

**SAN BERNARDINO VALLEY WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT**  
**MINUTES OF THE OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**JULY 25, 2023**  
**9:00 A.M.**

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Chairman 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, Chairman  
Robert Stewart, Vice President

**STAFF PRESENT:**

Betsy Miller, General Manager  
Manuel Colunga, Field Supervisor  
Katelyn Scholte, Principal Engineer  
Erwin Fogerson, PERC Engineer  
Athena Laroche, Administrative Specialist  
David Cosgrove, District Counsel

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

None

**1. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There was no public present.

**2. ADDITIONS/DELETIONS TO AGENDA**

There were none.

**3. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES FROM MAY 19, 2023**

**It was moved by Vice President Stewart and seconded by Director Corneille to approve the meeting minutes from May 19, 2023, as presented. The motion carried 2-0, with all directors present voting in the affirmative.**

**Vice President Stewart: Yes**  
**Director Corneille: Yes**

**4. FIELD SUPERVISOR UPDATE PRESENTATION**

Mr. Colunga gave a PowerPoint presentation on field operations activities. He reviewed an issue with trespassers swimming in the percolation basins at Mill Creek, who placed boards to increase water depth. This created a leak that the field team worked to stop. The trespass occurred in spite of signage posted

to deter trespassing. Field staff works with local law enforcement as necessary to address trespassing. Mr. Colunga indicated that our signs are often removed. He reviewed the cleaning of the Mill Creek intake, as well as algae growth and removal within ponds and canals. He noted that we are receiving State Water Project (SWP) deliveries at this location. Director Corneille asked if SWP water carries more algae than local water. Mr. Colunga said it does not currently have algae; when it does, copper sulfate may be added to address the issue.

Mr. Colunga reviewed the wildlife exclusion fencing that was installed at Mill Creek Diversion project site. The Field, Engineering, and Biology teams worked together to install this fencing in preparation of construction for Mill Creek Debris Management & Diversion Project. Director Corneille asked if it is installed around the entire site. Ms. Scholte indicated that the fencing currently ends at the water's edge. The Committee requested a visit to view the pre-construction spray-paint survey.

Mr. Colunga reviewed the dumping that occurred on Orange Street. He has been working with the City of Redlands (Redlands) to remove debris from the field.

Mr. Colunga reviewed the Enhanced Recharge project, which is currently under construction. Mr. Fogerson and Ms. Scholte said that San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District (SBVMWD) is doing pre-fab work for concrete structures for the new connection from Basin 13 through Cone Camp to D Dike. Mr. Colunga said that SBVMWD expects to begin grubbing today. Director Corneille asked about the locations of displayed project photos. Mr. Colunga said that it was taken at the west end of the Borrow Pit (Pit).

Mr. Colunga reviewed the fire that occurred in Santa Ana, which burned approximately 16 acres. Ms. Miller noted that it began on the Enhanced Recharge project site. Mr. Fogerson stated that it could result in more silt entering D Dike. Ms. Scholte said it burned over the canal. Additional details are pending. Mr. Colunga shared video footage of a bear in Santa Ana.

## 5. AGGRESSIVE RECHARGE VERBAL UPDATE

Ms. Scholte reviewed the results of aggressive recharge, noting that this operational approach only applies to Mill Creek. She said that recharge is slowly decreasing as the temperatures rise and snow melts. She indicated that we expect native Mill Creek flows to be low enough that they will percolate in the river by the time construction begins on the Mill Creek Diversion on August 14. Ms. Scholte said that we are currently receiving 20 CFS at the Mill Creek diversion. She said that SOD is currently releasing 72 CFS. Director Stewart asked if Southern California Edison (SCE) is taking water. Mr. Colunga said that SCE has not taken any water because they have been cleaning facilities. Ms. Scholte said that we have not operated under an aggressive recharge approach this year due to the high levels of precipitation. Significant maintenance is expected in Mill Creek to address sediment after this wet year. Ms. Scholte said that we have begun trucking material from basin three and basin twelve to the Borrow Pit. She noted that the Enhanced Recharge project has used some of the stockpiled materials. Ms. Miller noted that staff is analyzing maintenance needs in order to develop a prioritized plan. Discussion ensued on aggressive recharge.

## 6. MENTONE SHOP IMPROVEMENT VERBAL UPDATE

Ms. Scholte reviewed this item, stating that the engineering staff will meet with Redlands contractor immediately following today's meeting to install the hydrant. The building permit should be obtained soon, and the water line is being installed today. Ms. Scholte said that we expect approximately four months for the building to be delivered. Mr. Fogerson said that the septic system install is moving forward.

## 7. PERC (ARTP) POLICY COMMITTEE STATUS UPDATE

This item is included on package pages 5 to 8. Mr. Fogerson said that the average annual hydrology has been submitted.

The current progress includes:

- Waterman, Twin and Lynwood – Staff met with San Bernardino County Flood Control District (SBCFCD) to discuss the upcoming submittal on hydraulics. Discussion ensued on the analysis of Waterman.
- Plunge and Oak Creek – FCD is currently reviewing the studies for these projects.
- Mill Creek – Staff are analyzing the original scope, and have added a scope for new diversion structure. The hydraulic model was shown to the Board at its last Board meeting.

Ms. Miller stated that Water Systems Consulting (WSC) will provide an update on their screening of grants that may be suitable for the PERC projects at the August Board meeting.

Director Stewart said he would like to see in the projects prioritized. Mr. Fogerson said that timelines are a function of both engineering and permitting. Ms. Miller noted that the PERC agreement will need to be renewed next year. Director Corneille asked if staff can provide the River HCP priorities to the Committee. Ms. Scholte provided a verbal overview, as listed on package page 7. Ms. Miller indicated that the completed feasibility study is needed to complete the cost-benefit analysis and prioritize the projects appropriately. Mr. Fogerson noted that we are a year in on consultant contracts, and are on budget with all of them. Discussion ensued. The Program Schedule is included on package page 9.

## 8. MILL CREEK DIVERSION PROJECT VERBAL UPDATE

Mr. Fogerson stated that the District team has installed the required San Bernardino kangaroo rat (SBKR) fencing. The pre-con meeting will be held today at 2:00 p.m. He noted that contracts have been signed for two consultants, and the contractor. The current estimated start date for construction is August 14. The project survey will be done between now and the start date. We are making decisions based on keeping water turned into the recharge facility as long as possible. The contract amount is approximately \$1.4 million. The contractors have indicated their agreement with our proposal of 80 working days. The current estimated completion date is December 11, not accounting for any stop work days.

## 9. EXCHANGE PLAN VERBAL UPDATE

Ms. Cosgrove introduced this item for discussion, providing a verbal update on the process and current status. The Exchange Plan effort is on hold. The City of Redlands and East Valley Water District have requested to withdraw from the agreement, which was denied due to the lack of a unanimous vote per

the agreement. The group agreed to meet again in approximately three months. Mr. Cosgrove has asked that all parties have their legal team review the agreement, and bring forward any legal objections to decisions made at the most recent. To date, staff has not received any feedback.

#### 10. WASH PLAN TRAILS IMPLEMENTATION NEXT STEPS

Ms. Miller provided a verbal update on this item. She indicated that she is working to set up a meeting with the City of Redlands staff. Once we have met with their staff, we will be able to set up an Ad Hoc Trails Committee. Staff has not received feedback from the miners on the five-party agreement.

#### 11. CAPITAL EQUIPMENT AND VEHICLE BUDGET

Ms. Miller introduced this item, noting that President McDonald requested review of the District's equipment and vehicle needs. Mr. Cosgrove reviewed new regulations in Title 13 Sections 2013 that will revise new requirements for government fleets. The new requirements do not apply to our F-150 trucks, but will apply to our F-350, dump trucks and loaders. Mr. Cosgrove noted that fifty percent of all new vehicles purchased for a fleet above 8500 lbs. be zero-emission vehicles by 2027. He noted that there are a series of exceptions such as vehicles that are used less than 1,000 miles per year, areas where charging infrastructure is not available, and a lack of vehicles available for purchase. Under the new regulations, we will be required to report our fleet make-up and odometer readings beginning on April 1, 2024. Ms. Miller said that we have reviewed our vehicle and equipment needs and do not believe we need to purchase new vehicles at this time. She said that we have previously discussed leasing rather than buying heavy equipment. Vice President Stewart asked if the Suburban is used for over 1,000 miles per year. Staff does not believe so but will review. Director Corneille asked if the Suburban will need to be replaced. Ms. Miller said that the alignment was fixed, but it may need to go back to repair shop. Ms. Scholte said that engineering and biology staff use it. Ms. Miller noted that staff will keep the 2014 F150 and Suburban. She does not believe it is best practice for staff to drive their personal vehicles off-road. Ms. Miller said that we will check the weight of the Suburban and see if it falls under the regulation. Vice President Stewart said that our contract maintenance is expected to increase after the PERC projects are constructed, noting that new technology is likely to be released by the regulation deadline of 2027. Director Corneille said that at the minimum we want to make sure District vehicles are safe for use. Discussion on repairs to the Suburban ensued.

#### 12. NEXT QUARTERLY MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for October 10, 2023, at 9 A.M.

#### 13. ADJOURN MEETING

There was no further business, and the meeting adjourned at 10:22 A.M.

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

**Vice President Stewart: Yes  
Director Corneille: Yes**