

North Bay Watershed Association Board of Directors Meeting - Summary

March 3, 2023 | 9:30 – 11:30 a.m.

NO PHYSICAL MEETING LOCATION

Zoom Meeting

www.nbwatershed.org

1. **Welcome and Call to Order—Directors or Member Representatives Present Included:**

Michael Boorstein – Central Marin Sanitation Agency	Jean Mariani (Chair) – Novato Sanitary District
Leon Garcia – City of American Canyon	Pamela Meigs – Ross Valley Sanitary District
John Shribbs – City of Petaluma	Elizabeth Patterson – Solano County Water Agency
Cory Bytof – City of San Rafael	Chris Choo – County of Marin
Kate Hagemann – City of San Rafael	Sabrina Marson – NBWA
Susan Gorin – City of Sonoma	Sheri Lasick – West Yost (Public)
Mary Sackett – County of Marin	Susan Stompe – Public
Megan Clark – Las Gallinas Valley Sanitary District	Kate Powers – Public
Larry Russell – Marin Municipal Water District	Vanessa Apodaca – (RRWA) Public
Ranjiv Khush – Marin Municipal Water District	Jack Gibson – Public
Robb Carson – MCSTOPPP	Stephen Keese – Public
Ryan Gregory – Napa Sanitation District	Ann Thomas – Public
Rick Fraites – North Marin Water District	Shelley Reilly – Public (Marin Water)
Tony Williams – North Marin Water District	

Seventeen NBWA board members attended the meeting comprised of 27-member agency staff, stakeholders, partners, and interested members of the public.

Call to Order – Chair Mariani called the meeting to order at 9:36 am via Zoom and took roll call.

2. **General Public Comment** – None

3. **Agenda Review and Approve Past Meeting Minutes** – Chair Mariani asked for any Board members to speak up if there were requested changes to the agenda. No comments.

Chair approved the Agenda by consensus.

Treasurer's Report

No comments. Chair accepted the report by consensus.

4. **Guest Presentation: Status of Federal Infrastructure and State Water Program Funding Opportunities**

Sheri Lasick, Senior Grant Funding Specialist, West Yost

Sheri provided an overview status of Federal and State funding, designated funding agencies, general range of priorities for water services agencies, districts and municipalities, and answered questions on successful positioning and preparation of funding applications.

Grant Funds Come From:

- State General Fund
- Voter Bond Propositions
- Congressional Appropriations
- Local Measures
- Foundations
- Corporations

Federal Infrastructure Funding – Water

- Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) aka Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL),
 - \$55 billion to upgrade water infrastructure
 - \$50 billion towards water system resiliency
- Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) - New
 - \$5.5 Billion for Flood Mitigation and Climate Resiliency
 - \$550 Million Planning, Design, and construction of water projects for DAC that do not reliable water access

IIJA Funding for Water

Funding Category	Funding Amount
Drinking Water and Clean Water SRF	\$23.4 B
Lead Service Lines	\$15 B
PFAS and Emerging Contaminants	\$10 B
Rural Water	\$1 B
Western Water	\$7.1 B
Total	\$56.5 B

IIJA Funding for Resilience

Funding Category	Funding Amount
Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient, and Cost-Saving Transportation	\$8.7 B
Wildfire Management	\$8.25 B
Investments in Resilience through the Army Corps of Engineers	\$7 B
Western Water	\$3.8 B
Flood Mitigation Assistance Program	\$3.5 B
Weatherization	\$3.5 B
Cybersecurity	\$1.3 B
Total	\$36 B

Federal Agencies Granting Funds

- Bureau of Reclamation
- United States Department of Agriculture
- United States Environmental Protection Agency
- United States Department of Energy
- Forest Service Department of Agriculture
- Department of Homeland Security -FEMA
- United States Fish and Wildlife Service

Sheri's presentation slides can be viewed online at

<https://www.nbwatershed.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/Guest-Presentation-Status-of-Federal-Infrastructure-and-State-Water-Program-Funding-Opportunities.pdf>

Slides provide information on federal grant requirements, state funding opportunities, how grants are distributed, how to prepare for grant success, near-term funding opportunity examples, and forecasted funding opportunities.

Websites resources

- Grants.gov (Federal website to search for grants)
- Grants.ca.gov, California grants centralized database
- Build.gov (guidebook and database of programs funded under IIJA)
- madeinamerica.gov/ (BABA waiver information)
- USBR.gov/bil
- USBR.gov/WaterSMART

Questions and Comments

Director Fraites: (In relation to the State Funding Opportunities slide) Some percentages of where this money went were shown and I did a quick add up, and it went over 100%. What am I missing?

Sheri: This image came from the State directly. I think, the way it works is there's some overlap. For example: 41% is environmental and water. But then they show a disadvantaged communities category—disadvantaged communities would be eligible for the environment and water funds also. Some federal programs have some different definitions, and they use some different metrics. It's important to talk to the funding agencies themselves as well, because [you can get a] better understanding that had how to interpret their criteria.

Director Gregory: Can you talk to briefly the money going out now and grants, and then the money that's going to the States through formula funding and how those work together?

Sheri: When we hear about the infrastructure grant and funds, where does it go? Some of those funds go directly through Grant programs directly to States—there's formulas there that have been exist in existence for a long time. For example, the clean water and drinking water acts of been around since the seventies. There's prescribed formula that show what each state is going to get. California was supposed to get an increase of 800 million, but some interesting things happened. Some of the money when to the State and went into the ESRA pot, but not as much as was originally planned. Other funding was direct appropriations by Congress. Some agencies do find directly. The EPA does not fund very many projects directly most of their funds go through to the State, Bureau of Reclamation provides direct funding, the United States Department of Energy does both. Look at both resources, and if it is pass through funds that come into the State, that means that there's Federal requirements that are attached to it.

Director Gregory: Given that the state of this budget coming soon, do we expect any callbacks to programs that the governor is committed to?

Sheri: There's still a good amount invested into drought and water supply resiliency. We really didn't see a lot of pullbacks for water projects we're seeing more pullback for some other projects. The PFOS funding that's been put on hold so it's probably not going to be funded at the at the level that they originally thought, which I think was estimated to be about a 160 million. This may be cut in half. This is a proposed budget so it's subject to change.

Vanessa Apodaca: You mentioned continuous Grant opportunities. If an agency applies for a continuous opportunity, and is not awarded funds, is there an opportunity to resubmit? Is there a typical timeframe for when you're notified whether funds were awarded or not?

Sheri: I would recommend as if it doesn't get funded to reach back out to the funding agency and ask questions: Where were we strong? Was there something that wasn't clear? Did we miss the mark? Is there another spending program that this would be better suited for?

Awards are different for different programs. Bureau of Reclamation is pretty quick (4-6 months). I've seen things take up to or over a year. It is helpful to look at guidelines, because each grant program does typically include a schedule as far as when they expect to do awards and those are important to understand for your project schedules.

Director Schribbs: Instead of us competing, each city or county, is there regionally based projects that we could go across the board, across our cities and our counties and do a bundled regional project application? And would this group be the appropriate group to organize that and make that happen?

Sheri: It really depends, like the Integrated Regional Water Management Program (IRWM). They do prefer projects that are regionally based. The challenge with that is that the IRWM has been around a long time and the funding is getting smaller. We would have to look at what kind of project makes sense, and how much money does your region have. I've seen other regions do the same thing—Rather than competing with one another, they just got together and decided how to split up the money.

Director Mariani: Chris, maybe we can follow up with Andy. I know he's got some ideas along those lines as well and look at other efforts that we've done in the past.

Director Keese: Are you aware of any RND funding for development of new desalination technologies that address the objections from environmentalists and cost objections (sea life in the intake water, and discharging of concentrated saline back into the ocean, which creates dead zones)?

Sheri: USBR has funding for research for desal projects, as well as for planning and for implementation it is competitive. We would have to look deeper into that.

Director Meigs: (just got back from Casa Conference) PFOS is a hot topic. You quoted 10 billion in the beginning of the presentation. Is that research of active programs, drinking water, recycled water? How do you think that money is going to be governed?

Sheri: That's through the Infrastructure Act--each state is going to get some. The way California is working with it is, it was coming through two different programs. They are accepting applications through their SRF application format. They just set up the guidelines late last year, so we're not super clear on all things. What I would recommend the first path forward is to talk to, to submit the general application on the ESRA program because that's a simple application, then get in their queue and talk to their project managers about your project in more detail.

5. Executive Director Report

Andy Rodgers, Executive Director

Updates since last meeting

- Congratulations to Jean Mariani, Director NSD, and Ryan Gregory, Supervisor Napa County as our new NBWA officers for 2023!
- Followed up from CASQA legislative subcommittee meeting advocating for storm water funding to be included in CA water bond
- Participated in North Bay/Coast GSAs (6) collaboration

- Continued work on NBWA/NBWRA alignment planning

Administrative Activities

- Coordinated future Board and social events
- Coordinated scope and contract to initiate development of droughtSMART & fireSMART
- Working with SFEI on NBWA website rebuild! Beta for Board review soon
- Coordinated with MMWD Finance Manager and NBWA staff on reporting
- AR – Membership dues
- AP – Subconsultants

Communications

- Held virtual BOD meeting highlighting Sonoma Water's Regional Water Supply Resiliency study on Feb 3
- Preparing NBWA 1st Quarter Newsletter
- Coordinated w members to host meetings throughout NB region
- Regional partners
- Subject matter experts and speakers

Committees

- Met with Chair, Deputy Director, and staff to progress NBWA initiatives

North Bay Watershed Association MOU Refresher: Mission, Goals and Objectives

Mission Statement: Facilitate partnerships across political boundaries that promote stewardship of the North San Pablo Bay watershed resources.

- Bring together local agencies to work cooperatively and effectively on issues of common interest.
- Be proactive on watershed-based regulation, which increasingly affects areas beyond traditional political boundaries.
- Work cooperatively to increase eligibility for watershed-based funding.
- Maximize effective use of resources.
- Enhance the NBWA's influence on local, state, and federal policies and programs.
- Educate communities about the importance of watershed stewardship.

NBWA FY 2022/23 Work Plan

Executive Director services

- Continue transition to in-person/hybrid (including field trips) meetings
- Member communications and advocacy
- Convene Executive/Admin Steering Committee – Spring 2023
 - Prioritize and provide direction on implementing initiatives (small grants, regional planning, association alignment)

Implement focused regional initiatives

- Water services infrastructure and land use/housing – Focused workshop #2, spring 2023
- Align missions and programs with NBWRA – Chairs meeting March 2023
- Annual General Managers meeting – May 2023
- Phase I (exploratory) DroughtSMART & FireSMART branding pilot – Spring 2023
- Proposal to support convening a series of ACWA-endorsed regional industry workshops

Participate in regional forums

- IRWM, RCIS, SFBRA, others

Convene Joint Technical Committee

- Programmatic planning and funding

Communications

- Quarterly newsletter
- Update NBWA website

FY 2022-23 Board Meetings

- April 7 – In person/hybrid
- May 5 – Field trip
- June 2 – In person/hybrid
- July 7 – Virtual
- August ** SKIP MONTH**
- September 1 – In person/hybrid
- October 6 – In person/hybrid
- November 3 – In person/hybrid
- December 1 – In person/hybrid

Agenda Items for Future Meetings

Topics in development:

OneWater-OneBay Strategic Funding Initiatives, Regional Resiliency, SFBay Basin Plan Amendment, American Canyon Field Trip, Berryessa and Solano County Field Trips, Environmental Education & Grant Funding, Small Grants Program, Urban Scale Carbon Sequestration Initiatives, Regulatory Compliance Partnerships, Baylands Strategies, DroughtSMART/FireSMART, Water Management & Conveyance Innovations, Capital and Natural Assets Management, Small Grants and Scholarship Program, New Members!!

6. Board Information Exchange and Drought Updates

Members highlighted issues and shared items of interest.

Director Clark: We are talking about PFOS because our GM, Curtis Paxton, just came back from Washington. We're going to have an agenda item on that. We will also get information to the public about PFOS out via our newsletter. We are also planning Judy's memorial and a possible bench or scholarship. We haven't had any spills during the rains.

Director Meigs: Our district has instituted 24/7 storm patrols during the heavy rains. we collaborated with MMWD to acquire 3 new portable water meters for the districts who are cleaning equipment fleet. I think, as a regional agency, I'm just wondering how do we collaborate with all these organizations on how we can help each other, whether it's a storm or not, or cleaning equipment?

Director Garcia: We've formed a new commission, open space, active transportation and sustainability. On State route 29 goes up north of America Canyon, there's a swale area there that is not draining; it's a Caltrans administered. The road was closed. Fortunately, we have alternate route.

Director Gorin: We did declare emergency declaration this week, dealing with the snow. All of our drought weakened trees came tumbling down in the snow and the winds, so a number of our roads washed out, we have a lot of potholes. A lot of trees down because of their weakened condition in the snow.

Susan Stompe: Conservation League is having a discussion with the three managers of the three water districts that provide water. Two are county. That's Grant Davis from Sonoma Water, Ben Horenstein from Marin Water, and Tony Williams from North Marin Water district. This will be on Friday, March thirty-first. It's a breakfast meeting at 7 30 Am. At the McInnis Park Clubhouse. The meeting is open to the public. "Future of Water Resiliency" There is a charge for the breakfast. Contact marinconservationleague.org

7. Announcements and Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 11:51 am

Next Meeting: April 7, 2023