

**MONTEREY COUNTY WATER RESOURCES AGENCY  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
RESERVOIR OPERATIONS COMMITTEE**

David Hart, Chair  
Ken Ekelund  
Richard Ortiz  
Mark Nielsen  
David Pozzi  
Mark Gonzalez

John Baillie  
Benny Jefferson  
San Luis Obispo County Representative  
Richard Riddle (Parks)  
Mark Sandoval (CalParks)

**TIME:** 1:30 p.m.  
**DATE:** **Thursday, September 4, 2014**  
**PLACE:** Monterey County Water Resources Agency  
Board Room  
893 Blanco Circle  
Salinas, CA 93901  
(831) 755-4860

**MINUTES**

**1. CALL TO ORDER @ 1:37 p.m. by Chair David Hart.**

Members present: David Hart, Ken Ekelund, Richard Ortiz, John Baillie, Benny Jefferson, Dean Benedix, Mark Sandoval

Members absent: Mark Nielsen, David Pozzi, Mark Gonzalez, Parks Dept. Rep/Richard Riddle

A quorum was established.

**2. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Howard Franklin, Senior Water Resources Hydrologist, introduced Dean Benedix as the interim representative for SLO County.

**3. APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE RESERVOIR OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON JULY 10, 2014**

**Committee Action: On motion and second of Committee members Richard Ortiz and Benny Jefferson, the Committee approved the minutes. Members Ken Ekelund, Mark Sandoval, and John Baillie abstained.**

**4. REVIEW THE STATUS OF BOTH RESERVOIRS; REVIEW RELEASES AND RELEASE SCHEDULE**

Jason Demers, Hydrologist, provided a status report of reservoir storage and elevation. The current releases total approximately 35 cfs with Nacimiento Reservoir releasing approximately 30 cfs and San Antonio Reservoir releasing approximately 5 cfs.

The Agency has been conducting snorkel surveys on the Nacimiento River and the latest monitoring report will be brought to the Committee in October.

The Committee asked if the 25 - 30 cfs release target at Nacimiento would remain. Staff responded that these flow targets would remain until we began to see winter inflows into the reservoirs.

Brent Buche stated that the Agency is still looking at the possibility of performing maintenance on the outlet valves at San Antonio which would require the reservoir to be at dead pool. If the work is performed this fall we may need to increase release rates in order to ensure the lake elevation reaches dead pool. Prior to performing this maintenance, trash racks would be replaced while lake elevation is above dead pool, as the water would aid in this task because of the weight of the racks.

At the current rate of release, San Antonio is expected to reach dead pool in March 2015, assuming no inflow this winter. Also, assuming no winter inflow and current releases of 25 to 30 cfs, Nacimiento is expected to reach minimum pool in September 2015.

Howard Franklin discussed the most current NOAA Climate Prediction Center's winter forecast. Based on this report we currently expect a 65% chance of "weak" El Nino conditions. Though El Nino conditions "open the door" to the potential for large storm events; statistically, weak El Nino's result in drier than normal winters.

**NACIMIENTO** elevation is 718.70 feet and 66,285 acre-feet of storage, 18% of capacity, and current release is 30 cfs.

**SAN ANTONIO** elevation is 650.25 feet and 12,644 acre-feet of storage, 4% of capacity, and current release is 5 cfs.

**5. RECEIVE REPORT ON CLOUD-SEEDING**

Staff reported that the Agency is evaluating the use of cloud-seeding reserve funds to purchase parts necessary for the repair of San Antonio low level outlet works. Staff also noted that the reserve funds were not enough to complete the environmental work that would be required in order to implement a cloud-seeding program.

Dean Benedix, San Luis Obispo County, expressed SLO's interest in joining with the Agency on a cloud seeding project and will recommend that the SLO Board of Supervisors budget funds up to approximately \$150,000 for cloud-seeding in the next fiscal year and encouraged the Agency to do the same. The Committee discussed the possibility of a joint effort between Santa Cruz, San Luis Obispo, and Santa Barbara counties.

**Committee Action: On motion and second of Committee members Ken Ekelund and Dean Benedix, the Committee unanimously recommends to the Board of Directors to**

**direct staff to look into the possibility of a cooperative effort with other counties for the funding of a joint cloud-seeding project.**

**6. RECEIVE REPORT REGARDING OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE ACTIVITIES AT THE RESERVOIRS**

Brent Buche, Assistant General Manager & Chief of Operations and Maintenance, provided an update on operations and maintenance activities at the reservoirs. Obermeyer Hydro Inc. was at Nacimiento recently to evaluate items of concern listed by the DSOD regarding the operation of the Obermeyer gates at Nacimiento. Hydro revenue from the Nacimiento Hydroelectric Plant has been significantly lower than normal as a result of minimum releases from the reservoir and declining reservoir head.

NOAA Fisheries has signed off on the Salinas River Stream Maintenance Demonstration Project. Maintenance location flagging is occurring now and physical work is scheduled to begin on October 1<sup>st</sup>, once flagged locations are reviewed by a Biologist. The EIR comment period closed last Saturday and no notices of lawsuits have been received. The EIR process was a four year effort totaling approximately \$1.4 million.

**7. RECEIVE REPORTS ON STATUS OF:**

**A. LAKE RECREATION BY CONCESSIONAIRE & PARKS DEPARTMENT**

Mark Sandoval, CalParks, provided a report for the Parks Department as a representative from Parks was not present. Parks has been facing budget crisis and the potential elimination of fourteen positions at the reservoirs by the end of September 2014. Though the efforts of a special committee, which included members of the Board of Supervisors, funds were identified and action was taken by the Supervisors to fund the positions through the end of June 2015.

Tom Shepherd has retired from the Monterey County Parks Department effective September 1<sup>st</sup>.

CalParks reported that normal annual revenue generated from the operation of both San Antonio and Nacimiento resorts is approximately \$4 million for the fiscal year. This fiscal year the total revenue generated from facilities operations this was approximately \$2.5.

**B. EASEMENTS AND AGENCY LEASES**

Chris Keehn, Right-Of-Way Specialist, provided an update to the Committee. The Department of Fish & Wildlife notified the Agency that illegal hunting was observed on Lease 3 at Nacimiento South Shore. The Agency provided permission to Fish and Wildlife to initiate proceedings to prosecute the violator.

Lessees at Nacimiento and San Antonio have paid their fees and the Agency has received approximately \$95,000. Implementing seasonal grazing restrictions into future lease agreements was discussed by the Committee.

The Agency recently contacted the military to inquire on the timing of the underground fiber-optic cable installation along Tank Road at Nacimiento. As of this report, there has been no response to our information request.

When the Agency obtained property for constructing Nacimiento Dam and Reservoir, we were granted a patent from the US Government for 1700 acres on the condition that we build a recreational facility at Bee Rock Road. The facility was never built, and as result the Agency lost the 1700 acres, which was later acquired by the Nature Conservancy and was eventually sold. At that time, the Agency was granted a temporary floodage easement to year 2018. Recent efforts by the Agency have resulted in the granting of a permanent floodage easement on this property.

The Committee asked about lease fee reductions as a result of the drought. As stipulated in the Lease Agreements, fee reductions are provided if the Lessee makes improvements on the property.

### **C. QUAGGA / ZEBRA MUSSEL PLAN**

Mark Sandoval, CalParks, provided an update. The inspection program at Nacimiento is still in operation. The north gate has been closed.

Dean Benedix stated he received an email from Mark Nielsen about the inspection program's continued cooperative funding. NWRMAC and SLO County appreciate the efforts by the Agency to keep that program going. SLO will be modifying the resident vessel program to address issues such as including kayaks and canoes in the inspection program, options for late renewals and other minor changes. There are approximately 450 people in the resident vessel program of which 200 are certified screeners. SLO staff will be contacting Agency staff for review of these proposed modifications.

The Committee had questions about State grant funds from the vessel registration program and how those monies would be dispersed. Questions were also asked about who was elected or appointed to the Board or Committee that will determine where the funding would go and how the fund was going to operate. At this time the answers to these questions are still unknown.

The Committee asked if we had received information on portable decontamination stations from committee member Mark Nielsen. Mr. Nielsen was absent from this meeting and no information has yet been provided.

### **D. UPDATE ON SLO COUNTY ACTIVITIES**

Dean Benedix reported on SLO County activities. Leaks have been detected in the Nacimiento Water Project pipeline in an underground crossing below the Nacimiento River about one mile downstream from the dam. Four to six very small leaks on a spiral weld have been detected in a 30-inch diameter steel pipe. SLO is continuing to assess the situation and has spent approximately \$0.5 million during the last six weeks. The NWP has been off line since June 2, 2014. SLO hopes to have the project back in service by April 2015. Mr. Benedix also expressed SLO's desire to participate in the Agency's Interlake Tunnel Project.

**ADDENDUM ITEM #6: REPORT REGARDING OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE ACTIVITIES AT THE RESERVOIRS**

Staff was asked to provide information on water quality data collected for Nacimiento and San Antonio Reservoirs. Mr. Buche reported that SLO County performs a drinking water level suite of constituent testing at Nacimiento, including testing for biological pathogens and heavy metals, on a monthly basis. The Agency performs limited sampling at Nacimiento and San Antonio which does not include the testing for the presence of biological pathogens. There was discussion about the need for additional water quality sampling at San Antonio. There was a discussion about increased cooperation between the Agency and SLO in order to eliminate duplication. The Committee requested testing for contaminants which might be a risk to human health.

**Committee Action: On motion and second of Committee members John Baillie and Benny Jefferson, the Committee unanimously recommended that the Agency Board of Directors consider providing direction to staff on performing specific water quality sampling in order to identify if conditions exist at San Antonio Reservoir which may pose a risk to human health from biological pathogens.**

- 8. SET NEXT MEETING DATE AND DISCUSS FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**  
The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday October 2, 2014 at 1:30 PM at the Agency.
- 9. ADJOURNMENT BY CHAIR DAVID HART @ 2:52 P.M.**

**SUBMITTED BY: TERESA CAMPA**

**Approved on: October 2, 2014**