

MINUTE ITEM

7/26/73

16. STATUS OF MAJOR LITIGATION

The attached Calendar Item 15 was submitted to the Commission for information only, no action thereon being necessary.

Attachment:

Calendar Item 15 (8 pages)

INFORMATIVE CALENDAR ITEM

7/73

15.

STATUS OF MAJOR LITIGATION

As of June 30, 1973, there were 245 litigation projects involving the Commission, no change from last month.

1. Boyd v. State
Contra Costa Superior Court Case No. 95769

W 503.470

(Plaintiff seeks to quiet title to several alleged berms of approximately one acre within Piper Slough between Bethel Island and Frank's Tract on the basis of adverse possession.)

Trial has been postponed pending settlement negotiations.

2. Napa Sanitation District v. State, et al.
Napa Superior Court Case No. 22114

W 503.498

(Condemnation action by plaintiff for lands adjacent to Napa River several miles below the City of Napa for use as settling ponds.)

The matter was taken off the trial calendar as plaintiff has now settled with all defendants other than the State. The Attorney General and State Lands Division staff are in the process of completing a proposed settlement between the State and the plaintiff for the consideration of the Commission and the Board of Plaintiff District.

INFORMATIVE CALENDAR ITEM NO. 15. (CONTD)

3. Miller v. City of Santa Monica, et al. W 503.510
Los Angeles Superior Court Case No. 892295

(An action by private upland owners involving title to tidelands that have artificially accreted. Both the State Lands Commission and the Division of Beaches and Parks have interests to protect.)

Plaintiffs voluntarily dismissed the case. State and City may file new action if the parties do not remove the encroachments.

Notices by City and Attorney General mailed September 24, 1971, and October 28, 1971, to the 34 property owners believed to be responsible for the encroachments involved in this matter, informing the owners that action would be taken by the State of California and the City of Santa Monica if they failed to voluntarily remove the encroachments within sixty days. A public meeting was held April 6, 1972, for general exchange of views to explore possibility of settlement. Landowners were requested to respond within thirty days to City and State proposals. The State Department of Parks and Recreation will handle the bulk of the research work as they have been vested with the tideland portion of the grant.

4. County of San Mateo v. Ideal Cement Company, et al. W 503.539
San Mateo Superior Court Case No. 125379 (companion case to No. 144257)

(Action in condemnation for lands for park and recreational facilities including a small craft harbor, lying southeasterly of Coyote Point, which land is included within an area subject to the conflicting claims of the public and Westbay Community Associates in the Westbay case (W 1839.28).)

The State is a party and proceedings are being postponed pending resolution of the Westbay case, except efforts to enter into stipulations permitting the County to proceed with its improvements pending outcome of the Westbay case.

5. Marin Municipal Water District v. State W 503.541
Marin Superior Court Case No. 49577

(Plaintiff seeks to quiet title to lands alleged by the State to be located within the former bed of the State-owned San Rafael Canal consisting of a tidal navigable waterway reserved by the former Board of Tide Land Commissioners.)

The case is at issue. No current action pending completion of the survey by the City (Trust Grantee) pursuant to Chapter 1742, Statutes of 1971.

INFORMATIVE CALENDAR ITEM NO. 15. (CONTD)

6. Simpson v. State W 503.578
Sonoma Superior Court Case No. 60178

(Plaintiff seeks to quiet title to a portion of Bodega Bay as successor to a State Tideland Patent.)

State and County (Trust Grantee) claim public ownership by reason of the tidal-navigable character of the waterway in its natural location. Settlement negotiations are in process.

7. Delta Farms Reclamation District v. State W 503.585
San Joaquin Superior Court Case No. 97183

(Plaintiff seeks to quiet title to an alleged berm of about 80 acres in San Joaquin (Old River) west of Stockton at Bacon Island as the claimed successor to a State Swamp and Overflowed Patent.)

Have had some discovery on the part of the plaintiff, with trial setting conference set for August 6, 1973.

8. Federated Mortgage Investors, et al. v. Charles Lick, et al. W 503.586
Los Angeles Superior Court Case No. 940856
USDC-GDC No. 99379 EAC

(An action between private parties to determine ownership of the Lick Pier (Pacific Ocean Park), and to determine the ordinary high water mark at that point.)

The Federal Court has refused to take jurisdiction to determine the Mean High Tide Line, and the private parties will bring a State suit to determine the Mean High Tide Line. On May 26, 1972, the State was sued in Declaratory Relief by Matador Land Co. to determine the location of the Mean High Tide Line (L.A. Superior Court Case No. 30527) (W 503.711).

9. Donnell v. Bj W 503.607
Sonoma Superior Court Case No. 62402

(Plaintiff seeks to quiet title to about two miles of the bed of Bihler Slough located immediately north of Tubbs Island.)

A State response will not be required until plaintiff amends his complaint. A probable defense of the State will be that lands within the Slough are State-owned tidal-navigable waters.

INFORMATIVE CALENDAR ITEM NO. 15. (CONTD)

10. U.S. v. 1119.992 Acres (Solano) 1418 W 503.625
U.S. v. 1393.464 Acres (Contra Costa) 369 W 503.628

(These are omnibus U.S. condemnations for the Port Chicago buffer zone. Numerous parcels are included with questions involving disputed boundaries of the State's ownership of the bed of the tidal-navigable waters of Suisun Bay and adjacent waterways.)

The different parcels are in various stages of litigation. Settlement negotiations are under way with respect to several parcels.

11. Southern Pacific Transportation v. Evers W 503.631
Solano Superior Court Case No. 49386

(Plaintiff seeks to quiet title to lands along the Vallejo Waterfront as successor to a Railroad Grant and a Tideland Patent.)

The boundaries and the existence and extent of any private interests are disputed by State. Judgment taken against Defendants other than City of Vallejo and State. Further action against City of Vallejo and State is pending due to settlement negotiations.

12. Westward Properties v. State W 503.642
Butte Superior Court Case No. 50579

(Plaintiff seeks to quiet title to lands claimed by the State to be located within the former bed of the State-owned Feather River in Butte County just north of the Sutter County line.)

Settlement negotiations are now in progress.

13. Marin Yacht Club v. State W 503.667
Marin Superior Court Case No. 58068

(Plaintiff seeks to quiet title to lands claimed by the State to be located within the bed of the State-owned San Rafael Canal, consisting of a tidal-navigable waterway reserved by the former Board of Tide Land Commissioners.)

The State's response to the complaint has not been filed and there is no current action in the case pending the survey by the City (Trust Grantee) pursuant to Chapter 1742, Statutes of 1971.

INFORMATIVE CALENDAR ITEM NO. 15. (CONTD)

14. Sebastiani v. State
Sonoma Superior Court Case No. 66440

W 503.677

(Plaintiffs seek to quiet title to half of the bed of Sonoma Creek adjacent to its right or westerly bank upstream for about one mile from the Highway 121 Bridge a short distance below the City of Sonoma.)

The State claims the creek is a tidal-navigable waterway with the issue raised of State fee title in the lower meandered portion and a public easement over the upper portion. The case is at issue with settlement negotiations in process. Trial has been postponed and will be rescheduled.

15. Pipkin v. State of California, et al.
Court of Appeal, Second Appellate District, 2/Civ. 40489

W 503.691

(Quiet title action involving tidelands and submerged lands now owned in trust by City of Morro Bay subject to certain reserved rights of State.)

Demurrers of defendants were sustained and a subsequent motion by plaintiff for order granting leave to file an amended complaint was denied. Upon appeal, the judgment of the San Luis Obispo Superior Court was affirmed. Petition for Re-hearing by plaintiff-appellant denied by Court of Appeal (Second Appellate District); Petition for Hearing by Supreme Court of California was likewise denied.

The title to the subject property was therefore quieted in the State. The case is closed.

16. People v. Robinso
Humboldt Superior Court Case No. 44736

W 503.694

(Condemnation for that portion of the State Highway Bridge in Humboldt Bay between Eureka and Samoa Peninsula which crosses Woodley Island.)

The State and City of Eureka (Trust Grantee) are seeking to establish the boundary between the private lands of the Island and the State-owned tidal-navigable waters of the bay. Trial as to the area of land involved has been postponed pending settlement negotiations.

INFORMATIVE CALENDAR ITEM NO. 15. (CONTD)

17. U.S. v. 1164.34 Acres W 503.696
U.S. District Court Case No. 2274

(U.S. condemnation action for wildlife refuge of all the mud flats between the Sears Point Highway and San Pablo Bay boundary by Mare Island Navy Yard on the east and Sonoma Creek on the west.)

Tract 12 in the condemnation take is the subject of a stipulation for judgment approved by the Commission at its January 1973 meeting. Said judgment will establish the 1923 U.S. Government Land Office meander line as the permanent and fixed boundary line between the privately-owned uplands and the sovereign lands of the State.

18. City of Albany v. State W 503.726
Alameda Superior Court Case No. 428396

(Plaintiff seeks declaratory relief with regard to the State Lands Commission finding that the 1961 tideland grant to the City of Albany had not been substantially improved.)

The Office of the Attorney General has filed its appeal with the First Appellate District in San Francisco. The judges hearing the matter have issued an injunction prohibiting the plaintiffs from continuing to fill the tidelands pending the outcome of the case.

19. Pariani v. State of California W 503.737
San Francisco Superior Court Case No. 657291

(Plaintiff seeks to quiet title to three parcels of land in Sonoma and Lake Counties. State patented said land into private ownership in 1953, reserving all mineral rights. Plaintiff now seeks to determine whether geothermal energy was reserved to the State under the 1953 patent.)

On April 24, 1973, Staff Counsel and a member of the Attorney General's Office conferred with the federal officials in Menlo Park concerning this case and a similar federal lawsuit.

No further pleadings have been filed in the case pending determination by the Division of certain ownership rights for the parcels involved in the suit.

INFORMATIVE CALENDAR ITEM NO. 15. (CONTD)

20. People v. William Kent Estate Company W 1839.24
Marin Superior Court Case No. 32824

(Retrial of an action to abate a public nuisance (a fence erected and maintained perpendicular to the shoreline) on the Pacific Ocean side of the Bolinas Lagoon Sandspit. The case involved a judicial interpretation of the statutory phrase "Ordinary High Water Mark.")

Transcripts on appeal have been completed with Appellant's (State's) and Respondent's (William Kent Estate Co.) briefs having been filed. On June 18, 1973, Respondent filed a Motion for Order to Dismiss the appeal. The State filed its Opposition to Motion for Order to Dismiss appeal on July 5, 1973.

21. State of California v. County of San Mateo, et al. W 1839.28
San Mateo Superior Court Case No. 144257 W 6987

Suit seeking Declaratory Judgment to protect the public property rights in land covered by the open waters of South San Francisco Bay westerly of the deep draught ship channel, the area of which has been substantially increased with the filing of a cross-complaint by Westbay Community Associates to be an approximate 10,000 acres and twenty-one miles of shoreline including most of the westerly portion of the Bay between the San Francisco International Airport and the southerly San Mateo County line. Titles to other adjacent substantial areas of salt ponds have been brought into the case with the filing of a Complaint in Intervention by Leslie Salt Co. Pretrial and Discovery proceedings are now in progress, with factual investigation relating to substantial and complex issues continuing.

22. People v. Vincilione, et al. (People v. Evans, et al.) W 1839.29
Riverside Superior Court Case No. 15156

(An action to protect fishing rights in the Colorado River.)

Matter still under submission. Interrogatories have been filed by both sides. Title to the natural bed of the river is in question. Settlement of fishing rights pending. Title questions to be resolved.

INFORMATIVE CALENDAR ITEM NO. 15. (CONTD)

23. People v. Clarita Valley Salvage, Inc., et al. W 1839.30
Ventura Superior Court Case No. 54428

(An action for relief under the Harbors and Navigation Code Section 552; injunction; trespass and for damages.)

Complaint will be amended to include recovery of all costs of removal and to seek permanent injunction and default against the major parties. No funds have yet been recovered from Federal bankruptcy proceedings against former owner, Western Steamship Company.

24. State of California v. Dart Industries, Inc., et al. W 503.743
Nevada County Superior Court Case No. 18595

(Ejectment action to compel removal of purprestures from Donner Lake)

On July 2, 1973, State filed complaint in ejectment for damages, and to compel the removal and prevent the maintenance of purprestures which obstruct navigation and interfere with the exercise of the public trust over navigable waters of Donner Lake. Defendants are maintaining a landfill of approximately 10,000 sq. ft., a concrete boat launching ramp of approximately 2,040 sq. ft., and a water intake pipe 24-inches in diameter which extends approximately 700 feet into the lake, all of which encroach waterward onto the lake.

Defendants in this action are expected to be served with summons before the end of July. Contact with defendants indicates that they will seek a permit or lease for aforementioned activities, and it is anticipated that the State will grant them an indefinite extension of the time to answer the complaint pending the processing of the application therefor.