

JULY/AUGUST PUBLIC MEETINGS SUMMARY

Water Storage Investment Program (WSIP)

California Water Commission (Commission)

July 27, 2015, July 30, 2015 and August 10, 2015

Prepared by the Sacramento State, Center for Collaborative Policy (CCP)

General Overview of Public Meetings

The Commission and its staff, with facilitation assistance from CCP, held three public meetings in July and August. Public meetings were held in Napa (July 27, 2015), Davis (July 30, 2015), and Bakersfield (August 10, 2015). The objectives of these meetings were to inform the public about the WSIP; review the timeline to develop the program and its required regulations; learn about California Department of Fish and Wildlife's (CDFW) and the State Water Resources Control Board's (State Water Board) ecosystem and water quality priorities; and provide the public with an opportunity to provide input on the WSIP. The PowerPoint used for each public meeting is available at <https://cwc.ca.gov/Pages/Meetings.aspx>.

The general topics for each meeting were as follows:

1. Opening
 - a. Welcome by Commission Staff, Commissioners, and local public officials.
 - b. Review of the agenda and how to participate in the public comment portion of the evening.
2. WSIP Overview Presentation – Presented by Jennifer Marr, Supervising Engineer, Commission staff
 - a. Review of Proposition 1, Water Bond 2014, Chapter 8 requirements
 - b. Summary of WSIP goals and objectives
 - c. Review of WSIP timeline and steps
3. Ecosystem and Water Quality Priorities Presentations
 - a. CDFW ecosystem priorities – Presented by Scott Cantrell, Water Branch Chief, CDFW
 - b. State Water Board water quality priorities – Presented by Gail Linck, Environmental Program Manager, State Water Board
4. Public Questions and Comments
5. Closing

Commission staff changed the format slightly for Davis webcast and the subsequent Bakersfield public meetings. For these two meetings, public questions and comments occurred following *each* presentation rather than only at the end of the evening.

The general themes across public meetings are listed below. Specific themes for each meeting are contained within the individual summaries beginning on page 3.

General Themes

- Attendees asked several questions about whether specific project types could be eligible for WSIP funding. These project types included:
 - Flood prevention projects
 - Removal of invasive plant species due to drought conditions
 - Forest management to improve water storage

- Building water storage on fallowed farm land and using binding agents to control dust created in dry years
- Projects to create levee setbacks
- Projects to correct salt sinks
- Providing infrastructure improvements to existing water storage facilities (e.g., Shasta and Oroville Dams)
- Attendees frequently asked how the Commission would monitor public benefits to ensure that funded water storage projects continue to provide designated benefits
- Attendees frequently cited concerns that projects with no direct connection to the Delta or its tributaries would not be eligible for WSIP funding
- Attendees frequently asked for clarification on funding guidelines for projects including:
 - The maximum amount the Commission could award a project, including for the ecosystem benefit
 - Reimbursable costs (e.g., dollar for dollar, in-kind, or both)
 - Possible nonpublic benefit funding partners
 - Funding partnerships with federal agencies
 - Disclosure of private funding partners
 - Whether the Commission has determined if it will exceed the 50% cost share for conjunctive use and reoperation projects
- Attendees supported requiring projects to mitigate the negative impacts they create
- Attendees voiced concerns that applicants might use funding from WSIP to meet project mitigation and compliance obligations

Napa, CA—July 27, 2015

The Napa public meeting was held on July 27, 2015 at the Napa Elks Lodge #832. Twenty people attended the meeting. The Commission's Assistant Executive Officer, Rachel Ballanti; Commissioner Daniel Curtin, Assemblymember Bill Dodd (Assembly District [AD]-4); Napa Vice Mayor Scott Sedgley; and Mike Miiller Chief of Staff for Assemblymember Marc Levine (AD-10) welcomed participants and thanked them for their time. Commissioner Curtin added that building a reliable water system is critical to jobs in the State. He emphasized his interest to hear about water issues in Napa. Assembly member Dodd stressed that building a safe water supply is important for quality of life. He supported the need to invest in water storage. He also thanked the Commission for its work and for coming to Napa. Napa Vice Mayor Scott Sedgley welcomed the Commission to Napa and emphasized the need to work together to address water issues in California. Mr. Miiller stressed the need to build a stronger water infrastructure and a sustainable water system. He also emphasized the importance of public participation to determine how to allocate Proposition 1, Water Bond 2014 funding.

Specific Themes and Concerns Identified by Attendees

- A participant expressed concern that that many applicants may not be able to apply because the requirements for the WSIP will be too costly.
- Several participants asked how projects located in the Napa River Watershed could be eligible for funding.
- Some participants asked how the ecosystem and water quality priorities outlined by CDFW and the State Water Board, respectively, would be incorporated into the WSIP.
- A few participants questioned how or whether the Commission would score ecosystem and water quality priorities during the application review.

Davis, CA—July 30, 2015

The Davis, CA public meeting was held at the Davis Veterans Memorial Center. There were 26 attendees. The meeting was also webcast and viewed live by 92 people. The recording is available at <http://cwc.videoss.com/archives/073015/>.

Welcoming statements were provided by Ms. Ballanti, Commissioner Armando Quintero and Davis City Councilmember Brett Lee. They thanked attendees for taking the time to provide input on the WSIP. Commissioner Quintero added that the Commission looks forward to reviewing projects that will greatly benefit California's water system and help address future drought issues. Councilmember Lee emphasized the importance of funding a reliable water infrastructure. Also attending were representatives from the offices of Congressman John Garamendi (CA-3), Assembly member Bill Dodd (AD-4), and Assembly member Kevin McCarty (AD-7).

Specific Themes and Concerns Identified by Attendees

- Several attendees asked how the Commission was considering:
 - Water storage related to natural disasters
 - The categorization of funding projects based on geographic region or project types
 - Quantifying private benefits
 - Defining tributaries to the Delta
 - Maximum funding limit per project
- Some participants were concerned that the ecosystem priorities identified by CDFW, relative to the WSIP, do not clearly articulate net change as required by Proposition 1
- One participant commented that CDFW's ecosystem priority #2 (restoring physical processes and flow regimes to improve native habitats) is outside the scope of storage and does not relate to the storage chapter of Water Bond 2014
- Other participants expressed concerns that groundwater or conjunctive use projects would not be able to meet the priorities.

Recommendations/Suggestions from Attendees

- One participant suggested that the Commission ensure that project proponents emphasize safety considerations.

Bakersfield, CA—August 10, 2015

The Bakersfield, CA public meeting was held at the Bakersfield Senior Center. Thirty people attended. The Commission's Executive Officer Paula Landis and Commissioners David Orth and Daniel Curtin welcomed and thanked attendees for their time. Supervisor Allen Ishida from the Tulare County Board of Supervisors spoke briefly. He encouraged Kern County residents to urge their County Supervisors to endorse a Joint Powers Authority for the Temperance Flat Reservoir project. Also attending the public meeting were Field Representative Courtney Mayo from the Office of Senator Jean Fuller (Senate District-16) and District Director Shelly Abajian from the Office of Senator Dianne Feinstein.

Specific Themes and Concerns Identified by Attendees

- Several participants supported funding Temperance Flat Reservoir to decrease reliance on the Delta, recharge local groundwater supplies, and develop more reliable local water supply to reduce dependence on groundwater during drought conditions.
- One participant supported raising Friant Dam rather than building Temperance Flat.
- Several people stressed increasing water storage throughout California to ensure reliable water infrastructure and to ensure there was water for future drought conditions.
- A few participants suggested reducing the focus on providing benefits to the Delta. They noted that it was important to provide benefits to humans.
 - One participant conveyed concern that Proposition 1 had become a Delta preservation bill rather than a net water storage program, which was believed to be the original intent of the ballot measure.
- A few participants expressed concern that funding may not support projects south of the Delta due to the lack of a natural hydrologic connection.
- A participant asked for more information on how long projects would have to complete their requirements after receiving a soft commitment from the Commission.
- Some participants expressed concern that private investors might not receive the benefits that they will pay for as potential investors in water storage projects. Along the same lines, some were concerned about the potential negative impacts to private investors if future changes are made to the proposed regulations.
- Several attendees wanted more information on the CDFW ecosystem and State Water Board water quality priorities.
- Several participants wanted to make sure that project applicants would address and mitigate impacts created by storage projects.
- A participant stressed the importance of funding new technologies to address water storage issues.
- Several attendees asked how the Commission plans to monitor projects to ensure they continue to provide public benefits and address ecosystem and water quality priorities.
- A potential applicant asked if projects could be adapted after the Commission funded it.
- A participant expressed concern that projects would develop more visitor centers, instead of more beneficial facilities.
- Another participant asked the CDFW to clarify their meaning of water use efficiency.

Recommendations/Suggestions

- DWR should develop funding programs to use new technologies to address water issues.