



250.20

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
Gavin Newsom, Governor

MINUTES

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 4, 2020
SAN JOAQUIN RIVER CONSERVANCY

Board Meeting Location:

Fresno Metropolitan Flood Control District
5469 E. Olive Ave., Fresno CA 93727

and

California Natural Resources Agency
1416 Ninth Street, Ste. 1311
Sacramento, CA 95814

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GOVERNING BOARD

Mike Karbassi, Chairperson
Councilmember, City of Fresno

Steve Brandau, Vice-Chairperson
Supervisor
Fresno County Board of Supervisors

Brett Frazier, Supervisor
Madera County Board of Supervisors

Santos Garcia, Councilmember
City of Madera

Kacey Auston, Director, Fresno
Metropolitan Flood Control District

Carl Janzen, Director
Madera Irrigation District

Julie Vance, Regional Manager
Department of Fish and Wildlife

Kent Gresham, Sector Superintendent
Department of Parks & Recreation

John Donnelly, Executive Director
Wildlife Conservation Board

Bryan Cash, Assistant Secretary
Natural Resources Agency

Jennifer Lucchesi, Executive Officer
State Lands Commission

Karen Finn, Program Budget Manager
Department of Finance

Bryn Forhan
Paul Gibson
Vacant
Citizen Representatives

John M. Shelton
Executive Officer

MEETING AGENDA

CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mr. Karbassi called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. and
Mr. Garcia led the pledge of allegiance.

A. ROLL CALL

Name	Present	Telecon- ference	Absent	Late
Mr. Karbassi	X			
Mr. Brandau			X	
Mr. Frazier	X			
Mr. Garcia	X			
Ms. Auston	X			
Mr. Janzen	X			
Mr. Hatler	X			
Mr. Gresham	X			
Mr. Donnelly	X			
Mr. Cash			X	
Mr. Conner	X			
Ms. Finn			X	
Ms. Forhan	X			
Mr. Gibson	x			

Ms. Gavina confirmed a quorum was present.

Legal Counsel Present: David Pai, Deputy Attorney General

Staff Present: John Shelton, Executive Officer
Rebecca Raus, Associate Governmental Program Analyst
Vanessa Gavina, Staff Services Analyst
Heidi West, Program Manager, San Joaquin River Conservancy
Projects, Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB)

B. ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

Items identified after preparation of the agenda for which there is a need to take immediate action. Two-thirds vote required for consideration. (Gov. Code §54954.2(b)(2))

There were no additions to the Agenda.

C. POTENTIAL CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Any Board member who has a potential conflict of interest may identify the item and recuse themselves from discussion and voting on the matter. (FPPC §97105)

There were no potential conflicts of interest.

D. PUBLIC COMMENT & BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR

Ten minutes of the meeting are reserved for members of the public who wish to address the Conservancy Board on items of interest that are not on the agenda and are within the subject matter jurisdiction of the Conservancy. Speakers shall be limited to three minutes. The Board is prohibited by law from taking any action on matters discussed that are not on the agenda; no adverse conclusions should be drawn if the Board does not respond to the public comment at this time.

There were no public comments.

E. CONSENT CALENDAR

All items listed below will be approved in one motion unless removed from the Consent Calendar for discussion:

E-1 ACTION ITEM: Approve Minutes of January 8, 2020

E-2 ACTION ITEM: Authorize Agreements for Fire Prevention/Weed Abatement on Specific Conservancy Properties

Staff Recommendation: It is recommended the Board authorize fire prevention, weed abatement and fuel-load reduction agreements for various Conservancy properties as specified below.

Mr. Frazier moved to approve the Consent Calendar; the motion was seconded by Ms. Forhan. The motion passed as follows:

Roll Call Vote:

Name	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
Mr. Karbassi	X		
Mr. Frazier	X		
Mr. Garcia	X		
Ms. Auston			X
Mr. Janzen	X		
Mr. Hatler	X		
Mr. Gresham	X		
Mr. Donnelly	X		
Mr. Connor	X		
Ms. Forhan	X		
Mr. Gibson	X		

F. REGULAR SESSION ITEMS

There are no regular session items.

G. ADMINISTRATIVE AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

Information Items. No action of the Board is recommended.

G-1 Organizations' Reports: If time allows, the following oral reports will be provided for informational purposes only and may be accompanied by written reports in the Board packet.

G-1a. San Joaquin River Parkway and Conservation Trust

Ms. Sarah Parks, Development Director of the San Joaquin River Parkway and Conservation Trust (Parkway Trust), shared that they are in the midst of their Sycamore Island Field Program with the Madera Unified School District. They are working with sixth graders in the District by providing three program experiences. This past fall, they visited students in their classrooms; and during the winter, they all came to the River Center and visited Sycamore Island. One of the highlights of the program is canoeing. For many of these students, it was their first time being in a boat. She mentioned there were two teenage students that were terrified to be out on the water, but with a little encouragement, they overcame their fear, learned about teamwork, and joined the rest of their peers. She stated how this exemplified the importance of Sycamore Island for local children. She also mentioned that Thursday, March 12th at 5:30 pm would be the Parties for the Parkway kickoff and encouraged everyone to attend. It will be held in the Clovis Veteran's District Building in Old town Clovis.

G-1b. River Tree Volunteers.

Mr. Richard Sloan, with River Tree Volunteers, spoke about previous and upcoming activities. During the weekend, they plan to take down all the fish netting at the Conservancy's Liddell property. Adjacent to surrounding ponds, the property has netting covering certain areas and fencing around the brims with poles holding it up. The Perez family, who runs Bluff Pointe

Golf Course and Learning Center, agreed to take the some of the netting and poles to help prevent golf balls from going into the river, while Caglia Recycling will be able to take some of the metal and barbed wire. He invited people to come out Sunday to remove some of the netting. Also, he mentioned that in the same area, mosquito abatement staff went out to spray and ran into tarps and marijuana. They notified Mr. Perez that homeless people were inhabiting amongst the bushes. Mr. Perez called the police, who took care of the situation. Furthermore, Mr. Sloan mentioned that they are still hosting river trips every Wednesday and invited all in attendance to come out and canoe/kayak along the river.

G-2 Deputy Attorney General Report

Mr. Pai, on behalf of Ms. Deborah Halberstadt, stated there is nothing to report out of open session.

G-3 Executive Officer Report

Mr. Shelton mentioned there was an erosion at our Liddell property. A contractor was draining a landowner's pool and released some of the water, creating a crevice along the bluff. The landowner notified Conservancy staff and stated he would have it remediated. Mr. Shelton mentioned that a possible solution would be to have someone to dump dirt in. Although it looks unsightly, it is only bad for the landowner's yard and not Conservancy land because there is nothing more than open area down below. While investigating the erosion, staff came across the netting and considered getting rid of it. He spoke to Mr. Sloan, and the River Tree group stepped in and did one removal to determine difficulty, and then scheduled the next removal event.

Recently, an incident took place at the Milburn overlook, which overlooks the Milburn pond. There was a shooting, which resulted in a fatality. In response to this, neighbors in the area suggested that we do socials in the overlook areas to get more people and families out there and to help with monitoring the area. Although this is City property and not part of the Parkway, he stated he would be there. He extended the invitation to everyone saying it would be this Friday, March 16th at 6:30 p.m. There are other overlooks, such as Polk Avenue, Riverside Golf Course, and a few other areas, but he doesn't know if there will be socials at all of these places. If they do occur, it is because neighbors are coming together to host them. Potentially, something similar could occur in the Friant Cove area because it is comparable to the other overlooks. Friant Cove gets a lot of public use, so there is plenty of monitoring out there.

Conservancy staff attended a salmon release, which included a class that had participated in the Department of Fish and Wildlife's Salmonids in the Classroom educational program. The class is part of the North Fork TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) program. Specifically, it is a Native American TANF that covers a geographically large area. The students came out and released several young salmon. Unfortunately, the salmon had difficulty making it from North Folk down to the river, so it wasn't entirely successful for the fingerlings. Nonetheless, students still learned a lot. This was held at the Many Lightening's Native American Plant Garden down at Jensen River Ranch and hosted by Ms. Laura Wass, who manages the native plant area.

Mr. Shelton mentioned that he touched base with someone he worked with in the past who is the California Coordinator for American White Waters. This is an organization of canoers and kayakers that are dedicated to lobbying to keep rivers open for boat access. He invited her to come down to the San Joaquin River, as she is already doing some work up above Millerton Lake at the San Joaquin River Gorge Recreation Area. He would like to get together with some of the groups who have fairly large followings in the recreation field to network and let them know about the Conservancy's operations and upcoming events.

The Parkway Trust's Owl Hollow is going to have a pier soon, and there will be put-ins and take-outs for canoes. If there is anyone interested in a kayak/canoe trip, Mr. Sloan has offered, and staff from the Parkway Trust has offered in the past, so there are always plenty of opportunities

G-4 Board Members' Reports and Comments

Mr. Janzen, in reference to the previous minutes, inquired if the Conservancy had gotten the contract done with Sycamore Island.

Mr. Shelton answered that Sycamore Island is currently open and operating. There was a running event just before the public opening, so there was a temporary agreement in place for that, until we finalized the rest of the agreement. It is completed and operating fully. There is plenty of public use for people that are riding and running through the area.

Mr. Janzen commented that water in the river could be at its peak, and soon, but there may be less if we do not get any more rain.

Mr. Frazier stated that when he and Mr. Shelton went down south for mediation, they were able to meet with the Director of the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy in Calabasas. When they arrived, they were filming an episode of SWAT, the TV series, in the area. They inquired where his funding comes from, and the Director responded that they get 3.5 million dollars in film revenue. He mentioned that it was interesting to see the place. They charge fourteen dollars for Malibu citizens wanting to walk their dog. They had \$2.5 million from parking revenue and \$3.5 million from film revenue. He shared that it was an eye-opening thing, and that we will have to figure out how to sell our areas.

Mr. Shelton revealed that the Director mentioned that they have traffic cameras, which brings them plenty of revenue. They have them around their parks, and when a violation occurs, they send the violations through.

On inquiry from Mr. Garcia, Mr. Karbassi reported that the Fresno Bee article had some misinformation regarding the Milburn Pond Overlook gate. He clarified that the tragic shooting took place at approximately 2:30 a.m. on President's Day. The family was mourning on that site, and they closed the gate to vehicular access for two reasons: 1) to allow the family to mourn, 2) They were making security upgrades to the area with crews out there installing new lights and trimming vegetation, and did not want it to create problems for anyone else. It was made very clear that it was absolutely temporary. Currently, the gate has been open for approximately ten days now. Mr. Karbassi stated that overlook is not just for the

neighborhood, but it is an access point for the entire city. There were some that wanted to close it, but he was adamant about keeping it open. He is very encouraged by the neighbors who want to take back their park for the entire community because it is an asset for all of Fresno. In his District, there are many great access points to the River, such as Polk Ave. Camp Pashayan is another spot that will hopefully open up in the future. He reiterated that Milburn Overlook is open, and people are using it. On Friday, March 6, the Police Captain will be out there, and encouraged citizens from Fresno, Madera, and everyone else to come out there and show their support.

Mr. Garcia stated that they have a small office nearby, and they'll occasionally visit for peace of mind. He looks forward to attending an overlook social sometime.

Mr. Karbassi thanked River Tree Volunteers for taking him out along the river. They removed garbage and waste from several homeless encampments. He mentioned that he toured the river bottom with his team. He revealed that he grew up two miles from the river in Northwest Fresno, and he had no idea there was a river because there wasn't the necessary access at that time. He is encouraged and advocates further access so that people all over Fresno will be able to enjoy the second largest river in the state. He said he is looking forward to working with all of us and is looking forward to being our chairman.

H. CLOSED SESSION

Before convening in closed session, members of the public will be provided the opportunity to comment on Executive Session agenda items.

Ms. Sharon Weaver, Executive Director of the San Joaquin River Parkway and Conservation Trust, queried if there is any chance that the public could have a report at the next Board meeting regarding the Ad hoc committee and the settlement conference. She thinks it would be beneficial for the public to be informed.

Mr. Richard Sloan of River Tree Volunteers commented that he is a part of the San Joaquin River Access Corporation (Access Corporation), and that Access Corporation is averse to having any sensitive information released.

H-1 Government Code Section 54956.8

Consultation with real property negotiators concerning terms of negotiations, including price and terms of payment.

Property: Slenders
Madera County (APNs 048-280-009 and
048-280-011)

Negotiating Parties: Andrew John and Arlete Slenders

Agency Negotiators: John M. Shelton, San Joaquin River Conservancy
Daniel Vasquez, Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB)

H-2 CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL—EXISTING LITIGATION

Subdivision (a) of Government Code Section 54956.9.

San Joaquin River Access Corporation v. San Joaquin River Conservancy and specified Board members, Superior Court of California, County of Fresno Case #19CECG01138

Mr. Shelton reported out of close session that with regard to Item H-1, the Board provided staff with direction regarding negotiating with the landowner.

With regard to Item H-2, Mr. Pai reported that the Board was informed and discussed the conceptual framework for a potential settlement with the San Joaquin River Access Corporation. Staff and counsel will engage in further negotiations with the anticipation of a contingent settlement agreement and will be presented to the Board at the next meeting for approval.

I. NOTICE OF ADVISORY AND BOARD COMMITTEE MEETINGS, OTHER PUBLIC MEETINGS RELATED TO CONSERVANCY MATTERS

None.

J. NEXT BOARD MEETING DATE

The next Board meeting is scheduled for 10:00 a.m. Wednesday, May 6, 2020, location to be determined.

K. ADJOURN

Board meeting notices, agendas, staff reports, and approved minutes are posted on the Conservancy's website, www.sjrc.ca.gov. For further information or if you need reasonable accommodation due to a disability, please contact the Conservancy at (559) 253-7324.

Mr. Karbassi adjourned the meeting at 11:47 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

DocuSigned by:

John M. Shelton

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John M. Shelton

Executive Officer- San Joaquin River Conservancy