



Meeting Minutes

Meeting of the California Water Commission

Wednesday, September 17, 2014

San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District, Board Room
380 East Vanderbilt Way
San Bernardino, California 92408
Beginning at 8:30 a.m.

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 8:30 a.m.

2. Roll Call

Executive Officer Sue Sims called roll. Commission members Andy Ball, Danny Curtin, Joe Del Bosque, Lu Hintz, Dave Orth, and Armando Quintero were present, constituting a quorum. Chairman Joe Byrne arrived after roll was called. Commission members Kim Delfino and Anthony Saracino were absent.

3. Executive Officer's Report

Sue Sims provided the Executive Officer's Report. The minutes from the Commission's August meeting are complete but will not be approved until the Commission meeting in October. The Commission discussed water conservation and efficiency at its previous meeting. Items for the Commission's October meeting will include a briefing from the Director of the Department of Fish and Wildlife, an update on the final California Water Plan, a briefing on the Association of California Water Agencies' (ACWA) work on headwaters management, an update on agricultural water management plans, and a presentation on DWR's recent system reoperations study. The November meeting agenda will include an item on Proposition 1, the water bond, followed by a workshop on water conservation and efficiency. The workshop will cover topics such as the role of conservation in investments in other projects, the current state of conservation and new technologies, best practices, and a broader policy discussion on future actions.

Maureen King, staff counsel, added that the Commission is statutorily required to inspect portions of the State Water Project (SWP) annually. That inspection will occur immediately following this meeting. Members of the public are unable to participate due to safety and security concerns, so the Commission meeting will be adjourned at the conclusion of the agenda items.

4. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

5. Overview of East Branch Extension Operations and Facilities

Mitch Howard, Chief Operator at Devil Canyon Powerplant, provided an overview of the SWP East Branch Extension (EBX). Water from the California Aqueduct flows into Lake Silverwood, then to Devil Canyon Powerplant, and to the end of the SWP at Lake Perris. The EBX pumps water farther east than the Foothill Pipeline. Citrus Reservoir and Citrus Pump Station are new facilities. Once Citrus Pump Station is operational, both it and Greenspot Pump Station will send water to Crafton Hills Pump Station where it will be pumped into Crafton Hills Reservoir. The capacity of Crafton Hills Reservoir was recently expanded to 280 acre-feet. The reservoir is currently full and will be operational beginning October 1.

Commissioner Curtin asked if gravity feed is used throughout the EBX. Mr. Howard said that gravity feed is used to move water from Devil Canyon Powerplant to Citrus Pumping Plant and Greenspot Pumping Plant. From those plants, water must be pumped uphill to Crafton Hills. After Crafton Hills, water flows downhill by gravity feed. It is possible to bypass Cherry Valley Pump Station, the final pumping plant in the system, but the pump station allows water to travel farther. Commissioner Del Bosque asked if Lake Silverwood is used to simply capture water or store it. Mr. Howard said it is used for both; the reservoir stores SWP water from the California Aqueduct. John Bunce, Chief of DWR's Southern Field Division, added that Lake Silverwood also captures natural creek flow that goes to local agencies. Mr. Howard said the California Aqueduct ends at Lake Silverwood, but there is a pipeline that transports water to Lake Perris.

Commissioner Hintz asked if EBX power generation is linked with Southern California Edison. Mr. Howard said that power is sold to Edison through the California Independent System Operator (ISO). Devil Canyon Powerplant can produce 240 megawatts but is currently producing much less power. Commissioner Quintero asked if DWR coordinates with Edison on the timing of power consumption and generation. Mr. Howard said the ISO coordinates scheduling.

Mr. Curtin asked about current reservoir storage conditions. Mr. Howard said Lake Silverwood is a small reservoir that is in relatively good condition. Storage at Lake Perris was maintained at a high level until Memorial Day, but water has since been released. Mr. Bunce said water levels at Lake Perris and Castaic Lake are low and will continue to decrease. Carl Torgersen, DWR's Deputy Director of the SWP, said Castaic Lake is extremely low and Lake Perris is at about 25% of capacity. Mr. Curtin pointed out that those reservoirs will not be replenished without precipitation and asked at what point mandatory water use reductions may be implemented. Mr. Torgersen said rationing may be necessary if California experiences another winter like last year's. Ms. Sims added that the State Water Resources Control Board will hold a hearing on that issue on September 24.

6. Briefing on Joint Powers Agreement Relating to the Operation and Maintenance of the East Branch Extension

Mr. Torgersen provided a brief overview of the agreement for the operation and maintenance of the EBX. In 2004, DWR entered into an agreement with San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District and San Geronio Pass Water Agency. DWR integrated its system, which features higher voltage and more powerful pumps, with the significant existing infrastructure that was being operated by the two local agencies. The agreement was that the local agencies would continue to oversee and operate the facilities while DWR would perform any maintenance. When the initial agreement was due to expire it was decided that the cooperation could continue, but with some minor changes. The local agencies' operations staff must now meet DWR's safety requirements and DWR will continue to perform maintenance. DWR and the agencies have reached an agreement, but that agreement has not yet been approved by the agencies' boards or the Director of DWR. The roles of each agency are well defined. The facilities are all SWP facilities, so DWR ultimately has jurisdiction over them. The agreement is cost effective for all the parties involved. The updated agreement will also institute an operations group consisting of representatives from DWR and the local agencies that will review the effectiveness of practices within the EBX. There will also be a twice-yearly manager's meeting with the Deputy Director of the SWP and the general managers of the two local agencies. This agreement is unique to this section of the SWP because the local agencies were already operating significant infrastructure and their operations do not greatly impact the rest of the system because the EBX is at the end of the SWP. Mr. Curtin asked if employees of the two agencies work side by side. Mr. Torgersen said they do and the new agreement very clearly defines who will perform which duties. Chairman Byrne asked if DWR performs bigger tasks. Mr. Torgersen said local operators are not trained to perform tasks with exposure to high voltage, so DWR performs work of that nature. Mr. Del Bosque asked where the operations agreement begins geographically. Mr. Bunce said it begins at Devil Canyon Afterbay.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:58 a.m.

Upon adjournment, members of the Commission conducted an inspection Citrus Reservoir and Pump Station, Greenspot Pump Station, Crafton Hills Reservoir, and Devil Canyon Powerplant. For safety and security reasons, these facilities were not open to members of the public.



Inspection Summary

California Water Commission Inspection of the State Water Project Wednesday, September 17, 2014

Upon adjournment of the California Water Commission meeting on September 17, 2014, members of the Commission conducted an inspection of facilities in the State Water Project East Branch Extension. For safety and security reasons, these facilities were not open to members of the public.

The Commission inspected the recently constructed Citrus Reservoir and Citrus Pump Station. Citrus Reservoir is currently empty, but has a capacity of 400 acre-feet. Members of the Commission had the opportunity to see where pumps will be installed in Citrus Pump Station and where a turbine may be installed in the future for hydroelectric power generation. From Citrus Pump Station, members of the Commission traveled to the nearby Greenspot Pump Station where they toured the facility and met with operations staff. Greenspot Pump Station utilizes variable frequency pumps which are used to adjust the output of the facility because pumping there is based on customer demand. The Commission next visited Crafton Hills Reservoir. At the reservoir, members of the Commission observed solar-powered mixing devices that are used to circulate water in order to minimize oxygen stratification and improve water quality in the reservoir. The final stop on the inspection tour was Devil Canyon Powerplant. State Water Project staff discussed the equipment that is used for power generation. Members of the Commission inspected the original portions of the facility that were completed in 1975 as well as the portions of the facility that were constructed in the 1990s.