



**SAWPA COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
June 7, 2022**

<b><u>COMMISSIONERS PRESENT</u></b>	Marco Tule, Chair, Inland Empire Utilities Agency Bruce Whitaker, Vice Chair, Orange County Water District Mike Gardner, Secretary-Treasurer, Western Municipal Water District David J. Slawson, Eastern Municipal Water District June D. Hayes, San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District
<b><u>COMMISSIONERS ABSENT</u></b>	None
<b><u>ALTERNATE COMMISSIONERS PRESENT; NON-VOTING</u></b>	Jeff Armstrong, Eastern Municipal Water District Kelly Rowe, Orange County Water District T. Milford Harrison, San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District
<b><u>STAFF PRESENT</u></b>	Jeff Mosher, Mark Norton, David Ruhl, Edina Goode, Marie Jauregui, Sara Villa, Dean Unger, Ian Achimore, Zyanya Ramirez, Haley Mullan, Alison Lewis, Jessica McDermott, John Leete
<b><u>OTHERS PRESENT</u></b>	Andrew D. Turner, Lagerlof, LLP; Joe Mouawad, Eastern Municipal Water District; Nick Kanetis, Eastern Municipal Water District; Ken Tam, Inland Empire Utilities Agency; Michael Markus, Orange County Water District; Greg Woodside, Orange County Water District; Kevin O'Toole, Orange County Water District; Adekule Ojo, San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District; Olivia Ramirez, San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District; Shavonne Turner, San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District; Mallory Gandara, Western Municipal Water District; Craig Miller, Western Municipal Water District; Derek Kawaii, Western Municipal Water District; Brooke Jones, Yorba Linda Water District; Brian Dickinson, City of Colton; Mandy Parkes, Inland Empire Resource Conservation District

The Regular Meeting of the Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority Commission was called to order at 9:30 a.m. by Chair Marco Tule on behalf of the Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority, 11615 Sterling Avenue, Riverside, California.

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Pursuant to the provisions of AB 361, this meeting was conducted virtually, and all votes were taken by oral roll call.

**2. ROLL CALL**

An oral roll call was duly noted and recorded by the Clerk of the Board.

**3. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were no public comments; there were no public comments received via email.

**4. ITEMS TO BE ADDED OR DELETED**

There were no items to be added or deleted.

**5. CONSENT CALENDAR**

**A. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES: MAY 17, 2022**

Recommendation: Approve as posted.

**B. TREASURER'S REPORT: APRIL 2022**

Recommendation: Approve as posted.

**MOVED**, to approve the Consent Calendar as posted.

Result:	Adopted by Roll Call Vote
Motion/Second:	Gardner/Slawson
Ayes:	Gardner, Hayes, Slawson, Tule, Whitaker
Nays:	None
Abstentions:	None
Absent:	None

**6. NEW BUSINESS**

**A. ARUNDO HEADWATERS PROJECT OPPORTUNITY WITH INLAND EMPIRE RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT (CM#2022.34)**

Ian Achimore provided a presentation on the Arundo Headwaters Project opportunity with Inland Empire Resource Conservation District, contained in the agenda packet on pages 21-31. Arundo donax is an invasive plant, a noxious weed, that uses approximately 528 gallons of water per meter annually. Its highly combustible, survives fire, and causes flooding by altering flow regimes. Because Arundo donax seedlings can wash downstream during rain events, SAWPA staff has coordinated with staff from the Inland Empire Resource Conservation District (IERCD), as both agencies regularly attend Santa Ana River Watershed (SARW) Weed Management Area meetings, to develop an Arundo donax removal effort in the upper watershed. IERCD is one of four resource conservation districts in the SARW, and its service area covers the upper SARW. SAWPA has implemented Arundo donax invasive weed removal projects that cover approximately 6,000 acres in the Santa Ana River Watershed saving an estimated 43,000-acre feet of water per year.

The estimated costs for a five-year project are approximately \$150,000, broken into two years of parcel owner outreach and initial treatment with handheld equipment, and three years of follow up treatment with an EPA approved herbicide. Approximately \$864,000 in funding is available in SAWPA's Arundo fund budget for this work, some of the other downstream Arundo "hot spots" in the watershed are being treated by other entities. It is anticipated that SAWPA staff will work with IERCD to develop a final task order and present it to the Commission for approval at a subsequent meeting.

Commissioner Hayes asked once the Arundo is cleaned up in a specific area, what happens the following year – does it grow back, do you go back to that original area, or do you move on to the next area? Ian Achimore noted that the first year the field staff enters the parcels and map out the GIS boundaries Arundo stocks to keep track of the areas. The field staff cuts and treats with approved herbicide to make sure there is no regrowth. June Hayes asked if there was private property ownership that did not want to remove Arundo, would they be responsible if there was any damage. Andy Turner noted that as a property owner you are obligated to maintain your property in a way that does not harm your neighbors to some extent. Mandy Parkes noted that one of IERCD specialties is outreach and involvement in their community. They are knowledgeable and experienced in relating their goals, in this case systemic, permanent removal of Arundo donax, to the community with positive results.

Commissioner Slawson and Commissioner Gardner expressed their support in the program. Arundo is a non-beneficial plant and has zero habitat value and is a real fire risk that sends embers everywhere. Commissioner Gardner is in support of beginning the program upstream due to any water flow received washes downstream. Olivia Ramirez, of San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District, asked what herbicide is used and at what rate does Arundo grow? Mandy Parkes noted that she will provide the information once she has it available.

Chair Marco Tule asked who will be providing the labor support and are there any special considerations for when it comes to further propagation, is there decontamination of the vehicles that are coming into contact with the Arundo? Mandy Parkes noted that they have protocols in place for making sure arundo does not spread, and as far as the labor work, there are people trained to use different tools and also have protocols in place.

This item was for informational purposes; no action was taken on Agenda Item No. 6.A.

**B. DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES INVOLVEMENT PROGRAM: RESOLUTION REGARDING 2021 URBAN AND MULTIBENEFIT DROUGHT RELIEF GRANT PROGRAM SET-ASIDE FUNDING (CM#2022.35)**

Mark Norton provided a presentation on the Disadvantaged Communities Involvement Program Set-Aside Funding, 2021 Urban and Multibenefit Drought Relief Grant Program, contained in the agenda packet on pages 45-52. In February 2022, the Commission approved and authorized staff to submit the attached portfolio of projects and funding allocations for consideration by Department of Water Resource (DWR) for up to \$5 million in Proposition 1 IRWM Disadvantaged Community Involvement (DACI) Grant Set-Aside funding made available through the 2021 Urban and Multi-benefit Drought Relief Grant Program. This application is currently under review by DWR staff.

As part of the application process, DWR requires a resolution to be adopted by the applicant's governing body and submitted to DWR prior to the execution of a grant agreement. This resolution authorizes the application for a grant under the 2021 Urban and Multibenefit Drought Relief Grant Program for Disadvantaged Community Involvement Set-Aside Funding that designates a representative to sign the application, and in the event of an award of grant funds, a representative to execute the funding agreement and all necessary documentation. The next steps are to Amend the existing DCI Program Grant Agreement to incorporate additional projects and SAWPA Project Administration and prepare DCI Grant sub-agreements with each of the project proponents. There was no discussion.

**MOVED**, to adopt Resolution No. 2022-10, to authorize the application for a grant under the 2021 Urban and Multibenefit Drought Relief Grant Program for Disadvantaged Community Involvement Set-Aside Funding that designates a representative to sign the application, and in the event of an award of grant funds, a representative to execute the funding agreement and all necessary documentation.

Result:	Adopted by Roll Call Vote
Motion/Second:	Hayes/Gardner
Ayes:	Gardner, Hayes, Slawson, Tule, Whitaker
Nays:	None
Abstentions:	None
Absent:	None

**C. SANTA ANA RIVER WATERSHED WEATHER MODIFICATION PILOT PROGRAM OPERATIONS REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (CM#2022.36)**

Mark Norton provided a presentation on the Santa Ana Weather Modification Pilot Program Operations Request for Proposals, contained in the agenda packet on pages 55-67. SAWPA staff has submitted its application under the DWR Proposition 1 Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) Round 2 Implementation grant program to cover 50% of the cost of the four-year pilot program with validation. The proposal for grant funding was entered into SAWPA's OWOW Call for Projects online entry form. Thereafter, the proposal will be competitively rated and ranked among other projects seeking grant funding through the OWOW Stakeholder Budgeting process. The pilot program, including independent validation and capture analysis, is estimated to cost \$1,570,000 over the four-year program and is

anticipated to generate additional water of 7,800 Acre Feet/year, or a total of 31,200 AF. If Prop 1 Round 2 funding is successful, the local cost share to implement the pilot would be half the amount and offset by local agency funding of \$94,000, or \$691,000 over the four years (\$34,550 average SAWPA Member Agency Cost/Year).

For the local cost share match (50% match), the SAWPA Commission requested staff to conduct outreach about the pilot program to educate and inform local water agencies about the program and seek out commitments to fund the program as well. Over sixty agencies in the watershed have been contacted. The following agencies have committed funding in the amounts shown below:

Chino Basin Water Conservation District	\$20,000
San Geronio Pass Water Agency	\$20,000
Big Bear Lake Dept of Water & Power	\$12,000
Big Bear City Community Services District	\$12,000
Lake Elsinore & San Jacinto Watersheds Authority	\$10,000
City of Santa Ana	\$10,000
San Antonio Water Agency	\$ 5,000
City of Corona	\$ 5,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$94,000</b>

The pilot project work to commence by November 15, 2022, a Request for Proposals needs to be issued, SAWPA staff anticipates bringing the recommended award of a contract to the Commission on July 19, 2022. Due to the timing of the grant awards, local funding from the SAWPA member agencies will be needed to commence the work in July 2022 and will be invoiced for the first-year costs in July 2022. All these local costs can be applied as local cost share to the future grant which is not expected to be available until 2023. Commissioner Gardner thanked Jeff Mosher for his presentation to the WMWD’s Board on this project and wanted to make sure that approving the RFP today, does not commit to any dollars from any of the participating agencies at this point. Mark Norton confirmed that this approval is for issuance of the RFP and no funding is being requested, funding is anticipated to be requested in July.

**MOVED**, to authorize issuance of a Request for Proposals for the Santa Ana River Watershed Weather Modification Pilot Program Operations services.

Result:	Adopted by Roll Call Vote
Motion/Second:	Gardner/Slawson
Ayes:	Gardner, Hayes, Slawson, Tule, Whitaker
Nays:	None
Abstentions:	None
Absent:	None

**7. INFORMATIONAL REPORTS**

Recommendation: Receive for Information.

**A. CHAIR’S COMMENTS/REPORT**

Chair Marco Tule thanked SAWPA staff for all the presentations and the public for the comments received.

**B. COMMISSIONERS’ COMMENTS**

There were no Commissioners’ comments.

**C. COMMISSIONERS' REQUEST FOR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

Commissioner Hayes requested a presentation be put together about SAWPA as an Agency for any forthcoming new Board Members. Commissioner Hayes also requested looking into a regional program to help people get off of septic tanks in the rural communities. Jeff Mosher noted he will work with SAWPA staff in developing a presentation for the onboarding Board Members.

**8. CLOSED SESSION**

There was no closed session.

**9. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business for review, Chair Marco Tule adjourned the meeting at 10:31 a.m.

**Approved at a Regular Meeting of the Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority Commission on Tuesday, June 21, 2022.**

  
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Marco Tule, Chair

Attest:

  
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Sara Villa, Clerk of the Board