

**MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 19, 2011
OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
WATER RESOURCES ASSOCIATION OF YOLO COUNTY**

1. CALL TO ORDER & INTRODUCTIONS

The meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m. by Chair, William Marble.

Board members present: William Marble – City of Woodland, WRA Chair
Cecilia Aguiar-Curry – City of Winters, Treasurer
Matt Rexroad – Yolo County
Regina Cherovsky – Reclamation District 2035
Sid England - University of CA, Davis
Jim Mayer – Yolo County Flood Control & WCD
Sue Greenwald – City of Davis
Chris Ledesma – City of West Sacramento
Don Peart – Colusa County Water District
Fritz Durst – Reclamation District 108

Alternate members present: Tim O’Halloran – Yolo County Flood Control & WCD
Jacques De Bra – City of Davis
Duane Chamberlain – Yolo County
Kurt Balasek – City of Winters

Members Agencies absent: Dunnigan Water District

Associate members present: Fran Borcalli
Lynnel Pollock, Cache Creek Conservancy
Jeanette Wrynski, Yolo County Resource Conservation Dist.

Members of the Public & Agency Staff:
Mark Cocke, City of Woodland
Cindy Tuttle, Yolo County
Max Stevenson, Yolo County Flood Control & WCD
Dave Pratt
Stephen McCord, McCord Environmental
Rich Marovich, Lower Putah Creek Coordinating Comm.
Gillies Robertson, Yolo County Resource Conservation Dist.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA – The Board motioned, seconded and unanimously approved the agenda.

3. PUBLIC FORUM – There were no comments from the public.

4. CONSENT ITEMS - The Board motioned, seconded and unanimously approved all consent items.

- a. Approved minutes: June 20, 2011 Board meeting
- b. Amended FY 2011-12 Budget, receive final 6/30/11 fiscal year end statements
- c. Received financial reports: July – August 2011
- d. Received minutes of Executive Committee: 7/13/11
- e. Received minutes of Technical Committee: 6/2, 7/7, 8/4/11
- f. Adopted 2012 Board meeting dates: 1/9, 3/19, 6/4, 9/17 and 11/15/12

5. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

- a. *Report from WRA Chair:* Chair Marble congratulated RD 2035 for receiving 100% funding for the final design of the Sacramento River Joint Intake. He also reported that while meeting with federal representatives in Washington, DC last week, everyone acknowledged their support of the restoration of the Joint Intake facility as a priority. They also were lobbying in support of the Cache Creek Feasibility Study and discussing the relationship between flooding issues and the Cache Creek Settling Basin.

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Chair Marble informed that a nominating committee will be appointed to recommend Board officers for election and Board appointments for 2012.

6. UPDATE on WATER LEGISLATION & REGULATORY ISSUES

Tim O'Halloran reported that this year's legislature session had no major repercussions locally. The Delta Stewardship Council's (DSC) 5th draft of the Delta Plan has been released for comments. Sacramento Valley interests have treated favorably so far in the Plan. The DSC has yet to clarify the financing option and what fees might be imposed on stakeholders. Tim informed that he continues to work on water use efficiency standards for agriculture along with other regional agencies.

Max Stevenson reported on two regulatory issues. Max will be taking on coordination of local activities in relation to the Irrigated Lands-Ag Waiver Program. The Program has focused on surface water and now the Regional Board will be focusing on groundwater quality within the next year. The extent and details have yet to be defined. He also informed about a grant opportunity from the CA Department of Public Health for an abandoned well incentive program (drinking water protection program) to pay for volunteer landowners to properly destroy unused wells. Yolo County, YCFCWCD and the Yolo County Farm Bureau jointly applied for the \$1.4 million grant and hope to recruit 100-200 local abandoned wells into the program. This would protect the lower aquifer from contamination.

Fritz Durst reported on activities with regard to settlement contracts between the Bureau of Reclamation and Sacramento River settlement contractors for water rights and potential water supply cuts. There is no clarification yet from the Bureau. Litigation continues regarding whether the settlement contracts should have been involved in re-operation procedures for the Central Valley Project and the State Water Project as documented in the Operations Criteria and Plan (OCAP).

7. WRA TECHNICAL COMMITTEE (TC) UPDATE

- a. Update on Westside IRWMP/Prop. 84 Planning Grant Process: Jacques De Bra, TC Chair, gave an update on recent activities of the Sacramento River Funding Area (SRFA) (10-county Northern CA region). A group of SRFA counties are meeting to discuss an allocation process should the remaining Prop. 84 funds become available next summer. The SRFA was designated \$73 million, 90% is available for implementation grants. The SRFA would like to pre-agree on a planning and implementation funding allocations internally. Tim O'Halloran reported that the Prop. 84 grant contract has been signed for the Westside IRWMP planning grant (YCFCWCD is the grant's fiscal agent). The consultant contract with Kennedy/Jenks will be finalized as soon as DWR returns a fully executed contract.
- b. Project Funds Proposal - Watershed-wide Invasive Weed Management Plan for Cache Creek: Jacques reported that the TC is requesting Board approval for the Yolo County Resource Conservation District's proposal to develop a Cache Creek weed management plan. They have requested \$35,164 from the WRA Project Funds budget to support this collaborative effort to implement an IRWMP priority action. Jeanette Wrysinski, Yolo County RCD gave a brief presentation on the scope of work, budget and local partners that will be utilized to develop the plan. There are many separate agency efforts in weed management, but there isn't a unified plan for the watershed in existence. Coordination is a critical element of implementation and existing plans will be referenced. The plan would provide a strategic approach to assess, treat and monitor non-native weeds for the watershed. Jeanette answered questions from the Board. The Board motioned, seconded and unanimously approved the proposal to fund a *Watershed-wide Invasive Weed Management Plan for Cache Creek*. A PowerPoint presentation on the proposal is available on the WRA's website: http://www.yolowra.org/meeting_directors.html.

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FY2011-12 WRA Project Funds Allocation Amendment

Project	WRA Funding	Local Match	Total Project Costs
Foundational Action: Develop surface water monitoring program	\$ 35,000	TBD	\$ 70,000 over two-years
Yolo Bypass Integrated Action-Yolo Bypass Working Group/YBF	\$ 20,000	YBF	Varies
Westside IRWMP/ Proposition 84 Funding (5 County MOU)	\$35,000	Cost Share Westside MOU	\$1.2M
Administrative Legislative/Legal Support Services	\$ 18,194	TBD	\$ 35,000
Cache Creek Watershed Weed Management Plan	\$35,164	\$5,000 (Yolo County)	\$40,164
IRWMP Implementation: Non-allocated project fund reserves	\$16,954	-	-
TOTAL	\$160,312		

8. CACHE CREEK FLOODING SOLUTIONS, WOODLAND-DAVIS SURFACE WATER PROJECT, Parting Thoughts by Mark Deven, City Manager, City of Woodland

Mark Deven was invited to share some parting thoughts before leaving his position with the City of Woodland. Mark summarized his feelings about both of these IRWMP priority actions in three words, “stay the course.” Both of these projects are essential to the forward development of the region and each project has made significant progress over the last several years. Mark summarized the history, importance, benefits and challenges of each project since he has been Woodland City Manager. He acknowledged numerous individuals and agencies instrumental in cultivating flood solutions and future water supplies for Woodland and the surrounding region. The WRA Board and others commended Mark on his commitment to service for Woodland and the region. Chair Marble wished him well in his new job and echoed the sentiments of many.

9. PRESENTATION: Regional Mercury Issues, Regulations and Activities, Stephen McCord, McCord Environmental, Inc.

Mercury is a naturally occurring geological element in the Sacramento Valley. Stephen presented a historical overview of mercury mining in our region. Abandoned mines adjacent to waterways continue to contaminate the landscape and local waterways. He illustrated with photos and maps of specific mining sites and explained the mining process. Methylated mercury is the toxic form that bioaccumulates in local food webs, reaching levels in local sport fish and prey fish that exceed thresholds for concern. Regulations were created to compensate for impaired waterways in an attempt to minimize risks to humans and wildlife. In 2010, there were 108 new listings for mercury impaired waterways, including two areas of Cache Creek (North Fork Cache Creek / Indian Valley Reservoir and Davis Creek Reservoir / Davis Creek). Signs are posted in popular fishing areas along Cache Creek and the Delta warning which species are safe or harmful for consumption due to mercury contamination.

A TMDL (Total Maximum Daily Load) is a regulatory program that allocates reductions to mercury sources in an impaired watershed. Stephen discussed the TMDL requirements for the Cache Creek and Delta watersheds. Wetlands tend to methylate mercury and can present a dilemma when trying to counter-balance solutions for different problems. For example, in the Cache Creek Settling Basin sediment needs to be removed from the Basin to maintain flood control capacity. Regulators would prefer to increase sediment storage to trap mercury, but trapping mercury in the sediment allows it to methylate and bioaccumulate.

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Stephen explained how mercury issues compound to downstream watersheds in the Delta, the Central Valley and San Francisco Bay areas. The State requires 50% reduction from the existing Cache Creek Settling Basin total mercury loads.

Stephen summarized progress on local and regional mercury clean-up activities. There are several feasibility studies underway to determine what needs to be done, the best solutions and associated costs. Cache Creek contains high levels of mercury pollution originating from abandoned mine lands as well as from natural sources such as geothermal springs. He discussed several project sites listed along Cache Creek and neighboring Putah Creek. Tuleyome secured an Ecosystem Restoration Program grant for \$1.4 million from California Department of Fish and Game to test, improve, and maintain Twin Peaks and Corona mines site and comply with applicable laws. Stephen also discussed the criteria for prioritizing remediation work. The focus should be on land-based soil conservation in areas where erosive and mercury-laden soils intersect, for example the Sulphur Creek Mining District (Colusa & Lake County) has highly erosive soils. Erosive land combined with big storm events wash the mercury farther downstream. Total mercury load analysis does not tell the entire story, because mercury levels in fish populations are affected by methylation/demethylation, biodilution, and biomagnification.

Some key messages for decision-makers from this presentation are:

- Prioritize legacy sources as a good starting point
- Stabilize erodible, contaminated soils
- Try to improve the Cache Creek Settling Basin
- Try to break the methylation cycle to minimize negative impacts to wetlands
- Conduct public outreach in the interim
- Monitor to check; modeling to understand
- Seek available external funding (others downstream could be beneficially impacted by projects and may want to collaborate)

Stephen's PowerPoint presentation is available on the WRA's website:

http://www.yolowra.org/meeting_directors.html.

10. PRESENTATION: Putah Creek Restoration Update, Rich Marovich, Streamkeeper, Lower Putah Creek Coordinating Committee

Rich Marovich gave a presentation about several projects to improve Winters Putah Creek Park by restoring areas of the creek channel and top of bank from the Winters Car Bridge east to Highway 505. This is a culmination of 10 years of planning and on-going projects. Winters Putah Creek Park is the top priority of stakeholders meeting all of the project selection criteria established in stakeholder meetings in 2006. The Park is one of the few places the public can access to enjoy Putah Creek, because about 75% of the land along the Creek is privately owned. Rich explained how dense blackberry vegetation made passage very difficult and was detrimental to the floodplain. Clearing vegetation and controlling invasive weeds was essential to create a narrow trail along top of steep north bank. Restoration includes grading floodplains to a functional elevation creating a design channel along the edge of the floodplain and filling in the current channel in this reach. Excessive channel width and trapped sediments make it difficult for the Creek to restore itself to a natural, narrower meandering form while diminishing favorable aquatic habitat. Creating continuity of the floodplain through channel restoration and re-alignment benefits wildlife by allowing them to migrate through this corridor. The 1995 Winters Putah Creek Master Plan, updated in 2006, included improvements such as percolation dam removal and other channel restoration elements, particularly the realignment of the channel throughout the park. Rich illustrated with before and after photos of park trails created after vegetation control. Project photos demonstrated how the channel re-alignment is being

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accomplished. The total construction budget for this project was \$2.2 million, which is primarily funded California River Parkway Program and partially from the Department of Conservation Watershed Program. The combination of these two grant programs enabled the best design for the project.

Rich thanked the WRA for funding a nursery improvement project that improved water quality for growing trees and plants that will be used to re-vegetate the Creek's floodplains. Rich's PowerPoint presentation is available on the WRA's website: http://www.yolowra.org/meeting_directors.html.

11. MEMBERS' REPORTS & FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS:

No reports or future agenda items were discussed.

12. NEXT MEETING DATE: November 14, 2011 from 3-5 pm, Woodland Community Center

13. ADJOURNMENT - The meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Donna L. Gentile

Board Secretary & Administrative Coordinator