

The County of Orange Report

July 16, 2020
by Lewis Consulting Group



Board Gets Pummeled During Public Comments

The Board of Supervisors meeting scheduled on July 14, 2020 is three weeks after the last meeting, held June 23rd. Hopefully the hiatus will help them recover from the verbal pounding they took during the meetings conducted on June 16th and June 23rd.

On the 16th, a late agenda change, deleting the County health report and leaving only a closed session item dealing with the Hertz Rent-a-Car bankruptcy and its effect on John Wayne Airport left dozens of angry attendees who wanted to vent opposition to the mandated mask order. Those testifying had to bootstrap their comments around bankruptcy issues. The anger of the late agenda change was palpable.

However, that anger paled in comparison to the near melee on the 23rd when both the anti-maskers returned, but they were outnumbered by a throng of Black Lives Matter protesters. About 250 people showed up and the BLM members took the opportunity of promoting the de-funding of local law enforcement by testifying in opposition to a renewal of 13 contracts between the Orange County cities and the Sheriff's department. The Board pretty much ignored the insults flung in their direction and voted quickly to approve the contracts.

On the Agenda. . . July 14th Board Meeting Enhancing Prado Dam

At the upcoming July 14th meeting, the Board of Supervisors will require four Supervisors voting affirmatively to utilize eminent domain to acquire seven acres of land upstream of Prado Dam. What makes the action more interesting, is the land in question, seven acres in the City of Eastvale is in Riverside County. The proposed project is \$1.32 million.

The acquisition is necessary to meet a deadline imposed by the Army Corp of Engineers. Without the property, the current plan by the Army Corp to award a contract for spillway construction in 2021 could be delayed. That delay could result in a loss of federal funding.

Completion of the project will provide protection for Orange County residents and businesses against a 190 year flood event.



Commission Has Testy Meeting

The July meeting of OCLAFCO started off with “feel good” transition of Board membership. Long time and popular City Board representative Allan “Doc” Bernstein retired off the Commission and was appropriately honored by his colleagues. Also, the Commission welcomed the re-appointment of Special District Commissioner Jim Fidler and the election of Wendy Buckman from City Alternate to succeed Allan Bernstein as Commissioner. Lastly, Huntington Beach Councilman Mike Posey was welcomed as a new City Alternate member.

However, the tone of the meeting soon sharply changed as Commissioners found fault with several of staff’s agenzized items.

First was the Legislative Report. Staff had recommended a support position for SB 625 an urgency measure to restructure the Central Basin Municipal Water District. The measure would remove the Board of Directors, cancel a scheduled November election and appoint the Water Replenishment District of Southern California as the agency’s receiver. By a 5-2 vote, the Commission opted to stay out of a Los Angeles County Agency’s affairs and instead voted a neutral and watch position.

Supervisor Wagner pulled an item off the consent calendar which would have authorized an expenditure of \$18,000 to hire a consultant to conduct a search for a currently vacant Assistant Executive Officer. This led to a bitter debate centered around the issues of succession planning, the financial commitment and whether or not staff was leveraging the Commission by slowing down scheduled projects, while claiming the position was key to staying on schedule. After much debate, the item was defeated on a 5-2 vote with the matter and other alternatives to be discussed at next month’s meeting.

LAFCO Executive Director Carolyn Emory highlighted a number of items as the agency closed out the fiscal year. Partially due to COVID-19, LAFCO expenditures have been down and only 81% of its projected expenditure was spent. The remaining money was added to District Reserves.

The agency completed three applications in the last year and five more are pending. However, the San Juan application is moving slowly and it and South Orange County reorganization were two matters that could be further delayed according to Emory with the Assistant Executive Officer position remaining unfilled.

Lastly, as part of the on-going MSR cycle, LAFCO anticipates that both the MWDOC and Orange County Sanitation District MSR’s will be dealt with at the upcoming September meeting.

Orange County COVID-19 Stats

ORANGE COUNTY COVID-19 STATS	AS OF 7/15/2020	AS OF 6/7/2020
CUMULATIVE CASES TO DATE	27,031	7,440
CUMULATIVE DEATHS TO DATE	455	177
DEATHS REPORTED TODAY	22	1
CUMULATIVE TESTS TO DATE	329,001	158,592
TESTS REPORTED TODAY	4,522	1,244
CASES CURRENTLY HOSPITALIZED	722 *	297 *
CASES CURRENTLY IN ICU	238	129
CUMULATIVE RECOVERED TO DATE	11,611 *	3,273 *

* = INCLUDES *ICU* CASES



Where Orange County Ranks

[as of 7/15/2020]

LOCATION	POPULATION	CONFIRMED CASES	DEATHS
CALIFORNIA	39,937,500	355,462	7,375
LOS ANGELES COUNTY	10,105,500	143,207	3,941
RIVERSIDE COUNTY	2,445,760	27,371	577
ORANGE COUNTY	3,185,970	27,031	455
SAN DIEGO COUNTY	3,343,360	21,446	448
SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY	2,217,600	21,468	310



LATEST PRESIDENTIAL POLLS

In the last month, former Vice-President Joe Biden has maintained his lead over President Trump. Clearly, both COVID-19 and the suffering national economy, has taken its toll on President Trump's popularity.

DATE	POLL	RESULTS	SPREAD
JULY 15	RASMUSSEN	BIDEN 47, TRUMP 44	BIDEN +3
JULY 15	ECONOMIST / YOUNG	BIDEN 49, TRUMP 40	BIDEN +9
JULY 15	CNBC / CHANGE RESEARCH	BIDEN 51, TRUMP 41	BIDEN +10
JULY 15	NBC / WALL ST. JOURNAL	BIDEN 51, TRUMP 40	BIDEN + 11
JULY 15	QUINNIPIAC	BIDEN 52, TRUMP 37	BIDEN + 15
JULY 8	THE HILL / HARRIS X	BIDEN 43, TRUMP 39	BIDEN +4
JULY 2	MONMOUTH	BIDEN 53, TRUMP 41	BIDEN +12
JULY 1	IBD / TIPP	BIDEN 48, TRUMP 40	BIDEN +8

California to Lose Political Clout



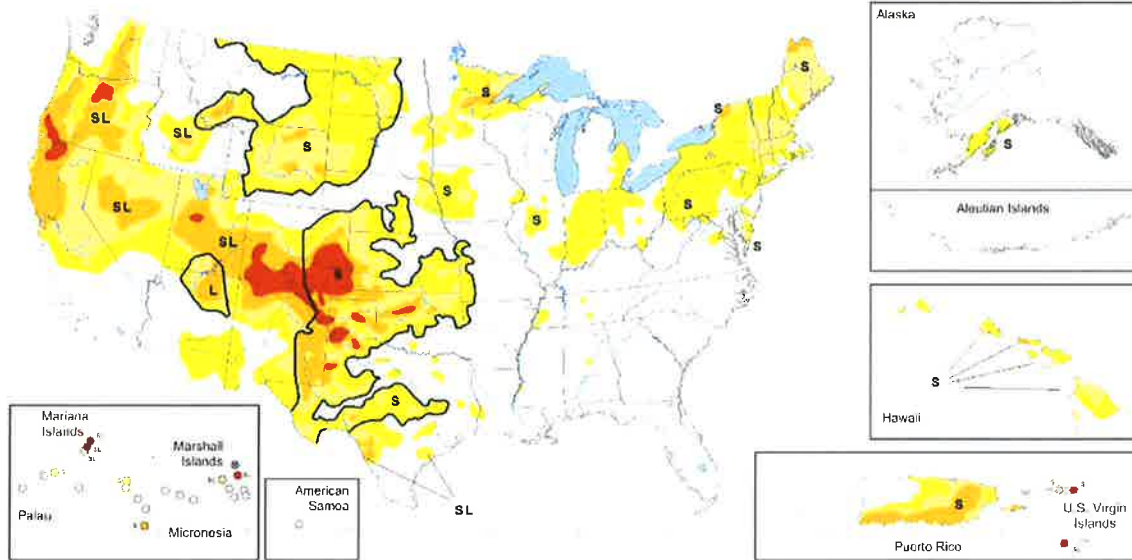
As the 2020 Census completion looms, there is certainty that California will lose at least one Congressional seat and corresponding electoral vote in the 2022 redistricting. Despite increasing by 2,000,000 in population in the last decade, that amount of growth has been outpaced by the rest of the nation.

The San Francisco Bay area has grown faster than the rest of the state, so it will be immune to political sacrifice. The real question facing the Golden State is whether the loss will be limited to one seat or will it expand to two. Our fate may be tied to the state of Texas which is enjoying the opposite effect. Texas is guaranteed a two seat increase but perhaps depending on how it fares verses California, it may pick up a third seat as well.

Western Drought Intensifies

Map released: July 9, 2020

Data valid: July 7, 2020



Takes Toll on Colorado River Basin

7/6/2020

LOWER COLORADO WATER SUPPLY REPORT

River Operations
Bureau of Reclamation

Questions: BCOOWaterops@usbr.gov

(702) 293-8373

<http://www.usbr.gov/lc/region/q4000/weekly.pdf>

	PERCENT	Content 1000 ac-ft (kaf)	Elev. (Feet above mean sea level)	7-Day Release (CFS)
CURRENT STORAGE	FULL			
LAKE POWELL	52%	12,748	3,610.18	11,700
* LAKE MEAD	40%	10,575	1,086.71	15,000
LAKE MOHAVE	94%	1,699	643.01	15,400
LAKE HAVASU	94%	581	448.07	11,800
TOTAL SYSTEM CONTENTS **	52%	31,273		
As of 7/5/2020				
SYSTEM CONTENT LAST YEAR	54%	32,113		

* Percent based on capacity of 26,120 kaf or elevation 1,219.6 feet.

** TOTAL SYSTEM CONTENTS includes Upper & Lower Colorado River Reservoirs, less Lake Mead exclusive flood control space.

Just a few weeks ago, Lake Powell's water level was eleven feet higher than the same date in 2019. The harsh drought has turned good news into bad news and the water level is now seven feet below where it was one year ago.