



## Meeting Minutes

Meeting of the California Water Commission  
Wednesday, June 19, 2019  
State of California, Resources Building  
1416 Ninth Street, First Floor Auditorium  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
Beginning at 9:30 a.m.

### **1. Call to Order**

Chairman Quintero called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

### **2. Roll Call**

Executive Secretary Kimberly Muljat called the roll. Commission members Carol Baker, Andy Ball, Joe Byrne, Danny Curtin, Maria Herrera, and Armando Quintero were present, constituting a quorum.

### **3. Closed Session**

The Commission did not hold a closed session.

### **4. Approval of April 17, 2019 Meeting Minutes**

Commissioner Baker moved to approve the April 17, 2019 meeting minutes. All Commissioners present voted in favor.

### **5. Executive Officer's Report**

Executive Officer Joe Yun reported the Water Foundation released its strategic framework document in March, which indicated the Commission did not consider climate change in the 2016 draft regulations for the Water Storage Investment Program (WSIP). Staff is working with the Chair to correct that inaccuracy. Due to difficulties reaching and maintaining a quorum for Commission meetings, staff is exploring alternate dates for upcoming meetings. The WSIP early funding agreement for the Sites Project has been executed. Commission staff hosted a stakeholder information exchange on May 30 and a Tribal information meeting on June 6.

### **6. Commission Member Reports**

There were no Commission member reports.

### **7. Public Testimony**

There was no public testimony.

### **8. Action Item: Rancho California Water District's Vail Dam**

Chairman Quintero introduced the item. Commissioner Byrne recused himself and left the dais. Rick Aragon, Assistant General Manager of Rancho California Water District, requested the Commission find the Vail Dam project consistent with Proposition 1 for the purposes of the

federal Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation (WIIN) Act eligibility requirements. A finding of consistency would allow the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation to fund up to 25% of the project to construct a new dam. After review by the Division of Safety of Dams, the current dam was deemed deficient in current regulation standards. Mr. Aragon provided an overview of the project's benefits, including water storage for multiple purposes and recreational and environmental benefits. Commissioner Baker moved to find Vail Dam to be consistent with Proposition 1 and Commissioner Curtin seconded the motion. All Commissioners present voted in favor.

**9. Action Item: Documenting Process for WIIN Act Consistency with Proposition 1**

Commissioner Byrne returned to the dais. Holly Stout, General Counsel for the Commission, discussed the need to follow a consistent process for any and all future findings of consistency and recommended the Commission document the process in regulations. Commissioner Byrne moved to have staff draft regulations and start the formal rulemaking process including publication of the notice and Commissioner Herrera seconded the motion. All Commissioners present voted in favor.

**10. Action Item: Approval of 2018 State Water Project (SWP) Annual Review**

Jennifer Ruffolo, Assistant Executive Officer for the Commission, presented the final draft of the 2018 Annual Review of the Construction and Operation of the State Water Project (SWP). Commissioner Ball moved to approve the review and Commissioner Byrne seconded the motion. All Commissioners present voted in favor.

**11. Water/Energy Nexus: How Water Agencies Account for Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions**

Carolyn Greco, with Sonoma County Water Agency (Sonoma Water), provided a brief presentation on how Sonoma Water has tracked GHGs and reduced emissions. Sonoma Water is a wholesale water supplier to Sonoma and Marin Counties. Ms. Greco discussed Sonoma Water's energy policy and climate adaptation plan. Sonoma Water began reporting GHG emissions in 2006 and has since decreased electricity related emissions by over 99%. One of the primary ways Sonoma Water has reduced emissions is through power purchase agreements with Joint Powers Authorities. Ms. Greco presented an overview of the actions Sonoma Water took to achieve a carbon free water supply.

Brad Coffey, with Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (Metropolitan), discussed Metropolitan's GHG reporting and related activities. Metropolitan is a large regional wholesaler and its sources of power include hydroelectric plants and solar power. Metropolitan uses a Climate Action Plan to reduce its GHG footprint and an Energy Sustainability Plan which supports the Climate Action Plan. Annual GHG emissions vary greatly depending on the amount of water available to deliver. Mr. Coffey provided an overview of where and how Metropolitan collects, verifies, and reports emissions data. Mr. Coffey also provided recommendations for GHG reporting, including starting with basic reporting and providing agencies with the ability to explain year-to-year variation.

Chris Dembiczak, Senior Environmental Health and Safety Specialist with East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD), discussed EBMUD's GHG reporting and emissions reductions. EBMUD

provides water and wastewater services for residents across the East Bay. EBMUD's district policies address sustainability and energy, and Mr. Dembiczak highlighted some key policy statements. EBMUD has participated in voluntary GHG emissions accounting since 2005 and in 2018 began to follow new protocols from the Climate Registry to include third-party verification and public reporting. Mr. Dembiczak provided an overview of how EBMUD collects and compiles emissions data, emissions data over time, and some GHG reduction actions.

The Commission lost a quorum at 10:45 a.m. The remainder of the meeting was conducted as a workshop.

Ghassan ALQaser, Chief of the Department of Water Resources (DWR) SWP Power and Risk Office, provided an overview of the SWP and discussed GHG management and reporting. The SWP's power needs vary with water deliveries. The SWP power portfolio includes 65% emissions-free resources; DWR's goal is to utilize 100% emissions-free resources by 2045. Mr. ALQaser discussed shifting pumping to solar hours and shifting pumping to the middle of the day to avoid higher energy costs. DWR has a Climate Action Plan, emissions reduction goals that surpass legal requirements, and wide variety of emissions reduction measures. DWR participates in mandatory reporting to the California Air Resources Board and voluntary reporting to the Climate Registry. Mr. ALQaser provided an overview of DWR's recent annual emissions.

Commissioner Byrne asked how the SWP compares to other utilities and if hydropower allows DWR to reduce its reliance on coal. Mr. ALQaser stated that hydropower makes a big difference, and the SWP has the cleanest portfolio among similar utilities. Commissioner Baker asked if the renewable contracts are within the state or out of state. Mr. ALQaser replied that DWR is focusing on contracts within the state. Ms. Greco said Sonoma Water is also focusing within California. Commissioner Quintero asked Mr. Coffey to clarify a statement he made regarding an upcoming water supply project that will demand more energy. Mr. Coffey stated it is a groundwater recharge project using recycled wastewater.

## **12. Governor Newsom's Water Resilience Portfolio Initiative: Listening Session Part 1**

Nancy Vogel, Director of the Governor's Water Portfolio Program, briefly introduced the initiative and the purpose of the listening sessions.

Caitrin Chapelle, Associate Director at the Public Policy Institute of California Water Policy Center, discussed anticipated impacts of climate change to California's water systems. Five of the pressures affecting the California water system are warming temperatures, decreased snowpack, shorter wet seasons, volatile precipitation, and rising sea levels. Ms. Chapelle discussed essential reforms for reducing vulnerability to climate pressures. Modernizing our water grid can help reduce costs of future droughts. Water allocation rules should be updated to facilitate equitable and efficient allocations during dry times and promote efforts to capture and store more water during wet times. Ms. Chapelle discussed improvements being made in the urban sector, agriculture, and safe drinking water, but stated that a fundamental shift in environmental management is necessary to adapt to the future.

John Cain, Conservation Director for River Partners, delivered a brief presentation on the benefits of floodplain restoration. Mr. Cain discussed the 2017 Central Valley Flood Protection Plan (CVFPP), stating that it is a flood risk management plan, it is outcome-based, and it emphasized multi-benefit projects. Resiliency elements of the CVFPP include land use considerations, encouraging expanding space for rivers, and risk-management strategies such as building codes, flood insurance, and emergency response planning. Mr. Cain discussed how multi-benefit floodplain restoration projects can reduce conflict, reduce water demand, improve water quality, increase water retention and usability, and improve reservoir operation flexibility. Mr. Cain also discussed the many benefits of restoring floodplains specifically in the San Joaquin River watershed.

Dr. Bob Wilkinson, Emeritus Professor at the University of California Santa Barbara Bren School of Environmental Science and Management, discussed framing considerations for developing resilience strategies. Dr. Wilkinson stated that the three key aspects of system resilience are sensitivity, adaptability, and vulnerability. Dr. Wilkinson summarized climate change response options, emphasizing that both mitigation and adaptation will be important to resilience. Some key trends in energy and water are increasing number of decentralized options available to water managers, local supplies are increasingly viewed as the most cost effective marginal sources, and local funding is paying for most water infrastructure. The water portfolio initiative offers an opportunity to create allies to move forward. Dr. Wilkinson highlighted the need for new approaches, such as using multi-benefit analysis as the basis for investments and decisions and using integrated and collaborative approaches.

Chairman Quintero and the panelists discussed integrating agencies to work cooperatively. Commissioner Byrne commented on the implications of changing water allocation rules, as mentioned by Ms. Chapelle. Ms. Chapelle stated that alignment across federal, state, and local jurisdictions is an important factor.

The Commission took public comment. Christine Compton, with Irvine Ranch Water District, encouraged water reuse, incentivizing emergency supplies, and water transfers and markets. Jennifer West, with WaterReuse California, encouraged featuring recycled water in the portfolio strategy and discussed the need for funding. Jonas Minton, with the Planning and Conservation League, stated an ad hoc group with a variety of interests formed to consider consensus recommendations for the portfolio. Gary Bobker, with the Bay Institute, outlined three themes for the state to proceed with a resilient portfolio: measurable outcomes, a systems approach to consider how suites of projects function together, and environmental water needs.

### **13. Consideration of Items for Next California Water Commission Meeting**

Agenda items at the next meeting will include consideration of the proposed Sacramento Regional Water Bank Project's consistency with Proposition 1 and a second listening session on the Governor's climate-resilient water portfolio initiative.

### **14. Adjourn**

The Commission workshop ended at 1:23 pm.