
SACRAMENTO ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

Robert Bailey
Mark Barry
Dr. Anthony DeRiggi
Richard Hunn, Chair
Diane Kindermann
George "Buzz" Link
Margie Namba
Eric Rivero-Montes, Vice-Chair
Mark White

A JOINT COMMISSION APPOINTED BY:
County of Sacramento
City of Sacramento
City of Isleton
City of Folsom
City of Galt
City of Elk Grove

MINUTES

Monday, February 26, 2018

**EMD Offices, 10590 Armstrong Ave., Mather, CA 95655
6 p.m.**

ITEM

- 1** Call to Order – Chair Hunn
- 2** Roll Call – Staff Secretary

Commissioners present: Richard Hunn, Robert Bailey, Mark Barry, Dr. Anthony DeRiggi, George "Buzz" Link, Margie Namba, Eric Rivero Montes

- 3** Introduction of Commissioners – Chair Hunn
- 4** Public Comment – Chair Hunn

No members of the public addressed the commission.

- 5** Update on Levee System- Rick Johnson, Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency

Sacramento, positioned at the confluence of the American River and Sacramento River, is now the most at-risk city in America for riverine flooding, with over half a million people in the floodplain and \$70 billion in damageable property. Flooding in Sacramento carries increased risk of death due to cold water temperatures ranging from 40-50 degrees. By comparison, the water temperature during the Katrina flooding in New Orleans was approximately 82 degrees, which increased the chance of survival time to days versus just hours, as would be the case in the cold waters surrounding Sacramento.

The Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency (SAFCA) is one of several levee maintaining agencies in the region and it provides funds for others to maintain the levees. The State of California requires communities to certify that they have a plan to safely handle a 200 year flood and to have that protection in place by 2025. SAFCA

is responsible for 106 miles of levees and channels including the Folsom Dam and Reservoir, the Sacramento Weir and Bypass and the Yolo Bypass. Ongoing Federal/State/SAFCA projects total \$4,395,000,000. Upcoming flood protection construction projects include widening of the Sacramento Weir and Bypass by 1500 ft., to divert flow during water events.

As soon as the Folsom Dam and Reservoir project is transferred from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to the Bureau of Reclamation, the next phase of raising the dam and levees by 3 ½ feet will begin. The Dam was designed using historical data collected during drier times but actual water events are proving to be more extreme and involve higher flows than historical flow data.

The levees that protect Sacramento were built by clamshell dredging and finished off with a hard cap, making the levees extremely porous. In the 1997 Central Valley Flood, there were more than 40 levee failures, 35 of which were geotechnical errors, not over topping. Saturated soil and sand layers shift and settle, allowing seepage, and high water pressure beneath the soil can cause water to emerge at the land side of the levee several hundred feet away from the levee base. In post- Katrina levee analyzation, when 100 levee failures were reviewed across the country, 80% were due to seepage and under-seepage. The result of these studies led to new federal and state standards for urban levees addressing seepage.

Inserting seepage cutoff walls are one solution to addressing levee seepage but is very expensive. Water is mixed with bentonite and poured down into the levee as deep as 120 feet, forming a barrier. Erosion protection is another issue when modernizing levees. Plantings are used to harden the banks and deter widening of the water channels.

Proposition 1e funding has been fully allocated allowing SAFCA to move forward with \$2.8 billion in new projects at the federal level, but there is no source of state funding. The FY 2019 proposed federal budget significantly reduces the U.S. Corps of Army Engineers construction funding to \$872 million.

The Nutria rodent has emerged as a recent threat to levee stability. Once eradicated from the area, Nutria have re-emerged in wetlands, rivers and canals in Merced, Fresno and Stanislaus counties They resemble a beaver or muskrat and weigh up to 60 lbs. They cause loss of wetlands, soil erosion, damage to levee stability, contaminate drinking water and transmit disease to humans and livestock. Since March 30, 2017, more than 20 Nutria sightings have been documented in the San Joaquin Valley.

6 Approval of January 2018 Minutes

Commissioner Link requested the date be corrected on the January minutes. A motion to approve the minutes with correction was made by Margie Namba and

seconded by Anthony DeRiggi.

Ayes: Richard Hunn, Robert Bailey, Mark Barry, Dr. Anthony DeRiggi, George “Buzz” Link, Margie Namba, Eric Rivero Montes

Abstentions: None

Noes: None

7 Permanent Committee Reports

1. 2017 Environmental Awards Committee
2. 2017 Annual Report Preparation Update
3. Webpage Committee Update

8 New Initiatives 2018 Discussion

9 Status of South Sacramento Habitat Conservation Plan Recommendation Letter

The letter will be sent to appointing authorities and the Sacramento Planning commission on 3/27/18.

10 Sacramento County Environmental Management Director’s Report- Marie Woodin

11 Commissioner Comments

Adjournment – Next Meeting: Monday, March 19, 2018, 6:00 p.m. , 10590 Armstrong Ave., Mather, CA 95655

This meeting is being audiotaped/videotaped in its entirety and will be available at the Environmental Management Department office. Agendas are posted in the offices of the City of Sacramento, Folsom, Galt, Isleton, Rancho Cordova, Elk Grove, and the County of Sacramento and also on the EMD Website at: emd.saccounty.net. Agendas are also forwarded to interested parties upon request.