly 19 some help with the homeless. 20 MR. CROWFOOT: Say that last piece again. 21 MR. CONANT: Possibly some help with the homeless. I think both counties are kind of concerned 22 23 at the ramifications their actions took. We felt, for public safety, and their public benefit, that we had to 24 25 do something. And don't forget, there has been a

- 1 fatality from this in -- excuse me -- 1997, I believe,
- 2 during that water event. One person didn't get. Out
- 3 they didn't even discover the body for another six
- 4 months.
- 5 MR. CROWFOOT: Yeah. I appreciate that.
- 6 Maybe, you know, to address Shannon's point, you know,
- 7 we can -- we're addressing so the homeless issue. You
- 8 know, the human activity within the levees and its
- 9 impact on the flood control system and the community as
- 10 an opportunity. So what I'll suggest is that my office
- 11 work together with Senator Nielson' office as the
- 12 cochair of this committee, and that we then identify
- 13 clearly in our meeting summary proposed topics for
- 14 meetings in 2020. And that we structure them so we can
- 15 have really meaningful conversations on each of those
- 16 topics.
- 17 MS. WIDENER: I have one other topic.
- 18 Recreation. I know that there's some future recreation
- 19 planned with the new license that is kind of on hold
- 20 right now. And some of those things were accelerated
- 21 after the 2017 incident. I think it will be really
- 22 important for the community to understand what those
- 23 future recreation improvements are. And also, there
- 24 is -- I don't know any other word, but to say a kind of
- 25 bitterness that a lot of people in the community have

- 1 over past recreation promises, (Unintelligible). Being
- 2 able to look into that and explain why some of those
- 3 things never came to fruition, I think would be really
- 4 important for the community as well.
- 5 MR. CROWFOOT: Good. That's a great
- 6 suggestion.
- 7 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I'm deeply involved in
- 8 the recreation, and probably something that I'd like to
- 9 talk about a lot. But I think I really appreciate
- 10 Genoa's comment, but I think we should try to get the
- 11 safety aspects of relationship with the community moving
- 12 forward. So if you could put the recreation behind the
- other things that were brought up today, and then we can
- 14 really get in depth on -- does that make sense?
- MS. WIDENER: Yeah.
- MR. CONNELLY: Let's get a foundation
- 17 under us before we get into some really contentious.
- 18 MR. PITTMAN: I would like to add,
- 19 too, that -- some prior comments about the river as a
- 20 controlled mechanism. And also, the topic of
- 21 jurisdictions from one town to the other, because I hear
- 22 some interesting things being done here in our partner
- 23 counties and our cities. It might be a great
- 24 opportunity for us all to have and see what's going, so
- 25 what one county does doesn't throw the folks into the

- 1 next county, and we have a little bit of continuation of
- 2 that. And who's actually responsible on the river,
- 3 would be a good topic to understand, because I know our
- 4 city, we're dealing with -- literally (Unintelligible)
- 5 month is taken off the river by our crews and our
- 6 special operation teams. So I think if we all share
- 7 what we're doing on the river, might be a great
- 8 opportunity for us all to understand that, and then make
- 9 it safer in the river for us all. And the flood issues
- 10 that come about that. So...
- 11 MR. CROWFOOT: Yeah. That seems like an
- 12 excellent question to ask when we're having the
- 13 discussion around and human activity in the river.
- MR. BRADFORD: So I just wanted to
- 15 kind of follow up on that a little bit from a
- 16 (Unintelligible) perspective that our cities and our
- 17 counties are all involved, and we all are passing a
- 18 similar ordinance to avoid exactly that. The
- 19 individuals that are camping just moving from one
- 20 jurisdiction to another, you know, crosses the city
- 21 limit sign, or, in our case, walking across the bridge
- 22 to another county or another city. So having all four
- 23 cities and both counties in our area essentially
- 24 adopting a similar ordinance would something that would
- 25 be very important.

- 1 MR. CONANT: Yeah, I'd like to say also,
- 2 another player in this that played a critical role, the
- 3 (Unintelligible). And whether I see (Unintelligible.)
- 4 Just make a note that they're not present here.
- 5 MR. CROWFOOT: That's really helpful, Matt. So
- 6 I might suggest that since we started with the
- 7 discussion of the Army Corps at the first meeting, and
- 8 it's central to safety for Supervisor Dowling's
- 9 statement -- or suggestion that we -- if we can, see if
- 10 we can agendize (sic) that discussion around the Army
- 11 Corps, and flood safety oversight, and how it can inform
- 12 reservoir operations at our next meeting, if that's
- 13 okay. And we'll work with our facilitators to figure
- 14 out how much we can fit in the next meeting. But I
- think the goal is to ensure that, in 2020, we're
- 16 addressing each of those priority areas. And, again,
- 17 working with our co-chair, Senator Nielsen, to make sure
- 18 that that agenda reflects the priorities of the
- 19 commission. Nick, if you can remind is, do we have a
- 20 date set for our next meeting, or a general trajectory
- 21 sort of around when we are going to do our next meeting?
- MR. SAFFOLD: Correct me if I'm wrong, but we
- 23 have February 21st as the next meeting.
- MR. CROWFOOT: Good. So for folks here, and
- 25 folks watching, February 21st will be the next

- 1 commission meeting. And we will shoot to have a focus
- 2 on a partnership with the Army Corps of Engineers, as
- 3 well as a status report on winter operations and safety.
- 4 And hopefully, we'll be able to tell really strong story
- 5 as it relates to communications of this winter. Senator
- 6 Nielsen, any final words to close us up?
- 7 MR. NIELSEN: No, thank you.
- 8 MR. CROWFOOT: Oh, one last thought. Sir, you
- 9 may have the final word here.
- 10 MR. ANTONETTI: I apologize, I did not
- 11 make out a speaking list because I was kind of hoping
- 12 that the item that I brought up to the last meeting we
- 13 had, and then you framed that as a deep dive for this, I
- 14 was just hoping that I wasn't the only one complaining
- 15 about or bringing that issue to your review. I want to
- 16 thank Director Nemeth for sending me an e-mail, getting
- 17 me in contact with Ted Craddock, and a couple of other
- 18 people on a conference phone call about the items that I
- 19 brought to your attention about the 2,400-foot, six-foot
- 20 diameter tunnel, that is on the left groin of the dam,
- 21 that is only providing 40-foot per second to the contour
- 22 ditch that holding up the ID Feather River water
- 23 (Unintelligible). I was assured at the time that your
- 24 people are looking into it. And I asked specifically
- 25 about what was the legal requirements involved in

- 1 setting up the original agreement between DWR and
- 2 Oroville Dam -- this is 60 years ago -- to provide a
- 3 tunnel through that groin over there, exposing the dam
- 4 to a potential blowout situation, and to only provide
- 5 40CFS on the contour ditch. And at the time, the
- 6 constructors provided a valve on that pin stock that
- 7 comes off the hill up there that you saw coming down the
- 8 road. That should something happen, that they could use
- 9 that valve to provide water for irrigation for the --
- 10 and it seems to me like an odd investment, and a
- 11 terrible exposure to a potential blowout on something
- 12 that has 300-foot of head on it in that tunnel going
- 13 through dam. Now, possibly, the legal requirements
- originally were such that, you know, they gut you over a
- 15 barrel. I don't know. I don't know if that value is
- 16 still operable on that pin stop to provide the 40 CFS.
- 17 And I brought this up to (Unintelligible) to look into
- 18 it. I was hoping they would bring it up and bring it
- into this deep-dive, Secretary, that you brought would
- 20 be the situation. And I haven't heard anything. And
- 21 that's why I've been reluctant to bring this up. So
- 22 now, here you got a meeting coming up in February 21st,
- 23 and I would think that something that is potentially
- 24 catastrophic to blow out -- if it does blow out, it's
- 25 going to flood the power plant, because the outlet is

- 1 just above the entryway into the power plant. That's a
- 2 situation where you need that power plant to work,
- 3 because you only have a river value outlet that's only
- 4 5,500CFS as the water's increasing into the lake. And
- 5 then you have to still lay that (Unintelligible) to
- 6 control it even more. So you got a situation where, if
- 7 you flood that power plant out, we're screwed big time.
- 8 And at the exposure to that tunnel through the haunch of
- 9 that dam over there is 60 years old, and in our lifetime
- 10 is expected to be possibly work. But I'm talking 50,
- 11 60, 100, 200 years from now, do you still need that
- 12 thing there? And why not just get rid of it? And look
- into the possibility of doing that. That's my question.
- MR. CROWFOOT: That's very helpful. Karla, you
- 15 know, recognizing that we're out of time, I want to make
- 16 sure that we provide an update in response to the
- 17 question that is not rushed. So I'll leave it to you
- 18 whether you -- what you want to say, and what we
- 19 actually come back to and address in the February
- 20 meeting.
- 21 MR. ANTONETTI: Well, Karla, I was told
- 22 that Ted Craddock's people -- I can't pronounce the
- 23 gentlemen's name there -- but a very extensive
- 24 conversation. And I brought these items up to him. And
- 25 I said, first of all, let's look at the legal

- 1 requirements that Feather River Recreation -- old WIB --
- 2 got with DWR to put the thing through to begin with.
- 3 That tunnel was built before the dam. Because that
- 4 contour ditch that come from Enterprise Dam is now
- flooded, so the contour ditch is no longer used up at
- 6 that point. So they need a water input into that
- 7 irrigation system. In the meantime, old WIB built their
- 8 facilities; they have that (Unintelligible) that comes
- 9 off the hill. And in the notes -- I gave those to
- 10 you -- they have a valve there that is -- will provide
- 11 the 40CFS. To take care of that leak. Now, 40CFS is
- 12 nothing --
- MR. CROWFOOT: Can I --
- 14 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: -- hold yourself to
- 15 that liability.
- MR. CROWFOOT: Can I just suggest this, it
- 17 sounds like there's a conversation taking place, but
- 18 it's not yet clear what the resolution is in terms of
- 19 having a clear answer to the question. So why don't we
- 20 just take time, Ted, Karla, myself, and you, sir, to
- 21 just have a discussion right after this, right now. And
- 22 then we can figure out how we report back on this
- 23 publicly.
- MR. ANTONETTI: Okay. That's fair
- 25 enough.

1	MR. CROWFOOT: Make sense?
2	MR. ANTONETTI: I apologize again for
3	being so late.
4	MR. CROWFOOT: No, don't apologize. Thanks,
5	Commissioners. We will see you in February.
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