Website: SitesProject.org



Reservoir Committee & Authority Board

April 19, 2024

Authority Board Chair: Fritz Durst (Reclamation District 108)

Authority Board Vice Chair: Jeff Sutton (Tehama-Colusa Canal Authority)

Reservoir Committee Chair: Mike Azevedo (Colusa County)

Reservoir Committee Vice-Chair: Robert Kunde (Wheeler Ridge-Maricopa Water SD)

Treasurer: Jamie Traynham (Davis Water District)

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Chair Durst called the Joint Authority Board (AB) and Reservoir Committee (RC) Meeting to order at the hour of 9:00 a.m., followed by Roll Call and the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL/ATTENDANCE:

Authority Board: 6 members in attendance, resulting in a quorum.

Reservoir Committee: 20 representatives (95.01%) in attendance, resulting in a quorum.

INTRODUCTIONS:

The Sites staff, consultants and members of the public introduced themselves.

AGENDA APPROVAL:

Executive Director (ED) Brown pulled consent agenda item 1.4 to action items to address concerns expressed by some Board members prior to the meeting.

ACTION RC: Moved by Mr. Tincher to approve April 19, 2024, meeting agenda. **Motion carried unanimously**.

ACTION AB: Moved by Director Sutton, seconded by Director Allen, to approve April 19, 2024, meeting agenda. **Motion Carried: All Directors present voted yes.**

ANNOUNCEMENT OF CLOSED SESSION:

General Counsel (GC) Doud announced the Authority Board of Directors and the Reservoir Committee Members would consider Closed Session matters 5.1 through 5.5.

Page: 1 of 6

PERIOD FOR PUBLIC COMMENT:

Chair Durst called for a period of public comment. After receiving no response, he concluded the session.

1. CONSENT AGENDA:

With ED Brown pulling item 1.4 to action, Chair Azevedo and Chair Durst made time to consider items 1.1 through 1.3 as follows:

- 1.1 Reservoir Committee and Authority Board consider approval of March 22, 2024, Reservoir Committee and Authority Board Meeting Minutes.
- 1.2 Reservoir Committee and Authority Board consider acceptance of the Sites Project Authority Treasurer's Report.
- 1.3 Reservoir Committee and Authority Board consider approval of the Sites Project Authority Payment of Claims.
- 1.4 [Moved to Action] Reservoir Committee and Authority Board consider approval of a task order amendment with CH2M Hill Engineers, Inc. Operations for additional CalSim modeling services in the amount of \$462,000 bringing the not to exceed task order amount to \$3,259,000.

<u>ACTION RC</u>: Ms. Traynham moved, seconded by Mr. Kunde, to approve Consent Agenda Items 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3 for the Authority Board's consideration. The motion carried unanimously.

<u>ACTION AB</u>: Director Sutton moved, seconded by Director Allen, to approve Consent Agenda item 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3. **Motion carried**: **All Directors present voted yes.**

2. ACTION ITEMS:

[Moved from Consent] Reservoir Committee and Authority Board consider approval of a task order amendment with CH2M Hill Engineers, Inc. Operations for additional CalSim modeling services in the amount of \$462,000 bringing the not to exceed task order amount to \$3,259,000.

ED Brown said there were some questions about the purpose and need for the proposed modeling services. ED Brown mentioned that the Board has previously been briefed on the need to transition Calsim II into Calsim III. Ms. Forsythe presented on the purpose and need for the additional modeling, which supports our State and Federal ESA consultation efforts and is critical for Sites Benefits & Obligations Contract, CWC funding, and Reclamation Partnership Agreement. Further discussion on the the details of the funding request occurred.

Mr. Sutton asked if the modeling uses the existing 2019 operating criteria. Ms. Forsythe confirmed that Calsim II uses 2019, and Calsim III would use the new BiOp criteria when issued.

Mr. Cheng asked if significant changes were anticipated. Ms. Forsythe confirmed there will be some changes but not significant changes.

Ms. Forsythe confirmed that the funds will come from the existing permitting area. Due to scheduling changes, some tasks have been deferred to a later date, but they will eventually be needed.

ACTION RC: Mr. Tincher moved, seconded by Mr. Vanderwaal, to approve added action item. **Motion carried unanimously.**

<u>ACTION AB</u>: It was moved by Director Sutton, seconded by Director Gray to approve *added* action item. **Motion carried**: **All Directors present voted yes.**

3. <u>DISCUSSION AND INFORMATION ITEMS</u>:

3.1 Receive an update on the State Incidental Take Permit (ITP) applications and Federal Biological Assessments / Biological Opinions for the Sites Project.

ED Brown introduced this item by stating that we are trying to isolate the Sites Project from everything happening in the world and trying to pursue the agencies issuing the permits with the backdrop of the uncertainties in these other processes. The permitting authorities allow for this approach.

Mr. Spranza gave a brief history of the State Construction ITP consultation status. No substantial issues have arisen in the consultation process to date. The Construction ITP is expected to be issued in October 2024, slightly delayed from July 2024. CDFW will issue the Operations and Construction ITPs in the same timeframe, which will not affect the project schedule.

The Authority's Operation's ITP application was submitted in Oct 2023, but the application was deemed incomplete, and the issues are being discussed and resolved in collaboration with CDFW.

Federal ESA consultation status regarding the Sites program and project-level steps were reviewed. We are on schedule to receive our project-level Construction Biological Opinion in December 2024 and our programmatic-level Operations Biological Opinion around the same time.

ED Brown reiterated that, eventually, the Sites Project will have its own individual biological opinions. While the Sites Project is covered programmatically in the CVP/SWP LTO Reconsultation, the Authority will work with Reclamation to address project-level operations in a stand-alone Biological Assessment/Biological Opinion(s) in the future. The Authority and Reclamation

both feel that the Sites Project is its own individual project and should not be connected to Reclamation's CVP Project long-term operations. The Authority needs to wait for the programmatic review to be complete in December/January as part of the LTO BiOp before moving to the project-level analysis. The LTO BiOp is holding up the Sites Project getting its project BiOp, but there is nothing the Authority can do to speed up this process.

Staff will continue meetings, coordination and address information needs with USFWS, Reclamation and CDFW.

CDFW is very cooperative and communicative. The path to getting the ITP for this project is complicated, but we have been reassured that it can be accomplished on the planned schedule and in time to support the water rights process.

Mr. Kunde asked about NMFS's involvement in the permitting process to date. It was explained that NMFS has been involved but are part of the LTO BiOp process and it is felt that CDFW's criteria being more stringent will lead to expeditious and consistent findings from NMFS. ED mentioned that NMFS is continually kept up to date on the process of the analysis we are doing.

Mr. Neudeck asked about the new date for the project-level Operations BiOps. Ms. Forsythe stated they are working with USFWS and NMFS on getting a date for this part of the BiOps process.

Chair Durst expressed concerns about new requirements being layered on during these permitting processes that could affect the affordability of the Project.

3.2 Review and comment on the process, assumptions and other considerations that are key to updating 1) the Estimated Construction Cost to reflect the 30% design and current market conditions and 2) the Project variable and fixed operating costs.

Mr. Robinette started with the background, mentioning that the last time we developed the project's capital cost of \$3.9 billion was in 2021 dollars. Mr. Thomas' analysis last year brought the project cost estimate the current dollar amount of \$4.9 Billion (2023 dollars), after accounting for inflation during the period. Today, the focus is on developing a comprehensive updated 2024 construction cost estimate, with an independent review, that reflects market conditions and has a higher degree of certainty based on design progression before the end of this year. Elements of this update will include variable costs (power and wheeling rate) and fixed costs (operations/maintenance (O&M), capital costs and financing).

Value Engineering (VE) activities were developed as part of the 2021 cost estimate, and 10 out of the 11 recommendations were accepted and moved forward as part of advancing to the 30% design. Mr. Robinette is considering

reconvening the VE group to assist with the review of the updated estimate. Interest rates will be updated close to the timeframe of the cost estimate.

ED asked if there were any other areas of concern for the cost estimate preparation so that the cost estimate taken to the agencies' home boards as part of investor commitment would be sufficient and complete to get buy-in to the project.

Chair Durst suggested the Plan of Finance clarify the assumptions about the payment of O&M expenses for the State and Federal cost shares of the Project.

Mr. Kunde asked for information related to explaining the changes between the 2021 estimate and 2024 estimate.

Ms. Kaplan asked if cost escalation is being considered when estimating costs. ED Brown confirmed that we will address that.

Mr. Weghorst questioned the confidence of home boards in executing the Benefits & Obligations contract on a 30% cost estimate even if it is escalated. Mr. Robinette acknowledged the uncertainties with this approach, but pointed out that designing while constructing yields the shortest duration project which saves the cost of time value of money and likely outweighs risks raised. Agencies will need to make their own assessment of these issues. Waiting to start the construction after completing all design and bidding would extend the length of the project substantially and delay the availability of the benefits. Mr. Robinette explained that the contingencies used in the cost estimate will be delineated to assist in assessing risks of cost increases.

Mr. Robinette mentioned that an item flagged at the Operations & Engineering workgroup recently was the need for an independent review. An important component will be, "Are the contingencies appropriate?" ED Brown clarified that there is no provision in the B&O Contract that we are capping our cost at a specified amount.

Mr. Kunde asked when the capital cost estimate would be available. Mr. Robinette replied with plan being around third quarter 2024. However, ED Brown stated that he expects the cost estimate preparation to be an iterative process.

3.3 Review and discuss the Interim Financing Plan, including reviewing assumptions related to how the project construction costs will be funded and the plan for cash needs from all Storage Partners throughout construction.

Mr. Thomas gave an overview of long term and interim financing planning being undertaken. The WIFIA Loan can only finance up to 49% of eligible construction costs, and tax-exempt revenue bonds are used for the remaining balance.

Mr. Thomas continued with a discussion on the structuring of financing of prior expenditures and capitalized interest. An important consideration will be if we want to capitalize the interest through construction. If yes, by the time you get to operations in 2030/2031, your annual principal & interest payments will be about 25 % higher than if you were paying interest during the construction period. The trade-off is that capitalizing interest provides the needed cash flow during construction before the project is operating, with no cash outlay by Participants. The State and Federal participation will be on a reimbursement basis so these portions are not part of the financing. In the next few months, we will be seeking the Boards concurrence regarding capitalizing interest as to.

Another factor and option with interim financing is that Sites can fund prior expenditures with borrowed funds. Dollars used for planning efforts are eligible for tax-exempt financing. Staff are planning to bring a resolution to the Board next month which is necessary to secure this option going forward.

Mr. Thomas concluded that release of a Request for Proposals in October/November 2024 is planned for commercial and investment banks to assist and advise on the interim financing structure.

Mr. Kunde commented that he needs to see the cash flow to comment on this matter and will provide feedback then. ED Brown reminded there is starter information in the 2023 Plan of Finance update.

Chair Durst asked if this would be decided by each agency or will all agencies need to follow the same approach. ED Brown said that technically and agency by agency approach is doable but could be complicated. Mr. Thomas responded with no, that the Authority would be taking out the loan on behalf of the participants. The lending market will look at loan as an overall credit.

Mr. Kunde asked if Sites could have more than one type of financing. ED Brown said it is possible but would be more complicated. We should focus on simple and easy to understand approaches rather than customizing to fit the needs of each of the 22 Participants.

3.4 Receive an update on the a) development of the Benefits & Obligations Contract, Amended and Restated Joint Powers Agreement, and Phase 3, 4, 5 Bylaws and b) next steps to achieving Participants securing authority to execute these documents.

Mr. Robinette announced that comments are coming in from participants, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Department of Water Resources (DWR) in their role as an acquirer on the State Water Project on the Statement

of Charges (SOC). We will continue integrating the operations plan development. The current plan is to integrate comments and have follow-up conversations with commenters on what Sites can or cannot accommodate. The goal is to have an assessment in the next few months. We are working toward a substantial completion in September 2024. Now is the easiest time to add and change, so please get your feedback on the B&O to Mr. Robinette at your earliest convenience.

Mr. Cheng asked about the sequencing of events, and ED Brown stated that we can work with any agency to determine what is needed, especially with the DWR SOC considerations.

4. REPORTS:

4.1 Chairs' Reports:

Vice Chair Azevedo attended the Contractors Procurement Outreach event on April 18, 2024, where over 100 contractors attended. Commended Mr. Robinette for his presentation.

Chair Durst was on a panel for the American Society of Civil Engineers on March 28, 2024.

4.1 Committee & Workgroup Chairs' Reports:

Mr. Kunde announced two Operations & Engineering Workgroup meetings in May.

The Environmental Planning & Permitting Workgroup met in April to discuss the terrestrial biological mitigation contracting strategy, ITPs and county permits.

Vice Chair Sutton announced that we will reschedule the Sacramento Legislative day. DC trip on May 20, 2024. Asking for interested participation. Along with a Legislative & Outreach Committee will be in June.

Mr. Tincher announced his appreciation to staff.

4.3 Authority Board & Reservoir Committee Participant Reports:

Ms. Kaplan had several positive meetings in DC regarding Sites.

Ms. Pryor announced that she and ED Brown attended the Pleasanton Chamber of Commerce, which heavily supports the project.

Chair Durst mentioned that Sites is a state-wide project.

Mr. Trimble mentioned that ED Brown attended a landowner meeting and was well received.

4.4 <u>Executive Director's Reports</u>:

Executive Director Brown spoke to the following:

Sites is holding a project update session at ACWA on Tuesday, May 7, 2024; please bring directors to the event.

ED Brown explained the effects of the schedule updates provided in the board packet.

ED Brown replied to Chair Durst's comment about how much a day's delay would yield: approximately \$275 thousand dollars a day.

Chair Durst declared a recess at 10:49 a.m. and convened into Closed Session.

5. <u>CLOSED SESSION</u>:

5.1 Conference with legal counsel regarding existing litigation (Gov0:49. Code §§54956.9(d)).

Friends of the River, et al. v. Sites Project Authority, et al., Yolo County Superior Court, Case No. CV2023-2626

- 5.2 Negotiations concerning water right permit terms and conditions (Govt. Code §54956.9(c) and §54956.9(d)(4)).
- 5.2 Conference with Real Property Negotiators (Gov. Code § 54956.8).

Property: [Colusa County] APNs 011-130-004-000, 011-130-011-000, 011-150-017-000, 011-150-018-000, 011-150-020-000

Agency negotiators: Jerry Brown, Kevin Spesert

Negotiating parties: Shirley Jensen

Under negotiation: Price and terms of payment

Chair Durst adjourned Closed Session at 11:55 a.m. and reconvened into Open Session.

6. REPORT FROM CLOSED SESSION:

GC Doud stated that no reportable action was taken on Closed Session matters.

7. RECAP:

- 7.1 <u>Suggested Future Agenda</u> Items.
- 7.2 Upcoming Meetings:

Authority Board & Reservoir Committee Meeting Reservoir Committee & Authority Board

April 19, 2024

Friday, May 17, 2024 (9:00 am to noon)

Chair Durst adjourned the Joint Reserv the hour of 12:00 p.m.	oir Committee and Authority Board Meeting at
Fritz Durst, Authority Board Chair	Mike Azevedo, Reservoir Committee Chair
 Marcia Ki	vett, Board Clerk

Current Voting Committee Participants (22):

	%	Participant		%	Participant
\boxtimes	3.47	American Canyon, City		2.57	LaGrande WD
	2.42	Antelope Valley-East Kern WA	\boxtimes	17.29	Metropolitan WD
\boxtimes	5.28	Coachella Valley WD		3.47	Reclamation District 108
\boxtimes	5.28	Colusa County		2.42	Rosedale-Rio Bravo WSD
\boxtimes	5.05	Colusa County WD	\boxtimes	8.70	San Bernardino Valley MWD
\boxtimes	2.41	Cortina WD (1)	\boxtimes	6.48	San Gorgonio Pass WA
\boxtimes	2.87	Davis WD	\boxtimes	2.42	Santa Clara Valley WD
\boxtimes	4.22	Desert WA	\boxtimes	3.77	Santa Clarita Valley WA
\boxtimes	3.17	Dunnigan WD	\boxtimes	3.89	Westside WD
\boxtimes	3.77	Glenn-Colusa ID	\boxtimes	3.19	Wheeler Ridge-Maricopa WSD
\boxtimes	2.57	Irvine Ranch WD	\boxtimes	5.28	Zone 7 WA
	•		•	100.00	Total

20 Voting members represented at the start of the meeting- \boxtimes

95.01% Represented participation percentage.

Representation has been delegated as follows:

- (1) Proxy to Jamie Traynham, Davis WD
- (‡) Not present after _____

Agenda Item 1.1, Attachment B

9:00 AM-12:00 PM

Current Voting Authority Board (9)		Primary		Alternate		
Colusa County	\boxtimes	Gary Evans		Mike Azevedo		
Colusa County Water District		Joe Marsh		Hal Charter Shelly Murphy		
Glenn County		Thomas Arnold		Jim Yoder		
Glenn-Colusa Irrigation District		Logan Dennis		John Amaro		
Reclamation District 108	\boxtimes	Fritz Durst		Sean Doherty Hilary Reinhard		
Placer County Water Agency		Gray Allen		Scott Alvord		
Tehama-Colusa Canal Authority		Jeff Sutton		Halbert Charter		
City of Sacramento	\boxtimes	Lisa Kaplan		Anne Sangar Brett Ewart		
Westside Water District	\boxtimes	Doug Parker		Zach Dennis		
Associate Members (non-voting)		Primary		Alternate		
Western Canal Water District		Greg Johnson	\boxtimes	Ted Trimble		
Non-Voting Committee Participants (2)		Primary		Alternate/Other		
Department of Water Resources	\boxtimes	Rob Cooke	\boxtimes	Jagruti Maroney		
Bureau of Reclamation	\square	Adam Nickels Allison Jacobson		Don Bader Natalie Taylor		
		7.111.56117446655611		Tracane Taylor		
Current Voting Reservoir Committee (22)		Primary		Alternate		
American Canyon, City	\boxtimes	Jason Holley				
Antelope Valley-East Kern WA		Matt Knudson		Dan Flory		
Coachella Valley Water District	\boxtimes	Robert Cheng	\boxtimes	Petya Vasileva		
Colusa County		Mike Azevedo		Gary Evans		
Colusa County Water District		Halbert Charter	\boxtimes	Shelly Murphy		
Cortina Water District		Jim Peterson		Chuck Grimmer Jamie Traynham		
Davis Water District	\boxtimes	Jamie Traynham		Tom Charter		
Desert Water Agency		Steve Johnson	\boxtimes	David Tate Esther Saenz		

Agenda Item 1.1, Attachment B

9:00 AM-12:00 PM

Dunnigan Water District		Bill Vanderwaal				
RD 108		Bill Vanderwaal		Lewis Bair		
Glenn-Colusa Irrigation District				Greg Krzys		
Irvine Ranch Water District	\boxtimes	Paul Weghorst	\boxtimes	Kellie Welch		
LaGrande Water District		Zach Dennis				
Metropolitan Water District		Randall Neudeck		Nina Hawk Sam Smalls		
Rosedale-Rio Bravo Water District	\boxtimes	Trent Taylor		Dan Bartel		
San Bernardino Valley Water District	\boxtimes	Bob Tincher		Heather Dyer		
San Gorgonio Pass Water Agency	\boxtimes	Lance Eckhart		Thomas Todd Emmett Campbell		
Santa Clara Valley Water Agency		Cindy Kao	\boxtimes	Katherine Maher		
Santa Clarita Valley Water Agency	\boxtimes	Steve Cole	\boxtimes	Ali Elhassan		
Westside Water District	\boxtimes	Allen Myers				
Wheeler Ridge-Maricopa Water Storage District	\boxtimes	Rob Kunde		Sheridan Nicholas		
Zone 7 Water Agency	\boxtimes	Valerie Pryor	\boxtimes	Lillian Xie		
Authority, Non-Signatory (6)	n-Signatory (6) Primary Altern		Alternate			
PCWA		Ed Horton		Ben Barker		
Roseville		George Hanson Joshua Alpine		Sean Bigley Darin Reintjes		
Sacramento County		Kerry Schmitz		Mike Peterson		
Sites Project Authority:						
		Ali Forsythe		Kevin Spesert		
☑ JP Robinette		Joe Trapasso	\boxtimes	Marcia Kivett		
Alan Doud						

Members of the Public

Name	Representing	Name	Representing
Eric Espinoza	Dokken Engineering	Erin Huang	Jacobs
Brian Thomas	Sites Project	Mike Smith	AECOM
Louis Jarvis	GCID	Pete Rude	Jacobs
Juleah Cordi	Office of Assembly Member James Gallagher	Mike Plinski	SBVWD
Leslie Barrett	Vanir	Scott Brown	LWA
Cheyanne Harris	Brown & Caldwell	Mike Urkov	CCFCWCD
Henry Luu	HDR	Conner McDonald	CMD West
John Spranza	HDR	Elizabeth Foss	Zone 7
Jessica Sikora	Bureau	Kyle Hughs	
David Sandino	DWR	Carrie Scott	CVWD
June Hayes	SBVMWD	Jeff Herrin	AECOM
Marcus Maltby	Brown & Caldwell	Quang Tran	South Land Holdings
Johnny Gailey	DVWA	Peter Nelson	Wonderful
Rubina Chaudhary	Marrs Corp	Christopher Arnold	Acciona
Sean Pritchard	KSN Inc	Richard Cruz	NCCRC
Michael Hether	Fairfield	Charlene Sun	Valley Water
Jeriann Alexander	Fugro	Rob Shackelford	Dewberry
Jelica Arsenijevic	HDR	Alan Boyce	Materra
Ryan Shaw	WMWD	Amy Young	DWR
Itzia Rivera	cwc	Onalee	Vanir
Douglas Montague	Montague DeRose	Ashley Stanley	HDR
Heidi Kaulen	Kleinfelder	Jill Miller	Тера