

---

---

# **SACRAMENTO ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION**

---

---

Mark White, Chair  
Richard Hunn, Vice Chair  
Thomas Malson  
Laura Nickerson  
Eric Rivero-Montes  
Stephanie Holstege  
Dr. Anthony DeRiggi  
Kayla Rabey

A JOINT COMMISSION APPOINTED BY:  
County of Sacramento  
City of Sacramento  
City of Isleton  
City of Folsom  
City of Galt  
City of Elk Grove

## **MINUTES**

**Monday, September 19, 2022 6 p.m.**

Meeting held via Zoom only.

Join ZoomGov Meeting

<https://saccounty-net.zoomgov.com/j/1608752767?pwd=cW9LaXFXL0ZkaE95ZFFReURtTlh3QT09>

Meeting ID: 160 875 2767

Passcode: 548412

One tap mobile

+16692545252,,1608752767#,,,,\*548412# US (San Jose)

+16692161590,,1608752767#,,,,\*548412# US (San Jose)

## **ITEM**

- 1 Call to Order – Chair White  
Meeting called to order at 6:00 pm.
- 2 Roll Call – Staff Secretary  
Commissioners present: Mark White, Richard Hunn, Laura Nickerson, Eric Rivero-Montes, Tom Malson, Stephanie Holstege, Kayla Rabey
- 3 Introduction of Commissioners
- 4 Public Comment  
\*Members of the public have three minutes to comment on each separate item including any matter not on the posted agenda.  
No public comment was made.
- 5 Native Plants and Habitats- Billy Krimmel, PhD, Founder and Ecologist, Miridae and Kate Hayes, Design Principal and Registered Landscape Architect, Miridae

Miridae specializes in creating native landscapes from small to large scale in regional

environments. The company designs/builds landscape projects, operates a mobile nursery and operates living labs which promote research and data collection and engage all ages in STEM projects. California native plants provide valuable habitat to native insects and wildlife and reflect the regional ecology. Residential projects are as important as corridor projects as they all make up the entire matrix.

Miridae is working on projects along utility corridors utilizing grassland habitats since plants taller than 12 feet are a fire hazard. The Oki Park Project is in a small residential area in College Glen. The project will include a multi-use shaped path, intertwining habitats of grassland, hedgerows and perennial buffers, with hubs of connection and learning spaced throughout. Plantings represent three themes of community, farm and habitat. The Ninos Parkway Project is a ¼ acre site being restored as a grassland. Grasslands are the best carbon sequestering ecosystems, even more effective than mature forests as so much of their biomass is underground. Grasslands are excellent carbon offset for utility companies.

SASD manages 130 pump stations on small plots. They approached Miridae for progressive landscaping ideas and Miridae designed small-plot living laboratories, used to attract and study ground nesting pollinator bees. Miridae designed a nesting bee bungalow to be installed on the plots and will study the use of the composting soil provided by the City of Sacramento Organic Waste Recycling on native insects. Composition of soil can be manipulated in these plots.

A collaboration with Capital Area Development Authority is in process to design an artistic seed dispersal structure which will disperse seeds of native plants along the O street corridor. Sculptures will disperse seed through birds eating them, wind, and the vibration of light rail. Patterns of seed movement and which plants thrived in an urban setting can be studied and data collected.

Miridae has a Seed Pile Project in collaboration with UC Davis, in which members of the public release seeds in unmanaged areas and report observations once a month. This data is uploaded on an app which informs future decisions about native landscape designs and decisions.

## 6 State of Pollinators in Sacramento County- David Kollen, Xerxes Society

Xerxes was founded in 1971 because of the xerxes blue butterfly which became extinct. Their mission is to protect wildlife through the conservation of invertebrates and their habitat. Invertebrates provide decomposition, biocontrol, food at the base of the food chain and pollination.

Eighty five percent of plants, 1200 crops globally, require a pollinator to set seed. There are 6 main groups of pollinators: butterflies, moths, flies, bees, wasps, and beetles. Bees are the primary group- their behaviors include collecting and transporting pollen, foraging in the area around their nest and exhibiting flower constancy. Bees learn tricks to get to the pollen in some plants that require skill in pushing or moving around plant parts. There are between 20,000-25,000 bee species varieties worldwide. California has 1600 of those species and Sacramento has 100-300 species. Projects are underway to increase knowledge of the number and range of distribution of native bee species to inform habitat decisions.

Native bees are solitary, gentle and unlikely to sting. Seventy percent are ground nesters and the rest are tunnel nesters, with 1% cavity nesters. Good habitats support the entire bee life cycle. Bees need secure nest sites, flowers for foraging, and a pesticide free environment. Man-made nest boxes are best scattered and not all placed in a group in order not to draw predators. Bees prefer native plants for foraging and areas of benign neglect are beneficial be habitats.

Pesticides are a threat to the bee population. Suburbia has more pesticide per acres than agricultural land because of cosmetic use. Pesticides is found in stormwater run of patios and driveways. It's best to avoid pesticides and avoid systemic pesticides like neonicotinoids that remain in stems for the life of the plant.

Xerces Society has a program called X kids for 3<sup>rd</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> grade to learn about invertebrates.

Homestead bee keeping doesn't add to bee conservation effort because they compete with native bees for the foraging area.

7 Sacramento County Sustainability Update- John Lundgren, Sustainability Manager

8 Delta Tunnel Project Construction Discussion

Commissioner Hunn has been researching the impacts of construction of the Delta Tunnel Project associated with tunnel waste discharges on water quality and aquatic resources. Three of the Delta Project facilities will be located in Sacramento County. There will be approximately 14.4 million cubic yards of Reusable Tunnel Material (RTM) discharged during the construction of the Delta Tunnels. RTM is a mixture of conditioners, called surfactants, and wet material lifted to the ground. After RTM is removed from the tunnel, it would be tested for hazardous material, dried mechanically or allowed to dry naturally. It will be stock piled or transported by further use.

Decant liquid collected from the RTM will be treated onsite or stored onsite to reduce water supply needs with excess being discharged to adjacent waterbodies. The plan has little discussion about treatment system capacity, how it will be treated and under what conditions it would be discharged. Up to 33 million liters of surfactant will be potentially used in tunnel digging and RTM management which would then need treatment after water is drained from the RTM.

Risks of surfactants.

They are not classified as hazardous so not tested for in the RTM. They are classified as toxic which can impact aquatic species if discharged to water bodies. They are not biodegradable as they have not gone through a municipal wastewater treatment or septic system process. Best practice is not to release surfactants into surface water or soil.

Questions to the SEC:

1. Does the Draft EIR provide sufficient information about storing, using, treating and disposing large volumes of surfactants to be used in tunnel excavation?
2. Does the Draft EIR discuss the risk to the environment associated with the release of

surfactants to surface water

3. Does the EIR adequately discuss the potential impact to the aquatic environment associated with the DISCHARGE of tunnel wastewater to surface water?
4. Does the Draft EIR provide adequate commitment to avoid, minimize or otherwise mitigate potential environmental impacts resulting from release of tunnel wastewater?

Vote to draft comment letter regarding deficiencies regarding treatment of surfactants and toxic materials potential discharge to surface water, including lack of discussion of Water Board discharge permit and alteration permit from Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Motion made by Laura Nickerson, seconded by Tom Malson.

Ayes: Mark White, Richard Hunn, Laura Nickerson, Eric Rivero-Montes, Tom Malson, Stephanie Holstege, Kayla Rabey

Abstentions: None

Noes: None

Motion passes with vote of 6.

Motion made by Tom Malson, seconded by Laura Nickerson, to send letter as drafted by Commissioner Hunn after email review by commissioners of inclusion of deficiencies regarding treatment of surfactants and toxic materials potential discharge to surface water, including lack of discussion of Water Board discharge permit and alteration permit from Department of Fish and Wildlife. If a commissioner wishes to edit the content, the letter will not be sent and will be carried forward for consideration at the October 17<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Ayes: Mark White, Richard Hunn, Laura Nickerson, Eric Rivero-Montes, Tom Malson, Stephanie Holstege, Kayla Rabey

Abstentions: None

Noes: None

Motion passes with vote of 6.

## 9 Approve August 15, 2022 Meeting Minutes

Motion to approve August minutes made by Richard Hunn, seconded by Eric Rivero-Montes.

Ayes: Mark White, Richard Hunn, Laura Nickerson, Eric Rivero-Montes, Tom Malson, Stephanie Holstege, Kayla Rabey

Abstentions: None

Noes: None

Motion passes with vote of 6.

## 10 EMD Director's Report- Jennea Monasterio, Director of Sacramento County Environmental Management Department

- 11 Report Back on SEC Commissioner Monitoring of Environmental Issues and Agencies  
Tom Malson reported on a dry well in Herald. Stephanie Holstege mentioned the compilation of webpage links distributed to the commissioners for review.
- 12 Commissioner Comments
- 13 Next Meeting- October 17, 2022 6:00 p.m. via Zoom

*This meeting is being recorded in its entirety and will be available the following day. Agendas are posted in the offices of the City of Sacramento, Folsom, Galt, Isleton, Elk Grove, and the County of Sacramento and also on the EMD Website at: [emd.saccounty.gov](http://emd.saccounty.gov). Agendas are also forwarded to interested parties upon request.*