

## SUMMARY REPORT

### Cachuma Operation & Maintenance Board (COMB)

#### Regular Meeting---July 24, 2023

##### Action items:

The board received and filed the 4th quarter financial report for fiscal year 2022-2023. COMB concluded the fiscal year approx. \$850,000 under budget. This will result in a constructive return of funds to the member agencies after the annual audit review is completed. No vote needed.

The winter rains caused overflow at Lauro Reservoir. This led to significant damage to the service road around the reservoir that also serves as a bypass channel to direct overflow water away from the reservoir and down to the nearby creek. The board approved an engineering services contract and a separate construction contract for design and repair to the road/bypass channel. (Previous improvements to a different portion of the road/channel were not damaged by the rains. Approximately one-half of the roadway remains to be similarly upgraded. Repairs to the winter damage will fix a portion; additional work will have to await further grant funding and may be done next summer.) Approved for this design and repair project, in the amount of approx. \$188,000, a portion of which may receive FEMA and CalOES funding. VOTE: 6-0.

##### GM Janet Gingras reported:

--Discussions have commenced on an amendment to COMB's Operations & Maintenance contract with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation. This amendment is expected to extend the existing contract by three years, to allow time for more extensive negotiations for a new, long-term contract. It is expected that the amendment will be available for COMB board consideration at the September board meeting, in time for a Sept. 30 implementation deadline.

--COMB received another award for its Annual Comprehensive Financial Report. This marks six consecutive years of this achievement.

--COMB honored staff biologist Scott Engblom for 25 years of service to the community and to the steelhead trout COMB is working to protect.

##### Engineer Joel Degner reported:

--the forecast for a "strong" winter El Nino has increased from 20% last month to 66% at this reporting.

--The 5.1 earthquake in Ojai on Aug. 20 triggered certain inspection protocols, due to its size and proximity. No damage or unusual conditions were found.

--COMB has issued a contract to Otis to repair water damage to the North Portal elevator at Lake Cachuma. Although the elevator is 800' inland from the lake, lake water migrates toward the elevator shaft. Future work may need to be done to reduce seepage, which becomes more of an issue when the lake elevation rises, as it did this year.

--Lauro Reservoir's debris basin was cleared of over 3,000 cubic yards of sediment and the Spillway stilling well, which was very clogged, is being cleared using hoses and vacuum trucks to reduce any effects to the creek below.

--Other storm-related repairs and clean-up, and all monthly maintenance activities, continue.

Fisheries Manager Tim Robinson reported:

--As the Bureau has continued to ramp down water releases into the Lower Santa Ynez River to the amounts required by the State Water board, COMB continues to do stranding surveys to provide data on the effects of the ramp-downs.

--The Bureau is doing needed repairs to certain large valves at Bradbury Dam. It has also repaired the lifting motors for the radial gates near the top of the dam, which are needed for release of water in "spill" events.

--COMB repairs are to begin soon at crossings 5 and 9 on Quiota Creek.

--Numerous O. Mykiss (trout) have been sighted in the river, including large fish that are thought to be anadromous, meaning they have gone out to sea and returned. That is always a very good sight for this river system.

A closed session was held on one item, with no reportable action.

Prepared by GWD rep. Lauren Hanson.

NOTE: Approved COMB minutes, and more information on COMB's work, may be found at the agency's website, [www.cachuma-board.org](http://www.cachuma-board.org).

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