

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

January 24, 2023

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:

Robert Stewart, Vice President

Richard Corneille, Director

STAFF PRESENT:

Betsy Miller, General Manager

Manuel Colunga, Field Supervisor

Katelyn Scholte, Principal Engineer

Erwin Fogerson, ARTP Engineer

Athena Laroche, Administrative Specialist

Laura Torres, Assistant Engineer

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 OCTOBER 4, 2022

Director Corneille suggested a revision to the section four of the minutes related to Enhanced Recharge, noting that it should say, "in accordance with the agreement, he requested that the District review and approval final plans before they go out to bid."

It was moved by Vice President Stewart and seconded by Director Corneille to approve the meeting minutes from October 4, 2022, with minor revisions. 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 verbal update with a PowerPoint presentation on field operations activities. He reviewed the Plunge Creek project, which received a maximum flow of 500 cfs during recent storms. Mr. Colunga reviewed the operations in Mill Creek, noting that the soft plugs were lost during recent storms. Field staff and Jacinto have worked to rebuild these soft plugs as needed following storms. Mr. Colunga indicated that the water flows are decreasing. Ms. Scholte shared a drone video of flows in Plunge Creek taken by the previous General Manager, Daniel Cozad. Mr. Colunga reviewed the pond cleaning that was recently done in Mill Creek. There is a rockpile in Basin 14 that Upland Rock will be disposing of in the near term. Eight basins have been cleaned to date. Mr. Colunga reviewed the Cal-Fire work performed in Mill Creek and stated that it is easier to complete with heavy equipment. Ms. Scholte said that aggressive recharge results in the need for significant sand removal. Vegetation removal was discussed. Ms. Miller indicated that initial vegetation growth is removed on an annual basis. Mr. Colunga reviewed recharge in Santa Ana and noted that Dike D is a third of the way full and percolating well. He said that 210 cfs were being released from Seven Oaks Dam as of this morning. The elevation level of water behind the dam this morning was 2241, and the goal of Orange County Flood Control District is to keep it below 2200. The Borrow Pit has been partially inundated and field staff are working to decrease inflows. The total recharge to date for this water year is 4600 AF in Santa Ana, 1200 AF in Mill Creek, and 1000 AF in Plunge Creek. Mr. Colunga said that the sedimentation basin is currently offline, and Valley Municipal is working on lining it.

5. MENTONE SHOP IMPROVEMENT VERBAL UPDATE

Mr. Fogerson said that staff is currently working on fire flow testing as required by the County's permitting requirements. The contractor is close to submitting the first round of permitting for the building. Discussion on the potential need for fire sprinklers ensued. It was noted that it is still being determined if sprinklers will be required. Mr. Fogerson said that the District will need a permit from the City of Redlands to perform the fire flow testing. The anticipated construction date is Summer 2023.

6. DRAFT ARTP POLICY COMMITTEE STATUS REPORT

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

- Waterman Basin & Twin Creek Spreading Grounds – Feasibility study contract is with Tetra Tech. The hydrology report is almost complete, and the consultant is working on annual average flow. Mr. Fogerson indicated that Mr. Huang and his team from Valley Municipal has been very helpful in gathering this data. The fieldwork for soils testing has been completed, and the hydrologic modeling has begun. There are two proposed conditions 1) Add Basin 1A and 1B; and 2) Adjust the existing basins.
- Mill Creek Diversion – Feasibility study contract with Q3. The hydrology has been completed, and the consultant is working on the hydraulic models. Mr. Fogerson said that the soils work is on hold, but the hydraulic models are moving forward. Because the District owns the property, planning for phasing is more efficient at this site. Ms. Scholte said that a 1600 permit and SBKR biologist may be needed for geotechnical testing.

- Plunge Creek – The hydrology study is being completed. FCD would not accept the previously submitted hydrology and adjustments will be in soon.
- Waterman – Reports are coming in soon, and staff will submit them to FCD for review and comment.

The program schedule was reviewed and included on package page 13. Mr. Fogerson said that Mill Creek gives us the best opportunity to move a project forward in the near-term, along with Cook Creek. He noted that the preliminary plans and studies prepared by staff and consultants can be used for the final design.

Ms. Miller provided a handout on the potential rebranding of Active Recharge Transfer Projects (ARTP) to Projects for the Enhancement of Recharge Capacity (PERC). She requested feedback from the Committee. Director Corneille spoke in support of the rebranding. Vice President Stewart said that on page two, it says that we capture stormwater, and asked at what point does it become stream flows. Mr. Fogerson said that storm flows exclude imported water. This information was shared with staff at Valley Municipal. We recommend adding logos for Valley Municipal, FCD and Western. This item will be presented to the ARTP Policy Committee for approval.

Ms. Miller discussed modelling the depth of water within the aquifer without the District’s efforts: We are considering an initial run over a shorter timeframe with an additional run back to 1912 if valuable. Mr. Cosgrove provided history. Ms. Scholte said that the producers have been working together on a basin optimization study.

Director Corneille asked for the project sites on the program schedule to be broken out into more detail, rather than lumped together. Ms. Scholte recommended providing detailed schedules from consultants rather than updating the full program schedule. Director Corneille said that we should focus on moving individual projects forward as expeditiously as possible rather than have everything finish together. He would like to see a more aggressive schedule. Director Corneille complimented the work of Ms. Scholte and Mr. Fogerson. Vice President Stewart suggested including the benefits of earlier project completion in the cost benefit analysis. Mr. Fogerson noted the complexity of these projects and discussed the importance of the percolation data in prioritizing projects. The feasibility studies are in progress with expected completion in Summer.

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

Ms. Scholte said that staff has received feedback from the COE legal team on the 408 permit, and Mr. Fogerson is working diligently to respond to them. We expect to receive the final gate by April 14. Staff will be preparing an RFP for inspection, soils testing and concrete testing.

8. DISTRICT CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT (CIP) PRIORITY LIST FOR FISCAL
YEAR 2023-2024

This item was taken out of order.

Ms. Miller introduced this item for discussion, noting its inclusion beginning on package page 14. She said that the District may need to invest in specialized field equipment to support aggressive recharge. She indicated that many agencies are leasing their fleets rather than purchasing them. Ms. Miller said that she

would like for field staff to try out various types of equipment to determine which item works best for them through renting or leasing before items are purchased. Vice President Stewart said that a cost-benefit ratio should be done to determine which equipment to purchase or lease.

A review of the Capital Projects and needs continued as follows:

- Item 25: Bulldozer/long reach excavator to support cleaning in an environmentally sensitive manner – Vice President Stewart spoke in support of leasing over purchasing to test equipment. Director Corneille said that purchasing may be appropriate once we had more basins to maintain.
- Item 35: Dump truck with grapple – Mr. Fogerson said this equipment could support removal of illegal dumps and encampments. Vice President Stewart indicated that he is supportive of leasing. Ms. Miller said that the District is evaluating leasing vs. buying. Vice President Stewart said that all fleets must be fifty-percent electric by 2024. Mr. Fogerson said that there is a lot next door to the Mentone Shop where we could install charging stations if needed.
- Item 1: Mill Creek Diversion Improvement – Director Corneille asked what was in the original budget cost under GL 7151. Mr. Fogerson said that staff is continuing the 408 permit, and the 404 permit is pending. The specifications and bid package for construction are in process. Ms. Miller said that the permitting included in the budget for this year was specific to operations and maintenance. Director Corneille said that since additional permitting is needed for this item, it should be listed separately. Mr. Fogerson said that this is a capital expense for a new improvement.
- Item 34: Initial Wash Plan Trails Tasks, including fencing, signage, COI requests – Ms. Miller said that this includes tasks for all trails.
- Item 11: Mill Creek North Canal Flume SB88 Compliance – Director Corneille asked if there is a permitting issue with this item. Ms. Miller said that the permit application for the 1600 was submitted last week. It does not look like certain resource agencies will take jurisdiction based on the results of surveys.
- Item 12: Planning for Mendoza – Ms. Miller said that staff will be looking at the site in approximately Q4 of FY24 with other projects currently taking priority. Ms. Miller said that the site was being considered for PERC, but there are challenges getting water to the site. Mr. Fogerson said that it is a possible site for mitigation.
- Item 32A: Seven W Property Cleanup and Planning – Ms. Scholte said that the new canal will run through this site and it may be a good location for additional basins. Additional studies are needed at this site. Mr. Fogerson said that there may be an opportunity to obtain grant funds for this site.
- Item 7: River HCP Permitting – Ms. Miller said that this item includes one-time issuance costs.
- Item 8: Capital Equipment – Director Corneille asked if leasing would affect this line item. Ms. Miller said that this item includes maintenance on some of the berms in Mill Creek.
- Item 23: Aggressive Recharge Planning/Implementation – Ms. Scholte said that this is an estimate if we had to maintain all our facilities right now. This also includes the disposal of stockpiles. Mr. Cosgrove and field staff are scheduled to meet with those interested in removing excess materials.
- Item 27: Greenspot and Cone Camp parking/staging/trailheads Project Planning and Item 30: Greenspot/Cone Camp parking/staging/trailheads implementation – These are future items. Vice President Stewart said that there might be a way to utilize EVWD parking lot.

9. EXCHANGE PLAN VERBAL UPDATE AND DIRECTION TO STAFF

Mr. Cosgrove explained the history of the Exchange Plan. He said that comments were requested in mid-November 2022 following the last workshop. The final version was sent out for approval, but some entities were late on their legal review. He indicated that the structural aspect has changed. The group was asked

if the DFR was still of use, and the majority spoke in the affirmative. The City of Redlands and East Valley Water District is requesting to withdraw from the Exchange Plan group. The District is in the process of reviewing the agreement with Mutual. We will likely have to make a budget adjustment for Water Systems Consulting (WSC). We have had eleven meetings over four years. Ms. Miller said that there is no requirement for us to perform the DFR within the 1977 agreement. We may need another meeting for the Exchange Plan Committee to determine the fate of the final agreement. The District is supportive of whichever direction the Exchange Plan Committee would like to go.

10. NEXT QUARTERLY MEETINGS

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

11. ADJOURN MEETING

There was no further business, and the meeting adjourned at 11:42 A.M.

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

Director Stewart: Yes

Vice President Corneille: Yes