

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE COCHISE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
WORK SESSION HELD ON
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 2024**

A work session of the Cochise County Board of Supervisors was held on Tuesday, November 12, 2024, at 2:00 p.m. in the Board of Supervisors' Hearing Room, 1415 Melody Lane, Building G, Bisbee, Arizona.

Present: Tom Crosby, Vice-Chairman; Peggy Judd, Supervisor
Absent: Ann English, Chairman
Staff Present: Richard G. Karwaczka, County Administrator
Sharon Gilman, Deputy County Administrator
Paul Correa, Chief Civil Deputy County Attorney
Lara Loewenheim, Clerk of the Board
Attendees: Jackie Watkins, Engineering and Natural Resources Director
Joaquin Solis, Highway and Floodplain Assistant Director

Vice-Chairman Crosby called the meeting to order at 2:26 p.m.

ANY ITEM ON THIS AGENDA IS OPEN FOR DISCUSSION

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

Board of Supervisors

1. Discussion and possible direction regarding the Flood Control District update.

Jackie Watkins, Engineering and Natural Resources Director, presented this item using a PowerPoint presentation. Ms. Watkins stated Leslie Canyon Pond project, located outside Douglas, is currently in the design phase, with completion expected in a few months. She stated the project involves working with the Arizona Department of Water Resources, as the pond has been classified as a jurisdictional dam due to its height. She stated the project will lower the dam by nine feet to remove its jurisdictional status and repair past flood-related damage. The estimated construction cost is around \$3.5 million, and the county aims to secure a Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) grant for flood control funding.

Ms. Watkins stated the Bay Acres Project, located just north of Douglas, is designed to reduce flooding in Bay Acres, Theonia, and along Washington Avenue. She stated the design is 90% complete. She stated the project requires acquiring rights-of-way along Palm Grove Wash, estimated to cost about \$1 million. Ms. Watkins stated the Coyote Wash project involves diverting water from Coyote Wash into an old gravel pit and gradually releasing it back to prevent flooding. She stated the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) clearance has been completed, and the project plans are set to be finalized by December. She stated the design cost was \$330,000, with a fully funded construction budget of \$6.5 million, targeting construction start early next year and completion within the same year. She stated the project will feature roller-compacted concrete inlet and outlet structures to reduce maintenance

costs, taking lessons learned from the Horseshoe Draw project to prevent blowouts.

In response to the Board, Ms. Watkins stated the project will use roller-compacted concrete, where concrete is laid out and compacted with a steel wheel compactor similar to road construction, creating a very dense structure. Mr. Solis stated the roller-compacted concrete for this project is much stiffer than typical foundation concrete, making it harder to move and less likely to slump. He stated unlike regular concrete that flows easily, the material remains firm when rolled, ensuring it compacts densely without spreading.

Ms. Watkins stated several additional studies and projects are underway to address flooding and water management. She stated Michael Baker is conducting a preliminary study on Pomerene Road to find solutions for the flooding issues there, with a focus on the Wilcox Basin area, for which J. Fuller is the consultant under a BRIC grant of \$299,000. She stated the study aims to identify potential flood control and recharge sites, particularly around Wilcox and Turkey Creek. The Rucker Canyon Watershed is awaiting potential funding from a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers study grant, estimated to cost \$800,000, with a possible 50-50 cost match. She stated Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is updating flood maps for the San Pedro Valley, impacting areas like Sierra Vista and Benson. Preliminary maps are available for review, with public announcements planned for those affected by new flood zone changes.

Ms. Watkins stated the county manages floodplain use permits in alignment with the National Flood Insurance Program, addressing erosion setbacks and reviewing hydrology reports for new commercial developments. She stated they partnered with Sulphur Springs Valley Water Conservation Network. This partnership aims to support future grant applications for flood control and recharge projects in the Douglas and Willcox Basins. Additionally, due to Fort Huachuca's presence, the county is eligible for Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration (REPI) and Sentinel Landscape grants, with current grants totaling about \$19 million for ongoing efforts.

Vice-Chairman Crosby adjourned the meeting at 2:39 p.m.

APPROVED:

Tom Crosby, Vice-Chairman

ATTEST:

Lara Loewenheim, Clerk of the Board