SAWA MEETING MINUTES

February 22nd, 2024
Meeting Location:
1835 Chicago Avenue, Suite C
Riverside, CA 92507
9:00 A.M.

BOARD ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Mills called the meeting to order at 9:04 A.M.

II. INTRODUCTIONS

Melody Aimar – SAWA; Teri Biancardi – TEAMRCD: David McMichael – OCWD; Brett Mills – SJBRCD; Brian Brady – SAWA; Jennette El Morsy – SAWA; James Law – SAWA; Kerwin Russell – RCRCD; Kimberly Kuznicki – SAWA; Maria Arellano – SAWA; José Mora – IERCD;

III. PUBLIC INPUT – Oral communication from the public audience on any subject matter within SAWA's subject matter jurisdiction. There was no public input at this time.

IV. CONSENT CALENDAR

a. Approve Minutes for January 25, 2024
b. Approve Financial Statement for January 2024

Director Russell moved to approve the consent calendar as presented. Director Biancardi seconded and the motion passed unanimously, 5-0

Alternate Mora	Aye	Russell	Aye	McMichael	Aye
Mills	Aye	Biancardi	Aye		

V. DISCUSSION ITEMS

a. ILF Project – Brian Brady

Mr. Brady reported staff has re-engaged with several potential entities in the SAR watershed for a viable ILF project site. Of note, the County of Riverside Parks is now managing several large ACOE parcels within the watershed. Initial SAWA staff discussions with Dudek are encouraging.

b. Treasurer's Report – Mandy Parkes

Absent

Mr. Mills reported on behalf of Ms. Parkes that there is $317,751.77 that came in and $236,379.92 outstanding and it looks like most of them are in the 1 to 30 day.

VI. ACTION ITEMS

a. Discussion and Possible Approval of SAWA Strategic Planning Process

For a copy of Mr. Brady's presentation, "2024 SAWA Strategic Plan", please contact the Administrative Services Manager, Jennette El Morsy, at jennette@sawatershed.org or 951-

750-1012 ext. 101. Director Biancardi moved to approve the SAWA strategic planning process. Director Russell seconded and the motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

Alternate Mora	Aye	Russell	Aye	McMichael	Aye
Mills	Aye	Biancardi	Aye		

GENERAL ITEMS

VII. SAWA PROJECT REPORTS

a. Brian Brady, Executive Director – SAWA

Mr. Brady reported SAWA staff continues to collaborate with OCWD and SAWPA in developing a plan for Arundo removal and long-term maintenance, including identifying funding sources. Based upon board discussion at the January 25th meeting and considering three recently appointed new board members or alternates, SAWA staff will be proposing a collaborative strategic/business planning process for board consideration. SAWA staff has transmitted a final proposed 2024-2025 MSHCP budget to RCA.

b. Kerwin Russell – RCRCD

Mr. Russell reported working with Mr. Law on the Fairmount Park drain. There's a channel that comes down from Box Springs that gets plugged and gets vegetation. RCRCD did a project back in 2009 or 2010 with the city and in Mr. Russell's recommendations he had mentioned that if the city did not maintain it, the vegetation would be back again. They did not follow through with what Mr. Russell recommended and now Mr. Law is trying to work with the city to get it done. RCRCD has been working with SAWA as QC since they have some historical background on that. Hopefully if SAWA can get in there and take care of that, maybe it can become a maintenance project. Mr. Russell also reported a lot of rain related issues going on. RCRCD have some clogged drains and some slopes that have failed.

c. David McMichael – OCWD

Mr. McMichael reported having a lot of weather related issues as well. OCWD did have some damage from the big storm. It took out a lot of access roads and part of their wetlands. There is some repair work that is going to be done. OCWD has a new director starting soon and there will be an announcement about it soon.

d. Teri Biancardi – Temecula-Elsinore-Anza-Murrieta RCD

Ms. Biancardi reported they have two candidates for their climate corps fellow position. If they're a good fit, hopefully they will have them hired by March 4th. Ms. Biancardi said she is beginning to get involved in the Community Wildfire Resilience Space and learn more about that.

e. Mandy Parkes – Inland Empire RCD

Absent

Mr. Mora reported on behalf of Ms. Parkes that IERCD recently received funding the County of San Bernardino to remove garlic mustard from the Lake Arrowhead area. IERCD have been finalizing the agreement and will hopefully be able to move forward with work in March. Hopefully with that funding IERCD will be able to tackle and remove some of that garlic mustard. The plan is to hand pull, bag everything and remove it from the site and hopefully IERCD can stop the spread of garlic mustard.

f. Brett Mills – San Jacinto Basin RCD

Mr. Mills reported going to the fire safe council meeting. Mr. Mills has been in coordination with the California Native Plants Society and they're thinking about hosting an event/workshop out

in the San Jacinto Valley, and Mr. Mills wanted to reach out to Ms. Aimar, Mr. Law and Mr. Brady to see if there would be any interest in SAWA being a part of it. SJBRCD is looking to have SAWA help maintain some of their sites.

g. Jennette El Morsy, Administrative Services Manager – SAWA
Ms. El Morsy reported on A/R January invoice totaling $177,349.17. Completed 2024-2025 FY MSHCP/Clinton Keith Project Budget for RCTC. Finalizing End of Year Financials. Completed Year End: Employee W-2's & Company 1099's. Updating Employee Manual. New IT server installation. IT installed Microsoft 360 for MSHCP (SAWA staff to follow). Hired new MSHCP field biologist: Leah Dann, start date 2/26/24. Recruitment for WHMS Biologist I/II. Recruitment for Seasonal BHCO Field Assistants. Restocking Covid Supplies as needed. Working on emergency evacuation kits.

h. James Law, Habitat Restoration Services – SAWA
Mr. Law reported on new job proposals and administrative tasks including ILF placement, IECF and City of Wildomar. Mr. Law also updated on other work within individual member agencies jurisdictions:

- Temecula-Elsinore-Anza-Murrieta RCD: The HRS department conducted treatments to: TEAM RCD – Riv Flood projects, Riv Flood – Lake Elsinore Outlet Channel and homeless monitoring.
- Riverside-Corona RCD: The HRS department conducted treatments at the following: Temescal 3M 2.86.
- Inland Empire RCD: SAWA's HRS department conducted treatments at: SAR – Upstream River Rd.
- San Jacinto Basin RCD: The HRS department conducted planting at: Canyon Hills HOA.
- Orange County Water District: The HRS department conducted treatments at: SAR – Upstream River Rd. and the City of Brea (Carbon Canyon).

i. Melody Aimar, Biological Programs Manager – SAWA
Ms. Aimar reported on MSHCP Dept. Monthly WRC MSHCP Management and Monitoring Coordination Meetings. Presentation: 2/8 – "*Investigating spatial spread and revegetation strategies for invasive annual grasses after fire."* by Noah Teller, PhD. (San Francisco Presidio Trust). Field Biologist new hire start date 2/26. New Botany Lead taking GIS and Scientific Writing training courses. Ms. Aimar and leads addressing 2022 Survey Report edits from RCA. 2023 Survey/Summary reports – in progress. Leads completing 2024 protocols, Ms. Aimar and Mr. Campanella proofing. Leads completing 2024 survey training. Mr. Campanella managing remote workflow; updated Operations Manual. Monthly leads meeting via zoom for project updates. Ms. Aimar attended monthly RCA managers meetings. Ms. Aimar and Mr. Campanella submitted monthly reports to RCA. Ms. Aimar also reported on other MSHCP work including:

- Rare Plants: 2023 report in progress. Prep/training for 2024 surveys.
- Riparian Birds: 2023 surveys – complete, report in progress.
- White-tailed Kite: 2023 surveys – complete, report in progress.
- Cactus Wren: 2023 surveys – complete, report in progress.
- Grasshopper Sparrow/CAGN: Prep/training for 2024 surveys and USGS training – in progress.
- Mammals: 2023 LAPM report in progress. SR 60 Undercrossing – Camera trap surveys – in progress.
- Clinton Keith Overcrossing: Camera trap surveys at overcrossing/undercrossing – in progress.

- Herps/Fish: Artificial Cover surveys – in progress. Arroyo Toad surveys – in progress. Drift fence camera surveys – in progress. Prep for 2024 herp projects.
- Quino Checkerspot Butterfly: 2023 report – in progress.
- Delhi Sands Flower-loving Fly: 2023 report – in progress.
- Vernal Pools/Spadefoot Toad: 2023 report – in progress. Prep/training for 2024 surveys – in progress.
- Data/GIS Analysis: Transition to electronic data collection – in progress. 2023 data QC – in progress. ArcGIS Pro Transition – in progress.

Ms. Aimar reported on WHMS Dept. LBVI – seasonal prep – in progress. IEUA: 2022-2023 Winter/BBS Bird Surveys report – submitted and invoiced. 2023-2024 WBS/BBS – in progress. BHCO – Dairy traps in Prado and San Jacinto open. 2024 BHCO assistant – application being reviewed. Biologist vacancy – top candidate selected. 2023 CNDDB/BIOS/45-day reports – complete and selected. March Meridian LBVI/BHCO – final report submitted and project invoiced. Ms. Aimar coordinating with SBVMWD and RivCo Parks Rangers on homeless camp safety. Ms. Aimar and select biologists attending SAR Science Symposium. Ms. Aimar invited for panel discussion (Watershed Monitoring Program) at SAR Science Symposium. Biologist attended The Western Section Wildlife Society annual conference. Ms. Aimar working on new website details/corrections. Ms. Aimar attends multiple weekly virtual meetings. Ms. Beckman and biologists are taking ArcGis training. Ms. Aimar also reported on other work within individual member agencies jurisdictions:

- Inland Empire RCD: Goose Creek LBVI monitoring – 2024 prep in progress. San Timoteo LBVI monitoring – 2024 LBVI/BHCO prep in progress. ISR – nest avoidance training scheduled for 2/27.
- Orange County Water District: Biologist assisting with WBS in Prado. Funds San Jacinto BHCO winter dairy traps – open.
- Riverside-Corona RCD: No work this month.
- San Jacinto Basin RCD: No work this month.
- Temecula-Elsinore-Anza-Murrieta RCD: No work this month.

VIII. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

There were no Board Member comments at this time.

IX. NEXT MEETING – March 28, 2024 will be held at the SAWA Headquarters, 1835 Chicago Avenue, Suite C, Riverside, CA 92507 and remotely via Zoom.

X. ADJOURN – The meeting was adjourned at 9:58 A.M.

Notice: All open session agenda materials will be available for inspection by members of the public at the SAWA office located at 1835 Chicago Avenue, Suite C, Riverside, CA 92507. Please contact Maria Arellano at (951) 780-1012 x106 for this information (Government Code Section 54957.5). In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Government Code Section 54954.2, if special assistance is needed to participate in a Board meeting, please contact the Administrative Services Manager at (951) 780-1012 x101. Notification of at least 48 hours prior to meeting time will assist staff in assuring that reasonable arrangements can be made to provide accessibility at the meeting.

Please post 72 hours before meeting