SJWA Reclaimed Water – A Temporary Reprieve?

By Tom Paulek

he Friends February 2014 newsletter (SJWA Reclaimed Water-going down the Drain) gave the alarm the Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) and Eastern Municipal Water District (EMWD) were negotiating the renewal of the 1987 Reclaimed Water contract for the San Jacinto Wildlife REWA(SJWA). Back in 1987, the then Department of Fish and Game (DFG) and EMWD entered into the 25-year contract to bring reclaimed water to the SJWA for the management and development of the diverse wildlife habitats now established on what has become southern California's premier state wildlife area.

The 1987 contract recognized the delivery of reclaimed water to SJWA would result in the production of valuable wildlife habitat supporting resident and migratory wildlife and provide long-term benefits to the public. Both DFG and EMWD acknowledged wildlife populations and public benefits would become dependent upon habitat supported by the reclaimed water delivery. In good faith, and consistent with their respective legal authority, DFG and EMWD agreed to periodically extend the contract for the life of the pipeline bringing reclaimed water to SJWA and for the cooperative replacement of that pipeline should it become necessary. The intended longevity of the DFG/ EMWD contract was further embodied by the DFG acquisition of reserved capacity in the constructed EMWD constructed reclaimed water delivery pipeline. To view the 1987 reclaimed water agreement online, go to: http://www.northfriends.org/ reclaimedwateragreement1987.pdf



Water, be it reclaimed or fresh, is the lifeblood of the San Jacinto Wildlife Area. Shown here is Mystic Lake.

Photo by Greg Ballmer

In anticipation of the expiration of the 1987 contract, EMWD and DFW have been negotiating the expected renewal of the SJWA reclaimed Water contract behind closed doors. After emphatic protest and calls for transparency, two EMWD Draft Agreements were released to the public. The latest draft being presented by EMWD/DFW at the April 2014, public workshop is presented here for public inspection: http://www.northfriends.org/recycledwateramendmentapr2014.pdf

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ASAP. If you do not give us an email, we

will continue to send you a hard copy.

With the original 25-year agreement set to expire on June 30, 2014, EMWD General Manager Paul Jones consented to a one-year extension if the 1987 Agreement that incorporates the original terms of that contract. The one
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year extension is designed to provide time for DFW to complete its long- term land management Plan that is anticipated to be released this year for public review and comment. Mr. Jones wisely recognized a completed SJWA Land Management Plan would provide clear direction on the long-term water supply needs of the Wildlife Area and facilitate a reclaimed water contract that is in the best interest of the public.

The ball is now in the DFW's court to timely complete the long overdue SJWA Land Management Plan. Repeated inquiries to local DFW managers asking for a status update on the Management Plan and the time frame for public review of this crucial Land Management Plan elicited no written response. We can only conclude SJWA Reclaimed water contract rights are still going down the drain. DFW's apparent abandonment of the SJWA reclaimed water contract rights will surely lay waste to ongoing wildlife conservation efforts in Western Riverside County.

Wanted: Submissions For Future Newsletters

Friends welcome articles for the newsletter, subject to the Board's approval, regarding any and all issues relating to the SJWA. We want to know your concerns, a great birding day, book or movie reviews about the environment, poems, photos, etc. Submit to northfriends.org.

Donate

We welcome donations. To make a tax-deductible donation to Friends of the Northern San Jacinto Valley online, please go to http://www.northfriends.org and click the Donate button.

WARNING: Consumption of Game Meat Shot with Lead Ammunition May Be Hazardous to the Health of Your Family.

By Tom Paulek

ast October Governor Brown signed into law AB 711-the ban on the use of lead ammunition for hunting in California. The lead ban will not go into effect until July 2019. In the interim California upland game hunters can continue to use lead shot for hunting dove, pheasant, snipe and other small game species.

The adverse impact of spent lead ammunition on wildlife populations has been well documented over many years. More recent research indicates the discharge of lead ammunition may be a significant public health concern. The wildlife Society 2009 Position Statement on lead ammunition reports: "When lead that is imbedded in game meat becomes exposed to acid in the human stomach, lead

may be absorbed into the system. Even if a lead pellet completely passes through an animal, a small amount

animal, a small amount of lead may be left in the tissue and may be absorbed by a person consuming the meat."

The September 28, 2009 Scientific American article "Wild Meat Raises Lead Exposure" notes:

"The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention tested 736 people, mostly adults, in six North Dakota cities and found that those who ate wild game had 50 percent more lead in their blood than those who did not eat it. The lead exposure was highest among people who consumed not only venison, but also birds and other game, according to the study published last month in the journal Environmental Research."

"What was most troubling is that as wild game consumption increases, blood-lead levels increase", said study co-author Many Jean Brown, chief of the CDC's lead prevention branch. "The strong recommendation we would make is that pregnant women should not consume this meat"

".... recent research has reported that

children's mental abilities are reduced by lead at levels far below the CDC guideline. Brown and others say there is no threshold below which lead

> does not cause harm, particularly with children."

The Friends participated in the California Fish and Game Commission adoption of this year's Upland Game hunting regulations. We presented the Friends May 21, 2014 comment letter and testified at the August 6, 2014 public hearing adopting the hunting regulations. Our testimony presented the science based lead hazard information and once

again requested the Commission include a public health advisory in the upcoming Upland Hunting Regulation booklet advising California hunters of the hazards of the consumption of game meat shot with lead ammunition. The Commission ignored the May 21st letter as well as our testimony at the August 6th Public Hearing, which they summarily dismissed.

Looking forward, the Friends may ultimately be stymied again by Commission misfeasance. AB 711 requires the Commission to promulgate regulations to fully implement the ban on lead ammunition by July 1, 2015. The Commission is now taking public input on regulations necessary to implement the 2019 lead ban. We plan to again raise the issue/impact of the need for a public health advisory warning hunters of the hazard of the consumption of game meat shot with lead ammunition. Given the Fish and Game Commission's poor record of implementing its CEQA duties, we are not confident this obvious environmental impact will receive the consideration required by law.

Management Plan Running Late?

By Tom Paulek

The 19,000-acre San Jacinto Wildlife Area (SJWA) is an ongoing 30+-year effort to establish what has become the premier state Wildlife Area in Southern California. We the public have easily invested over 80 million dollars in acquiring and developing the diverse wildlife habitats now evolving on this unique wildlife conservation area. What will SJWA look like in the years ahead? Will SJWA literally dry up and wither back to an ephemeral lakebed and dry-land farming? The answer to these questions is dependent on the timely release of the long overdue SJWA Management Plan now being formulated by the Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW).

The SJWA Management Plan has been a long time coming and the future management direction it will provide is needed now more than ever before. The State Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) allocated a \$ 221,000 grant for the management plan back in 2007. Subsequently, in 2010 the WCB allocated an additional \$ 260,000 to complete the management plan effort. Apparently, \$481,000 of the public's money has thus far been spent on the sorely needed management plan. The plan now seems to be languishing with local Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) staff responsible for managing the wildlife area.

Friend's would encourage DFW to get the SJWA Management Plan out for public review the sooner the better. It is also important to recognize that substantial wildlife conservation and management knowledge as well as plant and animal expertise are available in Southern California. Many of these members of the public would welcome the opportunity to assist DFW in developing a 21st century Wildlife Management Plan for the SJWA. The full extent of the SJWA potential for wildlife conservation and ecosystem restoration are far from being realized. Both the Department of Fish and Wildlife and the public need to be moving forward on those efforts.

SJWA Closures for Hunting

The SJWA is closed to all non-hunters east of Davis Road all day Saturdays and Wednesdays for waterfowl hunting from October 18th to January 31. All other days of the year the area is open to the public daylight hours.



Mystic Lake view from Jackrabbit Trail. Photo by Greg Ballmer

Interested in Joining Friends?

We are always interested in new members and volunteers as walk leaders, for help with membership, banking and taxes and to give us ideas about where we should best focus our efforts. Our Board meetings are the second Tuesday of the month, on an irregular basis. Please let Sue know if you are interested in joining us. snash22@earthlink.net

LEGAL EAGLE

Information about these cases can be obtained by going to this link http://www.courts.ca.gov/4dca.htm and entering the case number or name.

Paulek v. Department of Fish and Game (now Wildlife)

(San Diego Court of Appeal D0652780)

Oral arguments are set in this case for Friday October 17 at 9a.m. in San Diego. The issue is whether or not a Conservation Easement on a Duck Club that allows the use of lead shot and contains endangered plants is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act. [This court does not issue tentative opinions]

Paulek v. Department of Water Resources

(Riverside Court of Appeal E060038)

In the tentative opinion for this case, the Court denied our writ of mandate on the basis that DWR adequately responded to our comments and that removal of the Emergency Release Channel from the Final EIR were in compliance with CEQA. The case has been certified for publication. We will ask for oral argument.

Paulek v. Regional Conservation Authority

(Riverside Court of Appeal E0591133)

We contend a "Criteria Refinement Process" which takes endangered species habitat out of conservation and provides mitigation lands for that removal is not exempt from CEQA. The court has not yet issued its tentative opinion.

Climate Change Impacts to the San Jacinto Wildlife Area

Wildfire-induced loss of ecosystem integrity

n addition to the question of DFW being able to obtain a long-term contract to assure the affordable availability of sufficient reclaimed water to the San Jacinto Wildlife Area, another threat is "wildfire-induced loss of ecosystem integrity". (IPCC-Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change; Climate Change 2014—Impacts, Adaption and Vulnerability. (www.ipcc.org)

Much of the coastal sage scrub habitat on the SJWA has al-

ready been replaced with non-native grasses. Frequent wildfires facilitate the occurrence of non-native grasslands, which also helps make way for the introduction of other noxious weeds such as "stinknet" (Oncosiphon piluliferum) which further compromises native plants.



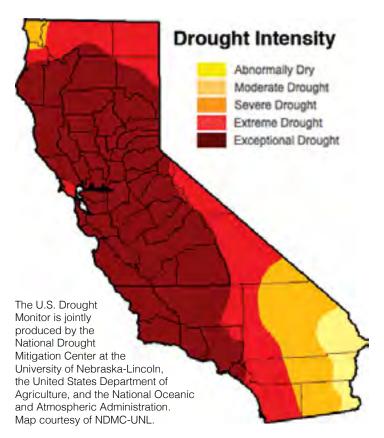
The risk of a decade-long drought is normally about 50 percent, but with climate change it goes up to about 80-90 percent. The risk of a mega-drought [multiple decades] is normally 5 to 15 percent, but with climate change, it goes up to between 20 to 50 percent for the Southwest United States. (Cornell University Professor Toby Ault.) (www.democracynow.org 28 August 2014.)

As summer dryness lasts longer and becomes more intense, fire occurrences are exacerbated. If temperatures rise in the medium range (around 5 degrees F by 2070-2090) the risk of wildfires in California could increase by as much as 55 percent. (www.cal-adapt.org/tools/factsheet)

"What's Wrong With Us?" This Changes Everything: Capitalism v. The Climate Naomi Klein (2014)

lein says the predictions we are on track for a whopping 6 degrees Celsius [10.8 degrees Fahrenheit] warming by the century's end is the equivalent of every alarm in your house and street going off simultaneously. Rather than responding with alarm and doing everything in our power to change course, humanity is, quite consciously, continuing down the wrong road. The international Energy Commission warns that if we do not get our emissions under control by a terrifying 2017 [two years] our fossil fuel economy will "lock-in" extremely dangerously warming. [Tipping point].

Naomi Klein explains why she believes the climate crisis challenges us to abandon the core "free market" ideology of our time, restructure the global economy, and remake our political systems. Either we embrace radical change or radical changes will be visited upon our physical world. The status quo is no longer an option. Climate change is not just another issue, it's an



alarm that calls us to fix an economic system that is already failing us in many ways. Klein meticulously builds the case for how massively reducing our greenhouse gas emissions is our best chance to simultaneously reduce gaping inequalities, re-imagine our broken democracies, and rebuild our gutted local economies. She exposes the ideological desperation of the climate-change deniers, the messianic delusions of the would-be geoengineers, and the tragic defeatism of too many mainstream initiatives. Klein demonstrates precisely why the market has not—and cannot—fix the climate crisis but will instead make things worse, with ever more extreme and ecologically damaging extraction methods, accompanied by rampant disaster capitalism.

Klein argues that the changes to our relationship with nature and one another that are required to respond to the climate crisis humanely should not be viewed as grim penance, but rather as a kind of gift—a catalyst to transform broken economic and cultural priorities and to heal long-festering historical wounds. She documents the inspiring movements that have already begun this process: communities that are not just refusing to be sites of further fossil extraction but are building the next, regeneration-based economies right now.

"When we marvel at the blue marble in all its delicacy and frailty," Klein cautions, "and resolve to save the planet, we cast ourselves in a very specific role. The role is of a parent, the parent of the earth. But the opposite is the case. It is we humans who are fragile and vulnerable and our earth that is hearty and powerful, and holds us in its hands. In pragmatic terms, our challenge is less to save the earth from ourselves and more to save ourselves from an earth that, if pushed too far, has ample power to rock, burn, and shake us off completely."

United Nations Climate Summit

The United Nations' Metrological Organization (www.wmo.int), reports the concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere rose by nearly three parts per million from 2012 to 2013, the largest single-year increase since detailed records began three decades ago. In 2013, concentrations of carbon dioxide reached nearly 400 parts per million, the highest level in at least 800,000 years.

As oceans absorb the increased carbon, ocean acidification has reached a rate that is "unprecedented at least over the last 300 million years." The report comes ahead of the U.N. climate summit and the People's Climate March in New York City.

The People's Climate March (www.350.org) is prompted by the fact that scientists around the world in the IPCC (www.ipcc.com) report that humans need to keep 75 or 80 percent of the fossil fuel we know about underground. If we don't, instead of temperatures rising 3.6 degrees F by 2050, they will rise by 6.7 degrees F or more by the end of the century. The technology is there and in places like Germany (where this summer 75% of their energy came from solar panels within their borders) they have the political will to drastically slow down carbon emissions.

The United States, where a binding treaty will never be ratified by two-thirds of the Senate, is not showing the political will to change runaway greenhouse gas emissions. In the areas literally surrounding the San Jacinto Wildlife Area, neither the County of Riverside nor the City of Moreno Valley have shown the political will to acknowledge global warming and its catastrophic impacts on both the people who live in Riverside County and places like the SJWA set aside for habitat conservation. Neither are they looking for projects that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Instead, projects like the World Logistics Center, the Riverside General Plan, the Mid-County Parkway, the Villages of Lakeview, and the Mott Ranch (beginnings of the new City of Lakeview) gallop ahead as if none of the climate science of the last 40 years existed. As Bill McKibbon (Eaarth: Making a Life on a Tough New Planet) said recently, "Short of self-immolation in Times Square, there's really not much more the scientific community could be doing to warn us." (www.democracynow.org 28 August 2014.)

Friends will continue to work to protect the SJWA from the impacts of global warming, the drought (the worst since the 1500s) and surrounding urbanization.



The San Jacinto Wildlife Area—and many areas of the American Southwest—will turn into a dust bowl if climate change isn't addressed.

Photo by Greg Ballmer

Calendar of Friends and Audubon Walks at the SJWA & Lake Perris

All walks are free and open to everyone. No reservations are needed. Children are welcome. Binoculars and birding books provided. To all walks, wear comfortable shoes, hats and sunscreen and bring water, snacks and binoculars, if you have them.

Lake Perris

Saturday September 13, 2014 8am-10am

Join Rosedith and Joyce on these moderately easy walks of 1-2 hours around Lake Perris. Free with Paid day-use or camping fees. Meet Rosedith (951-321-9812) in Parking Lot 2.

Lake Perris

Saturday October 11, 2014, 9am-11am

Join Rosedith and Joyce on these moderately easy walks of 1-2 hours around Lake Perris. Free with Paid day-use or camping fees. Meet Rosedith (951-321-9812) in Parking Lot 2.

Friends Beginning Bird Walk

Sunday October 26, 2014, 9am-11am

Join Rosedith and Joyce at the SJWA to observe birds feeding nesting, mating, nesting and watching us watching them. You will see shorebirds, ducks, raptors and upland birds—over 100 species on a good day. Meet Rosedith Marx (951-321-9812) in the SJWA parking lot.

Audubon Beginning Bird Walk

Sunday November 2, 2014, 8am-10am

Our goal will be to teach you enough basic birding techniques and identification skills so that you will feel comfortable birding on your own or joining our bird walks. Meet Dave Goodward (909-783-2417) in the SJWA parking lot.

Lake Perris

Saturday November 8, 2014, 9am-11am

Join Rosedith and Joyce on these moderately easy walks of 1-2 hours around Lake Perris. Free with Paid day-use or camping fees. Meet Rosedith (951-321-9812) in parking lot 2.

Audubon Northern San Jacinto Valley

Sunday November 16, 2014 7am-?

Cooler weather brings wintering birds of prey and waterfowl. The first goal is to have fun; the second is to see 100 species. The northern San Jacinto Valley usually has ranked in the top 1% to 2% on Christmas Bird Counts for inland areas. Meet

Bird Checklist for Beginning Birders

Rosedith Marx has shortened the exhaustive list of the San Jacinto Wildlife Area for beginning birders which shows 175 of the over 350 birds on the exhaustive list prepared by Doug Morton and others. Both lists can be downloaded at www.northfriends.org before you come on our walks.

Overview Schedule of Walks				
Date	Event	Time		
2014 Sept. 13 Oct. 11 Oct. 26 Nov. 2 Nov. 8 Nov. 16 Dec. 7	Lake Perris Lake Perris Friends Beginner's Bird Walk Audubon Beginner's Bird Walk Lake Perris Audubon SJ Valley Audubon Beginner's Bird Walk	8-10am 9-11am 9-11am 8-10am 9-11am 7-?am 8-10am		
Dec. 13-Jan. 4 2015 Jan. 25 Feb. 21 March-May Apr. 26 May 9	Audubon SJ Valley Friends Birds of Prey Butterfly, Plant, Bird Boxes Audubon SJWA Lake Perris	7-?am 7-?am 9-12am 9-12am 7-?am 8-10am		

Tony Metcalf (951-242-7038) and Dave Goodward (909-783-2417) in the SJWA parking lot.

Audubon Beginning Bird Walk

Sunday December 7, 2014, 8am-10am

Our goal will be to teach you enough basic birding techniques and identification skills so that you will feel comfortable birding on your own or joining our bird walks. Meet Kirk Stitt (909-886-5513) and Linda Stitt (909-886-5513) in the SJWA parking lot.

Christmas Bird Counts

December 13, 2014-January 4, 2015

The San Jacinto Valley CBC will be on a Tuesday. Check out **www.sbvas.org** in December for exact dates, times and locations.

Audubon San Jacinto Valley/Lake Perris

Sunday January 25, 2015, 7am-??

The diversity and number of birds of prey and gulls peaks after the new year. Join us on a fairly intense but unstructured day. We may go on to Lake Perris. Meet Chet McGaugh (951-781-3699) and Tony Metcalf (951-242-7038) at the SJWA parking lot.

Friends Raptor/Birds of Prey Walk

Saturday February 21, 2015, 9am-12pm

Join the former SJWA area manager to search the wildlife area for raptors and other wildlife. Over twenty-two species of Birds of Prey, also called raptors, including six species of owls, peregrine falcon, bald and golden eagle, ferruginous hawk and prairie falcon can be found on the Wildlife Area. Meet Tom Paulek (951-368-4525) in the SJWA parking lot.

Continued

Directions to the SJWA

Butterflies, Bluebird Boxes & Plants

Sats. March-May, 9am-12pm. Dates to be determined

Audubon San Jacinto Wildlife Area

Sunday April 26, 2015, 7am-??

Shorebirds. We will provide some knowledge about this fascinating bunch of birds, stimulate appreciation and interest in them and mitigate some of the phobias. BRING YOUR SCOPES. Meet Tony Metcalf (951-242-7038) and Chet McGaugh (951-781-3699) at the SJWA parking lot.

Lake Perris

Saturday May 9, 2015, 8am-10am

Join Rosedith and Joyce on these moderately easy walks of 1-2 hours around Lake Perris. Free with paid day-use or camping fees. Meet Rosedith (951-321-9812) in parking lot 2.



Wildlife enthusiasts stroll through the San Jacinto Wildlife Area during one of the many wildlife walks. *Photo by Greg Ballmer*

All walks begin in the San Jacinto Wildlife Area headquarters parking lot, 17050 Davis Road, Nuevo CA. Tel. (951-928-0580) Because Davis (Theodore) Road is closed from Moreno Valley the only access is north off the Ramona Expressway — despite what your GPS may tell you. There is now a traffic light on Davis Rd.

From Moreno Valley: go south on Perris Blvd; east on Ramona Expressway; north 2.3 miles on Davis Rd.

From San Jacinto/Hemet: go west on Ramona Expressway; north 2.3 miles on Davis Rd.

From Interstate 215: go east on Ramona Expressway; 2.3 miles north on Davis Road.

USE EXTREME CAUTION. If raining, call area office for road conditions: (951) 928-0580.



Information About the San Jacinto Wildlife Area

he San Jacinto Wildlife Area is 19,000 acres of wildlife habitat managed by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. Its lands are partial mitigation for the State Water Project, the project that brings water from northern California to southern California so that we can live and work here.

It is a Stephens' kangaroo rat reserve for the Riverside County Habitat Conservation Agency (RCHCA); it is a cornerstone reserve in the Riverside County Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Agency (MSHCP), the county reserve system which is supposed to protect and preserve the county's endangered animals and plants.

Tens of thousands of waterfowl and shorebirds winter in the northern San Jacinto Valley. It is a known resting point and/or wintering site for migrating birds traveling the Pacific Flyway. The northern San Jacinto Valley is known for its large number of wintering birds of prey (peregrine falcon, bald eagle, ferruginous hawk, prairie falcon).

The SJWA is considered one of the premier hunting areas in southern California. All state-owned wildlife areas allow hunting. Hunting fees help support the acquisition of wildlife habitat throughout the state of California. The northern San

Jacinto Valley is considered a Significant Natural Area by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife.

The northern San Jacinto Valley and Mystic Lake are considered Important Bird Areas by the National Audubon Society. The San Jacinto Wildlife Area represents an \$80 million investment of the tax-payers' money. The San Jacinto Wildlife Area includes the 10,000 acre Davis Road Unit (includes 2,000 acres of Mystic Lake) plus the 9,000 acre Potrero Creek Conservation Unit. San Jacinto Wildlife Area, 17050 Davis Road, Lakeview; (951) 928-0580; http://www.dfg.ca.gov/lands/wa/region6/sanjacinto/index.html

FRIENDS OF THE NORTHERN SAN JACINTO VALLEY P.O. Box 4266 Idyllwild, CA 92549 NEWSLETTER September 2014

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We hope this is the last issue of the newsletter that will be mailed to you. Please help us save money and view pictures in living color.

IMPORTANT!

Email us asking to be included on the email list.
Send the email to:

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