

**Sacramento Environmental Commission (SEC)
Minutes – July 21, 2008**

Commission members present: Robert Bailey, Krista Clark, Matthew Jones, Michael Mendez, Marjorie Namba, and Mark White.

Commission members absent: Panama Bartholomy, Mike Fallon, and Shane Jiang

Commission Staff: Val Siebal, Director, Environmental Management Department (EMD) and Sarah Crowl, SEC Secretary.

Other Guests: Dave Brown, Sacramento/Yolo Mosquito Abatement District; Stan Dean, Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District; Dave Brent and Chris Powell, City of Sacramento Department of Utilities.

The meeting was called to order by **SEC Chair Clark** at 6:30 p.m. Attendance list and sign in sheet were distributed.

1. **Public Comment** – **Chair Clark** read a statement relative to audiotaping of the meeting and posting of agendas. She then opened the meeting to members of the audience.
2. **Consent Item - Minutes** - It was **moved (Bailey)**, **seconded (Namba)** and **carried** to approve the minutes of the June 23, 2008 meeting as presented.
3. **West Nile Update** – Director Siebal introduced Dave Brown from the Sacramento/Yolo Mosquito Abatement District who gave a speech.

The incidence of West Nile Virus in mosquitoes and birds has increased since it was discovered in Sacramento in 2005, and is likely to continue to increase. The District is concerned because this outbreak has not followed the pattern observed in outbreaks in the other parts of the county. Also, the development of the outbreak is about three weeks ahead of the progression of events seen in the last few years.

Infected birds and mosquitoes have mostly been found in the Pocket and Elk Grove-Florin areas. These areas were aerielly sprayed last week, (July 16, 17, and 18th) but it is too early to determine effectiveness.

The District is participating in an aggressive public outreach program to discourage mosquito proliferation by reducing standing water, and monitoring backyard pools of foreclosed homes. Green waste collection loose in the street also contributes as it releases organics in the runoff water from lawn watering.

Pools abandoned in the foreclosure crisis have been an ideal breeding ground for mosquitoes. The District is encouraging neighbors living next to such pools to alert them. They are also engaging in aerial surveys to find the pools. When located, the water can be treated with mosquito fish to reduce the mosquitoes.

More information is available on www.westnile.ca.gov.

4. **Update on Ammonia in treated wastewater** -- Director Siebal introduced Stan Dean of the Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District , who gave a Powerpoint Presentation.

There are three types of fish in decline in the Sacramento River: Delta Smelt, Striped Bass, and Longfin Smelt. It is difficult to pinpoint exactly what is causing the reduction: ammonia, other toxins, non-native predators, and the decline in algae could all play a role.

The Sanitation District is participating in in-depth studies with many other entities to determine how the discharged ammonia is affecting the River's ecosystem. Converting to an ammonia-removing treatment plant is possible but would be very costly.

5. **Sacramento City Water Meter Update, City of Sacramento, Department of Utilities** – Chair Clark introduced this item and Dave Brent, Engineering Manager spoke in place of Publicist Jessica Hess. He was accompanied by Chris Powell, Utility Construction Coordinator.

Sacramento is the last large city in California to install water meters for all homes, although they have been mandatory in new development since 1992. By 2025, all homes are required by the state to be retrofitted with water meters. The City of Sacramento is installing 110,000 meters in the sidewalks of non-metered homes and businesses, and starting in 2010, property owners will be charged for water usage based on meter reads. The City plans a test run in 2009 to inform homeowners of their water usage and what they will be charged once the meter rates are implemented.

Action Item: Member White has requested a report or presentation on a water meter pricing study the City Utilities Department is conducting when it is completed.

6. **Recognition of Retiring Chair Clark** -- Director Siebal presented Chair Clark, who is moving out of the country, with a plaque in honor of her 4 years' service to the Commission. Chair Clark expressed that she has found her experience in the SEC to be fun and interesting and the commission is a good group.

Vice Chair Bailey will now step into the Commission Chair seat and Member White will become Vice Chair.

7. **Sacramento County Environmental Management Department Director's Report** -- Director Siebal highlighted the article published in the July/August 2008 edition of the California Counties magazine (distributed to Commission members in their board packets) regarding EMD's food safety inspection program.
8. **Environmental News Review** – Vice Chair Bailey mentioned the two articles from the Sacramento Bee that were provided in member board packets: (1) *State Renews Climate Battle: New rules to curb emissions call for a 30 percent cut by 2020*, dated June 26, 2008; (2) *Wilton Farm Producing Turkeys and a Side of Solar*, dated July 8, 2008
9. **2008 Proposed Meeting Topics** – Chair Clark and Vice Chair Bailey suggested topics for the next meeting: (1) Strategic Planning for the Environmental Management Department; (2) County Habitat Conservation Plan; (3) General discussion on topics for the rest of the year
10. **Correspondence** – Secretary Crowl noted that no correspondence had been received.
11. **Adjournment** - The meeting was adjourned at 7:35 p.m. The next SEC meeting will be held August 25, 2008 at 6:00 p.m. at the Environmental Management Department, 8475 Jackson Road, Sacramento, California.