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# **SACRAMENTO ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION**

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Richard Hunn, Vice-Chair  
Thomas Malson  
Laura Nickerson  
Eric Rivero-Montes,  
Mark White, Chair  
Shelby Witherby

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, July 19th, 2021, 6 pm  
Via Zoom**

Join ZoomGov Meeting

<https://saccounty-net.zoomgov.com/j/1607485866?pwd=bVZ6bXZpNFZaVWZCYVozRXdHekNwdz09>

Meeting ID: 160 748 5866

Passcode: 775203

One tap mobile

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## **ITEM**

1 Call to Order – Commissioner White

Richard Hunn, Thomas Malson, Laura Nickerson, Eric Rivero Montes, Mark White, and Shelby Witherby were present.

2 Roll Call – Staff Secretary

3 Introduction of Commissioners

4 Public Comment

5 Lower American River Water Quality Monitoring- Alisha Wenzel, Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board

Alisha Wenzel is Regional Coordinator for the Surface Water Ambient Monitoring Program. SWAMP is not a regulatory program but is filling the need to assess surface water quality, designed to support water resource management in California. The SWAMP programs include:

Bioaccumulation, Bioassessment, Stream Pollution Trends, and Freshwater Harmful Algal Blooms (HABS). The Harmful Algae Bloom program was developed in response to increasing HABS being seen across California water bodies. Data can be found at the portal [www.mywaterquality.ca.gov](http://www.mywaterquality.ca.gov)

The HABS portal has an incident report map to report blooms and shows test results from sites tested. Ongoing hotspots continue to be the Delta and Clear Lake. Not all algae is harmful. Alicia showed pictures of filamentous green algae, not harmful, vs. cyanobacteria which is toxic.

There is a Safe to Eat Portal shows advisory maps and detailed fish data in various regions.

The Central Valley Recreational Beneficial Use Assessment evaluates the protection of recreation beneficial uses, targeting swimming holes and beaches. Sampling is primarily done during summer months when the number of users is highest. Testing focuses on fecal indicator bacteria, E. Coli. Most E.coli strains are harmless and found in pets, wildlife and human waste. State Water Board adopted bacteria water quality objectives a few years ago based on EPA guidelines.

The Lower American River was first monitored in 2007. Testing sites have been added to a dozen sites where people swim and access the water. Bacteria Indicators worsen near the Confluence and Discovery Park, and exceed bacteria objectives at these sites. Grants fund the source identification study.

Potential sources of E.coli were looked at: stormwater systems, sanitary sewer overflows, broken or leaking septic or sewer lines, direct human input, domestic animals and wildlife (geese.) Testing is implemented in a phased approach and started during dry weather conditions. 1<sup>st</sup> phase starts at Paradise Beach and extends to Sutter's Landing; the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase includes Sutter's Landing to the Confluence. Samples are collected from water at ankle of knee depth, where the water is not mixed and is warmer. The testing goal was 30 dry season sampling sets, looking for E.coli and bacterial DNA source markers. Most of the sites at this reach of river met the bacteria objectives. There was a minor exceedance at sump 10 and the right bank of Sutter's Landing.

DNA results indicate bird sources of E.coli, not humans, with dog signals at a very low level below quantification limits. Results for urban runoff were similar. Paradise Beach has a stronger dog signal than bird signal which is consistent with the use of dog walking at the park.

Testing phase 2 will move downstream from Sutter's Landing to the Confluence. More samples will be taken on the south shore as there are a large number of homeless encampments on the south shore which concerns citizens.

There is no current guidance for posting at freshwater beaches when HABS or E.Coli exceedances are found. Central Valley Water Board has an interactive map online to show weekly data so the public can stay informed. If birds are the primary source of E.coli then their feces may be studied in the future to determine pathogen risk.

- 6 Sacramento Valley Conservancy- Habitat and Groundwater Recharge Projects- Kelly Hopkins, Executive Director, Sacramento Valley Conservancy

The Sacramento Valley Conservancy (SVC) protects and stewards natural and working land and scenic open space for the benefit of current and future generations. They were/are accredited by the Land Trust Accreditation Commission in 2009 and forward. Open spaces are protected in perpetuity.

SVC works with farms and ranches when their mission aligns. They are involved in the protection of over 16,000 acres involving conservation easements, preserve management properties, and title properties.

SVC high priority areas include Sutter Butte to the Delta and the foothills to Yolo County. They protect vernal pools and upland habitat: Fairy Shrimp, California Tiger Salamander, Burrowing Owls, Swainson's Hawk. More high priority areas that have recharge potential and flood setbacks are areas along the Sacramento and Feather Rivers, and oak woodland from Deer Creek Hills Preserve extending to Folsom south. Eventually a paved trail will connect the two areas and the land in between will be preserved. The South Sacramento Habitat Conservation Plan appendix J goals are part of SVC plan. SVC is focusing on reaching out to landowners in the Lower Cosumnes Watershed to provide education regarding landowner opportunity for conservation easements to protect habitat, seasonal flooding on parcels of their land for water recharge and switching to alternative crops to support specific species and their habitat which can provide a pathway to tax savings for the landowner. Conservation easements follow the property if the land is sold. Future owners can use the land in various ways as long as the habitat being protected in the easement is provided for. SVC acts as the preservation auditor in many cases.

In addition to acquisition and conservation efforts SVC has a robust education program. Each year 3,000 children visit Deer Creek Hills and Camp Pollock. These are open to the public all year but other critical/sensitive preserves are only open for docent guided outings. SVC holds several conservation easements in the Dry Creek Parkway area which also allows for public access. SVC holds conservations easements and partners with the Cosumnes River Preserve.

Sacramento Region is home to the largest Blue Oak Woodland old growth forest in the country.

- 7 Approve June 2021 Minutes

Motion to approve the June minutes was made by Laura Nickerson, seconded by Eric Rivero Montes.

Ayes: Richard Hunn, Thomas Malson, Laura Nickerson, Eric Rivero Montes, Mark White, and Shelby Witherby

Noes: 0

Abstentions: 0

8 Discuss Future SEC Meetings- Zoom vs. In Person

A motion to continue meeting via zoom was made by Mark White and seconded by Laura Nickerson.

Ayes: Richard Hunn, Thomas Malson, Laura Nickerson, Eric Rivero Montes, Mark White, and Shelby Witherby

Noes: 0

Abstentions: 0

9 Report Back on SEC Commissioner Monitoring of Environmental Issues and Agencies  
Commissioner Malson- Folsom is updating its backflow ordinance. It does away with tags and transitions to an on-line database. Revenue would be maintained by charging when test reports are submitted online.

I would suggest that EMD review what City of Folsom is proposing and report back to the SEC at a future meeting.

There were no other items of SEC interest from the FIG Cities.

10 Sacramento County Environmental Management Department Director's Report- Marie Woodin, Director Environmental Management Department

11 Commissioner Comments

12 Adjournment – Meeting was adjourned at 7:32 pm. Next meeting-September 20, 2021 6:00 p.m. via Zoom

*This meeting of the Sacramento Environmental Commission is cablecast LIVE on Metro Cable 14, the local government affairs channel on Comcast, Consolidated Communications and AT&T U-Verse. This meeting is closed captioned and livestreamed at.*

*Today's meeting will be repeated Wednesday, July 21 at 2:00 p.m. on Channel 14. This meeting can also be viewed at [youtube.com/metrocable14](https://www.youtube.com/metrocable14)*

*This meeting is being audiotaped/videotaped in its entirety and will be available at the Environmental Management Department office. 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.net](http://emd.saccounty.net). Agendas are also forwarded to interested parties upon request.*