

SAN BERNARDINO VALLEY WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
MINUTES OF THE OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING

October 4, 2022

9:00 A.M.

Vice President Corneille called the Operations Committee meeting to order at 9:00 A.M. The meeting was held as a hybrid meeting with in-person and Zoom/teleconference attendance.

OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Richard Corneille, Vice President

Robert Stewart, Director

STAFF PRESENT:

Betsy Miller, General Manager

Manuel Colunga, Field Supervisor

Katelyn Scholte, Principal Engineer

Erwin Fogerson, ARTP Engineer

Milan Mitrovich, Land Resources Manager

Athena Laroche, Administrative Specialist

Laura Torres, Assistant Engineer

OTHERS PRESENT:

Wen Huang, San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District

Joanna Gibson, San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District

Mike Esquer, San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District

Nate Scheevel, Scheevel Engineering

Brent Adair, San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District

1. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public present.

2. ADDITIONS/DELETIONS TO AGENDA

There were none.

3. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES FROM JULY 28, 2022

It was moved by Director Stewart and seconded by Vice President Corneille to approve the meeting minutes from July 28, 2022. The motion carried 2-0, with all directors present voting in the affirmative.

Director Stewart: Yes

Vice President Corneille: Yes

4. ENHANCED RECHARGE ENGINEERING DESIGN, PHASE 1B UPDATE

Mr. Huang provided a PowerPoint presentation on this item. He noted that this project is a collaborative effort between the San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District (Valley Municipal), San Bernardino Valley Water Conservation District (Conservation District), Western Municipal Water District and the City of Riverside Public Utilities. Mr. Esquer provided an update on the progress of engineering and design documents. He stated that there will be twenty new recharge basins, eight new basin diversions and eleven new drop diversion structures installed within the project area. The final plan will include 1.3 miles of improved channel from the Santa Ana Low Turnout to the Metropolitan Water District Easement, where water will turnout into Dike D and will be metered. Mr. Esquer reviewed an updated design to reduce impacts to San Bernardino kangaroo rat (SBKR) and permanent impacts by thirty percent. Vice President Corneille asked how much the project will increase water volume and the acreage of the new recharge basins. Mr. Esquer stated that these enhancements will allow for capture of 500 CFS flow, with up to 78,000 AF recharged in wet years. Mr. Scheevel said that the new recharge basin are approximately 90-100 acres depending on water levels. Vice President Corneille asked for more detail on the phasing approach. Mr. Esquer indicated that Phase 1A has been completed and a new lining is being installed to reduce the amount of recharge occurring there. Ms. Gibson stated that the initial plan separated the project into phases to address permitting issues, but that the full Phase 1B project will be constructed following responses from U.S. Army Corp of Engineers (COE) and the Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Board), which declined jurisdiction and accepted the project application as presented, respectively.

Ms. Gibson reviewed the map of the redesign efforts noting that the blue areas are the basins, light yellow are temporary impact areas and white cross hatched areas are heavy equipment areas. The heavy equipment areas will be restored upon completion of the project. The western side of the project was set aside for mitigation. Director Stewart asked if we are exporting materials and how the embankments are being created. Mr. Esquer said that there will be a mixture of cut and fill to create the embankments. Director Stewart stated that continuous cut and fill will result in significant impacts. Mr. Esquer said the project has been designed with a certain amount of compaction and the impacts have been discussed with a geologist. Ms. Gibson said that several redesigns were completed to reduce impacts to SBKR and reviewed the project design changes in depth. Ms. Gibson reviewed the progress of environmental compliance. She noted that a draft Streambed Alteration Agreement has been submitted to the California Department of Fish & Wildlife Service (CDFW) and revisions are pending. The incidental take permit is under review by CDFW. Ms. Gibson said that a certificate of inclusion is needed to demonstrate that the project is compliant. The project was awarded a \$2 million grant from the Bureau of Reclamation, which is currently processing NEPA review.

Mr. Scheevel reviewed the proposed Operational Plan. He stated that the final Operational Plan will describe existing and new operations from Cuttle Weir through all basins down to Dike D. The project will result in changes to inflow, vegetation and debris movement, basin storage volume, basin clogging and groundwater mounding. Mr. Scheevel reviewed a map of the proposed operational plan which is color coded to show basins that will operate together. He discussed the installation of smart basins and said that wet year operations are expected to require two-to-four additional staff. The first high flow event of each year will require additional time to manage debris and adjust gates. Vice President Corneille asked if the new gates are motor operated. Mr. Scheevel confirmed that there are some motor operated gates at

the upper end of the project near the sandbox. There will be thirty-five to forty gates to adjust. Vice President Corneille asked if there was any consideration to install additional motor operated gates. Mr. Scheevel said that this was discussed during early design phases but was not feasible due to the lack of a power source. He recommended the use of a hydraulic operator. Vice President Corneille asked if there were any changes suggested to optimize operations of the Cuttle Weir. Mr. Esquer indicated that none were recommended at this time and noted that COE had stated a 408 permit would be required for changes near the weir. He said Phase 1C of the project will include earthwork deepening Cuttle Weir and create a debris pool away from the river pickup and a trash rack structure behind the Santa Ana River abutment. Ms. Miller requested details on the preferred process to receive comments from Conservation District field staff. Mr. Scheevel said that the draft operations and maintenance manual is thirty percent complete, and offered to meet with Conservation District field staff in the next month for a joint review. Mr. Esquer reviewed the project schedule as follows: November 2022: Complete engineering and permitting; December 2022: Advertise for Bids; February 2023: Award Construction Contract; March 2023: Notice to Proceed for Construction; and 2025: Complete Construction. Vice President Corneille asked for the construction cost estimate. Mr. Esquer indicated that it is in process. Mr. Huang stated that the preliminary cost estimate, including contingency, is approximately \$80 million. Vice President Corneille requested the opportunity to review final plans before they go out to bid and recommended incorporating phasing into the plan during construction process. Mr. Huang indicated that he would make them available to Conservation District for review and comment. The Committee thanked Valley Municipal for their detailed presentation.

5. FIELD SUPERVISOR UPDATE PRESENTATION

Mr. Colunga presented a PowerPoint presentation on field operations activities. He reviewed the flows at the Mill Creek Diversion including recent debris that were removed by the team. He reviewed the utilization of the new hoist to load the herbicide tank onto the gaiter. A new gate was installed on Sapphire and a new gate is planned for installation on Orange street. Trespass issues were reviewed in brief. Ms. Miller indicated that staff is working closely with the City of Redlands to offer services to persons experiencing homelessness on District property. Mr. Colunga said that Field Operations Specialist Michael Guizar has been working diligently with local entities to connect the unhoused population with services and housing placements. He reviewed office maintenance that was performed by Field Operations Specialist Tommy Purvis. He stated that the Redlands Plaza roof security system repeatedly reports false alarms. Vice President Corneille asked if there is a plan to upgrade the security system and Ms. Miller confirmed that staff is working to finalize a plan.

6. OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE MANUAL UPDATE

Ms. Torres reviewed this item via PowerPoint. The Operations and Maintenance Manual has been revised to include: updates to reflect completion of the Wash Plan HCP, updates for Plunge Creek Project O&M, updates to the Active Recharge program, updates on efforts to address trespass, recalculation of the Mill Creek basin volumes using 2022 topographic data, addition of a field priorities summary to Appendix D, and revisions throughout to update data. The Committee thanked staff for the update.

It was moved by Vice President Corneille and seconded by Director Stewart to approve the Operations and Maintenance Manual as updated for 2022 and recommend to the Board for approval. The motion carried 2-0, with all directors present voting in the affirmative.

Director Stewart: Yes

Vice President Corneille: Yes

7. MENTONE SHOP IMPROVEMENTS VERBAL UPDATE

Ms. Scholte provided a verbal update on this item. The District has paid a deposit for the building and the building designer is preparing structural calculations. We have not submitted the structural plans to the County for permitting at this time. The fire system requirements are still a concern since the closest fire hydrant is across the street and further down the road.

8. MILL CREEK DIVERSION AND DEBRIS MANAGEMENT IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS VERBAL UPDATE

Ms. Scholte said that staff met with the Army Corps of Engineer's 408 team, including a legal representative, and a 408 permit is required to proceed. The District has received the 401/WDR permit and staff will begin working on project specifications. Permitting is expected to be completed by spring.

It was moved by Director Stewart and seconded by Vice President Corneille to defer the construction of the Mill Creek Diversion and Debris Management Improvement Project until 2023 in order to allow recharge operations to proceed uninterrupted in Fall 2022/Winter 2023. The motion carried 2-0, with all directors present voting in the affirmative.

Director Stewart: Yes

Vice President Corneille: Yes

9. DRAFT ARTP POLICY COMMITTEE STATUS REPORT

This item is included on package pages 9 to 12. Ms. Scholte reviewed the Progress Overview slide via PowerPoint. The current progress includes:

- Waterman Basin & Twin Creek Spreading Grounds – Feasibility study contract is with Tetra Tech. Hydrology studies have been completed and submitted to San Bernardino County Flood Control District (FCD). The second round of comments have been addressed. Approximately \$295,000 has been expended from the \$1,530,615 (Waterman, Twin & Lynwood) contract to date. The geotechnical testing is underway.
- Lynwood/29th Street Basins – Feasibility study contract is with Tetra Tech. Hydrology studies have been completed and submitted to FCD and the first round of comments have been addressed. Approximately \$295,000 has been expended from the \$1,530,615 (Waterman, Twin & Lynwood) contract to date. The geotechnical testing is underway.
- Plunge Creek – Feasibility study contract is with CASC. The lag time sensitivity analysis for hydrology has been completed and submitted to FCD. Approximately \$295,000 has been expended from the \$786,880 (Plunge and Oak Creek) contract to date. Permitting efforts for geotechnical work are underway, with an access permit required from BLM.

- Oak Creek – Feasibility study contract with CASC. The lag time sensitivity analysis for hydrology has been completed and submitted to FCD. Approximately \$295,000 has been expended from the \$786,880 (Plunge and Oak Creek) contract to date. Permitting efforts for geotechnical work is underway; however, SBKR were found on site. Vice President Corneille asked if progress reports were received with each bill. Ms. Scholte responded in the affirmative and noted that an updated schedule is received as well.
- Mill Creek – Feasibility study contract with Q3. She noted that Q3 is primarily focused on Mill Creek. A hydraulic model for existing conditions in basins has been started, and currently takes six days to run in full. The consultant is fine-tuning the hydraulic model. Pebble count for sediment transport analysis is complete. Coordination with Lockheed regarding hazardous materials has occurred. Approximately \$157,000 of the \$1,374,343 contract has been expended to date. Geoscience has prepared an initial groundwater model to cover all of the projects.
- City Creek (Bledsoe Creek) – Feasibility study contract with Q3. The concept was refined to analyze diversion from Bledsoe Creek only. Notice to proceed has not been given for the project. No invoices have been received on the \$332,514 contract to date.
- Cook Creek – The feasibility study contract is with Q3. The Cook Creek location has been added after discussions with Valley Municipal staff. The fault study conducted for the site indicates that groundwater does reach the Bunker Hill Basin, and additional geotechnical testing options are being researched. Approximately \$13,500 has been expended from the \$483,787 contract to date. We have recently received the estimate for the seismic infraction and will be working on a change order.

Vice President Corneille inquired about the previously requested financial report for the ARTP projects. Ms. Scholte indicated that staff is working on it and that it will likely be ready for review in December. Vice President Corneille requested to review the financial report prior to presenting it to the ARTP Policy Committee.

10. SEDIMENT MANAGEMENT DISCUSSION

Ms. Scholte stated that the District is limited on locations to place stockpiles of aggregate. She provided a handout of a map showing locations of existing stockpiles in Mill Creek and discussed potential options to remove materials. She reviewed the long-term Mill Creek sediment removal map. Mr. Colunga and Mr. Mitrovich have been discussing the option of spreading sand in the Borrow Pit. Mr. Mitrovich indicated that surveys are being performed. Ms. Scholte said that there is an estimated 47,000 square feet of material or approximately 175,000 yards of materials that need to be removed.

11. NEXT QUARTERLY MEETINGS

The next meetings are scheduled for January 24, 2023; March 28, 2023; July 25, 2023; and October 10, 2023 at 9 A.M.

12. ADJOURN MEETING

There was no further business, and the meeting adjourned at 10:59 A.M.

It was moved by Vice President Corneille and seconded by Director Stewart to adjourn. The motion carried 2-0, with all directors present voting in the affirmative.

Director Stewart: Yes

Vice President Corneille: Yes