

**SAN BERNARDINO VALLEY WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT**  
**MINUTES OF THE OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING**  
APRIL 17, 2024  
9:00 A.M.

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  
John Lambie, Consulting Chief Engineer and Hydrogeologist  
Laura Torres, Assistant Engineer  
Athena Laroche, Administrative Specialist

**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 FEBRUARY 6, 2024

**It was moved by Vice President Stewart and seconded by Director Corneille to approve the meeting minutes from February 6, 2024 as presented. The motion carried 2-0, with all directors present voting in the affirmative.**

**Vice President Stewart: Yes**

**Director Corneille: Yes**

4. FIELD OPERATIONS UPDATE PRESENTATION

Mr. Colunga introduced this item for discussion. The Enhanced Recharge Project was reviewed, including construction of seven new drop structures. He indicated that the new basins are operating well. Mr. Colunga reviewed facility trespassing, noting that several locks were vandalized using super glue, and one of the gates was cut. Michael Guizar, Field Operations Specialist, met with multiple agencies, including

the City of Redlands, the City of Highland, the Redlands Police Department, and the Highland Sheriff, to perform outreach efforts for persons experiencing homelessness. The Committee expressed their appreciation of Mr. Guizar's efforts. Field staff continue to manage invasive plants by spraying herbicides. Mr. Colunga reviewed Mentone Shop construction support performed by field staff. Safety of Mill Creek overflow structures was reviewed, including treatment of grasses and weeds around the overflow structures and removal of debris and other potentially hazardous materials.

#### 5. MENTONE SHOP IMPROVEMENTS CONSTRUCTION VERBAL UPDATE

Ms. Scholte introduced this item for discussion. She indicated that the contractor is installing rebar and anchors for the building. The building inspector is scheduled for Monday, and the slab is scheduled to be poured on Tuesday. The fire hydrant is functional, and field staff provided significant support by delivering soil for backfill in order to meet compaction requirements for the building pad. The building is scheduled for delivery in three weeks, which lines up with the twenty-eight day cure period for the concrete.

#### 6. ENHANCED RECHARGE CONSTRUCTION VERBAL UPDATE

Ms. Scholte introduced this item for discussion. She noted that 144 CFS was picked up on Monday; basins G, H and 17 are online in addition to the previously completed basins. Mr. Colunga said that the newly constructed canal percolates a significant amount of water. Vice President Stewart asked if there was a particular pond that would take the majority of the silt. Ms. Scholte indicated that the majority of the sediment is trapped in Basin 1A (sedimentation basin), which is functioning well. Director Corneille asked if they are taking quality measurements to keep track of functionality. Ms. Scholte stated that the contractor, Nate Scheevel, is tracking these data.

#### 7. PRIORITIZED MAINTENANCE LIST FOR FY25

Ms. Miller introduced this item for discussion. She indicated that staff will conduct full maintenance needs surveys of all District facilities, with our focus currently on the Mill Creek facilities. She said that the maintenance survey of the Santa Ana basins is planned following completion of Enhanced Recharge project construction. Laura Torres, Assistant Engineer, has reviewed the Mill Creek facilities and prepared a prioritized list of recommendations for FY25.

Ms. Torres stated that she has collaborated with field staff to complete the maintenance survey and identify priority maintenance items based survey results. Staff has completed a detailed walk-through of the Mill Creek Groundwater Recharge Facility; noted areas of concern regarding field safety; prioritized maintenance based on factors such as safety, recharge rate, time cost, etc.; and have held preliminary discussions of Santa Ana River Recharge Facility maintenance needs. Ms. Torres reviewed the items that are prioritized using the Mill Creek Recharge Facility Maintenance Map that was provided as a handout. It was noted that there are a number of culverts that need to be replaced and some areas where a culvert is needed. Staff indicated that field staff may be able to install culverts in some areas, but there may be others that require a contractor. Ms. Torres stated that we are looking into additional training for field staff to be able to perform the culvert installation and replacements independently. Ms. Scholte noted that we have budgeted funds to bring in a geotechnical firm to assist in materials testing to ensure appropriate compaction. She noted that field staff is coordinating closely with our natural resources team to perform clearance and monitor sites. Ms. Miller indicated that today's presentation is specific to the FY25 budget,

and this is the first look. that staff will bring a prioritized maintenance plan to the Committee once they have concluded their analysis of existing and future needs. She noted that these maintenance needs reflect the last few years being some of the highest rainfall years in District history, making a full analysis of existing and future needs essential. Director Corneille spoke in support of the comprehensive analysis being performed by staff. Ms. Scholte said that some maintenance needs result from the District's aggressive recharge approach that was implemented approximately five years ago at Mill Creek. Ms. Torres said that the cleaning of basin 10 and D-Dike at SAR is proposed for this fiscal year. She said that staff also proposes cleaning of basins 1, 2, 13, 42-53 and compact west end of basin 22 to improve safety and improve overflow safety at Mill Creek for the FY25 budget. Discussion on maintenance ensued. A long-term prioritized maintenance plan will be prepared following additional field surveys at Mill Creek and detailed field surveys at Santa Ana River following Enhanced Recharge construction, with close coordination during development of the Enhanced Recharge Operations Manual.

#### 8. BASIN 10 CLEANING BUDGET AMENDMENT FY24

Ms. Miller said that the District may elect to perform maintenance on basins 10 18 in May or June, prior to the end of the current fiscal year. She noted that this work was initially planned for FY25 but there is an opportunity to complete the work while the area is dry for Enhanced Recharge Project construction, decreasing the time that our recharge capacity is limited. Ms. Scholte said that once basins C, D, and E are completed, Valley Municipal will begin the new connections to the District's existing basins. In order to install the new connections, they will need to dry down basins 10, 11, 12, 13, and 14, which is planned for June. Staff are soliciting bids to determine the costs of the cleaning. If the Committee supports this approach, staff will present an action for a contract and budget adjustment to the Board. Ms. Miller said that the cost for the cleaning would be allocated to GL 5050 Basin Cleaning. The Committee concurred with the staff's recommendation.

#### 9. COUNTY VECTOR CONTROL CONTRACT EXTENSION

Ms. Miller introduced this item for discussion, reviewing the agreement's history. The agreement for Vector Control with the County of San Bernardino Department of Public Health is set to expire this year. The County reached out to the District to obtain their interest in extending the agreement through 2029 at an average cost of \$53,274 per year. Costs for this work are included in the proposed budget. Since the initial contract was approved, the District has received no complaints regarding vector issues.

#### 10. ZANJA RESTORATION PLAN VERBAL UPDATE

Ms. Miller said that there was a call to discuss the potential of a Feasibility Study and communication with key stakeholders a month ago. Director Corneille asked if ESRI was involved. Ms. Miller indicated that the local participants have reached out to Mr. Dangermond. Vice President Stewart said Loma Linda included the Zanja in its trails plan. Ms. Miller has reached out to the Redlands Conservancy. Ms. Scholte said that Crafton Water Company utilizes the upper portion of the Zanja for deliveries and stated that the lower portion is used for flood control.

#### 11. GRANT APPLICATION FOR PLANNING AND DESIGN FOR MILLE CREEK PERC PROJECT

Ms. Miller introduced this item for discussion. Staff is moving forward with the WaterSMART Planning and Project Design Grants for FY23 and FY24 for the Mill Creek PERC Project. This would allow the

District to obtain up to \$400,000 in cost recovery for the existing Q3 contract for the Mill Creek PERC Project. The application is due by May 21.

12. NEXT QUARTERLY MEETINGS

The next quarterly meetings are May 21, August 6 and November 5.

13. ADJOURN MEETING TO FIELD TOUR

There was no further business, and the meeting adjourned at 10:20 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**