**Southwestern Riverside County Multi-Species Reserve
Reserve Management Committee Meeting
Wednesday, September 1, 2021 – 1:00 pm**

 **Meeting Conducted Remotely via Microsoft Teams**

**Meeting Notes**

**RMC Members Present**
Dustin McLain (Riverside County Regional Park and Open-Space District/Parks)

Alex Marks (Metropolitan Water District of Southern California/MWD)

Brian Shomo (Riverside County Habitat Conservation Agency/RCHCA)

James Thiede (United States Fish and Wildlife Services/USFWS)

Richard Kim (California Department of Fish and Wildlife/CDFW)

**Other Attendees**
Robert Williams (Parks), Bill Wagner (MWD), Gail Barton (Public)

1. **Call to order and introductions** – The meeting was called to order at 1:03 PM.

Alex and Dustin introduced Robert Williams as the new Reserve Manager. Joseph Sherrock took another position outside of the County.
2. **Public comments** – No comments
3. **Approval of meeting notes** – June 28, 2021 meeting notes were presented and discussed.

Richard requested an amendment to Item #7. Replace “Friends of San Jacinto” with “Friends of the Northern San Jacinto Valley”.

 **MOTION to approve the June meeting notes with amendment.**

**Motion – Richard Kim; Second – Brian Shomo; Motion approved**

1. **Quarterly Report: The Reserve Manager will present the quarterly report with updates on reserve management activities addressing (a) natural resources management, (b) patrol, (c) maintenance, and (d) interpretive program** Robert presented the June 2021 – August 2021 quarterly reserve management report. Highlights from the written report were as follows:

* Worked with Kidd Biological to band three chick burrowing owls hatched from the two adults translocated in the spring. Kidd conducted observation surveys and provided supplemental feeding until the chicks fledged
* Reserve staff completed all weed abatement and mowing operations in Crown Valley, Bell Spring, and SKR & BUOW management units
* Reserve staff and Cal-Fire conducted a prescribed burn in the Domenigoni Unit (50 acres) on June 8. Historically, the unit consisted of non-native grasses and tumbleweeds
* Interpretive services were not provided due to COVID-19
1. **Section 27 Conservation Bank Fire – Fire Legal Recourse -** Alex updated the RMC on the status of Metropolitan’s investigation of whether legal action could be taken against the property owner that started the 6.6 acre wildfire. Dustin indicated that the incident report for the fire was still forthcoming from Cal-Fire. Robert stated that there is new vegetative growth occurring on the site since the fire, which the Reserve staff would continue to monitor and well as controlling invasive plants along it edges. Based on the regrowth that had occurred and low probability of Metropolitan receiving funds for the damage, the RMC agreed to allow the site to restore itself naturally with the Reserve Manager continuing to control invasive plants and monitor the vegetation growth. If necessary, a long-term plan to restore the site with a variety of RSS species would be created if it does not happen sufficiently enough naturally.

**6. Endowment Update -** Alex presented the FY 20/21 financials and the projections for the endowment based on the FY20/21 average rate of return, MWD’s $200,000 annual contributions, and current $500,000 budget limit for Reserve management. Based on the projections, the endowment would be depleted by 2061. Alex stated that the beginning balance for FY 20/21 was $9,602,382 and the ending balance was $9,463,481. In follow up to the RMC’s June meeting, he indicated that the funds in the endowment are invested pursuant to MWD’s Statement of Investment Policy and cannot be invested separately. The trust is invested in a diversified portfolio, including short-term and long-term portfolios consisting of bonds, money markets, US treasuries but cannot be invested in individual stock holdings. Alex added that the assets are being invested by the portfolio manager utilizing strategies to achieve the highest rate of returns under current market conditions. In relation to the endowment, he noted that the endowment funds had previously been used to purchase the Reserve’s mitigation bank parcels and that the remaining credits in the bank could be used as a way to interject funds into the endowment; either be selling more credits or the properties entirely.

**7. Roundtable –** (a) James requested botanical information for the Reserve. (b) Richard- No comments. (c) Alex – No comments, (d) Brian stated the RCHCA will send out a request to reserve managers requiring SKR management activities for their annual report. (e) Dustin stated that former Reserve Manager Sherrock is still in the area and is available if RMC or new Reserve Manager has questions.

**8. Adjourn** – The meeting was adjourned at 2:56 PM.