

**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
Paavo Ogren
Tom Shepherd/Richard Riddle (Parks)
Mark Sandoval (CalParks)

TIME: 1:30 p.m.
DATE: **Thursday, April 3, 2014**
PLACE: Monterey County Water Resources Agency
Board Room
893 Blanco Circle
Salinas, CA 93901
(831) 755-4860

**MINUTES
(DRAFT)**

1. CALL TO ORDER @ 1:30 p.m. by Chair David Hart.

Members present: David Hart, Ken Ekelund, Richard Ortiz, Mark Nielsen, David Pozzi,
Mark Gonzalez, John Baillie, Benny Jefferson, Tim Colvin for Mark
Sandoval

Members absent: Paavo Ogren, Tom Shepherd, Richard Riddle

A quorum was established.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

3. APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE RESERVOIR OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON MARCH 5, 2014

The minutes will be corrected to state the meeting day was a Wednesday. John Baillie stated there was an action taken regarding San Antonio that does not appear on the minutes. The Committee had discussed reducing Nacimiento from 60 to 25 cfs and possibly reducing San Antonio to about 3-5 cfs. Howard Franklin stated no action was taken on San Antonio reductions, but will review the audio and make corrections to the minutes on the action.

Committee Action: On motion and second of Committee members John Baillie and Richard Ortiz, the Committee unanimously approved the minutes.

4. REVIEW THE STATUS OF BOTH RESERVOIRS; REVIEW RELEASES AND RELEASE SCHEDULE; AND, DISCUSS SALINAS RIVER DIVERSION FACILITY OPERATIONAL STRATEGIES FOR THE 2014 SEASON

Howard Franklin, Senior Water Resources Hydrologist provided a status report. End of flow in the Salinas River is approximately 0.3 miles upstream of Elm Street Bridge at Greenfield. San Antonio is currently in minimum pool. The required maintenance on the inlet structure at San Antonio can be done when the elevation drops another two feet, to elevation 653, estimated to occur, at current release rates, around May 2014. For the recommended maintenance to be performed, the elevation at San Antonio needs to be at deadpool level, estimated to be reached in late September or early October 2014. The maintenance would be on the intake structure, and leakage in the tunnel. If the work is performed above deadpool levels, divers would need to be hired to do the work. If we wait until deadpool, Agency staff is able to perform the work, which because of costs is preferable to the Agency. The Committee requested a draft work plan on the maintenance work, and staff stated this would be provided at the May meeting.

The Committee asked if releases are still required to be made from San Antonio after reaching minimum pool. Staff stated that the Agency's operations policy states no releases after minimum pool, but this does not necessarily comply with state legislation. There is no formal agreement with Fish & Game (CA State Fish & Wildlife Service) below minimum pool. Legislation states that we must make fisheries releases from a dam if the water is available and able to be released. The Committee discussed the differences in the various policies and the need for uniformity on all policies, as well as the need for an operational policy that addresses releases during drought conditions. Staff acknowledged the need to reevaluate and re-write the Agency's operations policy.

Staff stated we have the flexibility to reduce San Antonio releases to 3 cfs, which is the minimum release stated in the agreement with Fish & Game. A few years ago we increased it to 10 cfs for the purpose of improved channel conditions below the dam, and the 10 cfs is not required by CA Fish & Wildlife. Committee members expressed concern about saving the water and preferred the maintenance work be done sooner, rather than later at deadpool, to conserve the water. It was suggested Agency staff contact local legislators about what assistance is available.

The Agency is required to report the forecasted year-type to NOAA Fisheries on March 15th and April 1st of each year. Both forecasts were for "Dry" year-types. This forecast, along with flow triggers in the upper watershed, is used to determine whether a block flow will be required.

NACIMIENTO elevation is 726.80 feet and 84,320 acre-feet of storage, 22% of capacity, and current release is 60 cfs.

SAN ANTONIO elevation is 655.50 feet and 15,675 acre-feet of storage, 5% of capacity, and current release is 10 cfs.

5. RECEIVE REPORT ON BOARD OF DIRECTORS AGENCY DIRECTION ON POSSIBLE RESERVOIR OPERATION DROUGHT CONTINGENCIES

Howard Franklin provided a report on this item. Agency staff informed the Board of Directors (BOD) about the conference call with NOAA Fisheries on April 1, 2014. The BOD directed Agency staff to invite Congressman Sam Farr to participate in the conference call but he was unable to do so. The Committee suggested inviting him to participate in the conference call scheduled for April 7. The Committee suggested providing updates to Mr. Farr to keep him informed of the situation.

There was discussion on items that were discussed with NOAA Fisheries on April 1. NOAA asked when we would resume Nacimiento releases to 60 cfs and we stated this would be at elevation 748 feet. Another question from NOAA Fisheries was about the 25 cfs. Staff replied that the 25 cfs is close to the releases that were evaluated earlier, and is also the optimal release for the operation of a public water system, that being the well gallery below the dam. NOAA expressed concern that it might be diverting from the 25 cfs and staff stated it would not because we gage the 25 cfs downstream from that site, as per the agreement in the Biological Opinion and Flow Prescription. NOAA also asked about monitoring temperature and staff stated that the Agency monitors the temperature in the river at two locations from March to November, as required under the Biological Opinion.

Howard Franklin explained about NOAA's comments about a "water bank". Their concept was that if we're releasing 25 cfs instead of 60 cfs there would be a savings that would belong to them that they could use another way, such as to extend passage flows during other periods. We stated that the water would not be theirs; we wouldn't be saving water – just using it at a different rate. The same amount of water would be used over a longer period of time.

If the releases at Nacimiento continue at 60 cfs, it will be at minimum pool in February 2015. If we release at 25 cfs, minimum pool will be reached in September 2015.

NOAA Fisheries stated they would be consulting with their attorney and environmental specialist about our request. The Agency is scheduled to meet with NOAA again on Monday April 7 and they are aware that we expect a decision at that time. The Committee requested notification of their reply regarding the Nacimiento releases.

6. RECEIVE REPORT ON CLOUD-SEEDING

There was no report on cloud-seeding. (Paavo Ogren absent)

7. 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. The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) conducted a 5-year safety inspection of Nacimiento Dam on March 6, 2014.

When the elevation at San Antonio drops to 653 only the top section of the trash rack would be exposed and would be able to be repaired. The bottom portion would still be underwater

and there are safety concerns about conducting maintenance underwater. If the reservoir level reaches deadpool the internal work can be performed on the tunnel.

The Agency has received a request from the California National Guard for permission to utilize either Nacimiento or San Antonio Reservoir to conduct a fire training session with Cal Fire on May 21, 2014. Helicopters will be used to retrieve reservoir water during the training session but will be put back into the reservoir after the session.

8. RECEIVE REPORTS ON STATUS OF:

A. LAKE RECREATION BY CONCESSIONAIRE & PARKS DEPARTMENT

Tim Colvin, CalParks, provided a report. The recent rainstorms were a welcome event. Staff is discussing different scenarios and ideas for the upcoming season. Some ideas being discussed for San Antonio include promoting kayaking and lowering the speed limit on San Antonio Lake to 5 mph for the small boats, and no skiing. Launch ramps remain closed and only hand-launched water craft such as kayaks are allowed. The annual Wildflower Triathlon is scheduled for May 2014 and a special event is planned for North Shore, and lodging will still be available. Nacimiento will continue to have the usual activities for the season.

B. EASEMENTS AND AGENCY LEASES

Chris Keehn, Right-Of-Way Specialist, provided an update to the Committee. The U.S. Army will be installing fiber-optic cable along Tank Road, in June 2014. The installation will occur along the entire length of the tank road. The Agency has requested the military work with staff to address erosion concerns and increased siltation of the lake. One of the Lease holders is scheduled to go before the Personnel & Administrative Committee next week, with a request to remove 80 acres from his lease due to a growing trespassing issues and exposure risk. The trespass issues are the result of the low reservoir levels. The Agency was also contacted by Tri County, the location of the trespassing, who expressed interest in leasing the same area.

C. QUAGGA / ZEBRA MUSSEL PLAN

Elizabeth Krafft, Senior Hydrologist, provided a report. Staff conducted plankton tows at San Antonio and Nacimiento in March and results were negative. We plan to conduct plankton tows each month with State Fish & Wildlife Department, who will be funding the lab analyses. The State Boating & Waterways has been collecting fees that will be made available in June 2014 through grants. One of the items on the list of priorities includes funding programs for uninfected lakes. The Agency is coordinating with SLO County to ensure eligibility for the grant funding. The Committee requested a copy of the Boating & Waterways list of priorities, and staff stated this would be provided.

D. UPDATE ON SLO COUNTY ACTIVITIES

There was no report on SLO County activities. (Paavo Ogren absent)

9. DISCUSS OPTIONS FOR RESERVOIR OPERATIONS COMMITTEE SOUTH COUNTY MEETING

The Committee discussed plans for a Committee meeting in South County. It was decided for Thursday June 5, 2014 at Nacimiento. Mark Nielsen and Tim Kopack offered to provide a BBQ lunch. Details of the meeting will be discussed at the May meeting.

10. SET NEXT MEETING DATE AND DISCUSS FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday May 1, 2014 at 1:30 p.m. at the Agency. Agenda items will include the results from the NOAA Fisheries conference call, and details for the June meeting at South County.

11. ADJOURNMENT BY CHAIR DAVID HART @ 2:47 P.M.

SUBMITTED BY: TERESA CAMPA

Approved on: May 1, 2014