

**TEHAMA COUNTY FLOOD CONTROL AND WATER CONSERVATION  
DISTRICT  
MEETING OF APRIL 24, 2007**

Present: Directors': Gregg Avilla; Bob Williams; George Russell; Ron Warner; Charles Willard. Also present: Ernie Ohlin, Water Resources Manager; Bill Goodwin, Tehama County Chief Administrator; Jeff Sutton, General Manager of the Tehama Colussa Chanel Authority.

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Chairman Avilla called the meeting to order at 8:31 a.m.
2. **APPROVAL OF MARCH 27, 2007 MINUTES:** Motion by Director Warner and second by Director Williams to approve the March 27, 2007 minutes as presented. Carried 5-0 with 0 absent.
3. **PUBLIC COMMENT:** None.
4. **CLAIMS:** Motion by Director Willard and second by Director Warner to approve the claims in the amount of \$2,383.84. Carried 5-0 with 0 absent.
5. **RED BLUFF DIVERSION DAM FISH PASSAGE IMPROVEMENT PROJECT:** Bill Goodwin presented draft correspondence commenting on unresolved issues regarding the re-circulated draft EIR/EIS Fish Passage Improvement Project at the Red Bluff Diversion Dam. Clarification and research should be completed before decisions can be made. The Flood Directors' should make their comments today for the Board of Supervisors consideration at their meeting.

Director Willard expressed his thoughts on the timeline and felt the 2002 issue should come back for review and solution.

Director Avilla questioned the EIR process. Bill Goodwin answered that the comments from 2002 were submitted from the Board, City of Red Bluff and to the Tehama Colusa Canal Authority,

It will be very difficult to find a win-win solution from the County's point of view. The City has a strong opinion as well as the Tehama Colusa Canal Authority.

Director Warner reiterated his opinion as leaving the dam the way it currently is. It is understandable that Tehama Colusa people need assurances that if the dam is taken out, they will receive water. Director Warner was in concurrence with the Administrator's draft correspondence.

Director Russell agreed and felt the correspondence prepared by Mr. Goodwin was pointing out concerns and not opposing or supporting the issue, such as economic impact, pumps and the long-term issues. It is a reasonable response to the concerns that exist.

Director Williams concurred. The key statement to the correspondence urges "its elected representatives at the state and federal levels to pursue careful and balanced action to permanently resolve the competing interests implicated here". Director Williams continued by saying that we are one administration away from the complete removal of the Red Bluff Diversion Dam and the de-watering of the west side of the Sacramento Valley. With the removal of other diversion dams in the nation, it was foreseeable that an administration more supporting to environmental interests, and not hearing the needs of the people or irrigators in the Sacramento Valley could change things. That sentence and the letter says it very well.

Director Avilla concurred with the correspondence request.

Ernie Ohlin added that the EIR did not change and there were comments the Board had submitted in 2002. The Green Sturgeon has since been added to the Endangered Species List and there was no response to our comments that previously were made. A permanent solution to support economic issues and the irrigators who are reliant on the facility is needed. Ultimately, large pumping plants with screens seem necessary. The County does not want to be in that same crises mode, when there is a chance to move forward.

Bill Goodwin requested Staff gather names that could influence the solution and send correspondence stating parameters for permanent solutions. Correspondence could be presented to the Flood Directors' for approval at the next meeting.

Ernie Ohlin stated that next week the 4-County Staff will meet with a representative for Congressman Wally Herger and the issue will be discussed.

Jackson Williams, Red Bluff resident, expressed his opinion of installing pumps. He was not in agreement, due to continued repairs and passing water to the pumps. The dam was built purposely for gravity flow eliminating costs of pumping water into the canal. Four to six large pumps, using electricity would be needed, costing farmers more and eventually us. In his opinion, if the fish ladders were repaired there would be no problem for steelhead and salmon coming through. Sturgeon possibly, do not spawn. There is a natural bypass at the dam for salmon and even the sturgeon. It needs to be cleaned and if the lake is full, that would work for the fish. Mr. Williams questioned the deadline and public meetings. If you want to dry up the north valley, you will do it.

Bill Goodwin thanked Mr. Williams and felt the correspondence expressed his opinion.

Jeff Sutton thanked everyone for their comments and said that if approved, they will be commented on. In 2002 there were public meetings, and due to citizens and the City of Red Bluff, there was a "timeout". The one thing that has changed since that time is the listing of the Green Sturgeon, circumstances are different today. Other dams are under attack due to this Sturgeon. Mr. Williams was right when he said the County does need to be involved. Communications with the City have occurred. We want to bring the County and City into discussions and examine the opportunities. There is not the normal "win-win" solution. We

need to protect our water users. The reason the Red Bluff Diversion Dam is due in part to the efforts of my Great Grandfather. The pumps Mr. Williams discussed is the research pumping plant, which is unreliable and different than what we want to install. Pumping and fish screens are state of the art and a solution that balances the environmental needs, as well as the economic needs for communities. The Tehama Colusa Canal Authority (TCCA) is working with CH2M Hill, overseeing a number of projects. The end result should make those interested feel confident that it will be a successful product. In terms of mitigation, Mr. Sutton continued, "I don't want to see Lake Red Bluff go away", and there may be opportunities to keep it in some temporary period that the fishery agencies would find to be agreeable, or there are other alternatives. That is a great river resource and there can be other ideas thinking outside the box. Change is ultimately coming and if it not negotiated into this package for this project, that opportunity is probably lost at that point. Economically, this will probably be a \$100 million project bringing activity into your community. The ag business will be hurt if this project does not move forward and greatly out way the loss of Lake Red Bluff. As to the fish ladders, spending more money in the current operation is a failure.

Mr. Sutton discussed the emergency dam closure coming. With irrigation beginning in April, water rationing was avoided, and an emergency dam closure is scheduled for April 29th to May 9th. There will be a 5-day fish passage and then a permanent closure on May 15th. Dates are still in discussion and if rains continue the possibility of closure may not be needed.

Director Russell questioned who negotiates with whom.

Mr. Sutton answered by saying changing negotiation to "getting engaged in the process" and addressing your concerns. The TCCA has been trying to bring the City into the discussions for 5-years. The project needs to move forward and there is likely to be a Federal appropriation for this and an opportunity for benefits. The County and City needs to have dialogue. The real "win win" is not necessarily there. There is a win for the water users and a win for the fishery resource. Lake Red Bluff will probably suffer as a result. There is no choice, but to move forward with this project. The TCCA and Tehama County Westside irrigators need water supply reliability year-round. It is not part of this project, but with the State's presentation on the Site Reservoir, you would need to be able to fill the canal and reservoir during the winter months when we cannot have the dam down; therefore cannot divert. That is for regional and statewide protection for the water business, Mr. Sutton concluded.

Administrator Goodwin questioned Mr. Sutton regarding his statement of the Sites Reservoir and no mention of this in his CEQA document. Mr. Sutton admitted his project has nothing to do with the Sites project.

Mr. Suttan answered that it was used as an example.

Ernie Ohlin questioned Mr. Sutton of the next step in this project.

Mr. Sutton answered the Response To Comments should be completed in the next two to three months and a decision made by the end of the year. With the feasibility studies and enough monies in the budget to take the EIR/EIS to 90%, the drawings could be within the next two

years.

Mr. Sutton was questioned by the Board as to when he first heard about the re-circulation of the EIR project and deadline. Mr. Sutton answered, before starting his present job, December 27th, the Bureau's circulation of a press release. It did not go into the Federal Register until February 2nd approximately. Discussions with the City officials were in mid January, a press release printed February 6th, a meeting with the City of Red Bluff and all department heads on February 20th. Included were the Fire Chief, Department of Recreation, and Police Chief.

This County, Mr. Sutton added, will lose 20,000 acres of irrigated agriculture without a reliable source of water. Agriculture in this County brings in \$126 million a year just in crops. Weigh that against the \$4 million in revenues from the Boat Drags in Lake Red Bluff. There is still the opportunity to save those.

Ernie Ohlin will stay in communication with the Administrator, Directors of the Flood Control Board and Mr. Sutton.

Director Russell requested Staff provide a review of this project. Ernie Ohlin will bring CH2M Hill, if possible, for a presentation for all agencies.

Administrator Goodwin added the presentation should include what the CEQA document/project entails.

6. **APPROVAL OF AMENDMENT NO. 2 TO EATON DRILLING CONTRACT:** Ernie Ohlin presented the Amendment No. 2 for signature and approval by the Board and information regarding the current progress of the well.

Motion by Director Willard and second by Director Warner to approve the Amendment No. 2 for Eaton Drilling to increase the payment to "not to exceed \$145,000 and the following:

- Non-collusion affidavit
- Add retention and substitution of securities
- add anti-trust assignment
- add excavation
- add child support compliance
- add utility identification and relocation

Motion Carried 5-0 with 0 absent.

7. **OUT OF STATE TRAVEL REQUEST:** Motion by Director Russell to approve the \$430 request for out of state travel of Staff to attend the Floodplain Management Conference in Nevada.

Ernie Ohlin added this cost is for the registration only and hotel and meals were not included in the total.

Director Williams questioned the benefit of the conference. Staff answered by saying that this conference should also be attended by new Floodplain Administrator/Building Official. Many agencies can present new information on floodplain mapping and issues revolving around floodplain management. Staff has attended this conference for several years, gaining valuable information associated with flood Control issues.

Motion was seconded by Director Warner and carried 5-0 with 0 absent.

**DEER CREEK AND ELDER CREEK LEVEES-DWR CHANNEL MAINTENANCE:** Ernie Ohlin reviewed the shift of policy by the Corps of Engineers. The Deer Creek and Elder Creek levee systems are inspected every year by DWR and the County received a satisfactory rating. The Corps of Engineers re-inspected California levees and issues on channel maintenance were their main concerns. Discussions by Staff to the Reclamation Board, informing them of the responsibility of DWR to maintain the creek channels, resulted in DWR addressing debris, growth, possible removal of gravel bars. This plan will be implemented by the Sutter DWR Maintenance Yard in less than one year with funding from DWR. It is a very important step for DWR to accept, in writing, that they are responsible for channel maintenance in Deer and Elder Creeks in the areas of the levees.

Director Russell questioned the amount of streams blocked with vegetation and who is responsible.

Staff answered the property owner is responsible for the maintenance and there are some who do not want the streams cleaned for environmental purposes. There are also cost concerns.

Director Russell added that this should be another issue returning to the Board for education.

9. **ADJOURN:** With no further business the meeting adjourned at 9:42 a.m.