



CCRSCo

Clean Colorado River Sustainability Coalition Meeting Minutes

Hosted By Clark County Water Reclamation District
Laughlin Water Reclamation Facility (WRF)
450 Bruce Woodbury Dr.
Laughlin, NV 89029

Thursday, January 15, 2015
1:00 p.m.

Voting Membership Present

Bob Leuck -Vice Chairman	Bullhead City
Raymond Mejia	Chemehuevi Indian Tribe (via phone)
Mark S. Nexsen-Chairman	Lake Havasu City
D.L. Wilson	La Paz County Supervisor (via phone)
David Brownlee	City of Needles (via phone)
Jake Jacobson-Treasurer	Clark County Water Reclamation District
Andy Jones	Colorado River Sewage Systems Joint Venture
Maria Lopez	Metropolitan Water District of So. California (via phone)
Nancy McLain	Mohave County Supervisor (Steven Moss)
Peggy Roefer-Secretary	Southern Nevada Water Authority
Tim Edwards	Town of Parker (via phone)

Others in Attendance

Becky Blasius	Bureau of Reclamation
Noe Santos	Bureau of Reclamation
Tom Brady	Bullhead City
Charlie Cassens	Lake Havasu City
Don Callahan	Lake Havasu City
Doyle Wilson	Lake Havasu City
Jerri Bracamonte	Lake Havasu City
Scott Bryan	Central Arizona Project (via phone)
Jerry McGuire	Colorado River Sewage Systems
Todd Tietjen	Southern Nevada Water Authority

Prior to the start of the meeting, members that attended in person, toured Big Bend Water District and met for lunch at the Laughlin WRF.

Call to Order

Chairman Nexsen called the meeting to order at 1:10 p.m. Roll call was taken and it was determined that there was a quorum.

1. Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes from September 18, 2014-Chairman Nexsen

Andy Jones made a motion to approve the minutes from the September 18, 2014, Regular Meeting. The motion was seconded by Vice Chairman Bob Leuck and unanimously carried.

2. Treasurer's Report- Treasurer Jacobson

The Treasurer's Report was given by Treasurer Jake Jacobson and is attached. He reported the beginning balance as of August 31, 2014, as \$189,652.38. He reported that membership dues totaling \$10,000 were deposited, some interest was earned, and there were two expenses for a plaque and lunch meeting meal from September, bringing the ending balance to \$199,509.59.

Vice Chairman Bob Leuck made a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report. The motion was seconded by Andy Jones and unanimously carried.

3. Bureau of Reclamation Update-Water Concerns w/Lake Mead-Becky Blasius, BOR and Noe Santos, Reclamation River Operations Group

Becky Blasius introduced Noe Santos to the group and Noe presented an overview of reservoir operations and current conditions of the Colorado River Basin.

Noe Santos displayed a map showing the Colorado River Basin spanning parts of the seven Basin States of Arizona, California, Colorado, New Mexico, Nevada, Utah, and Wyoming. He explained that the Colorado River is one of the most critical sources of water in the West and the operations and water deliveries are governed by the "Law of the River." On average 16.5 million acre-feet (maf) is allocated annually; 7.5 maf to each Upper and Lower Colorado River Basins (Basins), and 1.5 maf to Mexico. Because of the Colorado River system's ability to store approximately 60 maf, or nearly four times the annual flow of the river, all requested deliveries were met in the Lower Basin despite the recent drought.

He stated that the Lower Colorado Reservoir Management Office of the Bureau of Reclamation's main objectives are to provide flood control and river regulation; meet water demands; generate hydropower; enhance and maintain ecosystem habitat; recover and protect endangered species; and provide recreation.

He explained that the inflow into Lake Powell has been below average 12 of the past 15 years (2000-2014) and was the driest 15-year period in over 100 years of historical record. Tree-ring reconstructions show more severe droughts have occurred over the past 1200 years; however, based on the paleo-record, the current drought from 2000-2014 fits within the driest one percent of the 1200-year record. He said despite the back-to-back driest years on record in 2013 and 2014, we have been able to weather the drought and we are pretty fortunate that the system storage is at 50% capacity. He said that it is projected that 2015 will come in at 93% of the average inflow.

He said that in response to the drought in the beginning of the turn of the century, the Bureau of Reclamation and the Basin States developed the 2007 Interim Guidelines which are strategies that cover a full range of operations for Lake Powell and Lake Mead through 2026. The process provides a mechanism in the Lower Basin to motivate more efficient and flexible use and management of the Colorado River. It allows for states to develop Intentionally Created Surplus (ICS) that will minimize the likelihood and severity of potential future shortages.

He said that the 2015 Annual Operating Plan (AOP) was signed by the Secretary of the Interior on December 24, 2014 and is available online. Under the 2007 Interim Guidelines, August projections of the reservoirs are used as the basis for decision for Lake Powell and Lake Mead annual operation for the coming year. April projections are also important due to potential adjustments to Lake Powell's annual operation at the higher reservoir levels.

He announced that the federal government is working with water agencies to develop a 5-year pilot program beginning in 2015 to help ease drought conditions. Strategies may include voluntary reductions in water use to help protect against lower Lake Mead elevations and to add water to the system. A component of the plan, the System Conservation Pilot Program, started

on July 20, 2014. This program includes \$11 million to fund new efforts resulting in water savings in Lake Powell and Lake Mead that benefit all users of the Colorado River system during the on-going drought.

He reported that the International Boundary and Water Commission was able to develop a cooperative 5-year agreement with Mexico. This is an historic breakthrough for sharing Colorado River resources and provides a mechanism for Mexico to store water in Lake Mead and to also share in shortage and surplus conditions with the U.S. water users. He said the Bureau of Reclamation meets with Mexico on a monthly basis to check in on the status of various projects.

He said that as of mid-night, January 13, 2015, Lake Powell was 47% full, Lake Mead was 41% full and the total system storage was 50% full. The total system storage was 29.20 maf or 49% this time last year. He said prior to 1999, Lake Mead was last at elevation 1,087 feet in May 1956. In mid-August 2014, Lake Mead was at its lowest elevation of 1080 feet since it was first filled in the 1930s. The snowpack last year in the upper Colorado was pretty decent and was measured at 111% of average in April, compared to the year before which was below average. This year they project Lake Powell to be at elevation 3,596 feet in August, which places it in the Upper Elevation Balancing Tier, and allows them to release up to 9.0 maf to Lake Mead. He said that if we see Lake Mead drop below an elevation of 1075 feet we would meet the first shortage criteria. If Lake Powell surpasses the equalization elevation level this year at 3649 feet, Lake Powell can release additional water to equalize the contents of Lake Mead and Lake Powell so neither one is too full or too empty.

He reported that the current conditions are pretty decent; in December 2014, unregulated inflow to Lake Powell was 109 % of average and they are forecasting the next three months to come close to average but slightly still below. Current total Water Year is about 93% of average so it's close to normal.

He concluded by stating the future hydrology that includes continued drought conditions may lead us to new operational challenges, and the need for innovative collaborative solutions.

4. Status of Foam and Phosphorus Levels in River-Secretary Roefer

Peggy reported there have been no reports of foam in the river, but that Todd Tietjen was present to report on the water quality of Lake Mohave. Todd said the most interesting thing in Lake Mohave is that there continues to be Microcystis (blue-green algae), and he is surprised that it's still present this late in the year. He said we worry about this type of algae because they are members of the algal group that release toxins, although toxins have not been detected to date. This situation is different than what has been seen in the past two years and can't be tied to any other changes.

Bob Leuck said that Jeff Theuret, with Big Bend Water District, stated they noticed over the last several years that at the in-takes at the water treatment plant there are larger than normal nutrient levels and looking at the history, it is higher now than in the past. Todd explained that he does not really have data below the dam, but immediately upstream of the dam we have low phosphorus concentrations pretty much year-round. Todd said that if we can coordinate samplings with the in-takes, we can look at what's happening from below the dam.

He stated that over the past two months, there have been localized foam clumps but it's not been widespread. Other members commented that they have had the same results or no reporting.

Mayor Nexsen invited a member of the public present to speak on the item.

Ms. Terry Shurte former high school science teacher and local resident by the River Bend said she has watched the river deteriorate over the past 37 years that she has lived on the river. She stated that there is foam in the river and has been there for about the last five to seven years. She passed around her iPad displaying pictures of the foam floating down the river behind her home and explained that this is a serious problem and she feels the ecosystem is dying. She offered to give the members a sample of foam every day, because it's flowing down the river every day, all day long, and has seen oil rings connected to it.

She advised that she thinks it's due to outside dumping into the river, ecological changes, and global warming. She explained that the bottom of the river used to be rocky, and has observed higher levels of silt and an evasive green plant growing at the bottom. She said that the bird population is not there, because the fresh water clams are not there anymore. She explained that this is a major migratory flight-way for birds and they are not coming because the food source is not there. She concluded by stating that she is concerned for the surrounding communities' tourism.

5. ASU Student Research Opportunities-Water Quality-Doyle Wilson, LHC

Doyle Wilson reported that several students are working on many projects geared towards water quality in the river through ASU, and the program opportunities are starting to gain traction.

He reminded everyone that the river is by-in-large an artificial system to begin with, and that there is very little native-anything out there. He said that the students are studying how the created system is changing for the better and for the worse. For example, there is a student looking at diet preferences between native and non-native species in the river with red-eared sunfish and bullfrogs. He said another student is working on the abundance and diversity of fish species at artificial fish habitats. These habitats have been in Lake Havasu City for close to 30 years, and the student is looking at what diversity of species those fish habitats are serving.

He said there are three other students that will be up for Senior Capstone projects next fall. He proposed that the students look at the feces of quagga muscles to see what they are ingesting and what they are not eating, for example the *Microcystis*. He suggested this will be a very beneficial study of the changes in the water column due to the impact of quagga mussels. He said two other students are interested in heavy metals and phosphorus concentrations in the lake bottom sediments. And one other student wants to get involved with water quality in some manner.

He concluded by stating that with the introduction of environmental science next fall, he believes we will be able to sustain this interest through time.

6. Follow-up on Exploration of CCRSCo Website Launch-Doyle Wilson, LHC

Doyle reported that the person working with Lake Havasu City has a professional web-development business and is currently working on the Water Conservation website. She is interested and suggests that she would charge \$25 an hour, but price may vary depending on what the members want. He suggests that the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) get together to brainstorm content of what the website should include.

Jake suggested getting a proposal for the "shell" of the website in a lump-sum cost and then any hourly rate for maintenance and upkeep.

Members agreed that TAC should meet with her, put together some content, and provide a proposal from her at the next available CCRSCo meeting for review and possible action.

Andy Jones suggested adding the Engineering Report that was done about 15 years ago as an accessible link.

Secretary Roefer suggested adding a description of each of the members.

Bob Leuck suggested to the members to email any items they want added to the website to him or Jerri Bracamonte in the next week or two.

Chairperson Nexsen suggests adding a link with current reports and articles about the river for educational purposes, including reports by American Rivers.

Jake Jacobson suggests the website will provide a one-stop shop for board member announcements and meeting location and reminders and so forth.

Bob Leuck will setup a TAC meeting in the near future to go over the details and content for the website and will report back at the next meeting.

7. Follow-up on Watershed Grant Application w/Bureau of Reclamation-Doyle Wilson, LHC

Doyle reported that he finally got a debriefing in December from the Bureau of Reclamation on the application that was submitted for the WaterSmart Grant. There were 30 applications and six awards. He said we were in the middle of the pack as far as the scoring was concerned. They had questions about the size of the Watershed and thought we were too big, but the points that were deducted for size were not significant. What they thought was most important was to expand the details in the budget.

Additionally, he said that points were deducted based on two other criteria: Project Planning and Landscape Conservation Cooperative (LCC) involvement. For Project Planning, they wanted more details in the timeline and improved milestones, definition of the duties of the coordinator and why the position is needed, and elaboration of the plan. They also suggested getting involved with the LCC, which is Reclamation supported. He said, initially when he was putting the application together, he looked up the LCC website and it listed members including CRIT; however, today they have action groups for different categories listed and CRIT was removed. He said he didn't recognize anyone on the list, and there were non-profit groups listed rather than municipalities. Doyle said the WaterSmart panel suggests that CCRSCo get a letter of support from the LCC, in addition to the individual letters of support from the CCRSCo members. Doyle said that he will follow-up with LCC to attain this.

Noe Santos suggested Doyle get in touch with a member from the Steering Committee. After much discussion, it was suggested that Doyle get in touch with the Chairperson of the Steering Committee and setup a meeting with himself and possibly Mayor Nexsen and other CCRSCo members.

8. Future Agenda Items and 2015 Goals

CCRSCo Website Launch Update
CCRSCo Budget and Goals over the Next Three Years

9. Discussion on Current Events

Nancy McLain announced that Supervisor Moss is proposing an ordinance that would require man-made water features to use wastewater effluent instead of fresh water, this will include golf courses and other un-incorporated areas. She said it will be brought to the board in February.

10. Future Meeting and Tour Suggestions

March-Jerri Bracamonte to send a list of dates via Doodle Poll
June 18-Davis Dam (Bob Leuck will help facilitate)
September-LHC Annual Meeting
December-Wetlands in Henderson, CRIT, Chemehuevi Tribe?

IV. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by Andy Jones and seconded by Jake Jacobson. Chairman Nexsen declared the meeting adjourned at 2:27 p.m.