

**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, May 1, 2014**  
**PLACE:** Monterey County Water Resources Agency  
Board Room  
893 Blanco Circle  
Salinas, CA 93901  
(831) 755-4860

**MINUTES**

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

Members present: David Hart, Richard Ortiz, David Pozzi, John Baillie, Benny Jefferson, Paavo Ogren, Tom Shepherd, Mark Sandoval  
Members absent: Ken Ekelund, Mark Nielsen, Mark Gonzalez, Richard Riddle

A quorum was established.

**2. PUBLIC COMMENT**

John Baillie requested the Committee be provided a copy of the Owner's Dam Safety Program for Nacimiento Dam that was received by the Board of Directors (BOD) on April 28, 2014. Howard Franklin stated it would be made available on the Agency's website.

Howard Franklin read an email received by Robert Johnson on April 25, 2014 from Gina Boring of Oak Shores Community Association regarding private marina slips. The Committee requested a copy of the email.

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

**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**

Jason Demers, Hydrologist, provided a status report. Beginning April 24, 2014 San Antonio releases were decreased from 10 cfs to 5 cfs. Nacimiento releases remain at minimum fisheries release of 60 cfs. The total releases in the Salinas River are 65 cfs. The USGS gage has recorded 64 cfs in the Salinas River at Bradley. A map identifying the river miles will be provided to the Committee at the next meeting.

**NACIMIENTO** elevation is 725.85 feet and 82,048 acre-feet of storage, 22% of capacity, and current release is 60 cfs.

**SAN ANTONIO** elevation is 654.55 feet and 15,080 acre-feet of storage, 5% of capacity, and current release is 5 cfs.

**5. RECEIVE REPORT ON BOARD OF DIRECTORS DIRECTION TO STAFF ON REDUCING NACIMIENTO RESERVOIR MINIMUM RELEASES**

Howard Franklin, Senior Water Resources Hydrologist, provided a report on this item. The Committee discussed the Agency's request to National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) for the reduction of Nacimiento releases from 60 cfs to 25 cfs, and their response received by the Agency on April 25, 2014 and presented to the BOD on April 28, 2014. (Both of these documents are included in the Committee's agenda packet.)

The Agency's Biological Opinion includes an evaluation of minimum flows at 60 cfs. The report covers the Agency for take of steelhead to that minimum flow. It does not include an evaluation below that minimum flow amount. NMFS has stated that if a take occurs as a result of the Agency's decision to reduce releases below 60 cfs, the Agency would not be exempt from that take and would be subject to enforcement (Section 9) as defined in the Endangered Species Act.

NMFS also recommended that if the Agency decides to reduce releases below 60 cfs, the Agency follow their recommendations including: a gradual ramp at a rate of 2 inches per hour or less, perform temperature monitoring in the Nacimiento River downstream of the dam for the duration of the reduced releases and report this data monthly to NMFS. In addition to the monitoring already conducted every October by the Agency as per the Biological Opinion, NMFS also recommends that fish monitoring take place in the summer, and they have volunteered their staff to assist the Agency with this. NMFS also requests that supplemental flows, when available, be utilized to aid upstream and out migration passage, which would be determined based on elevation, storage, weather forecasts, and river flows.

The BOD directed the Agency to provide a report on various options below the minimum 60 cfs, and seek advice about the legal risks involved in exercising those options. The BOD also directed the Agency to evaluate the impact of maximizing the releases from Nacimiento for the purpose of recharging the groundwater basin. Committee Chair Dave Hart stated that the BOD also requested the Agency to evaluate the impact of releasing at a different rate, such as 200 cfs.

Howard Franklin provided estimates of the benefit to groundwater storage that would be likely from a 300 cfs release. Calculating for losses of channel flows to groundwater recharge, surface water evaporation, and evapotranspiration, the Upper Valley Area would

receive approximately 50% of the water, the Forebay Area would receive 30%, and the Gonzales/Pressure Area would receive 20%.

At current releases of 60 cfs, with no significant reservoir inflow next winter, Nacimiento would be at minimum pool early March 2015, and would reach dead pool in June 2015. The Committee expressed concern about the quantity of inflow that would be available next year. The Agency encouraged other options or recommendations from the Committee. The Agency has met with the Governor's Drought Task Force and is seeking to obtain letters of support from the Board of Supervisors of Monterey and San Luis Obispo Counties.

John D'Ornellas, General Manager, Heritage Ranch Community Services District, provided a copy of a letter of support of the Agency's efforts to reduce Nacimiento flows from 60 to 25 cfs. The Heritage Ranch community obtains their water supply from Nacimiento Reservoir releases and there is concern about the health and safety of the community if the levels reach minimum pool or lower. Mr. D'Ornellas offered to provide assistance to the Agency in meeting the monitoring recommendations put forward by NMFS.

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

Paavo Ogren stated he would be contacting staff from Santa Barbara County to schedule a meeting with their staff, SLO and the Agency to discuss cloud-seeding efforts. Howard Franklin stated if next winter developed into El Nino conditions, it would be ideal for cloud-seeding.

**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. Current activities involve routine maintenance at both dams. The Agency has developed a Draft Maintenance Plan for San Antonio Dam appurtenances. A major item on the list is the trash racks, which has been an issue due to the inability to get equipment to that location because of excessive mud and/or soft ground conditions. Staff will attempt to use pontoon boats as a platform to perform some of the maintenance at the location. Cost estimates are being obtained for newly manufactured trash racks. These racks would be mounted to the outside of the structure, utilizing divers, if necessary. Staff is also obtaining price estimates to repair the leak in the tunnel. With San Antonio reservoir at dead pool, the repairs could be completed without divers.

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

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

Mark Sandoval, CalParks, provided a report. Current activities involve preparations for the Wildflower Triathlon scheduled for this weekend. Due to the lower water levels at Nacimiento, navigation has been challenging. The Narrows are still accessible and there is still plenty of water.

Tom Shepherd, Parks Department reported on events. The race course for the Wildflower Triathlon will be challenging. The second annual Mud Run was held last weekend at San Antonio, and multiple events are scheduled at Laguna Seca. At San Antonio, a concert is scheduled for the Memorial Day weekend at North Shore and is

expected to draw 12,000-15,000 people. The Parks Department director has resigned and his last day will be May 2. There has been public misconception about the water quality at the lakes because of the low water levels. The Parks Department has had the water tested by the Monterey County Environmental Health Bureau, and the results have been great. This information has been posted on the Parks Department website. The Agency will also post that information and/or provide a link to Parks Department's website.

**B. EASEMENTS AND AGENCY LEASES**

Chris Keehn, Right-Of-Way Specialist, provided an update to the Committee. The Agency has received requests from several regulatory and enforcement agencies to conduct surveys on the Agency's land. Some of the subjects for the surveys to be conducted in the Nacimiento area include forestry and bears.

**C. QUAGGA / ZEBRA MUSSEL PLAN**

Elizabeth Krafft, Senior Hydrologist, provided a report. The State Fish & Wildlife Department is scheduled to conduct a plankton tow on May 22, 2014. The Agency has scheduled an inspection program class for Certified Level 1 on May 17, 2014. SLO County will be scheduling additional courses for recertification. The Committee was provided with a handout of the Boating & Waterways regulations for the mussel fees, and the grant program which includes the grant regulations. The Agency has been told the application process will be out soon and the grants are expected to be awarded by fall 2014. The Agency has been involved in the Santa Clara Bay Area Consortium.

**D. UPDATE ON SLO COUNTY ACTIVITIES**

Paavo Ogren, San Luis Obispo County, provided an update. SLO is re-forming the Paso Robles Basin Advisory Committee and will include a seat for a member and alternate from the Agency. The memberships are scheduled to be appointed on May 13, 2014 and the Committee plans to begin meeting in June 2014.

**9. DISCUSS AGENDA FOR RESERVOIR OPERATIONS COMMITTEE SOUTH COUNTY MEETING**

The Committee discussed details for the Thursday, June 5, 2014 meeting to be held in South County. Transportation will be provided by the Agency will depart at 8:15 a.m. and those wishing to carpool should RSVP to Howard Franklin by Tuesday June 3. The meeting will begin at 11:30 a.m., break for lunch hosted by NRWMAC, followed by a boat tour of Nacimiento Reservoir and ending at 3:00 or 3:30 to return to Salinas.

**10. SET NEXT MEETING DATE AND DISCUSS FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday June 5, 2014 in South County. Agenda items will include the tour, an update on Nacimiento releases/NOAA, and Oak Shores' request.

**11. ADJOURNMENT BY CHAIR DAVID HART @ 3:02 P.M.**

**SUBMITTED BY: TERESA CAMPA**

**Approved on: June 5, 2014**