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Paul Gibson
Vacant
Vacant
Vacant
Citizen Representatives

John M. Shelton, *Executive Officer*

250.20

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
Gavin Newsom, Governor

MINUTES

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 3, 2022
SAN JOAQUIN RIVER CONSERVANCY

Board Meeting Location:
Madera County Government Center
200 W. Fourth Street, Madera, CA 93637
and via Webex

MEETING AGENDA

CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Ms. Forhan called the meeting to order at 9:31 a.m. and led the pledge of allegiance.

A. CLOSED SESSION

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

A-1 Government Code Section 11126 (a) (1)

Public Employee Performance Evaluation
Title: Executive Officer

ROLL CALL

Name	Present	Telecon- ference	Absent	Late
Ms. Forhan	X			
Mr. Frazier	X			
Mr. Karbassi				9:35
Mr. Brandau	X			
Mr. Garcia				10:08
Mr. Janzen	X			
Mr. Hatler	X			
Mr. Gresham	X			
Mr. Donnelly		X		
Ms. Scharffer		X		
Ms. Lucchesi			X	
Mr. Almy		X		
Mr. Gibson				9:49

PUBLIC COMMENT: No public comments were received.

Upon termination of the closed session, Ms. Jackie Vu, Deputy Attorney General for the San Joaquin River Conservancy, indicated that she had nothing to report out.

B. ROLL CALL

Name	Present	Telecon- ference	Absent	Late
Ms. Forhan	X			
Mr. Frazier	X			
Mr. Karbassi	X			
Mr. Brandau	X			
Mr. Garcia				10:08
Mr. Janzen	X			
Mr. Hatler	X			
Mr. Gresham	X			
Mr. Donnelly	X			
Ms. Scharffer	X			
Ms. Lucchesi			X	
Mr. Almy	X			
Mr. Gibson	X			

Ms. Gavina confirmed a quorum was present.

Legal Counsel Present: Jackie Vu, Deputy Attorney General

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

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)

None.

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.

None.

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 May 4, 2022

Ms. Forhan inquired if there were any comments or changes that Board members would like to make. With none given, she asked for a motion to approve the item.

Mr. Gibson moved to approve the minutes from the Consent Calendar; the motion was seconded by Mr. Frazier. The motion passed as follows:

Roll Call Vote:

Name	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
Ms. Forhan			X
Mr. Frazier	X		
Mr. Karbassi	X		
Mr. Brandau	X		
Mr. Janzen			X
Mr. Hatler			X
Mr. Gresham	X		
Mr. Donnelly			X
Ms. Scharffer	X		
Mr. Almy			X
Mr. Gibson	X		

F.

REGULAR SESSION ITEMS

F-1 INFORMATION ITEM: Status and Progress Report on River West Fresno, Eaton Trail Extension Project.

Mr. Shelton provided a brief background on the project. He noted that in September 2021, the Board authorized bonds, not to exceed \$3,104,831, to the City of Fresno to and complete final engineering designs and secure permits for the River West Fresno Eaton Trail Extension Project. On November 18, 2021, the Wildlife Conservation Board approved the project and a grant agreement with the City of Fresno. A notice to proceed for the grant agreement was issued on January 7, 2022.

Mr. Jesus Avita, Deputy Engineer and Program Manager for the City of Fresno, informed the Board that the City of Fresno released a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for the River West Fresno, Eaton Trail Extension Project, on April 19. The Statement of Qualifications were due on Friday, May 27 at 5:00 p.m. The City of Fresno received Statement of Qualifications from three engineering firms, that have been interviewed. The City of Fresno is currently in negotiations with one of the local firms. The City of Fresno is reviewing the scope and fee proposal, with the intent to award the Eaton Trail Design Contract in the month of September.

Mr. Avita spoke about a couple of milestones that they have coming up from now until the end of the year. The consultant contract will be taken to the City Council on September 15, 2022. Shortly after, they will be issuing the notice to proceed for the consultant to begin working on the initial concept design. The intent is to stay on schedule with having the trail concept design submittal completed and presented to the City in December 2022 or January 2023. Once that is done, they plan on working with their consultants on establishing a community outreach program. They are planning two outreach meetings, with one held shortly after the concept design is submitted to them for review. The second outreach meeting would be anticipated later in 2023 during the 60 percent design. Depending on the feedback that City staff get from the community, such as concerns or changes, there may be the need for more community outreach meetings. However, they believe two meetings should be sufficient to keep the public informed. Mr. Avita summarized that they are on schedule to continue and deliver the design by the end of 2023. Once the permitting process begins, there might be some impact, but they would work their best to resolve those issues. He asked if there were any questions from Board members.

On inquiry from Mr. Brandau, Mr. Avita reported that City staff can provide Councilmember Karbassi's office with updates on this project.

On inquiry from Mr. Donnelly, Mr. Avita reported that City staff should have a final design completed by December 2023.

Ms. Forhan asked if there was any chance, in terms of looking at the schedule, to be able to shave off any time.

Mr. Avita stated that this is something staff is constantly looking at. They consider processes where they can shorten up some of the timeframe. However, he noted that there is some challenge with the access through Spano Park. The overall trail concept design is very basic but modifying the access from Palm and Nees through Spano Park into what would be the trail access, that is not an easy design. They would have to contend with soil conditions there and cutting into the slope. That would be the most challenging part of the engineering design and coming up with a retaining wall design that can be maintained long-term and is low cost. He mentioned that staff will continue to look for ways to expedite the timeline. Mr. Avita noted that the schedule did include contingency, and that it is reflected in the timing.

Mr. Shelton added that in the Conservancy's and City's initial discussions, besides being stringent with timing, another thing that would be difficult would be permitting. That is one of the gray areas. City staff can get their side done, but then it is a matter of getting the permits back and generated through the system. That is an area that will potentially shave off time, but it will not necessarily be because the City is expediting a certain area, but more so, the assistance of the other groups they are working with.

Mr. Hatler inquired if it would be a 30-60 percent design, so they can identify potential problems before they go to the final design?

Mr. Avita stated that is the intent. City staff are doing a 30, 60, 90, and 100 percent design. The 30 percent concept design is typically where they would explore and weed out extreme challenges. Then, staff would go into the 60 percent design, which would be a

heavy push because that is where they are going into the details of the overall design. From 30 to 60 percent design, there is some resolution to finding engineering problems and solutions. In a 60-90 percent design, they would refine those problems. At the 90-100 percent stage, it would be permitting. While they may internally be able to expedite the design as far as getting it to construction, the critical path there is getting all of the City's permits in line.

Mr. Hatler asked if there were timelines for the 30, 60, and 90 percent designs?

Mr. Avita confirmed that there were. He did not include it in the presentation, but he has it reflected on the grant application. He stated that those timelines have not changed.

Mr. Hatler requested that City staff provide the Board with updates as the process moves forward, in addition to any regular updates, as these are critical timelines.

Ms. Forhan added that as Board meetings continue, they would like to have updates through next year going through the process from City Staff. She queried if there were any public comments regarding this item, and with none given, she proceeded to the next item.

F-2 ACTION ITEM: ~~Approve Proposition 68 Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access for All Grant Program Guidelines.~~

F-3 ACTION ITEM: ~~Authorize the Executive Officer to enter into a Contract that will Provide Portable Toilets and Handwashing Stations within the San Joaquin River Parkway.~~

F-4 ACTION ITEM: Adopt the State Park's Signage Handbook to be used as Guidelines for the San Joaquin River Parkway Signage.

Staff Recommendation: It is recommended the Board adopt the State Park's Signage Handbook to be used as guidelines for the San Joaquin River Parkway Signage. The Sign Handbook will help the Conservancy with standards for design and application for signage.

Mr. Shelton stated that these guidelines give us the ability to use State Park's Handbook for consistent signage. This handbook provides standards for design and application for signage to be used in the State Parks system. He added that it will give us ideas on types of signage and measurements. Mr. Shelton stated there is the ability to have certain signage that is specific to our area, as long as it is in the same format with State Parks. The handbook does have standard designs and applications. It is typically utilized for the State Parks' system, but other agencies use it, as well. Staff tried to track down the signage that other state conservancies use, since only a few use State Parks, but no responses have been received yet. Mr. Shelton mentioned that while on vacation, he visited Harmony Headlines, which is a small state park along the coast, and he toured the area and observed signage very similar to the Conservancy's.

He noted that in the Department of Parks and Recreation's Sign Handbook, there are eight sign categories. These include recreation symbols, hazard signs, land management signs, interpretive signs, park management signs, regulatory signs, warning signs, and

construction signs. He gave a brief overview of the different types of signs that would be pertinent to the Parkway and their meanings.

There is some definite need for recreational symbols around the parkway, as it will provide distinction between facilities and activities.

The hazard signs are used to identify hazardous situations for the protection of the park visitors. Currently, the Conservancy has some in place at Ball Ranch, as we do have some cliffs that are unstable, and there are other areas that should be marked.

Land management signs are typically signs that indicate an area is closed. They protect the natural features of the park and park visitors.

Interpretive signs are used to identify natural features within the park system, such as unusual animal, plants, and other natural phenomena. Mr. Shelton noted that these could be used for properties that have archeological areas or areas where ticks are present. One of the things this brings up is when the Conservancy does a grant, there are almost always requirements in the grant agreement for signage to recognize the Wildlife Conservation Board, the Conservancy, and the funding source/proposition that was there. Unfortunately, when the grant is over, the sign is still often up, and several are very difficult to read at this point, so it would be nice to replace some of that with new signage.

Park management signs are used to control facilities and features of the parks.

Regulatory signs are used to inform motorist of regulation which apply at definite locations, specific times, or where the regulations are not self-evident. This includes speeding, stopping, or parking of vehicles. He stated that these could be used in areas with loading zones or for a canoe launch, like at the Lanes property.

Warning signs should be held to a minimum and should be consistent with requirements for safety. Some examples of these types of signs are slow, horse crossing, pedestrian crossing, and bike crossing.

Lastly, construction signs are used in and near construction and maintenance sites. These sites may also include regulatory, warning, and guide signs. Mr. Shelton mentioned that construction signs will be important, especially as construction on River West occurs. These signs will also be needed at Ball Ranch and Ledger Island once there is the ability to do work on the bridge.

Mr. Shelton informed the Board that when a state agency purchases signs, aluminum signs must be purchased from the California Prison Industries (CALPIA). Sometimes, the process can be fast, and other times, it can be time consuming; so it is a fairly prescribed process. For signs that are made of plastic/porcelain, staff will be able to purchase these through an outside vendor. That has been done in the past, and we are hopeful to continue this process. Mr. Shelton asked if there were any questions.

Mr. Gibson commented that there is a lot of signage that now gives people the capability to scan QR codes and get more information. He asked Mr. Gresham if that was what they are doing at State Parks.

Mr. Gresham answered so far, he has only seen it utilized in a museum type setting for State Parks, but he can certainly see it being used for trail markers.

Mr. Shelton stated that another area he visited while on vacation was the Land Conservancy of San Luis Obispo, which is a privately run conservancy. Along the Bob Jones trail, the conservancy had QR codes which were labeled Public Information Trails (PIT). He mentioned that it was nice to see there was a program in place for that.

Ms. Forhan asked if there was a way to expedite the process of getting signs, once it was determined what was needed.

Mr. Shelton answered that there are some older signs still stored in the Conservancy's office, such as the San Joaquin River Restoration Program's signs for fluctuating water levels that we used when doing leases for the fisheries. Regarding new signs, that has been a priority, and staff should be able to start purchasing signs. He believes the first signs that will be purchased will probably be through an outside vendor. Staff will look into CALPIA to see if there is anything we can order from them. Again, there might be some unpredictability in regard to the timeframe. He noted that with some agencies that have ordered from CALPIA, the turnaround was within a few weeks; and there have been other agencies that have waited up to six months or more, so it just depends. He believes plastics signs would be the most effective and cost efficient right now for the Conservancy, rather than aluminum. There are a few of those, along the Parkway, that need to be updated. Staff will also start looking into interpretive signage at a later time. The first priority is to be able to get warning signs to inform the public of certain areas with unstable banks or other hazardous conditions.

Mr. Frazier queried if CALPIA could not furnish aluminum signs by a certain date, if it could be contracted out?

Mr. Shelton replied that the Conservancy would have to get a waiver for approval to go with another vendor, but we would most likely have to go through CALPIA for the aluminum signs.

Mr. Gresham added that CALPIA is slow to give waivers. It is a lengthy process.

Mr. Donnelly asked whether the signage, where there is a lot of wording displayed (such as regulation signs), be bilingual or use any other languages on the signs. He would recommend it.

Upon inquiry from Mr. Donnelly, Mr. Shelton answered that it is our intent to have a couple of different languages on the signs, especially for the warning and regulatory signs, and potentially interpretive signs. He stated that is why it would be beneficial to have the QR codes because you can put a lot of information onto a webpage rather than on a sign. This could be dangerous because people could just walk by and disregard it.

Mr. Garcia agreed stating that signage with the ability for QR codes would be very helpful in assisting the Conservancy with providing the public multiple languages of text to access. He suggested for staff to check in with the Elections Department and to look at their most necessary languages that they list and make accessible to the public.

Mr. Shelton added that it would be great to get some wordage that is both from some of the Yokut and Mono languages. That could be something to look into with one of our subgrantees, the Advocates for Indigenous California Language Survival (AICLS).

Mr. Gibson asked if there is a plan for sign installation. He stated that he lives near the river where there is hardpan dirt, which makes it extremely difficult to keep signs up. He wants to know if there are ways to get them installed where they last a longer time.

Mr. Shelton replied that later in the agenda there will be discussions about the Joint Powers Authority (JPA), and the direction the Conservancy is headed. It is our hope that the path we choose to take for the Conservancy's Operations and Maintenance (O&M) allows us to put the services together to be able to do that. Mr. Shelton stated there has been an issue in the past where, in certain areas, there have been big cobbles or hardpan dirt. That will be further investigated and is a work in progress.

Ms. Forhan asked if there were any comments from the public, and with none, she moved to a motion.

Mr. Frazier moved to approve the action item; the motion was seconded by Mr. Garcia. The motion passed as follows:

Roll Call Vote:

Name	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
Ms. Forhan	X		
Mr. Frazier	X		
Mr. Karbassi	X		
Mr. Brandau	X		
Mr. Garcia	X		
Mr. Janzen	X		
Mr. Hatler	X		
Mr. Gresham	X		
Mr. Donnelly	X		
Ms. Scharffer			
Mr. Almy	X		
Mr. Gibson	X		

Because of technical difficulties, Ms. Andrea Scharffer was unable to vote.

F-5 INFORMATION ITEM: Status and Progress Report on the Joint Powers Authority for the San Joaquin River Parkway.

Mr. Shelton stated that in March of 2021, an Ad Hoc Committee was formed with board members representing Fresno County (Mr. Brandau), Madera County (Mr. Frazier), the City of Fresno (Mr. Karbassi), the City of Madera (Mr. Garcia), and a nonpartisan member (Ms. Austen) to explore the idea of forming a Joint Powers Authority (JPA). The purpose of the JPA would be to operate and maintain facilities and oversee land management. Soon after, Madera City pulled out of the committee. Irrespective of this, other members were still interested, so Conservancy staff put together a Joint Powers Agreement that was modeled after some of the other Conservancies' agreements.

The Conservancy received feedback from several of the meetings, including from the public. From the feedback, the agreement was redrafted. Recently, several stakeholders have expressed concern about the formation of a JPA, and consequently, the JPA was put on pause. In discussion with the Chair and Vice Chair, the Conservancy has decided to explore other alternatives to be able to do its operations and maintenance. Mr. Shelton noted that work done by the Ad Hoc Committee and Conservancy staff will be archived, should the JPA Ad Hoc Committee resume in the future. In exploring other alternatives, the Conservancy is considering working with the local Resource Conservation Districts (RCD's). Staff has reached out to a couple of the other conservancies that use the RCD's to discuss their methods. In particular, the Tahoe Conservancy utilizes their local RCD in the area, which covers their entire geographic range.

The San Joaquin River Conservancy has decided to collaborate with the Sierra and Madera-Chowchilla RCD's. The Conservancy's aim is to work with the two RCD's, come up with an outline of potential duties, services and maintenance projects that can be done, and bring this back for a discussion item at the next board meeting. After having that discussion as an information item, staff would come back at a later meeting with an action item for the Board's consideration on their proposals. He reiterated that going through the State Process, there is a fairly long process to be able to get large projects done. There is typically a Request for Proposals (RFP), Invitation for Bids (IFB), or other ways of moving through a process for services, but all can be time consuming, especially with three staff members; it is hard to do. Hence, with a local agency like a resource conservation district, an interagency agreement with them. Since it is a government entity, a Request for Proposal does not have to be done, staff can just go directly to them. They can use their procurement processes to deliver things such as services. Mr. Shelton stated it is a transparent system. He believes both RCD's work off of the counties' procurement processes. The RCD's use the same process and have a board. The Conservancy could do a contract with them and would be able to make final decisions. However, staff will bring this to the Board at a later time for discussion.

Mr. Frazier thanked Mr. Shelton for highlighting all the benefits of the RCD's. After having met with the Mountain Conservancy, he stated that he always thought the JPA was a good idea. However, he does like this alternative with the RCD's

Ms. Forhan asked if there were any other questions or comments from the Board, and with none, she opened it up for public comment.

There were no comments from the public regarding the aforementioned item, and Ms. Forhan proceeded for discussion of the next item.

F-6 INFORMATION ITEM: Presentation by Fresno Building Healthy Communities on Progress on the Western Reaches Access Activation Plan: Camp Pashayan to Milburn Overlook.

Mr. Shelton stated that the Conservancy staff has worked a lot with the team on this project, and it has generated a lot of community interest. The project was approved by the

Board for bond funds in March 2021. This project is to develop a specific plan for a recreational trail along the river, extending four miles from the Milburn Avenue and Milburn Overlook down to Camp Pashayan at the Highway 99. This includes the California Environmental Quality Act coverage. Stakeholder outreach is a huge part of this project. The main purpose is to get people from the various communities that are around our region to know that the river is there and is available for recreation. The grant was approved for \$1.5 million. The main grantees are Fresno Building Healthy Community (FBHC), and they also have WRT and Urban Design Diversity as subcontractors.

Ms. Sandra Celedon, President and Chief Executive Officer for Fresno Building Healthy Communities (FBHC), expressed that she was really excited to provide this mid-point project status update. Although they are not at the finish line yet, she feels that this mid-point is a great time to come back to the Board and share progress. She is enthusiastic about the public engagement and tremendous support they have received. She stated that it has been exciting to be able to connect with people throughout the region. They have had several events to bring people out to the site to engage with each other and the space, itself. She introduced staff from FBHC, Urban Design Diversity, and WRT to detail their progress.

Mr. John Gibbs, Principal at WRT, shared that their conceptual design is done, and they are ready to move forward. He stated that this project has made significant progress, and they have an end of the year deadline. Provost and Pritchard, a local engineering firm, helped them with CEQA and some of the preliminary permitting. He felt it was significant to take the time to remind everyone what the project was about. From the 22 mile stretch of Conservancy River, they are focusing on four miles from the Highway 99 to the Milburn Overlook, which is inclusive of Camp Pashayan and the trail, as well. The San Joaquin River Parkway Master Plan was used as their guiding document, setting the tone for public access and recreation, but it was also for important ecological restoration goals. They are also building off of the Environmental Impact Report that was already done. There has been lots of progress made, but there is still a lot of important work to continue. Their overall mission is to create a river that is accessible for all to enjoy, and unfortunately, that has not happened in the past. They hope to bring the incredibly diverse community from both counties to this river.

Ms. Sheila Hakimipour, Urban Design Diversity, gave an overview of the community engagement and public outreach process. She stated that they had 20 stakeholder's meetings, in which they engaged with officials, CEO's, community advocacy groups that were involved with the river, those that represented the underserved communities, and several government officials. They had two community days, and over 280 people participated in those events. It was a fun event where they picnicked; but they also worked on maps, and the public gave their visions of what they would like to see incorporated into the project. They also had youth-only events, which were attended by young people throughout Fresno County, including Orosi and Reedley. Different high schools and middle schools came with buses and participated in cleanups, projects, river walks and swimming along the river. The staff kept getting asked when they would have the next event. In response, FBHC, Urban Diversity Design, and WRT continued to have these events. It was really rewarding for staff. They also conducted a survey, in which 1100 people

participated. They went out all around the city and worked with Fresno State students and youth ambassadors to ensure that they distributed the survey everywhere in the Fresno County area. They asked critical question such as, “have you been to the river,” and “do you know where the San Joaquin River is?” Staff was not surprised that 57 percent of people indicated that they had never been to the river. Ms. Hakimipour shared that it really speaks to the urgency of this project. Public access needs to be provided. Many of those people were from underserved communities of the southeast and southwest Fresno. They also asked vision questions like “what do you want to see, “and “what do you want to do out on the river while you are there?” The overwhelming response they received was that they wanted to be out on the water, either swimming or canoeing/kayaking. She stated that they received a lot of good information, and from this, they were able to push the design forward and help the WRT teams understand what the design was and what the community vision was.

Mr. Gibbs gave details of the design of Camp Pashayan and the trail. He said WRT started this process by just understanding the land out there and its potential obstacles. They encountered challenges with limited access from key portals from Weber all the way to Riverside to Polk, so access was difficult. They also found that part of the reason that people were not out actively using this space was because there were some issues with safety and the perception of lack of safety. However, people are starting to get really excited to be out in that area, and a program of activation makes a very successful place. They found a lot of steep slopes. This leads them to take consideration as they are thinking about trails, trail widths, and understanding some of those cliffs and steep embankments that might need signs. This also speaks of the need to explore some river crossings, as well. This has the added opportunity to further connect both counties.

WRT has also done more detailed engineering. He showed the topography map done by Provost and Pritchard and said they really understood the technical issues, as they are moving into the technical phase of the project. There are lots of views that are out there; ecological, various habitats with both natural systems and naturalized (consisting of invasives along the shores and in the upland areas). This project will seek to develop a long-term strategy for removal of those invasives.

The conceptual plan that WRT laid out, balances habitat and public access. This is an important first step in establishing the network of trail connections and hierarchy, such as where it is appropriate for equestrian users, cyclists, and joggers to utilize space; but also looking at smaller-scaled pathways like footpaths and places to access the river and considering little spots along the river in this four-mile stretch. This project seeks to serve the great number of users and create a safe space for everyone, from the established trail corridor all the way to Camp Pashayan. The hope is there will be opportunities to extend further west in the future and under the Highway 99 bridge.

This project makes the connections past the Bluff Pointe Golf Course and Learning Center, Riverbottom, and all the way to the Milburn Overlook. They are also examining the Liddell property and how access goes through there. Mr. Gibbs mentioned there are narrow bluffs, so they are exploring alternatives for a footpath along one side of the river, a bridge, and more of a parkway trail on the other side of the river. WRT’s design process

explored different themes regarding the balance of habitat and recreation. They came up with several different schemes, actively considering not touching the site too much and letting the natural experiences show through. Ultimately, they have a conceptual plan that has been conceived and drawn to scale, with the points of arrival of parking areas. They also analyzed how they could use the area under the highspeed rail, which was recently graded. He stated there are some interesting areas for parking and for river access. In the conceptual plan, there is vehicular access with a good quantity of parking.

Mr. Gibbs noted that they want folks to come out and to be able to launch kayaks, but they also want the site to be for pedestrians and bike use. This area will also consist of parking areas, restrooms, picnic areas, open meadows (for possible future events). As it moves more towards the river, the design is more restorative, and the natural landscape remains. It is still accessible, and there are picnic tables, but they are more dispersed. Future flooding is anticipated, with water levels changing; so improvements in the northeast area would be minimal. The area furthest to the east, which is the lagoon, is being considered as the primary place for water access. It is a safe area to swim, as it is about five feet deep and the main flows of the river are not present. There can be kayak rentals and a kayak launch. There would also be a structure for concessions to occur. The next steps involve continuing over to the rest of this year with more engineering. The team will move forward with a 65 percent design. They will also be completing CEQA and tiering off the existing EIR. Mr. Gibbs mentioned they will be developing a permitting strategy, but they will not be completing the permitting because the drawings do not go far enough. Essentially, at the end of the year, the team is going to have a cost estimate and will have a set of plans that will be realistic, with a permitting strategy and CEQA done; so they will be ready for the final design and construction.

Ms. Forhan asked if there were any questions from Board members.

Mr. Karbassi shared that the community engagement for this project is very strong. He found that the team's vision boards were particularly helpful. He stated FBHC did a great job at making this an inclusive process, and he is going to continue to support the project any way he can.

Mr. Frazier appreciated all the thought and consideration that went into the design, especially regarding the swimming area. The protective cove allows people to enjoy that without it being a potential hazard.

Mr. Garcia congratulated FBHC and the rest of the team on giving more opportunities for outdoor access to our communities. He believes Ms. Celedon has shown the worth and value of bringing her organization on to partner with the Conservancy. Hence, he fully supports the project.

Mr. Brandau commented that the project was very well done.

Ms. Forhan remarked this project was very impressive, and we are all very excited to see progress, especially in regard to the vision and implementation.

Mr. Gibson noted that if Camp Pashayan has any relation to the Pashayan family from Fresno, it would be good to reach out to them and interface the area in some way.

Ms. Forhan asked if there were any comments from the public, and with none, she moved to organizational reports.

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. Sharon Weaver, Executive Director of the San Joaquin River Parkway and Conservation Trust, stated that the Parkway Trust recently updated their website, and she introduced the staff that was shown on the Parkway Trust's contact page. This year, thanks to some increases in their program activities due to funding from school districts, they had 63 staff on board this summer. She shared that the Parkway Trust's staff has a wide breadth and depth of experience levels and people with various types of education that have specialties in several different fields. Ms. Weaver also mentioned They recently obtained a ranch foreman, who helps manage Sumner Peck. The restoration technicians are staff that are out in the field working on daily restoration projects. The Parkway Trust also has a program team, which are the staff that work with kids on field trips. She mentioned that she knows they talk a lot about their education programs and river camp programs, but she wanted to give a brief overview on things they do that are often not mentioned. Everything they are doing is to plan and create a beautiful parkway for the next generation.

Ms. Weaver mentioned that she would like to give an update at a future meeting on the River Center improvements project. It was a Conservancy funded project, that was approved by this Board. This consisted of the construction of a picnic shelter, a new native plant garden at the River Center, and a solar powered system.

G-1b. River Tree Volunteers

Mr. Paul Duckworth mentioned that since some of the restrictions of COVID-19 have relaxed, they have been able to be more active with groups going out on the river, such as community groups, scouts, church groups, and other special organizations. He mentioned they are out on the river three to four times a month, providing access to the aforementioned groups. River Tree Volunteers have also enjoyed working with FBHC, Urban Diversity Design, and WRT in assisting with some of the manual work at Camp Pashayan. He is very impressed with the project, and he encouraged the Board to support them in any way they can. Also, there are a group of Scouts that are interested in adopting the Liddell area and wanting to open it up and work in that area. They have been down there

planting trees and doing pollinator plantings, such as milk weed. River Tree Volunteers will be working with the Conservancy and the Scouts to see if they can assist with anything.

Mr. Gibson asked Mr. Duckworth to give an update on the displaced encampments on the river, as it was quite extensive the previous summer.

Mr. Duckworth said they continue to see a lot of encampments, particularly in certain areas. He believed the Joint Powers Authority would have been a great solution to be able to help remedy this situation. However, it is still a problem that needs to be addressed.

G-1c. San Joaquin River Access Corporation (SJRAC)

Ms. Christine Walters stated that she wanted to let everyone know that their organization is still engaged and still fully working in support to provide access to organizations, such as River Tree Volunteers and others, and law enforcement. They still have regular garbage pickup and are concerned with providing accessibility for maintenance down at the Yellow Gate Road. Along with that, they have been addressing vandalism and fire issues.

G-2 Deputy Attorney General Report

Ms. Jackie Vu stated that she has nothing new to report.

G-3 Executive Officer Report

Mr. Shelton stated that over the past few months, Conservancy staff has worked on several processes to operate and maintain our properties. This resulted in staff developing a priorities list. These consist of public safety, including fire protection, law enforcement/security services, and emergency vehicle access; litter prevention, removal, and cleanup; restroom/porta-potties; facilities maintenance; hazard reduction; and deferred maintenance. These priorities will assist in getting more of our properties officially formally opened.

In recent discussions regarding formally opening Conservancy properties, Chair Forhan, Vice-Chair Frazier, and Conservancy staff outlined a Public Access Classification plan that is categorized by a four-tier system. These tiers demonstrate accessibility and services needed for it to be formally opened. Tier 1 are the properties that are officially opened. This is approximately 950 acres, and includes Friant Cove, Jenco Farms, Jensen River Ranch, Wildwood Native Park, Van Buren, and Sycamore Island. Most of these properties have either on site or nearby parking and restrooms.

Tier 2 are properties that are informally open to the public, which consist of Ledger Island, Ball Ranch, and River West Fresno (Spano). There are approximately 955 acres. Similar to Tier 1, there is onsite or nearby parking and portable restrooms. However, not all the nearby parking is convenient or secure. Mr. Shelton gave the example of the parking at Ball Ranch's gate off Friant Road. It is a good-sized parking area, but it is not very secure, as there have been several break ins. There may be some ways that we can work on getting them more secure.

Tier 3 are properties that are open to groups. Properties in this category are Circle V (Vinnard), Lanes Road (Gagnebin), and Camp Pashayan. Between all three properties, there are approximately 85 acres. There is onsite parking, and restrooms. For example, the US Green Building Council (USGBC) and Advocates for Indigenous California Language Survival (AICLS) teams meet with permission at the Conservancy's Circle V property. Although we do have certain groups come out, such as River Tree Volunteer and Boy Scouts, the Conservancy typically sets up group access agreements with these organizations.

Tier 4 are Conservancy properties that need more work to open. The combined acreage for all these properties is approximately 620. These properties include Gibson, Cobb/Madera Co, Liddell, Schneider, and Slenders. There is no onsite or offsite parking or accessible restrooms. Eventually, it is our aim to get them opened; but either more work needs to be done to make them accessible, or staff is in the process of ascertaining what to do with them. An example of this is the Gibson property, which is underneath the Vulcan area. This is not opened because there is still heavy equipment in the area from the Vulcan gravel operations, which could be dangerous to groups and the public. There are also properties that are isolated, similar to how Camp Pashayan was, and staff is trying to figure out how to get them activated.

The other process that the Conservancy is currently working on is securing portable toilets for all the Tier 1, 2, and some of the Tier 3 properties that do not have restrooms. For example, Jenco Farms is contiguous with the Jensen River Ranch property, but a restroom will probably not be secured for that location because the nearby Jensen River Ranch restroom is now being operated and maintained by the City. It has been an issue in the past because of funding, and now because of the City's Measure P funding, they have actually done some restoration work to the restroom to get it opened and operated. Mr. Shelton noted that there are other areas that are not likely to have their own restrooms for a while because they are next to a property that currently does have one.

Mr. Shelton mentioned that he also included in the report a budget and breakdown for spending the \$15 million of operation and maintenance funding. In this breakdown, he included the funding for the RCD's operations and maintenance work for the Conservancy. He stated there is enough work to be able to allocate \$1.5 million, which would be \$750,000 for each RCD, Sierra and Madera-Chowchilla. It is just an approximation, and it could cost more or less. In regard to public safety, staff has had those discussions. Madera County is close to giving us a proposal. He mentioned that on the breakdown, he gave a rough figure for the City of Fresno's public safety expense. In past conversations with the City of Fresno, he believes that they might end up paying for their own law enforcement and extra police officers. It seems they are moving forward with that already, and they have not come back to the Conservancy for extra funding. Conservancy staff has also talked to Fresno County, but a proposal has not yet been received. Mr. Shelton stated that would be a good one to have in place, especially with Ball Ranch and a few of the other small properties the Conservancy has in the area.

Ms. Forhan requested to have this presentation forwarded to the Board to use as a guide moving forward. She inquired if there were any questions from the Board or public.

G-4 Board Members' Reports and Comments

Mr. Karbassi commented that it seems like we are heading in the right direction, and he thanked Chair Forhan and Vice-Chair Frazier for everything they have been doing for the Board.

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

None.

I. NEXT BOARD MEETING DATE

The next Board meeting is scheduled for 10:00 a.m. Wednesday, September 7, 2022, location to be determined.

J. ADJOURN

Ms. Forhan adjourned the meeting at 11:42 a.m.

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.

Respectfully Submitted,

DocuSigned by:

John M. Shelton

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John M. Shelton

Executive Officer- San Joaquin River Conservancy