



Humboldt County Fish & Game Advisory Commission MINUTES REVISED January 15, 2019

The Commission meets the THIRD Tuesday each month from 6:30pm through 8:30pm. Agenda items and supporting info should be mailed to HCF&GAC; PO Box 922; Ferndale, CA 95536; Phone 707.786.4902 email: nkaytis4@gmail.com up to two weeks following previous meeting. Held at the South Bay School Library, 6077 Loma Avenue, Eureka CA, across 101 from King Salmon.

Attendance: Present: Ted Romo, Mike Zamboni, Brad Smith, Denver Nelson, Harry Vaughn, Hollie Hall, Loren Furber, John Clark, Kim Watson, Nancy Kaytis-Slocum, Secretary. Absent: Wes Moore, Patricia Lai, Phil Grunert, Kenny Priest. Currently, two openings on the Commission.

Meeting called to order by Chairman John Clark at 6:40 pm.

The minutes of the Dec. 18, 2018 meeting minutes were approved. MOTION (Smith/Watson). All in favor.

OLD BUSINESS

Area River Updates: Commissioner Nelson reported the following: On Dec. 12, 2018, the state water board (4 to 1) adopted new requirements. Under the new requirement, water districts would have to reduce their historic diversions from three salmon-bearing rivers, the Stanislaus, Tuolumne and Merced. Average flows on the three tributaries of the San Joaquin River now range from 21% to 40% of what they would be without dams and diversions. The plaintiffs are OID, SSJID, the Turlock Irrigation District, and the City and County of San Francisco.

*\$12.9 billion – the estimated economic loss in Stanislaus, San Joaquin and Merced counties.

*\$10 million – Revenue lost to SSJID and OID from clean hydroelectric power generation. *1.57 million – acre feet of additional groundwater that could be pumped by cities and farmers.

*132,000 – acres of farmland that could be fallowed across the region. *120,000 acre feet – amount of water SSJID and OID customers would forfeit in a “normal” year; reductions would be even worse in “dry” and “critically dry” years. *4,000 – estimated number of jobs lost in the region. *1,100 – state estimate of “new” salmon that would be created in the three rivers. *12 – number of times new Melones Reservoir could go dry every 95 years.

The San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC) would see a significant decrease in water, leaving its customers, including some in Santa Clara County, relying more heavily on the water district. SFPUC currently provides 15 percent of the county’s water supply, mostly to San Jose, Milpitas, Purissima Hills, Mountain View, Santa Clara, Sunnyvale and Palo Alto. Doug Obegi, an attorney with the Natural Resources Defense Council, said he thinks the suit’s claims are overblown and that the water district could find solutions, such as capturing storm water, to prevent major problems. The Santa Clara Valley Water District has filed a lawsuit to challenge the state’s plan to reduce water flows on the San Joaquin River and its tributaries. San Luis & Delta-Mendota Water authority, Westlands Water District, Central California Irrigation District, Friant Water Authority, Reclamation District 108, Glenn Colusa Irrigation District, SJR Exchange

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Contractors, Tehama Colusa Canal Authority against. Nelson also provided a map of the California Department of Water Resources State Water Project. (1-15-19 Thanks to Commissioner Nelson for his written notes.)

Oak and Meadow Management: Commissioner Vaughn reported that they have been planting sheep grass. Controlled fires are working to keep firs out. In Salmon creek, six more acres were burnt. Raptors are returning. Ground squirrels have disappeared in this area. Twelve more bluebird and kestrel houses have been built.

Cannabis: Commissioner Hollie Hall reported that now that Cannabis is legal, mandatory water use must be reported to agencies. The Salmonid Restoration Federation is in Santa Rosa on April 23-26. Various presenters will present data reported in last few years. Fish Friendly Cannabis farming practices will also be discussed. The daylong cannabis focused workshop is titled: Growing Impacts: Cannabis and Instream Flows. UC Berkeley opened a cannabis research study. Under Humboldt County's 2.0 commercial cannabis ordinance, as of 1/1/19, applications for commercial cannabis cultivation can only request 50% of the re-January 1, 2016 cultivation area under application for cultivation in pre-existing areas. Humboldt County and the North Coast Regional Water Board require cannabis farmers to remediate all historic land degradation issues regardless of the source of the degradation, including all roads and culverts. The requirement to manage entire properties without access to restoration funding could have unintended consequences of land abandonment, economic decline at the county scale, and black-market success. (2-11-19 Thanks to Commissioner Hall for providing edits on this item.)

Crab Fishing: Commissioner Zamboni reported that commercial fishing is open, although no one is fishing except from Patricks Point to the Oregon border. There was some discussion of what the regulations actually mean.

Proposed aquaculture expansion is being considered in the North Bay: Commissioner Romo attended a workshop on Friday at Humboldt Bay Food. The workshop was meant to maximize overall use of Humboldt Bay for aquaculture. Brandt populations are increasing in Humboldt Bay.

Wolves in Western California: In the absence of Commissioner Wes Moore, Commissioner Mike Zamboni reported that there is an overpopulation of wolves in Yellowstone, which has decreased the Elk herd.

Salmon Habitat Restoration: Commissioner Vaughn reported over 20 coho salmon in a short walk of the Southfork Eel. Eric Stockwell is walking the Van Duzen and seeing salmon.

Wind Energy: Commissioner Romo reported that written comments on the Eir must be filed by January 28. PG&E filed bankruptcy.

Ocean Ranch Restoration Project: Commissioner Loren Furber reported that hunting has suffered at Ocean Ranch with the intrusion of salt water onto some of the land.

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NEW BUSINESS

New Meeting place and/or time: Use of the Board of Supervisors chambers for our meetings during the daytime will not work for most of the Commissioners. Instead three alternatives were mentioned: The Elk Club; General Hospital; Eureka City Hall. MOTION: (Romo/Nelson) send a letter to Brad Smith requesting the use of the Elks Club on the 3rd Tuesday of the month from 6:30 to 8:30 pm. All in favor.

Update on the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act: Update on the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act: Commissioner Hall provided an updated on the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) prioritization of groundwater basins in Humboldt County. Within Humboldt County 17 basins were prioritized. The Eel River Valley was rated at medium priority due to an estimation that 96% of the water consumed within the basin is derived from groundwater supplies. The SGMA reports groundwater levels to be stable. It also reports high connectivity between groundwater and saltwater. In Commissioner Hall's opinion, the connectivity between groundwater and saltwater indicates a likeliness that groundwater is also connected to surface water. Surface water levels in the Eel River Valley have fluctuated greatly throughout recent drought years. The SGMA requires governments and water agencies of medium priority basins, like the Eel River Valley, to halt overdraft and bring groundwater basins into balanced levels of pumping and recharge within 20 years of implementing their sustainability plans, or 2042. With this prioritization of the Eel River Valley and timeline in place, it is likely that we will see development of a sustainable groundwater management plan developed over the course of the next 20 or so years. (2-11-19 Thanks to Commissioner Hall for providing edits on this item.)

Target Shooting Ordinance: No action.

ADJOURN 8:10 PM; Next meeting: February 19, 2019.

Respectfully Submitted:

Nancy Kaytis-Slocum, secretary.