

CENTRAL VALLEY REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD

575th BOARD MEETING MINUTES

THURSDAY, 17 JUNE 2021, 9:00 a.m.

BOARD MEETING LOCATION

Zoom Teleconference and Webcast

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Longley, Dr. Karl	Kadara, Denise	Brar, Raji	Avdis, Nick
Ramirez, Carmen	Bradford, Mark	Yang, Sean	

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT

None

STATE WATER BOARD OFFICE OF CHIEF COUNSEL AND ENFORCEMENT STAFF PARTICIPATING IN THE MEETING

Jahr, Jessica	Lancaster, David	Toft-Dupuy, Bayley
Moskal, Chris		

REGIONAL BOARD STAFF PARTICIPATING IN THE MEETING

Pulupa, Patrick	Flower, Christopher	Kirn, David
Laputz, Adam	Garver, Kelli	Smitherman, Lauren
Baum, John "JJ"	Coughlin, Gene	Jimmerson, Chris
Snyder, Clint	Chow, Bob	Vue, Cheng
Rogers, Clay	Brown, Janelle	
Armstrong, Scott	Croyle, Christine	
Coster, Lynn	Palmer, Joshua	
Asami, Rebecca	Pelkofer, Tyson	
Marshall, James	Cottrell, Maxine	
Gamon, Daniel	Mullane, Jessica	
Braidman, Brett	Howard, Meredith	
Jimmerson, Dania	Harvey, Dale	
Garcia, James	Betancourt, Elizabeth	

ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES PRESENT WHO WERE IDENTIFIED

Doduc, Tam	Crooks, Mike	Fernandez, Albert
Seyfried, Robert	Miller, Latisha	Moloney, Emily
Hagan, Catherine	Reyes, Elvira	Ryan, Sarah
Nelson, Marlee	Rasmussen, Debie	Webster, Debbie
Dina	Sherri	

AGENDA ITEM 1 – CALL TO ORDER

Chair Longley called the 575th Board meeting to order and made introductions. Executive Officer (EO) Pulupa introduced staff. Member Bradford led the Pledge of Allegiance.

AGENDA ITEM 2 – BOARD MEMBER COMMUNICATIONS

Chair Longley submitted the following communications:

- 26 April 2021 – Participated with staff in a meeting with Environmental Justice representatives regarding CV-SALTS Management Zone Early Action Plans.
- 27 April 2021 – Participated in CV-Salts Public Workshop.
- 28 Apr 2021 – Participated together with Mark Bradford in a public/stakeholder outreach regarding Tribal Beneficial Use (TBU) proposed process.
- 29 April and 3/4 May 2021 – Meetings Regarding Projects for Allensworth Area. Board Members Denise Kadara and Karl Longley, acting in their capacities as a member of the Allensworth community and as a member of the California Water Institute, respectively, and not as Central Valley Regional Board members, met via Zoom with State Board Member Laurel Firestone (April 29), Rusty Areias, Self Help Enterprises, Tri-County Water Authority (GSA), Angiola Water District representatives, and members of the Allensworth community (May 3 and 4) and also Secretary Wade Crowfoot and Director Nancy Vogel (May 4). The topic discussed at the meetings was the funding requirement for several Allensworth projects including a new well and tank replacement, a community wastewater system, the construction of the Atwell Island-Alpaugh-Allensworth Nature Trail, Allensworth Flood Control and Recreational Park Project, and a regional water supply project. The new well and tank replacement project have been funded but not built, and the Atwell Island-Alpaugh-Allensworth Nature Trail is necessary to provide jobs to Allensworth and Alpaugh residents and increase tourism and improve local economy. The remaining projects are conceptual, and funds have not been allocated for their construction.
- 10 May 2021 – Participated in Monthly Regional Boards Chairs meeting.
- 14 June 2021 – Participated in Monthly Regional Boards Chairs meeting.
- 17 June 2021 – Participated in the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board Regular Meeting.

Vice Chair Kadara submitted the following communications:

- 26 April 2021 – Participated with staff in a meeting with Environmental Justice representatives regarding CV-SALTS Management Zone Early Action Plans.

- 27 April 2021 – Participated in CV-SALTS Workshop from 1:00 – 4:00 with stakeholders including Environmental Justice groups on Management Zones and proposed Early Action Plans.
- 4 May 2021 – Participated in a meeting with the Secretary of Natural Resources Wade Crowfoot and Director Nancy Vogel of Governor’s Water Resilience Portfolio Initiative and representatives from Tulare County, Tri-County Water Authority GSA, Self Help Enterprises, and Allensworth Community Service District to discuss water quality, wastewater treatment, and flood control issues of southwest Tulare County including Allensworth. Focus was on ways to look at regional approaches of implementing needed infrastructure.
- 1 June 2021 – Participated in 9:00 State Water Control Board meeting as they considered CV-SALTS amendments.
- 11 June 2021 – Participated in 12:00 meeting with Congressman Valadao and his representative, and representatives from Self Help Enterprises, Tri-County Water Authority, Tulare Basin Watershed Partnership, Water Replenishment District of Southern CA, and Allensworth community advocates. Congressman Valadao’s office reached out to the Allensworth community to hear issues/concerns and learn about programs and projects underway or planned. Infrastructure was major focus with emphasizes improving domestic water and wastewater treatment.
- 17 June 2021 – Participated in the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board Regular Meeting.

Member Bradford submitted the following communications:

- 28 April 2021 – Participated together with Chair Longley in a public/stakeholder outreach regarding TBU proposed process.
- 10 June 2021 – Met with Northern California Water Agency (NCWA) representatives at the Sills Farm along with Nick Avdis.
- 17 June 2021 – Participated in the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board Regular Meeting.

Member Yang submitted the following communications:

- 11 June 2021 – Met with coalition leaders (Bruce from Sacramento and Mike from Elk Grove) at McConnell Estate Winery in Elk Grove. The meeting focused on what coalition is, why it benefits farmers to join as members, and what the coalition was in need of.
- 17 June 2021 – Participated in the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board Regular Meeting.

Member Avdis submitted the following communications:

- 10 June 2021 – Met with NCWA representatives at the Sills Farm along with Mark Bradford.
- 17 June 2021 – Participated in the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board Regular Meeting.

Member Ramirez submitted the following communications:

- 27 May 2021 – Participated in a Water Education for Latino Leaders Virtual Conference on the CV Salts Program.
- 17 June 2021 – Participated in the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board Regular Meeting.

AGENDA ITEM 3 – STATE WATER BOARD LIAISON UPDATE

State Water Board Member Tam Doduc gave an update to the Board as follows:

- Ms. Doduc indicated she was happy to provide what was her final liaison report to the Board and indicated this was her final official act as a State Water Board Member. On 17 June 2021, Governor Newsom appointed Nicole Morgan to the State Water Resources Control Board in the civil engineering position. Tam indicated some of the Board and/or staff may remember Ms. Morgan from her time with the Regional Water Board. Ms. Morgan most recently served as the Assistant Deputy Director in the Division of Financial Assistance at the State Water Board. Tam indicated Ms. Morgan would bring a breadth of experience and knowledge to both the State Water Board and the Regional Boards. Tam further stated she felt privileged to hand off the baton and wish Ms. Morgan well in what Tam believed would be a challenging Summer for all water boards as they dealt with drought and wildfires, as well as the ongoing programmatic challenges.
- Ms. Doduc indicated the draft 2020 - 2022 integrated report included a proposed 303D list impaired water bodies, as well as the 305B assessment of surface waters. The Regions involved are the Central Valley Regional Board, Central Coast, and San Diego Regional Water Boards. Tam also indicated she believed there were some priority listings for the Colorado River basin, which would be heard at the 6 July 2021 State Water Board Meeting. Tam further indicated it was anticipated the State Water Board would consider adoption of the report in January of 2022.
- Ms. Doduc also updated the Board on the release of the draft Construction Stormwater General Permit. Despite being in the middle of a drought, the State Water Board will hear this issue on 7 July 2021 with public comments received

through 30 July 2021. It is expected the State Water Board will take action later this year.

- Ms. Doduc concluded that it had been her pleasure and privilege to work with the Board Members and staff on the many critical issues the Board was involved with. Tam stated since she resided in the Central Valley and hoped to see staff and/or keep in touch as she returned to her role as a private citizen.

Comments from Board Members

- Chair Longley reminisced about the many years working with Tam and how she created the inception of the CV SALTS Program. He stated it was also his honor and privilege to work with her. Chair Longley further stated he appreciated the leadership she provided on a multitude of program areas. Chair Longley thanked Tam for always being a strong advocate for regional board members, which has allowed the regional boards to perform their jobs better.
- Vice Chair Kadara stated she appreciated Tam listening to the issues surrounding disadvantaged communities and thanked her for her guidance and support. Executive Officer (EO) Patrick Pulupa expressed his gratitude for all she had done for the regional boards and indicated it had been a pleasure working with her and thanked her for getting resources into the hands of the individuals working so diligently to protect water quality. EO Pulupa further indicated he loved the idea of having a day of clean-up on the American River as her farewell. Several Board Members and EO Pulupa indicated their interest in volunteering with Tam. Tam concluded by indicating she would forward the information on the clean-up day.

AGENDA ITEM 4 – PUBLIC FORUM

- Albert Fernandez (self-represented) indicated he wished to comment on the schedule of fees for the management zones in the Central Valley and thanked the Board for their time. Mr. Fernandez was concerned with the Kings Water Alliance (KWA) Management Zone and the CV SALTS Program. He stated his family owned a small Tri-Plex in the Fresno County and they had been served a Notice to Comply. Mr. Fernandez indicated he was told by CV SALTS staff and the KWA they were the only facility type that was being included in this process and questioned why. Mr. Fernandez indicated he was told if he had been served with this Notice, he had to pay the fees. Mr. Fernandez expressed concern that a gentleman in the Division of Drinking Water informed him his facility did not qualify for these new regulations. Mr. Fernandez stated when he gave the letter to members of the CV SALTS Program, they told him they did not have the authority or jurisdiction to make that determination. Mr. Fernandez was not entirely sure what the relationships were between the two divisions, but it seemed like there was some other office politics involved. Additionally, he did not understand (regarding the determinations that were made) why there were 43

dischargers in the KWA individual dischargers category. Mr. Fernandez stated he was told multiple times that “everyone” was served with these notices but did not understand how he was the only facility type between Kings, Tulare, and Fresno County that was served. Albert further stated the costs for these management zones were quite extreme. For example, he was being asked to pay \$24,000 this year and \$135,000 next year, for a total of approximately \$160,000. Mr. Fernandez stated those kinds of fees for a church or school would be ruinous and felt the State was taking money from education and children in impoverished, high Latino populations. Secondly, Mr. Fernandez stated he was being asked to pay for people who had not participated or responded to these Notices to Comply and he was not sure how it could be enforced. Moreover, Mr. Fernandez wanted to know if there was an ability to be grandfathered into this Program and if this policy could be applied retroactively. He further explained he offered to install reverse osmosis or other nitrate removal systems and the answer was he needed to pay the fees. EO Pulupa indicated he needed more information and asked Mr. Fernandez to send his contact information to the same email address used to obtain the zoom information. EO Pulupa stated staff would get Mr. Fernandez some answers and review the records to ensure he was appropriately named in those orders. At a minimum, EO Pulupa stated Mr. Fernandez would receive some explanation as to where the Regional Board was in the process and where he could voice additional concerns.

- Latisha Miller, (Vice Chair, Paskenta Indian Tribe) indicated protecting water quality was one of her missions as a tribal leader and native. Ms. Miller stated she wanted to encourage the Board to continue to work with tribes and indicated her willingness and availability to partner with the Board on tribal issues. She stated her Tribe was doing some great work with respect to Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) where they work in riparian areas in the watershed to help with water quality. The Tribe is going in there and removing non-indigenous species and putting back the things that belong there to bring water back. Ms. Miller encouraged the Board to get involved and indicated her contact information as lmiller@paskenta.org. Ms. Miller stated they are the indigenous people who really know how to work with the land and encouraged staff to reach out to all tribes as feasible. Chair Longley thanked Ms. Miller for her comments and indicated there would be more zoom meetings with other tribal members in the future as the Board discussed issues related to tribal beneficial uses (TBU). Chair Longley stated Ms. Miller’s (and other tribal members) input was very important and he wanted to see an advisory group, as well as on-going dialogue. Chair Longley added Agenda Item 10 on today’s Agenda was a presentation on TBU. Ms. Miller indicated she could not stay on for the presentation but asked that a copy be e-mailed to her. EO Pulupa confirmed there would be future opportunities for her to participate in this process. Ms. Miller further stated she was actively working in coordination with Machuca Tribe and was trying to reach out to the other local tribes and create a group that is doing traditional land management and conservation, as repairing and working in watershed areas was really important

to her Tribe. Member Avdis extended an invitation to Ms. Miller for her to reach out to Member Avdis directly as he would like to hear more about the issues. Vice Chair Kadara thanked Ms. Miller for her comments and for being a strong advocate of community engagement. Vice Chair Kadara further stated the importance of having strong representation at the table as water quality issues are discussed.

AGENDA ITEM 5 – EXECUTIVE OFFICER’S REPORT

EO Pulupa indicated he was pleased this report contained a litany of items the Regional Board maintained during the late stage of the pandemic. Accomplishments ranged from additional site closures to additional inspections. Additionally, a number of metrics were tracking timely throughout the 18 water quality programs. EO Pulupa indicated he felt this was extraordinary and there was a tremendous amount of good work being performed in every sector of the of the Regional Board. EO Pulupa the only area not tracking timely was in the major inspections at NPDES facilities, simply because it had been difficult to do while remaining socially distanced. However, EO Pulupa had commitment from the NPDES Program to accelerate inspections once restrictions loosened. EO Pulupa then highlighted three employee awards:

Employee: KATIE GILMAN

UNIT: Water Quality Certifications Unit

LOCATION: Redding Office

TITLE: Engineering Geologist

SUPERVISOR: Lynn Coster, Sr. Environmental Scientist

The Central Valley Water Board's Redding office management team is pleased to select Katie Gilman for the Superior Accomplishment Award. Katie joined the Water Board as an Engineering Student in May 2016 in the Groundwater Unit and then filled an Associate Government Program Analyst Position in the Cannabis Unit in November 2017. While working full-time, Katie earned a degree in geology from Southern New Hampshire University in 2019 and joined the Water Quality Certifications Unit as an Engineering Geologist in February of 2020.

Despite the challenges of training for her new position while teleworking due to COVID, Katie quickly came up to speed with the Water Quality Certifications program and is an asset to the unit. Katie effectively communicates with dischargers and colleagues and has assisted in training a new staff member who joined the unit in August. Always eager to get involved, Katie volunteered to represent Region 5 on a State Water Resources Control Board committee that was formed to discuss new Water Quality Certification procedures. Most recently, Katie volunteered to work on the certification of a meadow restoration project and has taken on the challenge of learning the Central Valley Water Board's responsibilities as the CEQA lead agency.

In addition to Katie's core work duties she has been instrumental in developing several databases and maps, often on short notice, for other units throughout the office. Katie has recently assisted the Nonpoint Source Unit with map development and

maintenance of a GIS based prioritization system that has assisted with workload planning and outreach efforts.

Katie always has a great attitude and her program knowledge is valued. She is most deserving of recognition for her work and her contributions to the Central Valley Water Board.

Employee: MARGIE SALDANA

UNIT: Administration

LOCATION: Rancho Cordova Office

TITLE: Office Technician

SUPERVISOR: Brett Braidman, Operations Supervisor

This Superior Accomplishment Award (SAA) is to be awarded to Margie Saldana, whose incredible dedication in so many areas -- not just the front desk -- has helped the Central Valley Waterboard maintain excellence in mail preparation, file reviews, ECM distribution, invoice and office supply support, mail and front office phone support --- and Margie does all this while providing first rate customer service to staff, the public, vendors, mail delivery personnel, and to all those who call the main office number.

Since becoming full-time as an Office Tech in January 2018, Margie has made the front desk her own and has functioned as the Admin Lead for Seasonal Clerks -- training several clerks in the following areas: producing timely and accurate red folders, arranging file reviews for public record requests, answering the phone and accurately disseminating the calls to appropriate staff. Since the retirement of Della Kramer in October 2020, Margie has learned how to receive and approve Region 5 invoices, handle report of collection duties, process incoming checks, make bank deposits, and create library indexes for board adopted orders. Margie is receiving this SAA based in part on her incredible work ethic and high capacity to learn new skills and excel in multiple functions.

Her work product is superior, her sense of dedication to her work is incredibly high, and Margie does not shy away from learning something new and then training others in those areas. Margie has provided outstanding assistance and support to staff while also learning new tasks during the challenging time of the COVID pandemic -- adding emphasis to Margie's accomplishments. We are very fortunate to have Margie working at the Central Valley Waterboard and she is well deserving of this award.

Employee: Joshua Mahoney/Rebecca Asami/Dale Harvey

UNIT: Enforcement and Oil Fields

LOCATION: Redding Office

TITLE: WRC Engineer/Engineering Geologist/Supervising WRC Engineer

SUPERVISOR: Clay Rodgers, Assistant Executive Officer

In 2015, Central Valley Water Board (CVWB) staff convened a Food Safety Expert Panel (Panel) to provide input on a project (Food Safety Project) to investigate whether reuse of oil field produced water to irrigate crops for human consumption posed a threat the public health. As part of the Project, the CVWB entered into a Memorandum of

Agreement with the permittees (oil companies and the water districts using the produced water). The MOA required the completion of three studies or tasks and the completion of specific task reports. The scopes of the tasks were discussed by the Panel at several public meetings from 2015 through 2020. Task 1 was the identification of chemicals of interest (COIs) and a preliminary hazard assessment. Task 2 was an evaluation of the COIs and potential hazards. Task 3 was an evaluation of crop sampling results for the COIs. A third-party consultant completed the task research and reports with input from the Panel, Board staff, and an engineer from Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratories contracted by the CVWB as a Science Advisor for the Project.

During the subject period, Joshua and Rebecca with oversight by Dale worked tirelessly to draft the cumulative document for the project, a White Paper, for presentation at the CVWB's February meeting. The White Paper summarizes the state of science and research related to the use of produced water to irrigate crops for human consumption, identifies data gaps, and presents the Panel's recommendations on the practice. As such, it is an important contribution to the science available on the practice. To complete the White Paper for presentation to the CVWB, they critiqued the consultant's Task reports and coordinated with the consultant, Panel, and Science Advisor to finalize the reports. They also drafted, redrafted, and drafted again the White Paper with coordinated input from the consultant, Panel, and Science Advisor to ensure the document presented to the CVWB captured the complexities of the Project and summarized the compiled information and results in a readable, coherent fashion.

Joshua and Rebecca with oversight by Dale compiled an agenda package, and on 18 February 2021 presented the White Paper to the CVWB as an informational item. The presentation was excellent and well received by the CVWB. The CVWB also presented to each of the 11 Panel members resolutions of appreciation drafted by Rebecca. The time it took this team to complete the above assigned tasks was much shorter than anticipated.

The above accomplishments were partially in addition to the normal work completed by the group. They went above and beyond for this specific item/event, and the White Paper will aid not only the CVWB, but also the State and public in general. Joshua, Rebecca, and Dale are deserving of the quarterly SAA.

EO Pulupa indicated there are many agencies trying to determine what re-opening the State looked like and what reopening will look like for the Regional Board. EO Pulupa asked the Board to decide how the August 2021 Board Meeting would be conducted given that suspension of the Bagley-Keene requirements was extended through 30 September 2021. After discussion between the Board Members and EO Pulupa, it was decided the August 2021 Board Meeting would be all virtual and the October 2021 and December 2021 Meetings would be hybrid. Chair Longley thanked EO Pulupa for his guidance.

EO Pulupa gave a summary to the Board on small farmers having challenges with in the Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program on water supply, compliance, nitrate, and other issues. EO Pulupa noted staff attended some meetings with California Department of Food and Agriculture and Department of Pesticide Regulation. One of the concepts

being considered was having a Small Grower Summit where the Regional Board would invite many of the small growers in the Valley (perhaps in the Fresno area) to interact with not only the Board but with other agencies (CDFA/DPR) that might have resources available to small growers. EO Pulupa further explained staff would reach out to growers under 20 acres to have an open discussion about what the growers were experiencing since there had been some difficulty with small growers coming into compliance with Board Orders. EO Pulupa indicated it was an idea being explored and requested the Board's feedback (taking into account the best time of year would be Winter through early Spring for a Summit). Additionally, EO Pulupa questioned the Board as to their opinion on noticing it as a Special Board Meeting so many of the Board Members could attend hybrid or in person if they chose to do so. Chair Longley stated it should be noticed as a special meeting, with the option to attend in-person or virtually (given the large demographic of grower's locations). Member Avdis voiced his support for attending in-person and indicated if there was a tour available, he would be interested in that as well. Member's Ramirez and Brar agreed. EO Pulupa indicated the 20 acres or less threshold was flexible. Member Yang expressed his appreciation to EO Pulupa and Chair Longley for their support of small growers. EO Pulupa indicated staff would be working on getting the Summit scheduled and would keep the Board apprised of progress. EO Pulupa thanked Member Yang for his attention to small growers and for performing much of the legwork, attending many zoom meetings, and involving himself in many discussions to bring educate himself about some of the issues faced by these communities in the Central Valley. Member Yang indicated his gratitude for the support.

With regard to the opening of the State on 15 June 2021, EO Pulupa indicated not much of the Regional Board's operations changed on the 15th. He explained staff was waiting on decisions and negotiations to finalize between Cal OSHA (which would set the rules as to what mask expectations were in the workplace). He explained the current default position was vaccinated individuals could come back to the office without masks and without being socially distanced. However, those who had not taken the vaccine would still have to wear masks and socially distance. EO Pulupa stated staff would follow direction from the agencies making those determinations. EO Pulupa further stated CalHR was currently engaged in bargaining with a number of different bargaining units throughout the State and indicated the Regional Board had a number of different unions representing workers. Therefore, Executive staff was waiting on that Agency to release the new agreements with respect to telework and resources. EO Pulupa indicated the Executive Team was also working jointly with Cal EPA to make it relatively even throughout all of the State Water Board Departments and organizations so that one office did not have a more lenient telework or return to work policies than another (which could potentially draw employee resources away). EO Pulupa indicated one of the options was to have most staff continue telework (potentially a majority of their time) so they would only be in the office a couple days out of the week (with some staff more and some less). EO Pulupa stated the Executive Team was working hard to protect employee health and wellness, and the office remained as secure as possible. He further indicated an additional burden would be placed on Managers to ensure the benefits of telework were realized and that employees that came into the office a couple of days a week were doing so with purpose, not just to show up for two days out of the week. EO Pulupa stated he had recently attended hybrid workforce training and management and the State Water Board was realizing it was more complicated than

originally thought. EO Pulupa assured the Board they would be kept apprised as he learned more from other agencies and entities within Cal EPA.

Comments from Board Members

Vice Chair Kadara stated Margie was one of the main people in the office (during the pandemic) and thanked her for being an essential workers. Vice Chair Kadara thanked Margie for the significant role she played at the Regional Board and stated she appreciated her keeping the office open and serving with great customer service skills. Member Ramirez indicated she never hesitated to tell constituents to call the office because she knew they would receive good customer service from Margie.

Chair Longley also congratulated Katie Gilman for her accomplishments. Member Ramirez thanked Katie for investing so much of her time into the Regional Board and indicated she was grateful the way Katie invested her time in transitioning from a student assistant to getting her degree in order to further the Regional Board's mission. Member Ramirez felt it was a remarkable accomplishment.

Member Ramirez commented (as it related to the Food Safety Project) even if not subjected to all the political pressures, it was an amazing achievement by the Panel. Member Ramirez further commented this Project was under a microscope by many regulatory agencies and the political complexities, as well as the complexities of serving as a Program and Budget Manager for the Science Advisor was a tremendous amount of effort. She felt the work completed under the Memorandum of Understanding was handled very delicately and professionally by the three team members and her commendation went out to them. Chair Longley concurred they were all well deserving of the Award.

Member Yang recognized the team's outstanding performance and contribution to the State and the community. He further indicated his appreciation that the Regional Board had such outstanding employees and solution-driven individuals to be a part of the team. Member Yang congratulated and thanked the team for their work and expertise.

Member Brar echoed what Member Yang and EO Pulupa stated, thanked the team, and felt everyone on the team handled a politically charged topic well. She stated it could not have been handled any better and everybody did their due diligence, worked exceptionally hard to stay on task, and deal with all the scrutiny the Project presented. Member Brar felt it was handled perfectly and congratulated everyone involved in this well-deserved honor.

Chair Longley stated he was glad Patrick ensured the team was recognized because it was well deserved. Chair Longley mentioned Member Brar and himself attended meetings of this group to follow the progress. He further stated Josh, Rebecca, and Dale worked in an area which was highly technical and not encountered in the everyday activities of wastewater treatment and management. Chair Longley stated their ability to work through details and political issues was outstanding and highly commendable.

Vice Chair Kadara stated the team was certainly deserving of this Award and representing communities was important. She further stated all the staff that had been acknowledged with all three Awards do a tremendous job and represent the Board favorably. Vice Chair Kadara indicated she was very impressed by everyone's professionalism, commitment to do well, and represent the Board. She thanked everyone for their contributions and congratulated them on receiving the Awards.

Member Ramirez commented (as it related to the Food Safety Panel), she was initially one of the most skeptical Board Members. However, the Team had strong science behind them, and she trusted the science and way in which the team presented the science. Member Ramirez further stated the team overcame a tremendous hurdle with this Project and congratulated them on a job well done.

AGENDA ITEM 6 – ADOPTION OF MINUTES FROM PRIOR BOARD MEETING

Vice Chair Ramirez requested a clarification because Carmen Ramirez was the Vice Chair throughout the April 2021 meeting and there were instances in the minutes where it stated, "Vice Chair Kadara". Since Member Kadara was not made the Vice Chair until the end of the April 2021 meeting, she requested those updates to the minutes be made. Chair Longley agreed.

Motion to adopt previous Board meeting minutes from 22 April 2021 (with revisions).

Motioned: Member Avdis
Seconded: Member Ramirez

Roll Call Vote:

Member Bradford	Yes
Member Yang	Yes
Member Avdis	Yes
Vice Chair Kadara	Yes
Member Brar	Yes
Member Ramirez	Yes
Chair Longley	Yes

Approved by Roll Call Vote of 7-0-0

AGENDA ITEM 7 – ADOPTION OF UNCONTESTED CALENDAR AGENDA ITEMS 14 THROUGH 17

UNCONTESTED CALENDAR

(Cal. Code Regs., tit. 23, section 647.2, subd. (f).) Uncontested items are those items that are not being contested at the Board Meeting and will be acted on without discussion. If any person or Board Member requests discussion, the item may be removed from the Uncontested Calendar.

NPDES PERMITS (AGENDA ITEM 14)

- a) Sierra Pacific Industries, Quincy Division, Plumas County – Consideration of NPDES Permit Renewal (NPDES Permit CA0080357)
- b) Original Sixteen to One Mine, Inc., Sixteen to One Mine, Sierra County – Consideration of NPDES Permit Renewal (NPDES Permit CA0081809)
- c) Chester Public Utility District, Chester Sewage Treatment Plant, Plumas County – Proposed Cease and Desist Order (NPDES No. CA0077747)

WASTE DISCHARGE REQUIREMENTS (AGENDA ITEM 15)

- a) County of Fresno, Blue Hills Disposal Facility, Fresno County – Revision to Order R5-99-087

RESCISSIONS (AGENDA ITEM 16)

- a) City of Galt, Wastewater Treatment Plant and Reclamation Facility, Sacramento County – Order R5-2015-0123 (NPDES Permit CA0081434) and Time Schedule Order R5-2020-0905
- b) U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Hensley Lake Facilities, Madera County – Waste Discharge Requirements Order No. 90-152
- c) County of Fresno Department of Public Works and Planning, Monte Verdi Estates (CSA 44D) Wastewater Treatment Facility, Fresno County – Waste Discharge Requirements Order No. 92-203

CHANGE OF NAME AND/OR OWNERSHIP (AGENDA ITEM 17)

- a) J.R. Simplot Company, Simplot Growers Solutions, Westside Facility, Merced County – Waste Discharge Requirements Order R5-2014-0106
- b) Alpine Meats, Inc. and Alpine Packing Company, Alpine Meats, San Joaquin County – R5-2002-0225
- c) Soper Company, Spanish Mine, Nevada County – R5-2017-0082
- d) Sterling Caviar LLC, Sterling Caviar LLC, Elverta, Sacramento County – Order R5-2016-0026-01 (NPDES Permit CA0085197)
- e) Clean Energy Systems, Inc., CES Delano BECCS Plant, Kern County – Waste Discharge Requirements Order 96-171
- f) Clean Energy Systems, Inc., CES Mendota BECCS Plant, Fresno County – Waste Discharge Requirements Order 97-135

Motion to approve the uncontested calendar as presented.

Motioned: Member Ramirez
Seconded: Member Brar

Roll Call Vote:

Member Bradford	Yes
Member Yang	Yes
Member Avdis	Yes
Vice Chair Kadara	Yes
Member Brar	Yes
Member Ramirez	Yes
Chair Longley	Yes

Approved by Roll Call Vote of 7-0-0

OTHER BUSINESS

AGENDA ITEM 8 – Status Update on Wastewater Consolidation Efforts under Senate Bill 1215 – Informational Item Only

Scott Armstrong, Sr. Engineering Geologist and Manager of the Waste Discharge to Land Permitting Unit (commonly known as the WDR Unit) in the Rancho Cordova office explained the WDR Program provided regional oversight of the wastewater consolidation process. Dania Jimmerson explained the background of Senate Bill 1215 (SB1215) and identified the State Water Board selected the Central Valley Regional Water Board to implement SB1215 due to the large number of disadvantaged communities in the Central Valley. Dania further explained wastewater consolidation was parallel with the Safe and Affordable Funding for Equity and Resilience Program (SAFER) and their efforts to improve drinking water availability to disadvantaged communities. SB1215 was signed in 2018 and modified the California Water Code to authorize Regional Water Boards to encourage the provision of sewer service to disadvantaged communities. Additionally, the main goals of SB1215 were to reduce nitrate impacts to drinking water (not only to disadvantaged communities but also wastewater treatment facilities in need of upgrades). Dania then turned the presentation over to James Garcia from the Division of Financial Assistance and thanked him for his tremendous help with this new program over the last 18 months.

James Garcia provided a brief overview of the Small Community Grant Program that provided financing for wastewater consolidation projects. Currently, the primary source of available funding was the Clean Water State Revolving Fund, which was a federally funded program administered by the State Water Board. James explained the Clean Water State Revolving Fund had two allocations specifically for small communities: Principle Forgiveness and Small Community Grants. Both sources of funds were administered as grant funds to the applicant. James further explained for purposes of this presentation, the focus would be on grant funding for wastewater consolidation projects. To be eligible for funding, an applicant must be a public agency, a Native American Tribal Organization, or a 501c3 nonprofit organization. All entities must have jurisdiction over disposal of sewage, industrial wastes, or other wastes to be eligible for grant funding. Applicants must also meet three additional criteria. The community population must be less than 20,000, must meet the definition of a disadvantaged community or a severely disadvantaged community, and be within 3 miles of a

wastewater treatment plant. James explained the definition of disadvantaged and severely disadvantaged communities and indicated the main purpose of the grant funding was to benefit private residences with their wastewater infrastructure needs. Eligible projects typically focused on consolidating residential communities, mobile home parks, housing centers, tribal communities, and K through 12 public schools. James reviewed the various grant applications available for disadvantaged communities and severely disadvantaged communities and explained the available funding and how the money could be allocated. Items eligible for the funding include installation of new collection systems, rehabilitation of existing pipelines, sewer laterals, lift stations, treatment plant upgrades, new treatment facilities, storage, and recycled water distribution systems.

Jessica Mullane explained staff initially selected communities that met the two main criteria from SB1215 and the Small Community Grant Fund. She further explained they capitalized Central Valley Water Board efforts by aligning the prioritization strategy with the Nitrate Control Program and focused on counties that contained priority one management zones (Fresno, Kings, Madera, Merced, Stanislaus, and Tulare). In order to manage some obstacles in identifying candidate communities, staff partnered with onsite wastewater treatment system policy implementation staff and met with county Environmental Health Directors on an individual basis to obtain maps of sewer service areas and connections. Once disadvantaged communities were identified, staff-initiated outreach through local government, community, and nonprofit organizations. Jessica reviewed the current candidate community counts with the Board and noted the numbers were based on the 2014 through 2018 American Community Survey. The 2019 American Community Survey data was recently released but staff had not yet updated counts. Spot checks had shown consistency in the classification of communities between the two datasets. Jessica reviewed maps with the Board and indicated staff had elected to first focus on Fresno, Stanislaus, and Tulare counties, as they had the greatest number of disadvantaged and severely disadvantaged communities. Staff planned on meeting with Counties to obtain more granular information on sewer status of the potential candidate communities.

Dania Jimmerson provided a quick overview of what staff had accomplished, lessons learned through a year and a half of program implementation, and current unexpected challenges given the experience of working on these projects. She reviewed a simplified overview of the wastewater consolidation process from the moment staff was first contacted regarding a potential wastewater consolidation project until consolidation was completed. She noted that if consensus could not be reached after the voluntary process had been exhausted, the Regional Water Board could issue an enforcement order for mandatory consolidation. Staff was working towards encouraging voluntary consolidation since the mandatory consolidation would take away valuable and limited resources allocated toward working cooperatively with communities and potential sewer service providers. Dania noted she was fluent in Spanish and English which allowed her to ensure the Spanish Fact Sheet clearly communicated the intent of the legislature and to provide an extra level of comfort to the Spanish demographic audience. Dania reviewed the interested parties staff had been working with. She further explained staff was collaborating intensively with nonprofit organizations such as the Leadership Council for Justice and Accountability, the California Rural Legal Assistance

Corporation, and self-help enterprises to name a few. In addition, staff was working with other regional boards and the State Water Board Office of Chief Counsel. Staff learned they could build trust with the communities by continuing collaboration and coordination with non-profit organizations. Staff also recognized that greater coordination was needed with the State Water Board Divisions (such as the Division of Drinking Water, the Division of Financial Assistance, the Office of Chief Counsel, and other regional boards) to be consistent on the interpretation and implementation of SB1215. Because this is a state-wide program, staff from State Water Board (Groundwater Quality Branch within the Division of Water Quality) was helping develop those connections in a more formal and proactive manner. Some of the challenges staff had encountered during preliminary stages of the consolidation process (from the sewer service providers point of view) was the lack of incentive funding. Specifically, when it came to investing initial resources (such as attending meetings or completing initial applications). Additionally, municipalities, cities, and districts expressed concern and hesitation in moving forward with this project due to the potential legal consequences if they deviate from the City's 10-year General Plan to expand sewer service to communities not previously planned. The same concern applied to changes to the City Ordinance and the Municipal Code. The other challenge was the difficulty going door-to-door to determine median household income and educating households given social distancing rules. Other challenges included the fear of loss of local water control, as well as jurisdictional issues. Additionally, another challenge was the cost of taking facilities with existing compliance issues and aging infrastructure and after consolidation, the concerns related to the impact to sewer rates (meaning was the community going to be able to afford the new sewer rates), and finally hiring and retaining well-trained certified operators was a challenge (specifically since there is no operation and maintenance funding under the Small Community Grant Fund). Dania stated there is still much work ahead as staff continued to reach out to numerous disadvantaged communities and local sewer service providers within in the Central Valley. Dania thanked the Board for their time and attention.

Questions and Comments from Board Members

Chair Longley thanked staff for their work. He further stated his criticisms were not directed toward staff but rather towards the legislation and the way the Bill was written. Chair Longley noted the bill lacked current technology, as there were ways to do things virtually, including operate a wastewater treatment plant. Additionally, Chair Longley stated the issue of size was a huge issue because small communities could not afford operators and often times hired people who were working for another district or working part time. Chair Longley cited an example in Vice Chair Kadara's community, whereby the operator did not file reports on time for the water system and felt something similar would happen for a wastewater system. Chair Longley stated the legislature needed to look at other models of individuals who operate their systems remotely then went on to highlight some other challenges with hiring operators.

Vice Chair Kadara thanked staff for doing an excellent job presenting the issues. Vice Chair Kadara raised the issue of the less than three miles criteria. She asked how many disadvantaged communities in the rural areas were within a three-mile radius?

Additionally, she asked how many disadvantaged communities in the rural areas had voluntary support and participation from other districts that would want to take them in? Vice Chair Kadara felt the legislation was working against the communities it was trying to assist. She further stated to a degree, staff had done a tremendous job considering the available resources to implement this Program. She felt staff showed progress had been made, but there were a lot of communities out there that did not match up with the established criteria. Vice Chair Kadara further questioned how to address the water contamination, the surface water, the cesspools, and septic systems of the communities still impacted. She indicated she had been stating for some time there was a need for roving operators. If there was a District that had faulty operator(s), it could easily pull from a pool of operators to provide assistance and services. Vice Chair Kadara stated that despite those obstacles, she thanked staff for their great work. She further stated hopefully we would find answers to some of these questions that are of significant concern to her as a representative of disadvantaged communities.

EO Pulupa stated the drinking water consolidation authority is separate from this issue and some of the issues raised. However, EO Pulupa stated finding the resources to get one done should also include resources to get the other done. Vice Chair Kadara stated she stated drinking water because sewer and septic affected drinking water and water quality and you don't want to be constructing one without constructing the other. EO Pulupa agreed and added Dania and Jessica had been working exceptionally hard at this program and stretching the limits of it to try and accomplish exactly what Chair Longley and Vice Chair Kadara articulated. Discussion that the three-mile boundary should be extended is a good recognition of what roadblocks were on the horizon, whether it was operations, community acceptability, or funding issues. EO Pulupa stated he gives staff credit for getting this program up and running on a shoestring for the first year and a half. Chair Longley indicated he addressed this issue at the last chairs meeting and received favorable responses from the Chair of State Water Board. Vice Chair Kadara stated the presentation was great and when the opportunity came to address some of the concerns raised, they would be the ideal group to further the progress because they are already on the ground doing the work. Chair Longley reiterated his comments were not directed to staff, but towards the legislature. All Board Members asked for a copy of the presentation.

Comments from Interested Parties

Debbie Webster, EO, Central Valley Clean Water Association, wished to extend her thanks to the team for an excellent presentation, as well as recognize there are real challenges faced both by those communities that may be served and by the communities that would serve them. Ms. Webster stated she appreciated the conversation and recognized this was not an easy step to take. She agreed having financing definitely provided a start and also agreed the mandatory three-mile boundary requirement should be extended. She concluded by indicating her appreciation for this effort.

AGENDA ITEM 9 – Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District, Sacramento Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant EchoWater Project Update – Informational Item Only

Mike Crooks, Director of Operations/EchoWater Project Program Manager with Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District began the presentation. Mr. Crooks gave some background of the EchoWater Project, what brought it about, history behind it, technologies selection in the pilot facility (which were key in establishing the game plan for complying with the new permit) and discussed some challenges along the way. He indicated he would discuss their continued interaction and communication with the Regional Board, the ammonia milestone that was recently accomplished, and the status of their tertiary milestone (which is currently on track). Mr. Crooks explained in December of 2010, they received some significant revisions to their permit for discharging to the Sacramento River. Those revisions brought about some new limits for ammonia, a requirement for tertiary treatment, and enhanced disinfection. On 11 May 2011, the schedule was set for meeting these new limits by 11 May 2021. At the time, the District was operating under an interim average monthly ammonia limit of 39 milligrams per liter. The new limit that was set in 2010 was 2.1 milligrams per liter. This was in addition to the requirement to provide tertiary treatment. The District estimated the cost to come into compliance at \$1.5 to \$2.1 billion. The District decided to move forward with a full-scale pilot facility to explore the various alternative technologies for treatment. The District started with some seed money and some grant funding from the State Water Board. The plant site was designed and constructed from July of 2011 through April of 2012. The pilot allowed the District to basically “right size” the treatment processes in addition to selecting the right processes for the \$100 million (in construction costs alone). To meet the ammonia limit, the District needed a biological nutrient removal process (BNR), a tertiary treatment process (or requirements filtration process), and disinfection. The pilot plant allowed the District to prove they could work with shorter solids retention times (meaning they would not have to add additional secondary clarifiers). It also showed the District could operate with a shorter hydraulic retention time. On the tertiary side, the District worked with the Division of Drinking Water to get approval to use a higher filtration rate than what would be typical (7.5 gallons per minute per square foot instead of 5) which saved a substantial amount of money on the on the filtration footprint. On the disinfection side, the District was able to prove they could operate with a shorter contact time by reducing the size of the contact basin. All of those changes saved the District a substantial amount of money and allowed them to focus on the correct treatment processes.

Mr. Crooks noted prior to this Project, the District was using gaseous chemicals (gas chlorine and gas sulfur dioxide). Over the last 10 years, the District migrated away from those gaseous chemicals to liquid form (sodium hypochlorite and sodium bisulfite).

The District formed the EchoWater Program Management Office (PMO) in February of 2012. The PMO was an integrated team of District and consultant staff and was responsible for all project planning. The PMO developed the scope and budget, established consistent project delivery and design requirements, addressed various

challenges, established the design basis for each project, and assisted with procurement activities.

Some of the challenges faced during the project timeline included record rainstorms during the winter of 2016 when construction of the BNR began and during the deepening and lining of the emergency storage basins, the lack of skilled construction labor, the Oroville Dam break, and COVID 19. Despite these significant challenges, the PMO managed to persevere, pivot where needed, and stay within project timelines. Another major challenge faced was the construction happening in the middle of an existing operating plant. A tremendous amount of effort went into coordinating new construction activities while trying to operate an aging plant and performing repairs and rehabilitation.

After the District started sending all flow through the BNR, that marked the end of an era (turning off the original high purity oxygen activated sludge process). The District wanted to note their continued involvement (coordination and communication) with the Regional Board staff had been extremely helpful to their efforts. The District was very transparent with Board staff and they did everything within their power to help the District continue progress. Board staff addressed the compliance concerns and allowed the District to stagger their milestones for achieving the new limits. Mr. Crooks thanked Board staff for all the collaboration and communication.

Mr. Crooks explained in March of 2019, the nitrifying side stream treatment process came online and started removing ammonia from the side stream return flows and that is where they saw ammonia levels drop. In September of 2020, the first three basins came online, and they started treating partial flow through the BNR while the rest of the flow continued to go through the old system. However, that is where they saw a drop-in ammonia concentration in the effluent. Then, on 19 April 2021, all flow shifted through the BNR and all results since have been non-detect (under detection limit for reporting purposes). Currently, there is a calculated average load of ammonia going to the river of approximately 182 pounds. Prior to the Project, the District was sending more than 30,000 pounds a day to the river.

Comments from Board Members

Chair Longley stated this work was very impressive and District staff was to be commended. Chair Longley further commented he remembered back in December 2010; some District staff did not think this could be accomplished. However, it was evidenced that staff persevered and was successful. Mr. Crooks thanked his staff and mentioned District's Board of Directors had been very supportive through the project and none of this success would have been possible without their support. Mr. Crooks mentioned it's been a multi-faceted team effort and a good success story. Chair Longley stated it was an excellent success story and getting this load out of the Delta was certainly going to help improve water quality there.

Member Ramirez commented really amazing work had been done and she was pleased she had been on the Central Valley Water Board long enough to see this project come to fruition.

Mr. Crooks indicated the District planned on sending a large portion of their effluent to agricultural properties in the Southern part of Sacramento County for irrigation use in lieu of groundwater. Currently, irrigation in the Southern part of Sacramento County was on groundwater wells. Sending a large portion of the District's effluent would allow that groundwater basin to recharge and that would achieve a number of ecological public benefits, including groundwater restoration, ecosystem improvements, water quality improvements, and conjunctive use. Because of this, the District received a grant from the State of California to assist with implementation of this Project. Eco system and water quality improvements included an additional 3,500 acres for Sandhill Crane habitat, an additional 500 acres of vernal pool habitat, and a longer migration window for fall run Chinook Salmon as a result of increased flow.

AGENDA ITEM 10 – Designating Tribal Beneficial Uses: Proposed Process – Informational Item Only

Elizabeth Betancourt introduced herself to the Board and indicated she worked out of the Redding office and was spearheading the designation of TBU in the Central Valley Region. Elizabeth explained the history of the tribal beneficial use process and the path for moving forward. In 2012, tribes came forward to the State Water Board and shared some serious concerns. Elizabeth explained that beneficial uses are those uses designated to water bodies that instruct and shape regulations on how to protect water quality in the Central Valley and around the State. Beneficial uses as defined at that time did not include tribal or cultural considerations and tribes were concerned with the lack of input from them in water quality decisions. In 2013, the State Water Board recognized these concerns and performed a statewide survey of fish consumption practices and solicited Tribal input for TBU development. In 2017, tribal beneficial uses (multiple definitions) were adopted by the State Water Board. 19 tribes and tribal organizations submitted formal letters of support and additional tribes and tribal organizations attended the hearing in support of this effort by the State Water Board. Elizabeth explained she and Assistant Executive Officer Adam Laputz recently visited with the Pit River Tribe in Modoc and Northeastern Shasta County. Elizabeth reviewed the definitions of tribal subsistence, which included riparian plants and resources that tribes used for food sources.

Elizabeth explained basin plans were the foundation for the Board's regulatory action and compliance with those plans help beneficial uses on waterways in the region. Basin plans included those plans for completion of the water quality objectives. The State TBU have been adopted by Regions 6 and 9, as well as Region 1 (whose process differed slightly). Elizabeth further explained the State Water Board had not currently designated TBU on any waterway in the State, which provided an opportunity to do so now. Elizabeth reviewed the steps for TBU designation developed for the Central Valley. Following the process to designate waterways and amendments to basin plans would be public conversation/comments that would be brought to the Board for consideration. One issue was the question of confidentiality. This is of utmost importance because a Tribe's historic activities, cultural spiritual practices, location of ceremonies, locations of basket gathering materials, etc. are culturally protected. This is an issue being addressed as this process moved forward.

Elizabeth explained staff had worked extensively with tribes to understand what this process should look like how it could be most amenable to tribes, while maintaining basin planning requirements. Extensive outreach was performed, and input was gathered to help inform this process. Some challenges associated with the designation of TBU include addressing the mercury water quality objective and not having any instructions from State Board on how to designate waterbodies with tribal beneficial uses. These challenges made it important to be inclusive of other stakeholders and legal requirements. Additionally, there are diverse tribal perspectives. Every tribe (federally recognized and unrecognized) are sovereign nations and recognized as such in California. Along with those different perspectives and recognition levels comes different capacity levels. For example, federally recognized tribes often had access to resources that federally unrecognized tribes did not (environmental staff and people who were able to attend meetings that have experience in the regulatory process). Elizabeth further explained her goal was to create a process that addressed all these challenges to ensure every tribe in the Central Valley Region who was interested in participating was able to do so effectively. The goal was to create an inclusive and expedient process.

Elizabeth stated staff would be focused on high quality waterways (those waterways not listed for mercury) first and reviewed a map of where the initial focus would.

Elizabeth thanked the Executive Team for supporting a request for a discretionary funds contract to collaborate with the University of California Davis (which has an internationally recognized Native American studies program). This approach effectively utilized the limited staffing at the Water Board and respected tribe resources. Elizabeth explained the current proposal seemed to address both the Water Board and the tribal needs. She stated another example to achieve early success was the possible development of Tribal Advisory Committees and reviewed the timeline she expected to receive requests (with evidentiary support) from tribes for designation (November 2021 to January 2022). With over 100 federally recognized and unrecognized tribes in California, it would be proposed to organize TBU requests based on a tax organized by hydrologic unit code (HUC). This would allow staff to reach as many tribes as possible and allow for more geographic representation.

Elizabeth explained the tribal advisory groups would be informal so as to lessen administrative support from the Water Board's perspective. Additionally, the Water Board applied for and had been awarded an AmeriCorps Civic Spark Fellow beginning in September 2021, which would assist with administrative support. Elizabeth further stated the Regional Board would also be applying for the Cal EPA Small Grants Program, in addition to partnering with environmental justice groups to extend capacity.

Elizabeth indicated she expected staff to bring the Board recommendations for TBU designation by October of 2022.

Comments from Board Members

Vice Chair Kadara commented it was a very thorough presentation and this work was overdue. She further stated she has watched this process since 2012 and felt it was

moving in a positive direction. Vice Chair Kadara indicated her support for the Tribal Advisory Committee and felt it was important that there be representation from the tribes, that they should be the ones to speak and lead this process. She stated she was very supportive of the efforts Elizabeth presented.

Member Ramirez stated she appreciated Elizabeth's respect, appreciation, sincerity, and enthusiasm. Member Ramirez felt Elizabeth recognized the history and why these voices needed to be heard and concurred with Vice Chair Kadara's comments.

Member Avdis thanked Elizabeth for her presentation and questioned if anything formal had been planned. Elizabeth confirmed there was nothing formal planned at this point and added that Assistant Executive Officer (AEO) Laputz and herself were in the process of planning some field trips. Member Avdis then indicated his support for the Tribal Advisory Committee and felt it was an excellent idea.

Comments from Interested Parties

Sherri Norris (California Indian Environmental Alliance) indicated she would also read a comment from Sarah Ryan (Big Valley Band of Pomo Indians). Sherri indicated Sarah was the Environmental Director of Big Valley Rancheria and they had been working with her organization and a suite of tribes consistently since 2009. Sherri read the statement from Sarah Ryan that indicated due to time constraints she was unable to provide her comments in person. The letter indicated Sarah was the Deputy Tribal Administrator and Environmental Director for the Big Valley Band of Pomo Indians located on the shores of Clear Lake in Lake County. The letter further stated she was concerned the existing standards did not protect these tribal activities when water quality objectives were first developed for Clear Lake and other water bodies in the Central Valley Region. The letter also stated the existing standards did not factor in exposures that occurred during traditional activities (such as deliberate ingestion of water during ceremonies, long exposures, increased frequencies, and vulnerable populations). People of all ages continue to engage in these activities (which are both life-affirming and also potentially hazardous). Current estimates are that basin plans would not have amendments for years. Because of this concern and because of the oversight of these uses not being protected, Sarah's organization was requesting a phased approach to allowed tribes that are ready to designate water bodies be able to do so now (and for the development of water quality objectives) and be given a special consideration to be funded in order to speed up the process. Further, they anticipated that some tribes may jump into a later phase of engaging with the Regional Board for inclusion of their items. The timing of the process should be framed to protect the new beneficial uses and they urged the Board to acknowledge the multitude of tribes and the variability of their processes. This would lend itself to a more flexible approach of tribes amending the basic plan to protect their uses. Sherri Norris indicated she would email Sarah's statement to Elizabeth.

Sherri Norris indicated she was the Executive Director for California Indian Environmental Alliance, a California tribal organization. She stated their Board is California Tribal and they had 4 staff that was tribal. Sherri indicated this work was started in 2003 working with the group tribe and they were involved with some of the first statewide conversations with tribes about tribal beneficial uses and have given

multiple presentations to the State Water Resources Control Board, including multiple tribes. Additionally, with the California issues workgroup meetings and with EPA meetings and traveling up and down the state. They were the organization that vetted the tribal beneficial uses language (starting first with the tribes in the Region 1 area and then moving throughout the State). Sherri indicated the recommendations were:

- Quickly provide tribes with information on what kind of evidentiary submissions for these new beneficial uses will be acceptable. Some tribes have this information available while others would need to have internal conversations with membership to gather information from elders and cultural use practitioners. With Summer being the best time for tribes to gather that information from community members, staff should look at the timeline and see how that can be done quickly to support the adoption of tribal beneficial use definitions and waterbody objectives for those tribes that are ready. Sherri reiterated there were some tribes that had been working with them for a very long time and are very much ready. Their concern was they didn't want to delay a process that might allow for unnecessary exposure.
- There are some trends showing toxins they would like to address, and Sherri underscored they would love to designate now, especially for things that are being updated in the region.
- That the process allows for conversation among tribes in order to reach consensus. Sherri indicated while she liked the idea of the regional approach, her observation was the Regional Board wanted to find individuals that were enthusiastic, and they had been working with some enthusiastic people for many years and they were ready to start these processes.
- That they be able to participate in this process and organization (working with tribes). Sherri indicated they had a statewide tribal consortium (which included tribes in the Central Valley Region) who were very enthusiastic and willing to work. Most of which indicated they had not yet engaged with the Regional Board.

Emily Moloney (Water Program Coordinator, Buena Vista Rancheria of Me-Wuk Indians) thanked Elizabeth for her presentation. Emily indicated she was speaking on behalf of the Me-Wuk Indians. She explained Me-Wuk ancestral territory was in Sacramento and Amador County and their ancestral territory ranged from the Eastern bounds of the Delta and then East to include the Northern Sierra Nevada mountains. Emily stated this area included many important tributaries and rivers that fed the San Joaquin and Sacramento River Delta (including but not limited to the MacCallum River). Emily stated they were in support of the TBU definitions and supported the Board's overall intent around adopting the definitions into its basin plans and moving forward with designating tribal beneficial uses to water bodies without delay. Emily further indicated although they had not been involved in the initial consultation process to develop the TBU definitions, they wanted to begin the process of gathering information about water bodies. She stated they understood that many tribes had been gathering data, conducting surveys, and documenting water impairments that impacted the environment and people. Emily suggested the Board move quickly to designate

waterbodies where there are tribal entities who are ready to move forward. Additionally, for those tribal entities and individuals just coming into this process, they recommended the Board provide information on the type of evidentiary submissions that would be accepted so they could begin gathering information for designations. Additionally, they recommended that letters submitted from tribal councils about significant waterways be considered as a valid and high level of evidence, as it is a transfer of information between governments. Emily also asked the Board to acknowledge in the process for designating tribal beneficial uses that all water bodies be considered culturally significant to California tribes. Emily indicated they understood the proposed framework for going after high quality waters first but felt it was a priority to work to improve mercury impaired waters so those waters could be designated safely for cultural uses. She stated she also recommended additional resources be provided to fund tribal efforts in completing these work tasks. She concluded by stating they supported the formation of a Tribal Advisory Committee.

Chair Longley thanked her for her comments and asked if there were additional comments from Board Members.

Vice Chair Kadara reiterated the four requests and the importance of ensuring the right people participating and representing the tribal community were at the table. Vice Chair Kadara also acknowledged Chair Longley and Member Bradford for their work on this effort. She thanked Elizabeth for her efforts and felt she did a fabulous job.

AGENDA ITEM 11 – Strategic Planning: Consideration of Proposed Strategic Objectives – Informational Item Only

EO Pulupa began by stating the members of the strategic planning committee had been diligently working on this effort since the inception of the Strategic Plan and today's discussion would be about the objectives of strategic planning. EO Pulupa stated the Regional Board was nearing the end of the strategic planning that began approximately a year and a half ago. EO Pulupa further explained the Committee had performed a lot of research (both externally through engagement with stakeholders and internally through interviews with program managers) and through a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats assessment. There had been an ample amount of discussion about the Board's values, its mission statement, and where it wants to see efforts in the next five to seven years. EO Pulupa indicated the Committee was now at the point of developing strategic planning objectives before finalizing the plan. EO Pulupa reviewed the strategic planning timeline and accomplishments thus far. The plan would then be finalized over the Summer, potentially into Fall 2021. EO Pulupa then reviewed the proposed outline for the Strategic Plan and explained where the strategic objectives fit into the overall hierarchy of the plan. EO Pulupa indicated while the objectives had something concrete in terms of what the position the Board had with respect to those objectives, the text contained some aspirational text. In the future, the actual projects developed under those strategic objectives would be fleshed out on a year over year basis in the annual work plans developed by the Program Managers (consistent with the portfolio management process).

EO Pulupa reviewed the strategic objectives and indicated the Board would have further opportunity to comment in August:

- Adaptive Prioritization. This means looking at threats to water quality, what the Board can do about those threats, and prioritizing energy to manage those threats.
- A commitment to engagement with underserved and underrepresented communities. Although the Board currently had that commitment, it was a commitment the Board could expand upon as it looked forward to prioritizing over the next five to seven years.
- Responding to climate change and drought. The Board received many comments from stakeholders that climate change and drought are their number one issues. EO Pulupa indicated staff would like to develop a climate change dashboard portal (or something along those lines) to communicate what the Regional Board was doing on a day-to-day basis to address the threat posed by climate change, as well as communicate to the public the urgency of this issue. Each of the 18 different programs were currently addressing this issue.
- Internal administrative process improvements. EO Pulupa explained he wanted to look at administrative and internal process improvements to achieve greater efficiencies and engagement with employees. Additionally, he wanted to focus on achieving greater equity in program design to serve the communities of the State of California.

Rebecca Asami, Engineering Geologist, Fresno office, discussed adaptive prioritization (evaluating and prioritizing resources based on threats to water quality) and what the Board was able to do about those threats. Rebecca explained for this objective, some of the focus may be on permit requirements, enforcement actions, or planning efforts. As an example, Rebecca explained one of the biggest threats to drinking water in the Central Valley is nitrate pollution and reviewed a map where nitrate pollution was above the drinking water standard of 10 milligrams per liter. Rebecca further explained the Strategic Planning Committee received feedback via surveys in the workshop this was one subject area that was important to the public. Feedback included interest in having Board staff review the cost of compliance, clarify the permitting process, and analyze ways to be more consistent in enforcement. Rebecca further explained adaptive prioritization may require the Board to focus resources on the most serious threats to water quality and may also require the streamlining of processes to ensure transparency in decision making. Rebecca reviewed a slide that highlighted examples of potential actions that could assist with adaptive prioritization.

Lynn Coster reviewed the need for more meaningful and focused engagement with underserved and underrepresented communities to further the water quality mission and increase the ability of the disadvantaged to participate. Lynn indicated the conceptual framework for addressing increased engagement with the underserved and underrepresented included acknowledgment that these communities often have limited resources or barriers to participate in Board processes. Lynn further indicated the need

for increased participation to enable the public to participate as peers regardless of economic or social differences, strategic outreach with clearly articulated goals, coordination among overlapping programs, follow-up on commitments, and the provision of a feedback loop to measure effectiveness of the engagement efforts. Lynn then reviewed the potential actions the Board could take to achieve this objective.

Chris Flower, Engineering Geologist, Rancho Cordova office, talked briefly about climate change and noted survey stakeholders identified climate change as the most significant water quality issue facing the Central Valley. Chris reviewed the actions Board staff and programs were currently taking to address climate change. Chris noted in the December 2017 Board meeting, the Central Valley Water Board adopted a climate change work plan that contained provisions to be reviewed (at least) every five years and that the Regional Board was getting close to that five-year time frame. Even though the majority of Program Managers and Programs are taking steps to mitigate climate change, not all those steps were being clearly communicated. The Strategic Planning Committee was reviewing ways to increase climate change mitigation and communication via a dashboard or portal.

Clint Snyder, AEO, Redding Office reiterated in order to effectively address many of the goals, Board staff would need to continue to look for and implement internal process improvements. These internal process improvements would help achieve higher employee engagement and satisfaction, along with helping the Board reach racial equity goals. Clint further stated it was important to remember Region 5 was a unique region with nearly 300 employees and 18 different programs across three different offices. Clint explained streamlining processes had been important to the Board for some time and continued to be important. Clint discussed the Board's portfolio management process and how it served as the framework, not only for current efficiencies and consistency measures, but also as that framework that continued to build upon additional efficiencies and inconsistencies. Clint noted that many of the Board's programs, administrative functions, or regulatory considerations were getting much more complex as time progressed, and those complexities didn't always keep pace with existing resources or even projected resources. This inevitably puts continued pressure on Program staff and administrative staff region wide. Clint indicated another pressing question was how do we transition to a hybrid workforce model as it will pose a number of challenges, not just to the Central Valley Water Board, but many agencies statewide.

Christine Croyle, Staff Services Manager I, Rancho Cordova office, reviewed examples of the potential process improvements. Christine indicated one was the use of employee engagement surveys to foster an environment for staff input and feedback, annual revision of program manuals to streamline workflow and promote regionwide consistency, training to support the incorporation racial equity principles, and additional feedback loops put into practice throughout the organization. Additionally, possible updates to the Internet and Intranet pages to ensure information was current and readily available to staff and stakeholders. Christine further stated examples to assist with process improvements included updated technology and tools to support hybrid work systems, staff and management cross training and mentorship, and setting up the system for cross collaboration across all units. Christine further highlighted the

importance of adding administrative resources because it was crucial to the success of making process improvements within the Region.

Comments from Board Members

Member Ramirez asked if the issue of administrative support would be looked at with more detail or if that was something that would be built in over time. EO Pulupa explained if this was articulated as a strategic objective, the Executive Team would review position allocations when the legislature was working on water quality projects that it was going to put up on the Regional Board. EO Pulupa indicated that while Engineers, Scientists, and Geologists were necessary to the functioning of the Board, administrative support to help them get their job done was equally as important. EO Pulupa further explained the importance of having those discussions with the State Water Board because as water quality issues become more complicated, administrative tasks and knowledge had become more complicated. AEO Snyder added often times administrative professionals are thought of performing document production and answering phones. However, in today's climate, that would be the bare minimum. AEO Snyder gave the example of ADA remediation and it being a very complex task requiring a certain degree of skill, particularly when you're reformatting permitting documents that could be 200 pages. Not to mention grant management and procurement (as examples), those tasks required a high degree of skill and knowledge, in addition to quasi legal knowledge. Member Ramirez commented she understood the importance of having administrative professionals, as well as keeping staff engaged.

Member Bradford asked if there was any mirroring of the Regional Board's Strategic Plan with the State Water Board's. EO Pulupa indicated Cal EPA embarked on a Strategic Plan. However, it was relatively closed, and he was still trying to review it. The State Water Board had not yet developed a formalized plan.

EO Pulupa explained Climate Change was an area that would be referenced as part of the resiliency portfolio. Climate Change was something that the Board had committed to and it was raised frequently within discussions of both Climate Change and Adaptive Prioritization. Chair Longley commented he was happy to see racial equity included as a priority area and indicated the State Water Board would be having a work session on racial equity on 7 July 2021 and a Resolution would be adopted in August 2021. Chair Longley suggested finding the briefing notes on their website and checking if there was anything the Regional Board should be doing in the Strategic Plan with regard to racial equity. EO Pulupa clarified those notes had not been made public but were close.

Member Bradford said kudos to the Committee on staying on top of this Strategic Plan and blazing a trail the other Boards and maybe the State Water Board would eventually follow. He further commented it has been a consistent effort that generated a lot of public input and overall the level of granularity in the Strategic Plan was admirable.

Vice Chair Kadara indicated she was pleased with the way the Strategic Plan came together and thanked staff, the community, Chair Longley, and Member Bradford for their efforts. She further commented one of the areas she has always been passionate about was community engagement and she was glad to provide resources to

underserved communities to be engaged in this effort. Vice Chair Kadara asked if additional administrative resources funding was available, would those resources be going to address some of these issues as far as making sure we have community engagement involved. EO Pulupa indicated when he goes to State Water Board with a developed Strategic Plan, it makes the ask for addition resources all that more critical. EO Pulupa further explained one of the components of the overall strategic objectives was directing funds to capacity building and these people who are diligently working within their communities be educated about how to interact and ask for the things that they so desperately need to the State Water Board and advocate for their communities.

AEO Snyder mentioned one of the things Executive Staff would be doing was ensuring the connectivity between the Strategic Plan and its implementation by Program Managers as they developed their annual programmatic work plans.

Chair Longley commented staff had done a great job and the Regional Board had some remarkable staff and despite the pandemic, staff had been extremely busy.

Vice Chair Kadara closed with commenting on the wonderful work done by AEO Snyder on the Food Safety Committee. Chair Longley and Member Ramirez concurred.

EO Pulupa clarified the 12/13 August Board Meeting would be an all virtual meeting and added if Member Yang wished to come to the office he could.

Meeting Adjourned

The Board meeting adjourned at 3:37 P.M. to the 12/13 August 2021 All Virtual Zoom Board Meeting.