

MEETING REPORT
DITCH COMMITTEE
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 2024
9:00 A.M.

Chair: Director Balen
Member: Director Ringen

Rick Lind, EN2 Resources
Summer Abel, EN2 Resources

Staff: Don Perkins
Eric Hall
Kurt Bayers
Carolyn Higgins
Abby Parcon
Tony Diaz
Emily Long
Melissa McMullen

1. Update on the USDA Forest Service Community Wildfire Defense Grant Program Project – Rick Lind

Rick Lind provided an update on the USDA Forest Service Community Wildfire Defense Grant.

- Division of Work
- Scope of Work
- Progress and Next Steps
- Wildfire Risk Mitigation Plan
- TUD Assets – Risk Reduction Prioritization
- Co-Benefits Mapping and Evaluation
- Proposed Management Areas
- Decision – Support Information Matrix (Example)

Raw Water Ditch Draft Points Plan for Wildfire Protection

- Objectives for Raw Water Ditches
- 2022/2024 Field Reviewed Draft Points
- Draft Points with TUD Customer Service Areas
- Raw Water Ditch Draft Point Evaluation Criteria
- Wildfire Protection Draft Points Plan
- Steps to Complete TUD Wildfire Defense Plan

Director Balen recommended that the District develop Memorandum of Understanding with Tuolumne County and Cal Fire to use raw water draft points instead of treated water whenever possible for fire suppression.

Director Ringen suggested staff do a Press Release with an update on the USDA Forest Service Community Wildfire Defense Grant Program Project.

Committee Recommendation: This item was informational only.

2. Information on the Cost Breakdown of Raw Water Delivery

Carolyn Higgins provided a Raw Water Delivery Expense Analysis.

- Five Year Average FY 2020-2025
- Raw Water Expenses (\$2.4M)
- Raw Water Consumption (Five Year Average)
- Raw Water Consumption by Customer Type
- Expense Distribution by Customer Type
- Distributed Expenses Vs Revenue Recovery

Director Balen suggested that staff look at ways to manage ditch water conveyance volunteers, improve raw water quality, develop policies to help citizens be good stewards of the water and provide public education on the value of the ditch system.

Committee Recommendation: This item was informational only.

3. Stormwater Response Discussion

The Committee viewed the Utica Water and Power Authority – Utica’s Response Winter 2023 video showing Utica staff responding to severe storm water as an educational piece.

Director Balen stated that she would like to see staff develop a video showing the intricacies of the ditch system and the difficulties the District faces during winter storms for public education.

Committee Recommendation: This item was informational only.

4. Discussion Regarding Upcoming Ditch Maintenance and Projects

Kurt Bayers reviewed the upcoming Ditch Maintenance and projects.

- Main Canal Ditch Outage - Begins October 13, 2024
- Six temps were hired
- Spill Twelve – Maintenance
- Spill Eight - Maintenance
- Shaws Flat – 350 feet left to shoot

Committee Recommendation: This item is informational only.

5. Discussion Regarding the Historic Properties Management Plan (HPMP); Tuolumne Utilities District Ditch System

Director Balen stated that staff has the opportunity to monitor the past work that was Level 1 or Level 2 criteria in the HPMP. Eric Hall responded that staff is currently involved in monitoring activities along maintenance projects of the ditch system.

Director Balen recommended implementing Public Education Component in the 2023 HPMP including developing a historical photographic record of cultural resources for reference and creating public education interpretive signs within some portion of the ditch system that is accessible to the public. Director Balen recommended using Rick Lind of EN2 Resources for an integrated approach to Cultural and Natural Resources Monitoring.

Committee Recommendation: Staff contract with a qualified consultant for seeking grant opportunities that would fulfill the Public Education piece of the HPMP. This would include developing a historic database for resource monitoring and future restoration work.