

**REPORT FOR THE MEETING OF
THE ADVISORY WATER COMMISSION OF THE SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY FLOOD CONTROL
AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
FOR AUGUST 17, 2005**

The regular meeting of the Advisory Water Commission of the San Joaquin County Flood Control and Water Conservation District was held on Wednesday, August 17, 2005, beginning at 1:00 p.m., at Public Health Services, 1601 E. Hazelton Avenue, Stockton, California.

Roll Call.

Present were Commissioners Beckman, Edwards, Gilmore, Giovanetti, Nomellini, Pinhey, Robinson, Taro, Weybret, Chairman McGurk, Vice-Chair Price and Secretary Lytle. Others present are listed on the Attendance Sheet.

Approval of Minutes for the Meeting of July 20, 2005.

Motion carried to approve the minutes (Beckman/Nomellini).

SCHEDULED ITEMS

I. **Discussion Items:**

A. *Update on Farmington Program – Peters Pipeline Construction*

Kevin Kauffman, General Manager of Stockton East Water District (SEWD), presented a pictorial update on SEWD's Farmington Program – Peters Pipeline Construction. The pictures lent graphic description to the Pipeline update and the progress made between February 22 and August 15, 2005. Considered Phase I of the Farmington Groundwater Recharge Program, the reinforced concrete pipeline is six miles long and 60 inches in diameter. Extending west from Peters, Peters Pipeline connects an existing pipeline, which begins east of Mormon Slough near the community of Peters, to the Dr. Joe Waidhofer Drinking Water Treatment Plant, SEWD's surface water treatment plant located in Stockton. Thirty feet apart, Peters Pipeline runs parallel to the Bellota Pipeline until about a mile west of Duncan Road.

The Farmington Groundwater Recharge Program is Eastern San Joaquin County's solution to begin replenishment of the basin's critical overdraft and saline intrusion. The Program, led by SEWD and the Sacramento division of the Army Corps of Engineers, is partnering with local land owners to put water back into the aquifer and try to reverse the detrimental trend. Mr. Kauffman reminded the Commission that a study was completed in 2001 which showed there to be 35,000 AF of surface water available to put into the ground, either through Passive or Direct Methods. The Direct Method uses flooded fields, shallow and deep basins, or injection to actually put water into the ground; and the Passive Method, or in-lieu, uses surface water instead of groundwater. He pointed out that delivering water to the farmers through Conjunctive Use of surface and groundwater is made possible by the 35 agricultural inlets/outlets installed on the Pipeline. Conjunctive Use amicably combines the use of both surface and groundwater, hopefully optimizing the water demand and supply balance. Kauffman stated Peters Pipeline is what makes the Conjunctive use possible; that without the additional capacity they couldn't serve the farmland, explaining that the Bellota Pipeline only has enough capacity to serve the water treatment plant.

Mr. Kauffman reported that they've completed about 4 miles of the pipeline and are currently in the process of doing inspections and testing. He also noted that construction costs have been high and there has been such a great demand for the pipe that the manufacturer hasn't been able to make it fast enough. Due to pipe not reaching the contractor in time several weeks have been added to the finish date. Upon completion, it is believed they will be putting about 10,000 AF of water into the ground every year; Kauffman indicated it could be as soon as next year. He announced copies of the slides would be available to those interested in receiving them.

B. Update on City of Tracy Aquifer Storage and Recovery Project

Nick Pinhey, City of Tracy Public Works Director, gave an informal update on Tracy's Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR) Project. He reminded the Commissioners the intention of the ASR Project is to inject treated drinking water into the aquifer under the City of Tracy, with the long term objective being to create storage of about 4,800 AF. Storing treated drinking water when supply exceeds demand (wet year), they will then use previously stored water when demands exceed the supply (dry year).

The City of Tracy received a CALFED Grant to demonstrate the feasibility of implementing an ASR. In Phase I, a Tidewater Well was temporarily converted and tested as an ASR well; Phase II included the design and construction of an ASR well based on the Grant. Last year Tracy applied for a waiver of discharge requirements with the Regional Board to be able to go forward with the Demonstration Project. The Demonstration Project is approximately 23 tests a month of injection and withdrawal cycles, which is to help assess the ability to store the water and also help design features for the full-scale program. The Regional Board tabled the request, and asked for further technical studies and reports prior to bringing it back. Mr. Pinhey stated that those requests went far beyond what they had budgeted for the project – to the tune of half a million dollars worth of studies. A major concern is DBP's (disinfection byproducts) in the injected water; the RWQCB characterized drinking water as a "waste" that could impact the quality of native groundwater.

When Tracy's waiver was tabled, the City of Roseville had an immediate interest because they were about to proceed with their waiver. Roseville's project resembles that of Tracy's in terms of design, layout and history; Pinhey described it as almost a mirror image. Agencies in that area and Tracy formed a group and pooled resources to conduct some of the technical studies and to gather the data requested by the Regional Board. This group also engaged in educational activities through the Groundwater Resource Association to help spread the word on ASR: "what it is and the intents." Eleven months after Tracy's request for waiver was denied, on August 5th the City of Roseville took their request for waiver to proceed with their Demonstration Project before the Board and it was approved. Pinhey said the changes were significant enough in the conditions that the City of Tracy is now optimistic about moving forward with their Demonstration Project for a 24-month period.

The fact that the Board now recognizes that drinking water isn't a waste is one of the positive changes that has come from the process. Mr. Pinhey indicated that there are still issues concerning the Board's guidelines, such as percolation and the fact that water districts don't have the same land-use authority that cities do (cities have the ability to enact well head ordinances and control wells within their boundaries). The City of Tracy is eager to demonstrate, once and for all, what happens at each of their sites, especially regarding the disinfection byproducts in the groundwater storage area that they're constructing. They'll actually be able to generate some data, and hopefully refine the guidelines the Board is using, based on some "real" testing.

C. Update on San Joaquin River Restoration Activities and Recent Friant Dam Rulings

This County has been closely following the San Joaquin Restoration Issues for some time, and Dr. Mel Lytle wanted to update the Commission on what's taken place over the summer; what he considers to be some fairly significant issues. They're significant issues because there's not an agency on the Commission that's not in some way affected by the water quality in the San Joaquin River and the Delta. He listed some of these issues and concerns as: poor water quality in the Delta; loss of water supplies for eastside cities and districts; groundwater overdraft; saline intrusion; and public health and environmental health issues, all of which contribute to loss of economic benefits and a lower quality of life.

Dr. Lytle reminded the Commissioners that In August 2004, Judge Lawrence Karlton of the U.S. District Court in Sacramento came out with the Friant Dam Ruling. The Ruling found that Friant Dam operations violate Section 5937 of the state Fish and Game Code, which requires water to be released from a dam for fish. Karlton found that the dam's damaging effects on the San Joaquin

River's Chinook salmon stocks was directly attributed to the way the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) operates Friant Dam. This Decision comes after 16 years of litigation – between a broad coalition of fishing and environmental groups led by the Natural Resources Defense Council, as plaintiffs, and the Friant Water Users Authority and BOR, co-defendants. The ruling means that the BOR will have to release water from Friant Dam for the first time in 55 years.

After referring to a few other actions/items that have transpired related to the Restoration (The County's Oct. 2004 Resolution, Discussions for implementing a SJ River Restoration Task Force, Machado's Senate Bill 350 and its failure to pass the Assembly), Lytle directed the Commissioners' attention to Judge Karlton's new ruling. On July 27, Judge Karlton ruled that three federal agencies violated the federal Endangered Species Act when they ignored the fact that long-term sales of San Joaquin River water would likely harm salmon, Delta smelt and several other threatened or endangered species. Dr. Lytle pointed out that Karlton described the agencies' disregard for the various fish and other species as "arbitrary and capricious." He feels it's very significant that the ruling acknowledges "the frequent failure of federal wildlife agencies to protect wildlife." Feeling that this second ruling is stronger than his first ruling, Commissioner Nomellini also advised the Commissioners that Karlton stated he will make a decision on what the river restoration requirements will be by September 2006.

II. **Action Items:**

A. *Discussion and Possible Action Supporting Appointment of Ed Steffani to Regional Water Quality Control Board:*

Ed Steffani, General Manager for Northern San Joaquin Water Conservation District, asked to be included on the August Agenda to address the Advisory Water Commission with his request for their support for his appointment to the Regional Water Quality Control Board. He indicated there are 4 vacancies on the RWQCB and that he has applied for the Agricultural-Irrigation Category. Mr. Steffani believes that San Joaquin County is not being represented on that Board, and hasn't been represented for too many years. He would like to make a difference.

It was moved and seconded to direct staff to draft a letter of support (Weybret/Beckman). The motion carried (1 Opposed – Edwards, without comment).

III. **Communications:**

- A. Letter on Draft Environmental Impact Study for San Luis Drainage Feature Re-Evaluation
- B. Letter of Support for the South Delta Flood Conveyance Plan
- C. Letter of Comments on the Draft California Water Plan

Public Comment: None.

Possible Future Agenda Items:

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Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 2:48 p.m.

Next Regular Meeting: September 21, 2005, 1:00 p.m.

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