

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

Daniel Cozad, General Manager
Betsy Miller, Land Resources Manager/Assistant General Manager
Manuel Colunga, Field Supervisor
Erwin Fogerson, Senior Engineer/Project Manager
Katelyn Scholte, Assistant Engineer
Athena Lokelani, Administrative Specialist

OTHERS PRESENT:

Melody McDonald, San Bernardino Valley Water Conservation District

1. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public present.

2. ADDITIONS/DELETIONS TO AGENDA

There were none.

3. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES FROM NOVEMBER 4, 2021

It was moved by Vice President Corneille and seconded by Director Stewart to approve the Meeting Minutes from November 4, 2021. The motion carried 2-0, with all directors present voting in the affirmative.

Director Stewart: Yes

Vice President Corneille: Yes

4. FIELD SUPERVISOR UPDATE PRESENTATION

Mr. Colunga presented a PowerPoint presentation about field activities. He reviewed the cleaning of the Santa Ana River main canal that was completed with assistance from contracted CalFire labor. The brush

removed from the canal was chipped and taken to the Mentone Shop. He reviewed the cleaning of the overflow structures in Mill Creek and culvert placements in Santa Ana. He also discussed invasive plant management tasks where field staff used the sprayer to apply fusilade on invasive grasses in the burn area in Mill Creek. Director Stewart asked how the test area sprayed with fusilade versus roundup turned out. Mr. Colunga said that that the image shown reflects the first time staff has used fusilade. IERCD has been using fusillade in the Plunge Creek area. Ms. Miller reviewed the use of fusilade, indicating that it is a tool that has been used across California preserves for the last fifteen years, specifically to treat invasive grass species. Staff utilizes both fusilade and roundup as appropriate. Staff is tracking regrowth of native species at the site that was damaged by fire. Mr. Colunga continued review of additional invasive plant management in Mill Creek. He noted that field staff have also removed and treated Tamarisk, which Ms. Miller noted has been known to lower groundwater levels.. Hairy vetch is also another invasive species that field staff works to detect and remove.

Mr. Colunga stated that there was a fire on District property at Lockheed near the 7W property, but the cause of the fire has not been identified. There was also another fire between the 210 freeway and Orange Street which appears to have been linked to an encampment. He noted that part of the property belongs to BLM, where camping is allowed for up to two weeks. Director Stewart asked if lands exchanged with BLM will be open to camping. The District does not allow camping on our lands and will work to set up trespass barriers where needed. Water spreading was reviewed, and it was noted that there is currently a fair amount of water in Plunge Creek. Vice President Corneille said that SAWPA is planning to do some cloud seeding and asked for a status update. Mr. Cozad said that SAWPA completed an evaluation of cloud seeding and is now reviewing potential implementation. He indicated that the general consensus among various entities is that it has been attempted a number of times and has not been clearly proven to be effective. Vice President Corneille suggested that staff update the full Board on cloud seeding, so that they can gain familiarity with the concept. The Committee thanked Mr. Colunga for his report.

5. MENTONE SHOP IMPROVEMENTS

Mr. Fogerson reviewed this item, noting its inclusion beginning package page 6. He said that the RFB was advertised for a design/build project. The District received three bids, and two of the bidders did not complete the minimum requirements to bid upon. The complete bidder submitted a bid of approximately \$700,000 and were firm on their price. Mr. Fogerson said that he would like to work with the second bidder to see if they can secure a complete bid package. The alternative would be to rebid the project. He continued review of design/build summary. Mr. Fogerson said the initial preliminary budget was estimated around \$370,000. He said that the District may select based on best value, per our procurement policy, which is noted in the bid document. However, the best value has to be sufficient to meet our needs. Staff will bring a contract forward to the Board once a complete bid is obtained.

It was moved by Director Stewart and seconded by Vice President Corneille to authorize staff to work with Western Steel Building/CS-NK Construction to negotiate costs and negotiate a complete bid and scope of work. The motion carried 2-0, with all directors present voting in the affirmative.

Director Stewart: Yes

Vice President Corneille: Yes

Mr. Fogerson reviewed the geotechnical work conducted to date, and noted that the District will hire a separate firm to perform soils testing. He reviewed the preliminary fence plan as shown on package page 8. The fencing will need to be moved to allow for increased functionality of our facility; a cost estimate has not yet been determined. Staff may move the fence prior to installation of the Mentone Shop in order to secure the yard during construction. Mr. Fogerson said that the crane and hoist were delivered today. Stewart Handling will install the crane, with the District providing the electrical connection.

6. UPDATE ON MILL CREEK 408 PERMIT

Mr. Fogerson reviewed this item beginning package page 9. The documents are still being reviewed and discussed for the Section 7 consultation for the Mill Creek Diversion 408 permit. Because changes have been made to the nationwide 404 permits, our previously-approved 401 permit has expired and must be reissued to conform to the current regulations. Due to these factors, permitting efforts are ongoing; however, staff remains confident that the District will be able to bid the job in Summer of 2022. Mr. Fogerson recommended that the District order the gates as soon as the 408 permit is issued, and advertise, bid and award the contract on a parallel timeline in order to begin construction as soon as possible. Director Stewart asked if there are any project permitting conditions that will limit or prohibit work during specific time periods due to biological or other constraints. Mr. Fogerson indicated that restrictions apply to the nesting bird season and that staff will have to conduct pre-construction monitoring to ensure that nesting birds are not disturbed.

7. ARTP PRELIMINARY ENGINEERING: FEASIBILITY STUDIES

This item is included on package page 11. Mr. Fogerson introduced this item for discussion. He reviewed in brief the ARTP project cost worksheet, which will be updated and forwarded to the ARTP Policy Committee for further review. The proposed schedule from Tera Tech for the Waterman, Twin Creek, and Lynwood Basin Feasibility Study was presented on package page 12. The fee schedule from CASC Engineering for the Plunge and Oak Creek Feasibility Study was reviewed on package pages 13 to 14. Mr. Fogerson said that the fee schedule will be revised to reflect updates to certain tasks and costs. The CASC Engineering contract is being prepared for Board review and consideration. As certain tasks are completed under these contracts, staff will submit outcomes and products to the SBCFCD for their review in order to incorporate feedback into the next set of tasks, rather than submitting all of the final products together which could result in the need to redo aspects of the project. Geoscience will conduct the hydrologic modeling, which will be used to identify mounding effects and percolation rates. Mr. Fogerson reviewed the Q3 fee proposal for preliminary design and feasibility studies of the Mill Creek and City (Bledsoe) Creek diversion and basins, which totals \$1.5 million. He said that the Q3 contract will include Bledsoe and Cook Creek as optional tasks, and described the phased approach to these sites. Staff has carefully reviewed the Q3 scope to ensure consistency with the proposed fee, and noted that the total is higher than other ARTP contracts because it includes preliminary design. Director Stewart spoke in support of staff's approach. Ms. Miller said that she attended the Tetra Tech meeting with the District engineers and commended them on their preparedness and professionalism.

8. PLUNGE CREEK OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE UPDATE

This item is included on package page 18. Ms. Scholte provided the update. She stated that the Plunge Creek Conservation Project O&M map presented includes maintenance tasks as anticipated in 2021, with additional items following post-storm site visits in 2022, including: 1) Additional and extended check

dams to support stream braiding; 2) Protection of an area near the soil berm where water has begun eroding the soil berm; and 3) Stabilizing the channel base in specific locations within the pilot channel. These improvement activities are planned for early summer so that they will not interfere with groundwater recharge.

9. MILL CREEK FLOW METER PROJECT

Mr. Fogerson reviewed this item and map shown on package page 19. He said that staff are evaluating the need for various environmental permits prior to proceeding with this project. As a first step, staff is determining if the project can be accomplished entirely outside of jurisdictional waters to fully avoid impacts. Ms. Miller said that the environmental consulting firm that the District was initially working with is no longer in business, so we have obtained a quote from AECOM who is conducting work in the Mill Creek area for other operational permits. The quote is currently under review and, if approved, will likely be an amendment to the existing AECOM contract for operations and maintenance of the Mill Creek Groundwater Recharge Facility. Mr. Fogerson said there may be a need for a formal bid package for the installation of the measurement device. Mr. Fogerson said that staff is considering placing the flow meter outside of the channel, but the jurisdictional determination needs to be done so staff knows where the limits are.

10. EXCHANGE PLAN AGREEMENT UPDATE

Mr. Cozad introduced this item for discussion. There is a final draft agreement which Valley Municipal staff and legal counsel have recently commented on. District Counsel is working on incorporating revisions based on their comments. Once the consultant and District Counsel have completed their revisions, a SAR-MC (Exchange Plan) Committee meeting held to approve final agreement.

11. ENGINEERING STAFFING

Mr. Cozad provided a verbal update. This item resulted from the Succession and Transition Workshop held in October 2021, and was also reviewed by the Ad Hoc Succession and Transition Planning Committee. Mr. Fogerson will transition to a retired annuitant position at the end of March and begin working part-time in his role of Senior Engineer/Project Manager in early April. As a retired annuitant, he will continue to keep the ARTP projects moving forward. The District will request the Board waive the 180-day waiting period required by PERS due to this critical and immediate need. Mr. Cozad said that Ms. Scholte will transition into the Principal Engineer position. Director Stewart suggested adding a position for Assistant Engineer or Engineering Tech at the Ad Hoc Committee to help support these various transitions. Mr. Cozad said that the District will advertise for two positions for these.

12. ADJOURN MEETING

There was no further business, and the meeting adjourned at 10:46 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