

MINUTES

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE KINGS RIVER FISHERIES MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

JUNE 14, 2023

Call To Order

Minutes of the Executive Policy Committee (ExCom) of the Kings River Fisheries Management Program (KRFMP) convened at the Kings River Water Association and Kings River Conservation District office in Fresno, California at 2:00 p.m. on Wednesday, June 14, 2023, with Chairman Steven Haugen presiding.

Roll Call

Members Present: Steven Haugen (Kings River Water Association - KRWA), David Merritt (Kings River Conservation District - KRCD), and Gerald Hatler (California Department of Fish and Wildlife - CDFW)

Members Absent: None

Others Present: Binu Brar, John Cameron, Soua Lee, Matthew Meadows, Robert Moeller, Bailey Routt, and Lori Werner

Committee Member

Comment Period

Haugen reported on this year's water conditions, highlighting the flood releases occurring along the Kings River. KRWA went into flood release on February 22, 2023. Flows have been high since then with peak flows out of Pine Flat hitting 13,000 C.F.S. over the course of April 20 through May 10, and have experienced near-channel capacity on the North Fork since March 1. Additionally, KRWA has had a large volume of water running down the South Fork for an extended period of time, peaking at around 2,500 C.F.S. for one to two months. KRWA anticipates being in flood release with the United State Army Corps of Engineers through mid-to-late July. At that point, Pine Flat will be close to 1,000,000 A.F. and will continue irrigation releases and potentially some flood releases this fall in order to get Pine Flat down to flood control criteria, which is about 525,000 A.F. on December 1.

Public Comment Period

No public comments were provided.

Minutes Approval

Minutes taken from the January 26, 2023 ExCom Meeting were considered. Upon the motion of David Merritt, seconded by Gerald Hatler, and unanimously carried by roll call vote, the minutes were approved as corrected.

Executive Officer Report

Haugen reported since the last ExCom meeting held on January 26, 2023, the Kings River has been closed for access by all three counties; therefore, there has been very little on-river activities. During that time, the Technical Steering Committee has continued to work on their annual reports and various grant applications.

Public Advisory Group Report

Public Advisory Group (PAG) Chairman, Rob Moeller, mentioned PAG plans on meeting in July. Meetings were postponed earlier this year due to the water conditions.

Financial Report

KRCD Controller, Binu Brar, presented the financial report dated January 1, 2023 through April 30, 2023 for the fiscal year of June 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023.

Upon the motion of Steven Haugen, seconded by Gerald Hatler, and unanimously carried by roll call vote, the financial report was approved as presented.

Technical Steering Committee Reports

2022 Fish Population Survey Results: KRCD Supervisor of Water Resources, Soua Lee, reviewed the draft 2022 Fall Population Electro-Fishing Survey results with the Committee, which was prepared by KRCD's Environmental Resource Division. Six sites in total were surveyed between November 29 and December 8, 2022.

Upon the motion of David Merritt, seconded by Steven Haugen, and unanimously carried by roll call vote, the 2022 Fall Population Electro-Fishing Survey was accepted. With the ExCom's approval, the survey results will be uploaded to the KRFMP website for public access.

2022 TSC Annual Report: KRWA Assistant Watermaster, Matthew Meadows, reviewed the draft 2022 KRFMP Annual Technical Report for Water Year 2021-2022 with the Committee, which was prepared for the KRFMP by TSC.

Upon the motion of Gerald Hatler, seconded by David Merritt, and unanimously carried by roll call vote, the 2022 KRFMP Annual Technical Report was approved as presented. With the ExCom's approval, the report will be uploaded to the KRFMP website for public access.

CDFW Stocking Update: CDFW did not have any items to report on.

KRFMP Supplemental Stocking Program Update: Lee reported the KRFMP contracted with Desert Springs Trout Farm based in Summer

Lake, Oregon for the 2022-2023 fiscal year. They have since met their contract and stocked 10,000 pounds of fish between November 2022 and March 2023, which amounted to 24,416 fish with an average 0.41 pounds per fish. The majority of the fish were placed in Reach 1, with the remaining placed in Reach 2. KRCD also contracted with Desert Springs Trout Farm for their stocking program for 8,000 pounds of fish; however, they were only able to receive 6,150 pounds due to the high-level water conditions in February-March 2023.

As for the incubator building, 128,000 eggs were purchased, with 66,000 eggs surviving for the first batch. Of the 66,000 eggs, 48% of the fish were placed in Reach 1 and 52% were placed in Reach 2 on February 14 and 16, 2023. For the second batch, 120,000 eggs were placed in the incubator building, with 81,000 eggs surviving. Of the 81,000 eggs, 66% were placed in Reach 1 and 34% were placed in Reach 2.

2023-2024 Planned Incubator Operations: Lee reported for the 2023-2024 fiscal year, the KRFMP is contracted with Cold Springs Trout Farm once again and plan on placing 280,000 eggs into the incubator building, which will be broken up into two rounds. For the first round, KRFMP will place 130,000 to 150,000 eggs in the incubator building in late December-early January. The second round will be the remaining amount. The cost for the eggs purchase is going to be covered by a \$10,000 grant through the Kings River Conservancy.

2023-2024 Implementation Plan and Budget: Meadows reviewed the draft 2023-2024 KRFMP Annual Implementation Plan and Budget with the Committee, which was prepared for KRFMP by TSC.

Upon the motion of David Merritt, seconded by Steven Haugen, and unanimously carried by roll call vote, the 2023-2024 KRFMP Annual Implementation Plan and Budget was approved as presented. With the ExCom's approval, the plan will be uploaded to the KRFMP website for public access.

Review KRFMP Website Hosting and Maintenance Services Proposal:

Lee provided a brief overview of a proposal from Business Computer Technology to host and maintain the KRFMP website. The quote is much more reasonable in comparison to the company, Wonder Media, that currently manages the website.

Upon the motion of David Merritt, seconded by Gerald Hatler, and unanimously carried by roll call vote, the website will be hosted by Business Computer Technology moving forward. The website will also be ADA compliant.

Kings River Clean-Up Update: Lee reported the Kings River Clean-Up events will remain on hold until the Kings River and surrounding parks are reopened to the public.

Other

KRCD General Manager, David Merritt, announced the Thorburn Family will be gifting their property surrounding the Thorburn Channel to the Kings River Conservancy. KRCD currently has an easement with the Thorburn Family that provides the district access to the property and river. KRCD is working with the Conservancy to enter into a new agreement once the exchange has taken place, which Merritt suspects will occur in late December 2023-early January 2024.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 3:13 p.m.

Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for September 21, 2023, at 3:00 p.m., at the KRCD/KRWA office. Consultants will be provided with a Zoom link.

On September 11, 2023, the meeting was bumped up from 3:00 p.m. to 9:00 a.m. on September 21, 2023, and moved to the Zoom platform.

Respectfully Submitted,



Bailey Routt
Kings River Water Association
Executive Administrative Assistant