



**OFFICE OF THE COCONINO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS AND THE  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE  
COCONINO COUNTY FLOOD CONTROL DISTRICT**

**SPECIAL SESSION MINUTES**

**September 20, 2022**

**Present:** Chair Patrice Horstman, Vice Chair Jeronimo Vasquez, Supervisor Matt Ryan, Supervisor Lena Fowler and Supervisor Judy Begay were present virtually via Zoom meeting technology.

**Also Present:** County Manager Steve Peru, Deputy County Manager/Flood Control District Director Lucinda Andreani, Deputy County Manager Sue Brown, Deputy County Manager Andy Bertelsen, Clerk of the Board of Supervisors Lindsay Daley and Deputy Clerk of the Board Valerie Webber were present virtually via Zoom meeting technology.

Chair Horstman called the Special Session to order at 9:04 a.m. and the Supervisors introduced themselves.

Chair Horstman led the pledge of allegiance.

**Call to the Public:**

Lerryn Roberts stated she lives at the end of Treadway Trail and ten years ago during the Schulz Fire they flooded badly, and for two to three years after that, in which it took the flooding to stop over time. She said she reached out to everyone she could think of, had the state out there and nobody did anything with Government Tank and the flooding has been in the middle of their property ten to twelve feet deep every time the monsoon hits. She also stated the Government Tank drain off after the Schultz was never addressed and that she wants to know what the County is doing up there and how quick it can be done so they can bring their horses and vehicles back. She asked why it wasn't addressed back then and what is the County is going to do about it now?

**Motion:** Resolve as the Flood Control District Board of Directors, **Moved by:** Supervisor Jeronimo Vasquez, **Seconded by:** Supervisor Lena Fowler. The motion passed unanimously.

### **Flood Control District Discussion Item:**

1. Presentation, discussion and possible direction regarding Schultz/Pipeline Long-Term Flood Mitigation Plan, and funding and financing the Long-Term Flood Mitigation Plan.  
**Flood Control District**

Flood Control District Director Lucinda Andreani stated the purpose of today's meeting is to provide an overview of a long-term flood mitigation plan. She encouraged the Board to keep in mind that this was the worst natural disaster the County has ever had, even far worse than the Schultz Fire. The gravity of the level of investment needed far surpasses the Flood Control District and County funds and there will be difficult decisions that need to be made as we move forward and with limited funding, there is a need for substantial federal and state funding for the planning proposed.

She said there is a need to express all the elements and factors needed moving forward dealing with mitigation and the key issue is funding, plans may have to be limited depending on what funding can be obtained. Most projects that took place with the Schultz Fire took two to three years to even start with shovels in the ground. There are additional factors besides funding that may impact the mitigation plan timeline, such as securing National Environmental Policy Act approval, completion of engineering (everything being proposed today is conceptual), a no-adverse impact analysis, the securing of drainage easements and mortgage releases (a major process), contractors and the weather.

Flood Control Director Andreani noted we are at the first step of a long process that may include a lot of difficult decisions. She presented a presentation that provided an a brief history of post-wildfire flooding, flood modeling and rainfall events, Schultz/Pipeline severe and repetitive flooding, Schultz/Pipeline mitigation plan, current financial status and funding needs and financing.

JE Fuller Engineer Cory Helton continued with the presentation by displaying flood modeling from Wupatki Trails to Government Tank, Government Tank and Campbell, Doney Park and Schultz Creek and Upper Chimney. He provided a rainfall comparison from July to September from 2010 through 2022 and, measured rainfall recurrence intervals that affected the Pipeline Fire Scar.

Flood Control Director Andreani continued with the presentation displaying pictures of the burn scar from Schultz Peak and flooding in the Switchback Trail area. She highlighted major emergency response and mitigation efforts, which included over a million sandbags, 4 miles of concrete barriers, mitigation exhibits for about 1,000 properties, repaired on and off forest measures damaged by wildfires. She displayed several videos of severe flood events and subsequent pictures displaying the damage created and outlined three integrated strategies: on-forest watershed restoration, flood mitigation in neighborhoods and highway drainage improvements.

Natural Channel Design President Allen Haden continued with the presentation by reviewing current on-forest conditions and goal of conducting watershed restoration. He explained they are looking at 4 new major watershed projects including 300 acres of alluvial fan, 1,000 new grade control features, expansion and repair on 5 existing alluvial fans and to enhance infiltration to mitigate impacts to landfill and residential areas.

Engineer Chris Dusza with Civiltech Engineering reviewed several flood mitigation projects: concrete channels and box culvert improvements to reduce flooding of neighborhoods, new flood mitigation in Peaceful Way, Copeland and Government Tank corridors, major expansion in Wupatki Trails, and expansion and stabilization of the Brandis and Campbell corridors.

Flood Control Director Andreani continued by introducing Bob Holmes and Ana Ma with Nexxus Consulting.

Bob Holmes provided an overview of potential funding options through the United States Forest Service, Natural Resources Conservation Service's Emergency Watershed Protection Program, Federal Highways, and the State (Governor, Legislature, Department of Forestry and Fire Management and Department of Emergency and Military Affairs). He explained that the current funding strategy is use of emergency supplemental funding, appropriation bills and target project funding. He answered questions asked by individual Board members.

Flood Control Director Andreani introduced Engineering Manager Rick Schuller with Woodson Engineering.

Rick Schuller continued with the presentation by reviewing projects for improving highway drainage, which included goals to major economic and transportation corridors that are critical to neighborhood mitigation upstream and downstream. He reviewed plans for various projects: a project in Wupatki Trails to add box culverts, install concrete channels and rebuild channels, a project on Girls Ranch Road to expand channels and replacing with bridges over access roads, a project on Brandis to expand and repair channels, a project on Copeland Basin to expend detention basins and sediment traps, a project from Campbell to Government Tank for channels and additional and upsized box culverts and a project on Highway 180 for additional or upsized box culverts.

Flood Control Director Andreani continued with the presentation that displayed estimations for projects: Wupatki Trails/Lenox Road project is estimated at \$5,014,600, the Girls Ranch Road/Highway 89 Channel project is estimated at \$5,989,650, Brandis/Highway 89 Channel is estimated at \$2,507,070, Copeland Sedimentation Basins are estimated at \$4,007,250, Copeland Detention Basins are estimated at \$8,467,800, Government Tank/South Campbell is estimated at \$12,024,750 and Highway 180 is estimated at \$7,000,000, for an estimated total of \$45,011,120.00. She answered questions asked by individual Board members regarding mitigation in the Copeland area, the Government Tank planning area which includes Doney Park, improvements at Highway 180 and potential funding.

Individual Board members spoke about responsibilities of various jurisdictions and partnerships that are working together to address mitigation strategies.

Flood Control Director Andreani provided a summary of costs for long-term mitigation which included on-forest watershed restoration estimated between \$40 to \$45 million, flood mitigation in the neighborhoods estimated between \$50 to \$55 million and highway drainage improvements estimated between \$40 to \$45 million, for a grand total of between \$130 to \$145 million. She answered questions related to processes and criteria for receiving federal funding and how determinations by the federal government are made. She answered questions from individual Board members regarding plans related to mitigation in Doney Park and the City of Flagstaff's current detention project on the West side of Flagstaff and possible improvements at Highway 180 to transition floodwater to the Rio de Flag channel.

Individual Board members provided feedback on the information presented and spoke about the County's limited financial capacity and potential federal and state funding abilities.

Flood Control District Business Manager Shaun Pooyouma provided an overview of costs to date related to Museum Fire and Schultz/Pipeline flooding as well as, Natural Resource Conservation Services (NRCS) exigency, Department of Forestry & fire Management (DFFM) and Department of Emergency & Military Affairs (DEMA) reimbursements and County matches.

Director Andreani highlighted various additional funding options and funding strategies and reviewed a financial timeline of the long-term flood mitigation construction plan and timeline and investment and reimbursement plan.

Supervisor Fowler lost connection to the meeting at 12:36 p.m. and reconnected telephonically at approximately 12:43 p.m.

Finance Director Siri Mullaney explained general fund pledged revenue and tax-exempt debt relative to borrowing money to fund flood mitigation projects as well as other considerations related to same such as asset ownership, repayment timeline and asset life, the Flood Control Districts ability to pay and use funds priorities, timing of projects and federal reimbursements and multiple tranches and callable debt.

Flood Control Director Andreani spoke about the possibility of the County pursuing a short-term financing option through the Treasurer's Office to jump start mitigation investments and highlighted staff's recommendations for moving forward:

- Submit one or two more NRCS EWPP applications for Government Tank, individual lot mitigation and other.
- Pursue short-term financing through the Treasurer's Office for Fall 2022 projects - \$9,000.
- Continue to evaluate long-term financing options and costs as we see what occurs with federal and state funding.

Flood Control Director Andreani noted that until the County secures federal funding, she does not recommend proceeding with any loans without seeing what federal and state funds can be

secured first. She displayed the Flood Control District 10-Year Plan and highlighted impact comparisons as a result of the much needed flood mitigation projects.

Director Ryan said there is a lot of money needed but there are implications to paying back any loans. He would like to feel more comfortable about the what-if approach with regards to prioritization and strategies. He noted there could be other emergencies arise and they need to be cautious of what is going to be targeted, the Board needs more time to understand the overall recognition of cause and effect.

Chair Horstman said this most recent disaster and cost of mitigation far exceeds Flood Control District and the City funds. There is a need to maximize federal and state funding to address at least most of the mitigation efforts that need to be done. The County needs to be cautious of other emergencies we may be faced with, also, there is a need to ask ourselves if we are setting a standard that cannot be sustained and to make sure what mitigation efforts are possible, doable and reasonably within our reach.

Director Begay noted that the information is overwhelming, but she thanked all the staff and partners who put the information together. She said she agrees with her colleagues' comments, there is a need to be able to afford the financing and be careful moving forward. This will take a few more meetings in order to digest and she would like to look more at short-term financing and determine what is doable.

Vice Chair Vasquez thanked staff for the presentation and added that there is a sense of the magnitude and it is overwhelming. This does show how much staff has been doing over the past several months and people have to remember this is the largest emergency response situation the County has ever had. There are a lot of partners on board and community support; everyone will ride this out together and make it happen.

Director Fowler thanked all the presenters and said she knows how difficult it is to address the impacts. She thanked the community for their patience even though they are frustrated. As a County, the Board has to look at the budget and make sure we make the right decisions while realizing we want to help the public continue to live here. The Board does need to continue to evaluate priorities and possibly address projects in phases, as quickly as we can.

County Manager Peru noted this was a good opportunity to present all the information the team has been working on. Staff's obligation to the Board is to provide all the information that has been fully staffed in order to make important decisions. He noted staff is unable to proceed without knowing what federal and state funding may be reimbursed since the budget does not have enough funds to complete the projects.

Chair Horstman stated that assuming we went forward with this debt, how does it affect the rest of the County? Specifically raises, capital projects, other departments and aspects of the County.

County Manager Peru stated it will impact capital facility projects going forward, but we can look to see what phases we can move forward on.

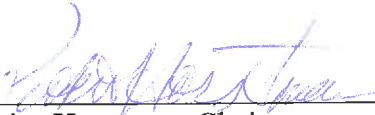
Flood Control Director Andreani provided closing comments; addressed disaster response and the importance of dealing with public safety.

**Motion:** Resolve as the Board of Supervisors, **Moved by:** Director Matt Ryan, **Seconded by:** Director Lena Fowler. The motion passed unanimously.

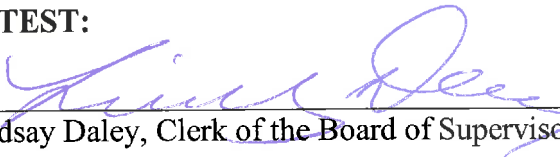
There being no further discussion, Chair Horstman adjourned the meeting at 1:32 p.m.

**COCONINO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

(SEAL)

  
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Patrice Horstman, Chair

**ATTEST:**

  
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Lindsay Daley, Clerk of the Board of Supervisors