

NOTICE AND AGENDA

Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees

SANTA YNEZ RIVER WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT, IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT NO.1

will be held at **3:00 P.M., Tuesday, January 20, 2026**

1070 Faraday Street, Santa Ynez, CA - Conference Room

Notice Regarding Public Participation: For those who may not attend the meeting but wish to provide public comment on an Agenda Item, please submit any and all comments and written materials to the District via electronic mail at general@syrwd.org. All submittals should indicate "**January 20, 2026 Board Meeting**" in the subject line. Materials received by the District during and prior to the meeting will become part of the post-meeting Board packet materials available to the public and posted on the District's website.

1. **CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**
2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
3. **REPORT BY THE SECRETARY TO THE BOARD REGARDING COMPLIANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS FOR POSTING OF THE NOTICE AND AGENDA**
4. **ADDITIONS OR CORRECTIONS, IF ANY, TO THE AGENDA**
5. **PUBLIC COMMENT** - Any member of the public may address the Board relating to any non-Agenda matter within the District's jurisdiction. The total time for all public participation shall not exceed fifteen (15) minutes and the time allotted for each individual shall not exceed three (3) minutes. The District is not responsible for the content or accuracy of statements made by members of the public. No action will be taken by the Board on any public comment item.
6. **CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF DECEMBER 16, 2025**
7. **CONSENT AGENDA** - All items listed on the Consent Agenda are considered to be routine and will be approved or rejected in a single motion without separate discussion. Any item placed on the Consent Agenda can be removed and placed on the Regular Agenda for discussion and possible action upon the request of any Trustee.
 - CA-1. Water Supply and Production Report
 - CA-2. Central Coast Water Authority Update
8. **MANAGER REPORTS - STATUS, DISCUSSION, AND POSSIBLE BOARD ACTION ON THE FOLLOWING SUBJECTS:**
 - A. **DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION**
 1. Financial Report on Administrative Matters
 - a) Draft June 30, 2025 & 2024 Audited Financial Statements – Presentation by Bartlett, Pringle & Wolf LLP
 - b) Presentation of Monthly Financial Statements – Revenues and Expenses
 - c) Approval of Accounts Payable
 2. Personnel Policy Manual
 - a) Resolution No. 858: A Resolution of the Board of Trustees of the Santa Ynez River Water Conservation District, Improvement District No.1 Amending the District's Personnel Policy Manual
 - B. **OPERATIONS**
 1. General Updates
 2. Recommendation and Proposed Professional Services Agreement for Hydrogeologic Consulting Services

9. **REPORT, DISCUSSION, AND POSSIBLE BOARD ACTION ON THE FOLLOWING SUBJECTS:**
 - A. **SUSTAINABLE GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT ACT**
 1. Eastern Management Area (EMA) Update
 - B. **CENTRAL COAST WATER AUTHORITY**
 1. Assignment of State Water Contract from Santa Barbara County Flood Control and Water Conservation District to CCWA
 - C. **WATER INDUSTRY UPDATES**
 1. Draft 2025 Annual Review of the State Water Project
 2. Overview of State Division of Drinking Water
10. **REPORTS BY THE BOARD MEMBERS OR STAFF, QUESTIONS OF STAFF, STATUS REPORTS, ANNOUNCEMENTS, COMMITTEE REPORTS, AND OTHER MATTERS AND/OR COMMUNICATIONS NOT REQUIRING BOARD ACTION**
11. **CORRESPONDENCE: GENERAL MANAGER RECOMMENDS FILING OF VARIOUS ITEMS**
12. **REQUESTS FOR ITEMS TO BE INCLUDED ON THE NEXT REGULAR MEETING AGENDA:** Any member of the Board of Trustees may request to place an item on the Agenda for the next regular meeting. Any member of the public may submit a written request to the General Manager of the District to place an item on a future meeting Agenda, provided that the General Manager and the Board of Trustees retain sole discretion to determine which items to include on meeting Agendas.
13. **NEXT MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES:** The next Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees is scheduled for **February 17, 2026 at 3:00 p.m.**
14. **CLOSED SESSION:**
The Board will hold a Closed Session to discuss the following items:
 - A. **CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL - EXISTING LITIGATION**
[Subdivision (d)(1) of Section 54956.9 of the Government Code - 1 Case]
 1. Name of Case: Adjudicatory proceedings pending before the State Water Resources Control Board regarding Permit 15878 issued on Application 22423 to the City of Solvang, Petitions for Change, and Related Protests
 - B. **CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL - POTENTIAL LITIGATION**
[Subdivision (d)(4) of Section 54956.9 of the Government Code - Potential Initiation of Litigation By the Agency - Two Matters]
15. **RECONVENE INTO OPEN SESSION:**
[Sections 54957.1 and 54957.7 of the Government Code]
 - A. Report (if any) on Closed Session Agenda Items 14.A - 14.B
16. **ADJOURNMENT**

This Agenda was posted at 3622 Sagunto Street, Santa Ynez, California, and notice was delivered in accordance with Government Code Section 54950 et seq., specifically Section 54956. This Agenda contains a brief general description of each item to be considered. The Board reserves the right to change the order in which items are heard. Copies of any staff reports or other written documentation relating to each item of business on the Agenda are on file with the District and available for public inspection during normal business hours at 3622 Sagunto Street, Santa Ynez. Such written materials will also be made available on the District's website, subject to staff's ability to post the documents before the regularly scheduled meeting. Questions concerning any of the Agenda items may be directed to the District's General Manager at (805) 688-6015. If a court challenge is brought against any of the Board's decisions related to the Agenda items above, the challenge may be limited to those issues raised by the challenger or someone else during the public meeting or in written correspondence to the District prior to or during the public meeting. In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, any individual needing special assistance to review Agenda materials or participate in this meeting may contact the District Secretary at (805) 688-6015. Notification 72 hours prior to the meeting will best enable the District to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to this meeting.

**SANTA YNEZ RIVER WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT,
IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT NO.1
DECEMBER 16, 2025 REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

A Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Santa Ynez River Water Conservation District, Improvement District No.1, was held at 3:00 p.m. on Tuesday, December 16, 2025, in-person at 1070 Faraday Street.

Trustees Present: Michael Burchardi
 Jeff Clay
 Brad Joos
 Mark Moniot
 Nick Urton

Trustees Absent: None

Others Present: Paeter Garcia Racel Cota Jessica Diaz
 Kylie Kelleher Dan Drugan

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL:

President Clay called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m., he stated that this was a Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees. Ms. Cota conducted roll call and reported that all Trustees were present.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

President Clay led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. REPORT BY THE SECRETARY TO THE BOARD REGARDING COMPLIANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS FOR POSTING OF THE NOTICE AND AGENDA:

Ms. Cota reported that the Agenda for this meeting was posted in accordance with the California Government Code commencing at Section 54953, as well as District Resolution No. 340.

4. ADDITIONS OR CORRECTIONS, IF ANY, TO THE AGENDA:

There were no additions or corrections to the Agenda.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT:

President Clay welcomed any members of the public and offered time for members of the public to speak and address the Board on matters not on the Agenda. There was no public comment. Mr. Garcia reported that no written comments were submitted to the District for the meeting.

6. CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF NOVEMBER 18, 2025

The Regular Meeting Minutes from November 18, 2025 were presented for consideration.

President Clay asked if there were any changes or additions to the Regular Meeting Minutes of November 18, 2025. There were no changes or additions requested.

It was **MOVED** by Trustee Burchardi, seconded by Trustee Urton, and carried by a unanimous 5-0-0 voice vote, to approve the November 18, 2025 Regular meeting minutes as presented.

7. CONSENT AGENDA:

The Consent Agenda Report was provided in the Board Packet.

Mr. Garcia reviewed the Consent Agenda materials for the month of November.

It was **MOVED** by Trustee Joos, seconded by Trustee Urton, and carried by a unanimous 5-0-0 voice vote, to approve the Consent Agenda.

8. MANAGER REPORTS - STATUS, DISCUSSION, AND POSSIBLE BOARD ACTION ON THE FOLLOWING SUBJECTS:

A. **DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION**

1. Board of Trustee Designations

a) Selection of Officers of the Board – President, Vice President, Treasurer & Secretary

Mr. Garcia reported that each December the District’s Board selects the positions of President, Vice President, and Treasurer and Secretary to the Board of Trustees. He explained that the process for selecting officers is based on nominations and votes by the Board members.

President Clay reviewed the current positions and called for nominations from the Board. Discussion ensued regarding the selection of officers of the Board. All Trustees agreed that the positions remain unchanged, and the nominations were closed.

It was **MOVED** by Trustee Moniot, seconded by Trustee Urton, and carried by a 5-0-0 voice vote to select Trustee Clay as President, Trustee Burchardi as Vice President, and Racel Cota as Treasurer and Secretary to the Board of Trustees.

b) Appointment of Representatives to Participating Agencies and Organizations – Central Coast Water Authority (CCWA), Eastern Management Area Groundwater Sustainability Agency (EMA GSA), and Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA)

President Clay reviewed the current Board representatives to participating agencies and organizations. Discussion ensued regarding the current agency and organization appointments. All Trustees agreed that the agency and organization representatives remain unchanged.

It was **MOVED** by Trustee Joos, seconded by Trustee Urton, and carried by a 5-0-0 voice vote, to appoint Trustee Clay and Trustee Urton as Director and Alternate, respectively, to the Central Coast Water Authority Board of Directors, to appoint Trustee Joos and Trustee Burchardi as Director and Alternate, respectively, to the Eastern Management Area Groundwater Sustainability Agency, and to appoint Trustee Clay and Paeter Garcia as Representative and Alternate, respectively, to the Association of California Water Agencies.

c) Appointment of Board Committees

President Clay reviewed the current Board representatives for the Ad Hoc Committees. He identified each Ad Hoc Committee, which included Trustee Urton and Trustee Joos – City of Solvang; Trustee Burchardi and Trustee Joos – Water Rates; Trustee Burchardi and Trustee Joos – Cachuma Operation and Maintenance Board (COMB); Trustee Burchardi and Trustee Urton – Cachuma Contract; and Trustee Burchardi and Trustee

Moniot – Los Olivos Community Services District (Los Olivos CSD). Discussion ensued regarding each of the Ad Hoc Committees. All Trustees agreed that the Ad Hoc Committees remain unchanged.

It was **MOVED** by Trustee Joos, seconded by Trustee Moniot, and carried by a 5-0-0 voice vote , to appoint Trustee Urton and Trustee Joos to the City of Solvang Ad Hoc Committee; Trustee Burchardi and Trustee Joos to the Water Rates Ad Hoc Committee; Trustee Burchardi and Trustee Joos to the COMB Ad Hoc Committee; Trustee Burchardi and Trustee Urton to the Cachuma Contract Ad Hoc Committee; and Trustee Burchardi and Trustee Moniot to the Los Olivos CSD Ad Hoc Committee.

2. Financial Report on Administrative Matters

a) Presentation of Monthly Financial Statements – Revenues and Expenses

Ms. Cota announced that the Financial Statements were provided to the Board via email earlier in the day, included in the meeting handout materials, and posted on the District’s website.

Ms. Cota reviewed the Statement of Revenues and Expenses for the month of November 2025. She highlighted various line-items related to revenue and expense transactions that occurred during the month and referred to the Fiscal-Year-to-Date Statement of Revenues and Expenses that provides a budget to actual snapshot for the five months of the fiscal year ending November 30, 2025. Ms. Cota stated that revenue exceeded expenses by \$268,173.69 and the year-to-date November 2025 net income was \$1,948,941.34.

b) Approval of Accounts Payable

Ms. Cota announced that the Warrant List was provided to the Board via email earlier in the day, included in the meeting handout materials, and posted on the District’s website.

The Board reviewed the Warrant List which covered warrants 26938 through 26989 in the amount of \$390,784.19.

It was **MOVED** by Trustee Burchardi, seconded by Trustee Urton, and carried by a unanimous 5-0-0 voice vote, to approve the Warrant List for November 19, 2025 through December 16, 2025.

3. Amendment to Rules & Regulations and Capital Facilities Charges

a) Resolution No. 856: A Resolution of the Board of Trustees of the Santa Ynez River Water Conservation District, Improvement District No.1 Approving the Automatic Annual Adjustments to the Capital Facilities Charge and Meter Installation Charges Contained in Appendix “C” and Appendix “D” of the District’s Rules and Regulations.

The Board packet included a December 16, 2025 Staff Report and Resolution No. 856 with related appendices. Mr. Garcia explained that Resolution No. 856 amends Appendix “C” and Appendix “D” of the District’s Rules and Regulations relating to the District’s Capital Facilities Charges and related costs under Section 603 and 709 of the District’s Rules and Regulations. He stated that Resolution No. 856 was presented in

draft form to the Board of Trustees at the November Meeting. Mr. Garcia reviewed the calculations used to establish the 2026 Capital Facilities and Meter Installation Charges, how the 2026 charges compare to the 2025 charges, and recommended approval of Resolution No. 856 for the automatic annual adjustment to the District's Capital Facilities Charges and Meter Installation Charges effective January 1, 2026 pursuant to Sections 603 and 709 of the District Rules and Regulations.

It was **MOVED** by Trustee Moniot, and seconded by Trustee Urton to approve and adopt Resolution No. 856. The Motion carried and Resolution No. 856 was adopted by the following 5-0-0 roll call vote:

Ayes, Trustees: Mike Burchardi
Brad Joos
Nick Urton
Mark Moniot
Jeff Clay

Noes, Trustees: None

Abstain, Trustees: None

Absent, Trustees: None

4. District Land and Air Space

- a) Resolution No. 857: A Resolution of the Board of Trustees of the Santa Ynez River Water Conservation District, Improvement District No.1 Concerning Inventory of District Land and Air Space

The Board packet included Draft Resolution No. 857 and supporting documentation.

Mr. Garcia stated that pursuant to Section 50569 of the California Government Code, the District must inventory its land and air space on an annual basis to determine if any surplus land exists. He stated that based on the inventory, no District lands are deemed surplus to the District's current and foreseeable needs and recommended approval of Resolution No. 857 as presented.

It was **MOVED** by Trustee Joos, and seconded by Trustee Burchardi to approve and adopt Resolution No. 857. The Motion carried and Resolution No. 857 was adopted by the following 5-0-0 roll call vote:

Ayes, Trustees: Mike Burchardi
Brad Joos
Nick Urton
Mark Moniot
Jeff Clay

Noes, Trustees: None

Abstain, Trustees: None

Absent, Trustees: None

9. **REPORT, DISCUSSION, AND POSSIBLE BOARD ACTION ON THE FOLLOWING SUBJECTS:**

A. SUSTAINABLE GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT ACT

1. Eastern Management Area (EMA) Update

The Board packet included the Notice and Agenda for the November 20, 2025 Regular Meeting of the Eastern Management Area Groundwater Sustainability (EMA GSA).

Mr. Garcia summarized several topics that were discussed at the recent EMA GSA meeting. He also reported that an EMA Citizens Advisory Group (EMA CAG) meeting is scheduled to take place on December 18, 2025.

10. **REPORTS BY THE BOARD MEMBERS OR STAFF, QUESTIONS OF STAFF, STATUS REPORTS, ANNOUNCEMENTS, COMMITTEE REPORTS, AND OTHER MATTERS AND/OR COMMUNICATIONS NOT REQUIRING BOARD ACTION**

Mr. Garcia provided an overview of various materials included in the Board packet. Trustee Moniot shared with the Board that the Los Olivos Community Services District is applying for grants to assist with funding the Solvang Sewer Connection Project.

11. **CORRESPONDENCE: GENERAL MANAGER RECOMMENDS FILING OF VARIOUS ITEMS**

The Correspondence List was received by the Board.

12. **REQUESTS FOR ITEMS TO BE INCLUDED ON THE NEXT REGULAR MEETING AGENDA**

There were no requests from the Board.

13. **NEXT MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES:**

President Clay stated that the next Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees is scheduled for January 20, 2026 at 3:00 p.m.

14. **CLOSED SESSION:**

The Board adjourned to closed session at 4:27 p.m.

A. CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL - EXISTING LITIGATION

[Subdivision (d)(1) of Section 54956.9 of the Government Code - 2 Cases]

1. Name of Case: Adjudicatory proceedings pending before the State Water Resources Control Board regarding Permit 15878 issued on Application 22423 to the City of Solvang, Petitions for Change, and Related Protests
2. Name of Case: Central Coast Water Authority, et al. v. Santa Barbara County Flood Control and Water Conservation District, et al., Santa Barbara County Superior Court Case No. 21CV02432

B. CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL - POTENTIAL LITIGATION

[Subdivision (d)(4) of Section 54956.9 of the Government Code - Potential Initiation of Litigation by the Agency - Two Matters]

15. **RECONVENE INTO OPEN SESSION:**

[Sections 54957.1 and 54957.7 of the Government Code]

The Board reconvened to open session at approximately 5:32 p.m. Mr. Garcia announced that the Board met in closed session in accordance with Agenda Items 14.A through 14.B, and that there was no reportable action for any of the closed session Agenda Items.

16. **ADJOURNMENT:**

Being no further business, it was **MOVED** by Trustee Burchardi, seconded by Trustee Urton, and carried by a 5-0-0 voice vote to adjourn the meeting at approximately 5:32 p.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

Racel Cota, Secretary to the Board

ATTEST:

Jeff Clay, President

MINUTES PREPARED BY:

Kylie Kelleher, Executive Administrative Assistant

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES
SANTA YNEZ RIVER WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT,
IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT NO.1
January 20, 2026**

Consent Agenda Report

CA-1. Water Supply and Production Report. The District's total water production in **December 2025 (128 AF)** was 47 AF lower than total production in **November 2025 (175 AF)**, 27 AF lower than the most recent 3-year running average (2023-2025) for the month of **December (155 AF)**, and 30 AF lower than the most recent 10-year running average (2016-2025) for the month of **December (158 AF)**. Below-average production in **December** was undoubtedly attributable to extraordinary rainfall totals for the December period, and thus lower demands. As noted in previous Consent Reports, the District's overall demands and total production generally have been trending below historic levels for domestic, rural residential, and agricultural water deliveries due to water conservation, changing water use patterns, and private well installations.

For the month of **December 2025**, approximately **30 AF** was produced from the Santa Ynez Upland wells, and approximately **98 AF** was produced from the 4.0 and 6.0 cfs well fields in the Santa Ynez River alluvium. As reflected in the Monthly Water Deliveries Report from CCWA, the District did not request or take any SWP supplies for the month. Direct diversions to the County Park and USBR were **1.61 AF**.

The USBR Daily Operations Report for Cachuma Reservoir in **December** (ending December 31, 2025) recorded the end of month reservoir elevation at **751.69'** and end of month storage of **189,253 AF**. USBR recorded total precipitation at the reservoir of **12.40 inches** for the month (mostly December 24-26) and "**computed inflow**" was reported at **68,021.5 AF**. SWP deliveries to the reservoir for South Coast entities were **19.5 AF**. Reported reservoir evaporation in **December** was **232.5 AF**. Based on modeled inflows to Cachuma and projected January storms, on December 26, 2025 USBR initiated spillway releases at a rate 7,500 cfs and official "spill" conditions ensued at that time or soon thereafter. As contained in this Consent Report, additional significant rain events occurred in the beginning of January 2026 (January 1-4), and USBR continues to operate the reservoir under spill conditions, where release rates have now ramped down to a rate of less than 500 cfs (as of January 12th). Based on the updated maximum storage capacity of 192,978 AF (previously 193,305 AF), as of **January 12, 2026** Cachuma reservoir was reported at **101.4%** of capacity, with then-current storage of **195,618 AF** (Santa Barbara County Flood Control District, Rainfall and Reservoir Summary).

At a point when reservoir storage exceeds 100,000 AF, the Cachuma Member Units typically have received a full allocation. Conversely, a 20% pro-rata reduction from the full allocation is scheduled to occur in Water Years beginning at less than 100,000 AF, where incremental reductions may occur (and previously have occurred) at other lower storage levels. In recent years, Reclamation approved a 100% Project allocation for federal WY 2023-2024 based on extraordinary rain conditions that spilled the reservoir in early 2023. The reservoir spilled again in early 2024 and Reclamation issued another 100% Project allocation for federal WY 2024-2025, which began October 1, 2024. As previously reported, the Cachuma Member Units submitted a joint letter dated June 24, 2025 requesting a 100% Project allocation for WY 2025-2026, and USBR approved that request on July 14, 2025. ID No.1's 10.31% share of the 100% Project allocation equals 2,651 AF. Notably, at the beginning of December 2025, ID No.1 held approximately 4,365 AF of contractual Project supplies in the reservoir (Cachuma Operation and Maintenance Board, November 30, 2025), including approximately 1,878 AF of prior year carryover supplies and 2,487 AF from the current WY 2025-2026 allocation. However, according to correspondence from USBR, all Cachuma Member Unit carryover supplies in the reservoir had spilled as of December 31, 2025, which leaves the District with approximately 2,487 AF of contractual Project supplies in Cachuma.

Water releases for the protection of fish and aquatic habitat are made from Cachuma reservoir to the lower Santa Ynez River pursuant to the 2000 Biological Opinion issued by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and the 2019 Water Rights Order (WR 2019-0148) issued by the State Board (SWRCB). These releases are made to Hilton Creek and to the stilling basin portion of the outlet works at the base of Bradbury Dam. The water releases required under the NMFS 2000 Biological Opinion to avoid jeopardy to steelhead and adverse impacts to its critical habitat are summarized as follows:

NMFS 2000 Biological Opinion

- *When Reservoir Spills and the Spill Amount Exceeds 20,000 AF:*
 - 10 cfs at Hwy 154 Bridge during spill year(s) exceeding 20,000 AF
 - 1.5 cfs at Alisal Bridge when spill amount exceeds 20,000 AF and if steelhead are present at Alisal Reach
 - 1.5 cfs at Alisal Bridge in the year immediately following a spill that exceeded 20,000 AF and if steelhead are present at Alisal Reach

- *When Reservoir Does Not Spill or When Reservoir Spills Less Than 20,000 AF:*
 - 5 cfs at Hwy 154 when Reservoir does not spill and Reservoir storage is above 120,000 AF, or when Reservoir spill is less than 20,000 AF
 - 2.5 cfs at Hwy 154 in all years when Reservoir storage is below 120,000 AF but greater than 30,000 AF
 - 1.5 cfs at Alisal Bridge if the Reservoir spilled in the preceding year and the spill amount exceeded 20,000 AF and if steelhead are present at Alisal Reach
 - 30 AF per month to “refresh the stilling basin and long pool” when Reservoir storage is less than 30,000 AF

The water releases required under the SWRCB Water Rights Order 2019-0148 for the protection of fish and other public trust resources in the lower Santa Ynez River and to prevent the waste and unreasonable use of water are summarized as follows:

SWRCB Order WR 2019-0148

- *During Below Normal, Dry, and Critical Dry water years (October 1 – September 30), releases shall be made in accordance with the requirements of the NMFS 2000 Biological Opinion as set forth above.*

- *During Above Normal and Wet water years, the following minimum flow requirements must be maintained at Hwy 154 and Alisal Bridges (“Table 2 Flows”):*
 - 48 cfs from February 15 to April 14 for spawning
 - 20 cfs from February 15 to June 1 for incubation and rearing
 - 25 cfs from June 2 to June 9 for emigration, with ramping to 10 cfs by June 30
 - 10 cfs from June 30 to October 1 for rearing and maintenance of resident fish
 - 5 cfs from October 1 to February 15 for resident fish

- *For purposes of SWRCB Order WR 2019-0148, water year classifications are as follows:*
 - Wet is when Cachuma Reservoir inflow is greater than 117,842 AF;
 - Above Normal is when Reservoir inflow is less than or equal to 117,842 AF or greater than 33,707 AF;
 - Below Normal is when Reservoir inflow is less than or equal to 33,707 AF or greater than 15,366 AF;
 - Dry is when Reservoir inflow is less than or equal to 15,366 AF or greater than 4,550 AF
 - Critical Dry is when Reservoir inflow is less than or equal to 4,550 AF

Based on local rainfall conditions thus far in the new water year, inflows to Cachuma Reservoir have exceeded 33,707 AF and thus have triggered higher fishery release requirements from Bradbury Dam under “Table 2” of State Board Order 2019-0148 (see flow regime above).

CA-2. State Water Project (SWP) and Central Coast Water Authority (CCWA) Updates.

As previously reported, in 2023 DWR declared a 100 percent SWP Table A allocation for the first time since 2006 (compared to a 5 percent allocation in 2022). In 2024, despite above normal precipitation and snowpack, and above-average storage levels in Lake Oroville, DWR took a conservative approach and limited the final Table A allocation to 40 percent. In 2025, DWR again took a very conservative approach to the Table A allocation, as follows:

- December 2, 2024 – DWR issued an initial 2025 SWP Table A allocation of 5 percent (5%)
- December 23, 2024 – Allocation increased to 15 percent (15%)
- January 28, 2025 – Allocation increased to 20 percent (20%)
- February 25, 2025 – Allocation increased to 35 percent (35%)
- March 25, 2025 – Allocation increased to 40 percent (40%)
- April 29, 2025 – Final Allocation increased to 50 percent (50%)

For the new 2026 Water Year, on December 1, 2025 DWR issued a Notice to the State Water Contractors establishing an initial 10 percent (10%) SWP Table A allocation. DWR’s December Notice explained the initial allocation as follows:

To determine the available SWP water supplies, DWR considers various factors including SWP contractors’ anticipated carryover supplies into 2026, projected 2026 demands, existing storage in SWP conservation facilities, estimates of future runoff, SWP operational and regulatory requirements under the Federal Endangered Species Act and California Endangered Species Act, and water rights obligations under the State Water Resources Control Board’s authority.

As of January 15, 2026 Lake Oroville storage levels have increased rapidly to 79 percent of total capacity (up from 51 percent on December 9, 2025) and 139 percent of its historic average for this time of year (up from 98 percent of historic average on December 9th). Accordingly, DWR is expected soon to increase the 2026 Table A allocation above 10 percent.

As reflected in recent meeting agendas for the CCWA Board of Directors and CCWA Operating Committee, CCWA remains focused on several important issues related to the SWP and SWP deliveries, including but not limited to: SWP operations and supply conditions; pending and proposed water transfers; land subsidence and invasive mussel issues affecting the California Aqueduct; CCWA infrastructure improvements; and the recruitment process for CCWA’s next Executive Director. Notably, on December 18, 2025 CCWA selected Peter Thompson to succeed Ray Stokes as the next CCWA Executive Director. Mr. Thompson will assume the role of Associate Director from February 9th to May 14th, then Executive Director upon the official retirement of Mr. Stokes. Also significant, final and official assignment of the SWP Contract from the Santa Barbara County Flood Control and Water Conservation District to CCWA was approved by DWR on December 16, 2025. The next meeting of the CCWA Board of Directors is currently scheduled for January 22, 2026.



— BUREAU OF —
RECLAMATION

Historical Archive and Reports Database

Lake Cachuma Daily Operations

Run Date: 12/30/2025

December 2025

DAY	STORAGE ACRE-FEET			COMPUTED*	CCWA	PRECIP ON			RELEASE - AF.			EVAPORATION		PRECIP
	ELEV	IN LAKE	CHANGE	INFLOW AF.	INFLOW AF.	RES. SURF. AF.	TUNNEL	HILTON CREEK	OUTLET	SPILLWAY	AF.	INCH	INCHES	
	737.20	148,442												
1	737.19	148,391	-51	1.1	0.0	0.0	23.2	12.5	15.0	0.0	1.4	0.010	0.00	
2	737.17	148,365	-26	45.0	0.0	0.0	25.6	12.5	16.0	0.0	16.9	0.120	0.00	
3	737.15	148,314	-51	13.2	0.0	0.0	28.2	12.5	15.0	0.0	8.5	0.060	0.00	
4	737.13	148,262	-52	10.6	0.0	0.0	28.5	12.5	16.0	0.0	5.6	0.040	0.00	
5	737.12	148,237	-25	45.7	0.0	0.0	29.1	12.5	15.0	0.0	14.1	0.100	0.00	
6	737.09	148,134	-103	-37.0	0.0	0.0	26.2	12.5	16.0	0.0	11.3	0.080	0.00	
7	737.07	148,083	-51	11.7	0.0	0.0	28.2	12.5	15.0	0.0	7.0	0.050	0.00	
8	737.05	148,057	-26	47.1	0.0	0.0	37.6	12.5	16.0	0.0	7.0	0.050	0.00	
9	737.02	147,980	-77	3.7	0.0	0.0	36.7	12.5	16.0	0.0	15.5	0.110	0.00	
10	737.01	147,954	-26	38.8	9.6	0.0	37.2	12.4	15.0	0.0	9.8	0.070	0.00	
11	737.00	147,929	-25	41.0	9.9	0.0	37.1	12.5	15.0	0.0	11.3	0.080	0.00	
12	736.94	147,775	-154	-59.9	0.0	0.0	56.9	12.4	15.0	0.0	9.8	0.070	0.00	
13	736.94	147,775	0	94.1	0.0	0.0	56.9	12.4	15.0	0.0	9.8	0.070	0.00	
14	736.91	147,698	-77	8.1	0.0	0.0	53.9	12.4	16.0	0.0	2.8	0.020	0.00	
15	736.89	147,647	-51	38.0	0.0	2.1	56.7	12.4	15.0	0.0	7.0	0.050	0.01	
16	736.85	147,544	-103	-7.8	0.0	0.0	55.6	12.4	16.0	0.0	11.2	0.080	0.00	
17	736.82	147,467	-77	13.2	0.0	0.0	57.2	12.4	15.0	0.0	5.6	0.040	0.00	
18	736.80	147,416	-51	49.1	0.0	0.0	60.5	12.4	16.0	0.0	11.2	0.080	0.00	
19	736.76	147,313	-103	-7.5	0.0	2.1	60.4	12.4	15.0	0.0	9.8	0.070	0.01	
20	736.74	147,262	-51	43.2	0.0	0.0	59.9	12.3	15.0	0.0	7.0	0.050	0.00	
21	736.71	147,185	-77	16.0	0.0	2.1	59.4	12.3	15.0	0.0	8.4	0.060	0.01	
22	736.69	147,133	-52	32.2	0.0	0.0	53.1	12.3	16.0	0.0	2.8	0.020	0.00	
23	736.70	147,159	26	82.9	0.0	0.0	20.2	12.3	16.0	0.0	8.4	0.060	0.00	
24	737.26	148,596	1,437	471.7	0.0	1,016.1	23.4	12.4	15.0	0.0	0.0	0.000	4.75	
25	741.13	158,792	10,196	9,742.2	0.0	501.9	20.4	12.7	15.0	0.0	0.0	0.000	2.23	
26	750.81	186,569	27,777	36,479.4	0.0	1,277.3	20.2	13.5	16.0	9,930.0	0.0	0.000	5.05	
27	751.90	189,901	3,332	13,238.8	0.0	84.5	21.1	14.1	16.0	9,930.0	10.1	0.060	0.33	
28	751.66	189,161	-740	4,656.2	0.0	2.6	20.8	14.2	117.0	5,235.0	11.8	0.070	0.01	
29	751.69	189,253	92	2,910.7	0.0	0.0	21.0	13.3	171.0	2,605.0	8.4	0.050	0.00	
TOTALS			40,811	68,021.5	19.5	2,888.7	1,115.2	366.0	705.0	27,700.0	232.5	1.620	12.40	
AVERAGE		153,840												

Comments: *Computed inflow is the sum of change in storage, releases and evaporation minus precip on the reservoir surface and CCWA inflow.
Indicated outlet release includes leakage from outlet valves and spillway gates.
Data based on a 24 hour period ending 0800.



**BUREAU OF
RECLAMATION**

January 2026

DAY	ELEV	STORAGE ACRE-FEET		COMPUTED* INFLOW AF.	CCWA INFLOW AF.	PRECIP ON		RELEASE - AF.			EVAPORATION		PRECIP INCHES
		IN LAKE	CHANGE			RES. SURF. AF.	TUNNEL	HILTON CREEK	OUTLET	SPILLWAY	AF.	INCH	
	751.78	189,531											
1	751.43	188,459	-1,072	4,627.0	0.0	410.0	20.8	14.2	171.0	5,903.0	0.0	0.000	1.61
2	752.26	191,010	2,551	8,665.3	0.0	5.1	21.2	14.2	170.0	5,914.0	0.0	0.000	0.02
3	751.95	190,055	-955	7,315.9	0.0	202.3	21.0	14.2	170.0	8,268.0	0.0	0.000	0.79
4	753.69	195,460	5,405	14,998.3	0.0	514.8	20.7	14.4	171.0	9,902.0	0.0	0.000	1.97
5	753.49	194,834	-626	6,867.1	0.0	65.2	22.3	14.5	172.0	7,341.0	8.5	0.050	0.25
6	753.01	193,336	-1,498	2,778.7	0.0	5.2	21.4	14.5	171.0	4,075.0	0.0	0.000	0.02
7	752.91	193,024	-312	2,018.0	0.0	0.0	25.5	14.4	172.0	2,108.0	10.1	0.060	0.00
8	753.07	193,492	468	2,295.8	0.0	0.0	27.9	14.4	171.0	1,601.0	13.5	0.080	0.00
9	753.26	194,116	624	2,022.9	0.0	0.0	28.8	14.5	27.0	1,310.0	18.6	0.110	0.00
10	753.48	194,802	686	2,021.8	0.0	0.0	27.8	14.5	21.0	1,264.0	8.5	0.050	0.00
11	753.68	195,428	626	1,969.5	0.0	0.0	28.1	14.5	22.0	1,267.0	11.9	0.070	0.00
12	753.84	195,932	504	1,568.7	0.0	0.0	29.0	14.5	21.0	990.0	10.2	0.060	0.00
13	754.03	196,531	599	1,624.7	0.0	0.0	27.3	14.5	5.0	967.0	11.9	0.070	0.00
14	754.21	197,098	567	1,597.6	0.0	0.0	33.4	14.5	0.0	969.0	13.7	0.080	0.00
TOTALS			7,567	60,371.3	0.0	1,202.6	355.2	201.8	1,464.0	51,879.0	106.9	0.630	4.66
AVERAGE		193,827											

Comments: *Computed inflow is the sum of change in storage, releases and evaporation minus precip on the reservoir surface and CCWA inflow.
 Indicated outlet release includes leakage from outlet valves and spillway gates.
 Data based on a 24 hour period ending 0800.



Santa Barbara County - Flood Control District

130 East Victoria Street, Santa Barbara CA 93101 - 805.568.3440 - www.countyofsb.org/pwd

Rainfall and Reservoir Summary

Updated 8am: 1/12/2026

Water Year: 2026

Storm Number: NA

Notes: Daily rainfall amounts are recorded as of 8am for the previous 24 hours. Rainfall units are expressed in inches. All data on this page are from automated sensors, are preliminary, and subject to verification.

*Each Water Year (WY) runs from Sept 1 through Aug 31 and is designated by the calendar year in which it ends
 County Real-Time Rainfall and Reservoir Website link > <https://rain.cosbpw.net>

Rainfall	ID	24 hrs	Storm Oday(s)	Month	Year*	% to Date	% of Year*	AI
Buellton (Fire Stn)	233	0.00	0.00	3.66	18.48	293%	112%	
Cachuma Dam (USBR)	332	0.00	0.00	4.66	26.78	365%	135%	
Carpinteria (Fire Stn)	208	0.00	0.00	1.71	17.59	268%	102%	
Cuyama (Fire Stn)	436	0.00	0.00	1.33	8.68	296%	113%	
Figueroa Mtn (USFS Stn)	421	0.00	0.00	4.14	22.30	270%	104%	4.8
Gibraltar Dam (City Facility)	230	0.00	0.00	4.94	30.42	309%	115%	4.4
Goleta (Fire Stn-Los Carneros)	440	0.00	0.00	4.22	20.34	282%	111%	
Lompoc (City Hall)	439	0.00	0.00	3.10	14.40	253%	98%	5.2
Los Alamos (Fire Stn)	204	0.00	0.00	2.65	14.31	252%	93%	
San Marcos Pass (USFS Stn)	212	0.00	0.00	7.57	41.62	306%	121%	
Santa Barbara (County Bldg)	234	0.00	0.00	3.63	21.85	313%	118%	
Santa Maria (City Pub.Works)	380	0.00	0.00	1.72	11.22	217%	84%	
Santa Ynez (Fire Stn /Airport)	218	0.00	0.00	2.85	17.51	291%	111%	
Sisquoc (Fire Stn)	256	0.00	0.00	1.56	11.42	199%	76%	

Countywide percentage of "Normal-to-Date" rainfall : **279%**

Countywide percentage of "Normal Water-Year" rainfall : **107%**

Countywide percentage of "Normal Water-Year" rainfall calculated assuming no more rain through Aug. 31, 2026 (End of WY2026).

AI (Antecedent Index / Soil Wetness)

6.0 and below = Wet (min. = 2.5)
 6.1 - 9.0 = Moderate
 9.1 and above = Dry (max. = 12.5)

Reservoirs

Reservoir Elevations referenced to NGVD-29.

**Cachuma is full and subject to spilling at elevation 750 ft. However, the lake is surcharged to 753 ft. for fish release water. (Cachuma water storage based on Dec 2021 capacity revision)

Click on Site for Real-Time Readings	Spillway	Current	Max.	Current	Current	Storage	Storage
	Elev. (ft)	Elev. (ft)	Storage (ac-ft)	Storage (ac-ft)	Capacity (%)	Change Mo.(ac-ft)	Change Year*(ac-ft)
<u>Gibraltar Reservoir</u>	1,400.00	1,399.53	4,490	4,385	97.7%	-188	2,878
<u>Cachuma Reservoir</u>	753.**	753.84	192,978	195,618	101.4%	7,563	42,451
<u>Jameson Reservoir</u>	2,224.00	2,224.00	4,587	4,587	100.0%	-10	367
<u>Twitchell Reservoir</u>	651.50	566.17	194,971	18,434	9.5%	8,542	18,434

[Previous Rainfall and Reservoir Summaries](#)



CENTRAL COAST WATER AUTHORITY
MEMORANDUM

TO: Dessi Mladenova, Controller
FROM: Lacey Adam, Senior Accountant
SUBJECT: Monthly Water Deliveries

January 9, 2026

According to the CCWA revenue meters at each turnout, the following deliveries were made during the month of December 2025:

<u>Project Participant</u>	<u>Delivery Amount (acre-feet)</u>
Chorro	120
Lopez.....	0
Shandon.....	0
Guadalupe.....	31
Santa Maria.....	334
Golden State Water Co.....	0
Vandenberg.....	219
Buellton	0
Solvang	0
Santa Ynez ID#1	0
Bradbury.....	<u>20</u>
TOTAL	<u>724</u>

In order to reconcile these deliveries with the DWR revenue meter, which read 750 acre-feet, the following delivery amounts should be used for billing purposes:

<u>Project Participant</u>	<u>Delivery Amount (acre-feet)</u>
Chorro	124
Lopez	0
Shandon.....	0
Guadalupe.....	32
Santa Maria.....	342*
Golden State Water Co.....	5*
Vandenberg	227
Buellton	0
Solvang	0
Santa Ynez ID#1	0
Bradbury	<u>20</u>
TOTAL	<u>750</u>

*Golden State Water Company delivered 5 acre-feet into its system through the Santa Maria turnout. This delivery is recorded by providing a credit of 5 acre-feet to the City of Santa Maria and a charge in the same amount to the Golden State Water Company.

Notes: Santa Ynez ID#1 water usage is divided into 0 acre-feet of Table A water and 0 acre-feet of exchange water.

The exchange water is allocated as follows

<u>Project Participant</u>	<u>Exchange Amount (acre-feet)</u>
Goleta	0
Santa Barbara	0
Montecito	0
Carpinteria	0
TOTAL	0

Bradbury Deliveries into Lake Cachuma are allocated as follows:

<u>Project Participant</u>	<u>Delivery Amount (acre-feet)</u>
Carpinteria	0
Goleta	0
La Cumbre	20
Montecito	0
Morehart	0
Santa Barbara	0
Raytheon	0
TOTAL	20

cc: Daniel Brooks, Goleta WD
Mike Babb, Golden State WC
Joshua Haggmark, City of Santa Barbara
Janet Gingras, COMB
Jeromy Caldera, San Luis Obispo County
Paeter Garcia, Santa Ynez RWCD ID#1
Shad Springer, City of Santa Maria
City Administrator, City of Guadalupe
Robert MacDonald, Carpinteria Valley WD
Mike Alvarado, La Cumbre Mutual WC
Pernell Rush, Vandenberg SFB
Nick Turner, Montecito WD
Jose Acosta, City of Solvang
Rose Hess, City of Buellton

Paeter Garcia

From: Buenrostro, Christian <cbuenrostro@usbr.gov>
Sent: Monday, January 12, 2026 7:53 AM
To: Alex Pappas; Bill Buelow; bvanlienden@woodardcurran.com; chanson@hansonenv.com; Curtis Lawler; drb@ccwa.com; wrubalc@countyofsb.org; Elisabeth L.; Matthew Young; EHonn@woodardcurran.com; elyons@cachuma-board.org; Joel Degner; Janet Gingras; Joel; mloum@bhfs.com; Peter Cattle; Paeter Garcia; Ray Stokes; shastings@bhfs.com; Scott"; Steve Anderson; rwillcox@countyofsb.org; Steve Torigiani; ADoran@countyofsb.org; Tim Robinson; oemduyofficer@countyofsb.org; sjohnso@countyofsb.org; cnrfc@noaa.gov; Matt Griffin; Matthew Young
Cc: Hyatt, David E; Emerson, Rain L; GONZALEZ, RUFINO; Papendick, Jeffrey E; Gallmann, Jeffrey S; Espinoza, J L; Salazar, Edward; Alcocer, Hector; Kyle.Evans@wildlife.ca.gov; Haga, Erica H; Garrison-Knecht, Mary Lee; Deena.Hansen@Wildlife.ca.gov; rick.bush@noaa.gov
Subject: Re: Bradbury Dam Releases Update

Good Morning Stakeholders,

Reclamation will make the following adjustments today at Bradbury Dam:

Monday, January 12, 2026								
Time	Release Changes (CFS)						Change	Total Release
	From	From	From	To	To	To		
	Spillway	R.O.W	Hilton Creek	Spillway	R.O.W	Hilton Creek		
800	639	11	7	564	11	7	-75	582
1100	564	11	7	489	11	7	-75	507
1300	489	11	7	489		7	-11	496

As you may have noticed, the river outlet works will be closed today at 1300 hrs. to begin the 10-inch valve replacement. We will continue to closely monitor hydrology and real-time conditions to ensure proper management throughout the process. If you have any questions or need additional details, please feel free to contact Rain Emerson or me.

Thank you,

Christian Buenrostro | Mechanical Engineer | Operations Division
T 559.822.7288 | **C** 559.470.4969
 South-Central California Area Office | Operations Division



From: Buenrostro, Christian <cbuenrostro@usbr.gov>

Sent: Friday, January 9, 2026 9:19 AM

To: Alex Pappas <apappas@syrwcd.com>; Bill Buelow <bbuelow@syrwcd.com>; bvanlienden@woodardcurran.com <bvanlienden@woodardcurran.com>; chanson@hansonenv.com <chanson@hansonenv.com>; Curtis Lawler <curtisl@stetsonengineers.com>; drb@ccwa.com <drb@ccwa.com>; wrubalc@countyofsb.org <wrubalc@countyofsb.org>; Elisabeth L. <EESPOSITO@bhfs.com>; Matthew Young <mcyoung@countyofsb.org>; EHonn@woodardcurran.com <EHonn@woodardcurran.com>; elyons@cachuma-board.org <elyons@cachuma-board.org>; Joel Degner <jdegner@cachuma-board.org>; Janet Gingras <jgingras@cachuma-board.org>; Joel <Joel.Mulder@icf.com>; mloum@bhfs.com <mloum@bhfs.com>; Peter Cante <pcante@ccrb-board.org>; Paeter Garcia <pgarcia@syrwd.org>; Ray Stokes <RAS@ccwa.com>; shastings@bhfs.com <shastings@bhfs.com>; Scott" <sshapiro@downeybrand.com>; Steve Anderson <Steve.Anderson@bbklaw.com>; rwillcox@countyofsb.org <rwillcox@countyofsb.org>; Steve Torigiani <storigiani@youngwooldridge.com>; ADoran@countyofsb.org <ADoran@countyofsb.org>; Tim Robinson <trobenson@cachuma-board.org>; oemdutyofficer@countyofsb.org <oemdutyofficer@countyofsb.org>; sjohnso@countyofsb.org <sjohnso@countyofsb.org>; cnrfc@noaa.gov <cnrfc@noaa.gov>; Matt Griffin <mgriff@countyofsb.org>; Matthew Young <mcyoung@countyofsb.org>
Cc: Hyatt, David E <dhyatt@usbr.gov>; Emerson, Rain L <remerson@usbr.gov>; GONZALEZ, RUFINO <RGonzalez@usbr.gov>; Papendick, Jeffrey E <jpapendick@usbr.gov>; Gallmann, Jeffrey S <JGallmann@usbr.gov>; Espinoza, J L <jespinoza@usbr.gov>; Salazar, Edward <ESalazar@usbr.gov>; Alcocer, Hector <halcocer@usbr.gov>; Kyle.Evans@wildlife.ca.gov <kyle.evans@wildlife.ca.gov>; Haga, Erica H <ehaga@usbr.gov>; Garrison-Knecht, Mary Lee <mgarrisonknecht@usbr.gov>; Deena.Hansen@Wildlife.ca.gov <deena.hansen@wildlife.ca.gov>; rick.bush@noaa.gov <rick.bush@noaa.gov>

Subject: Re: Bradbury Dam Releases Update

Good Morning Stakeholders,

Reclamation will make the following adjustments today at Bradbury Dam:

Friday, January 9, 2026							
Time	Ramp Down Releases (CFS)					Change	Total Release
	From	From	To	To	Change		
	Spillway	R.O.W	Spillway	R.O.W			
900	786	11	711	11	-75	722	
1500	711	11	636	11	-75	647	

We will continue to closely monitor hydrology and real-time conditions to ensure appropriate management. If you have any questions or require additional details, please feel free to contact Rain Emerson or myself.

Thank you,

Christian Buenrostro | Mechanical Engineer | Operations Division
T 559.822.7288 | C 559.470.4969
South-Central California Area Office | Operations Division



— BUREAU OF —
RECLAMATION

From: Buenrostro, Christian <cbuenrostro@usbr.gov>

Sent: Thursday, January 8, 2026 8:58 AM

To: Alex Pappas <apappas@syrwcd.com>; Bill Buelow <bbuelow@syrwcd.com>; bvanlienden@woodardcurran.com <bvanlienden@woodardcurran.com>; chanson@hansonenv.com <chanson@hansonenv.com>; Curtis Lawler <curtisl@stetsonengineers.com>; drb@ccwa.com <drb@ccwa.com>; wrubalc@countyofsb.org <wrubalc@countyofsb.org>; Elisabeth L. <EESPOSITO@bhfs.com>; Matthew Young <mcyoung@countyofsb.org>; EHonn@woodardcurran.com <EHonn@woodardcurran.com>; elyons@cachuma-board.org <elyons@cachuma-board.org>; Joel Degner <jdegner@cachuma-board.org>; Janet Gingras <jgingras@cachuma-board.org>; Joel <Joel.Mulder@icf.com>; mloum@bhfs.com <mloum@bhfs.com>; Peter Cattle <pcattle@ccrb-board.org>; Paeter Garcia <pgarcia@syrwd.org>; Ray Stokes <RAS@ccwa.com>; shastings@bhfs.com <shastings@bhfs.com>; Scott" <sshapiro@downeybrand.com>; Steve Anderson <Steve.Anderson@bbklaw.com>; rwillcox@countyofsb.org <rwillcox@countyofsb.org>; Steve Torigiani <storigiani@youngwooldridge.com>; ADoran@countyofsb.org <ADoran@countyofsb.org>; Tim Robinson <trobenson@cachuma-board.org>; oemduyofficer@countyofsb.org <oemduyofficer@countyofsb.org>; sjohnso@countyofsb.org <sjohnso@countyofsb.org>; cnrfc@noaa.gov <cnrfc@noaa.gov>; Matt Griffin <mgriff@countyofsb.org>; Matthew Young <mcyoung@countyofsb.org>

Cc: Hyatt, David E <dhyatt@usbr.gov>; Emerson, Rain L <remerson@usbr.gov>; GONZALEZ, RUFINO <RGonzalez@usbr.gov>; Papendick, Jeffrey E <jpapendick@usbr.gov>; Gallmann, Jeffrey S <JGallmann@usbr.gov>; Espinoza, J L <jespinoza@usbr.gov>; Salazar, Edward <ESalazar@usbr.gov>; Alcocer, Hector <halcocer@usbr.gov>; Kyle.Evans@wildlife.ca.gov <kyle.evans@wildlife.ca.gov>; Haga, Erica H <ehaga@usbr.gov>; Garrison-Knecht, Mary Lee <mgarrisonknecht@usbr.gov>; Deena.Hansen@Wildlife.ca.gov <deena.hansen@wildlife.ca.gov>; rick.bush@noaa.gov <rick.bush@noaa.gov>

Subject: Re: Bradbury Dam Releases Update

Good Morning Stakeholders,

Reclamation will make the following adjustments today at Bradbury Dam:

Thursday, January 8, 2026							
Time	Ramp Down Releases (CFS)					Change	Total Release
	From	From	To	To			
	Spillway	R.O.W	Spillway	R.O.W			
900	858	86	858	8	78	866	
1500	858	8	783	8	75	791	

We will continue to closely monitor hydrology and real-time conditions to ensure appropriate management. If you have any questions or require additional details, please feel free to contact Rain Emerson or myself.

Thank you,

Christian Buenrostro | Mechanical Engineer | Operations Division

T 559.822.7288 | C 559.470.4969

South-Central California Area Office | Operations Division



— BUREAU OF —
RECLAMATION

From: Buenrostro, Christian <cbuenrostro@usbr.gov>

Sent: Wednesday, January 7, 2026 8:26 AM

To: Alex Pappas <apappas@syrwcd.com>; Bill Buelow <bbuelow@syrwcd.com>; bvanlienden@woodardcurran.com <bvanlienden@woodardcurran.com>; chanson@hansonenv.com <chanson@hansonenv.com>; Curtis Lawler <curtisl@stetsonengineers.com>; drb@ccwa.com <drb@ccwa.com>; wrubalc@countyofsb.org <wrubalc@countyofsb.org>; Elisabeth L. <EESPOSITO@bhfs.com>; Matthew Young <mcyoung@countyofsb.org>; EHonn@woodardcurran.com <EHonn@woodardcurran.com>; elyons@cachuma-board.org <elyons@cachuma-board.org>; Joel Degner <jdegner@cachuma-board.org>; Janet Gingras <jgingras@cachuma-board.org>; Joel <Joel.Mulder@icf.com>; mloum@bhfs.com <mloum@bhfs.com>; Peter Cante <pcante@ccrb-board.org>; Paeter Garcia <pgarcia@syrwd.org>; Ray Stokes <RAS@ccwa.com>; shastings@bhfs.com <shastings@bhfs.com>; Scott" <sshapiro@downeybrand.com>; Steve Anderson <Steve.Anderson@bbklaw.com>; rwillcox@countyofsb.org <rwillcox@countyofsb.org>; Steve Torigiani <storigiani@youngwooldridge.com>; ADoran@countyofsb.org <ADoran@countyofsb.org>; Tim Robinson <trobenson@cachuma-board.org>; oemduyofficer@countyofsb.org <oemduyofficer@countyofsb.org>; sjohnso@countyofsb.org <sjohnso@countyofsb.org>; cnrfc@noaa.gov <cnrfc@noaa.gov>; Matt Griffin <mgriff@countyofsb.org>; Matthew Young <mcyoung@countyofsb.org>

Cc: Hyatt, David E <dhyatt@usbr.gov>; Emerson, Rain L <remerson@usbr.gov>; GONZALEZ, RUFINO <RGonzalez@usbr.gov>; Papendick, Jeffrey E <jpapendick@usbr.gov>; Gallmann, Jeffrey S <JGallmann@usbr.gov>; Espinoza, J L <jespinoza@usbr.gov>; Salazar, Edward <ESalazar@usbr.gov>; Alcocer, Hector <halcocer@usbr.gov>; Kyle.Evans@wildlife.ca.gov <kyle.evans@wildlife.ca.gov>; Haga, Erica H <ehaga@usbr.gov>; Garrison-Knecht, Mary Lee <mgarrisonknecht@usbr.gov>; Deena.Hansen@Wildlife.ca.gov <deena.hansen@wildlife.ca.gov>; rick.bush@noaa.gov <rick.bush@noaa.gov>

Subject: Re: Bradbury Dam Releases Update

Good Morning Stakeholders,

I wanted to update you on the current release schedule for Bradbury Dam today. Reclamation will make the following adjustments:

Wednesday, January 7, 2026							
Time	Ramp Down Releases (CFS)					Change	Total Release
	From	From	To	To			
	Spillway	R.O.W	Spillway	R.O.W			
900	1,658	86	1,458	86	-200	1,544	
1200	1,458	86	1,258	86	-200	1,344	
1500	1,258	86	1,108	86	-150	1,194	
1800	1,108	86	958	86	-150	1,044	
2100	958	86	858	86	-100	944	

We will continue to closely monitor hydrology and real-time conditions to ensure appropriate management. If you have any questions or require additional details, please feel free to contact Rain Emerson or myself.

Thank you,
Christian Buenrostro

Thank you,

Christian Buenrostro | Mechanical Engineer | Operations Division



BUREAU OF
 RECLAMATION

From: Buenrostro, Christian <cbuenrostro@usbr.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, January 6, 2026 9:10 AM
To: Alex Pappas <apappas@syrwcd.com>; Bill Buelow <bbuelow@syrwcd.com>; bvanlienden@woodardcurran.com <bvanlienden@woodardcurran.com>; chanson@hansonenv.com <chanson@hansonenv.com>; Curtis Lawler <curtisl@stetsonengineers.com>; drb@ccwa.com <drb@ccwa.com>; wrubalc@countyofsb.org <wrubalc@countyofsb.org>; Elisabeth L. <EESPOSITO@bhfs.com>; Matthew Young <mcyoung@countyofsb.org>; EHonn@woodardcurran.com <EHonn@woodardcurran.com>; elyons@cachuma-board.org <elyons@cachuma-board.org>; Joel Degner <jdegner@cachuma-board.org>; Janet Gingras <jgingras@cachuma-board.org>; Joel <Joel.Mulder@icf.com>; mloum@bhfs.com <mloum@bhfs.com>; Peter Cattle <pcattle@ccrb-board.org>; Paeter Garcia <pgarcia@syrwd.org>; Ray Stokes <RAS@ccwa.com>; shastings@bhfs.com <shastings@bhfs.com>; Scott" <sshapiro@downeybrand.com>; Steve Anderson <Steve.Anderson@bbklaw.com>; rwillcox@countyofsb.org <rwillcox@countyofsb.org>; Steve Torigiani <storigiani@youngwooldridge.com>; ADoran@countyofsb.org <ADoran@countyofsb.org>; Tim Robinson <trobenson@cachuma-board.org>; oemdutyofficer@countyofsb.org <oemdutyofficer@countyofsb.org>; sjohnso@countyofsb.org <sjohnso@countyofsb.org>; cnrfc@noaa.gov <cnrfc@noaa.gov>; Matt Griffin <mgriff@countyofsb.org>; Matthew Young <mcyoung@countyofsb.org>
Cc: Hyatt, David E <dhyatt@usbr.gov>; Emerson, Rain L <remerson@usbr.gov>; GONZALEZ, RUFINO <RGonzalez@usbr.gov>; Papendick, Jeffrey E <jpapendick@usbr.gov>; Gallmann, Jeffrey S <JGallmann@usbr.gov>; Espinoza, J L <jespinoza@usbr.gov>; Salazar, Edward <ESalazar@usbr.gov>; Alcocer, Hector <halcocer@usbr.gov>; Kyle.Evans@wildlife.ca.gov <kyle.evans@wildlife.ca.gov>; Haga, Erica H <ehaga@usbr.gov>; Garrison-Knecht, Mary Lee <mgarrisonknecht@usbr.gov>; Deena.Hansen@Wildlife.ca.gov <deena.hansen@wildlife.ca.gov>; rick.bush@noaa.gov <rick.bush@noaa.gov>
Subject: Re: Bradbury Dam Releases Update

Good Morning Stakeholders,

Reclamation will make the following adjustments for **Tuesday, January 6, 2026:**

Tuesday, January 6, 2026					
Time	Ramp Down Releases (CFS)				
	From	From	To	To	Change
	Spillway	R.O.W	Spillway	R.O.W	
900	3,208	87	2,808	87	400
1200	2,808	87	2,458	87	350
1500	2,458	87	2,158	87	300
1800	2,158	87	1,858	87	300
2100	1,858	87	1,658	87	200

If you have any questions or require additional details, feel free to contact Rain Emerson or myself.

Thank you,

Christian Buenrostro | Mechanical Engineer | Operations Division
 T 559.822.7288 | C 559.470.4969
 South-Central California Area Office | Operations Division



— BUREAU OF —
 RECLAMATION

From: Buenrostro, Christian <cbuenrostro@usbr.gov>
Sent: Monday, January 5, 2026 8:28 AM
To: Alex Pappas <apappas@syrwcd.com>; Bill Buelow <bbuelow@syrwcd.com>; bvanlienden@woodardcurran.com <bvanlienden@woodardcurran.com>; chanson@hansonenv.com <chanson@hansonenv.com>; Curtis Lawler <curtisl@stetsonengineers.com>; drb@ccwa.com <drb@ccwa.com>; wrubalc@countyofsb.org <wrubalc@countyofsb.org>; Elisabeth L. <EESPOSITO@bhfs.com>; Matthew Young <mcyoung@countyofsb.org>; EHonn@woodardcurran.com <EHonn@woodardcurran.com>; elyons@cachuma-board.org <elyons@cachuma-board.org>; Joel Degner <jdegner@cachuma-board.org>; Janet Gingras <jgingras@cachuma-board.org>; Joel <Joel.Mulder@icf.com>; mloum@bhfs.com <mloum@bhfs.com>; Peter Cantle <pcantle@ccrb-board.org>; Paeter Garcia <pgarcia@syrwd.org>; Ray Stokes <RAS@ccwa.com>; shastings@bhfs.com <shastings@bhfs.com>; Scott" <sshapiro@downeybrand.com>; Steve Anderson <Steve.Anderson@bbklaw.com>; rwillcox@countyofsb.org <rwillcox@countyofsb.org>; Steve Torigiani <storigiani@youngwooldridge.com>; ADoran@countyofsb.org <ADoran@countyofsb.org>; Tim Robinson <trobenson@cachuma-board.org>; oemduyofficer@countyofsb.org <oemduyofficer@countyofsb.org>; sjohnso@countyofsb.org <sjohnso@countyofsb.org>; cnrfc@noaa.gov <cnrfc@noaa.gov>; Matt Griffin <mgriff@countyofsb.org>
Cc: Hyatt, David E <dhyatt@usbr.gov>; Emerson, Rain L <remerson@usbr.gov>; GONZALEZ, RUFINO <RGonzalez@usbr.gov>; Papendick, Jeffrey E <jpapendick@usbr.gov>; Gallmann, Jeffrey S <JGallmann@usbr.gov>; Espinoza, J L <jespinoza@usbr.gov>; Salazar, Edward <ESalazar@usbr.gov>; Alcocer, Hector <halcocer@usbr.gov>; Kyle.Evans@wildlife.ca.gov <kyle.evans@wildlife.ca.gov>; Haga, Erica H <ehaga@usbr.gov>; Baron.Barerra@wildlife.ca.gov <baron.barerra@wildlife.ca.gov>; Garrison-Knecht, Mary Lee <mgarrisonknecht@usbr.gov>; Deena.Hansen@Wildlife.ca.gov <deena.hansen@wildlife.ca.gov>; rick.bush@noaa.gov <rick.bush@noaa.gov>
Subject: Re: Bradbury Dam Releases Update

Good Morning Stakeholders,

Reclamation will make the following adjustments for Monday, January 5, 2026:

Monday, January 5, 2026					
Time	Ramp Down Releases (CFS)				
	From	From	To	To	Change
	Spillway	R.O.W	Spillway	R.O.W	
900	5,106	86	4,606	86	500
1200	4,606	86	4,206	86	400
1500	4,206	86	3,806	86	400
1800	3,806	86	3,506	86	300
2100	3,506	86	3,206	86	300

If you have any questions or require additional details, feel free to contact Rain Emerson or myself.

Thank you,

Christian Buenrostro | Mechanical Engineer | Operations Division

T 559.822.7288 | C 559.470.4969

South-Central California Area Office | Operations Division



— BUREAU OF —
RECLAMATION

From: Buenrostro, Christian <cbuenrostro@usbr.gov>

Sent: Sunday, January 4, 2026 1:38 PM

To: Alex Pappas <apappas@syrwcd.com>; Bill Buelow <bbuelow@syrwcd.com>; bvanlienden@woodardcurran.com <bvanlienden@woodardcurran.com>; chanson@hansonenv.com <chanson@hansonenv.com>; Curtis Lawler <curtisl@stetsonengineers.com>; drb@ccwa.com <drb@ccwa.com>; wrubalc@countyofsb.org <wrubalc@countyofsb.org>; Elisabeth L. <EESPOSITO@bhfs.com>; Matthew Young <mcyoung@countyofsb.org>; EHonn@woodardcurran.com <EHonn@woodardcurran.com>; elyons@cachuma-board.org <elyons@cachuma-board.org>; Joel Degner <jdegner@cachuma-board.org>; Janet Gingras <jgingras@cachuma-board.org>; Joel <Joel.Mulder@icf.com>; mloum@bhfs.com <mloum@bhfs.com>; Peter Cante <pcante@ccrb-board.org>; Paeter Garcia <pgarcia@syrwd.org>; Ray Stokes <RAS@ccwa.com>; shastings@bhfs.com <shastings@bhfs.com>; Scott" <sshapiro@downeybrand.com>; Steve Anderson <Steve.Anderson@bbklaw.com>; rwillcox@countyofsb.org <rwillcox@countyofsb.org>; Steve Torigiani <storigiani@youngwooldridge.com>; ADoran@countyofsb.org <ADoran@countyofsb.org>; Tim Robinson <trobenson@cachuma-board.org>; oemduyofficer@countyofsb.org <oemduyofficer@countyofsb.org>; sjohnso@countyofsb.org <sjohnso@countyofsb.org>; cnrfc@noaa.gov <cnrfc@noaa.gov>; Matt Griffin <mgriff@countyofsb.org>

Cc: Hyatt, David E <dhyatt@usbr.gov>; Emerson, Rain L <remerson@usbr.gov>; GONZALEZ, RUFINO <RGonzalez@usbr.gov>; Papendick, Jeffrey E <jpapendick@usbr.gov>; Gallmann, Jeffrey S <JGallmann@usbr.gov>; Espinoza, J L <jespinoza@usbr.gov>; Salazar, Edward <ESalazar@usbr.gov>; Alcocer, Hector <halcocer@usbr.gov>; Kyle.Evans@wildlife.ca.gov <kyle.evans@wildlife.ca.gov>; Haga, Erica H <ehaga@usbr.gov>; Baron.Barerra@wildlife.ca.gov <baron.barerra@wildlife.ca.gov>; Garrison-Knecht, Mary Lee <mgarrisonknecht@usbr.gov>; Deena.Hansen@Wildlife.ca.gov <deena.hansen@wildlife.ca.gov>; rick.bush@noaa.gov <rick.bush@noaa.gov>

Subject: Re: Bradbury Dam Releases Update

Good Afternoon Stakeholders,

Reclamation will be making an increase of 500 cfs at 1400 hrs based on the latest hydrological updates. Please see the ramp up schedule below:

Sunday, January 4, 2026			
Time	Ramp Up Releases		
	From Spillway	From R.O.W	To Spillway
1400	4,614	86	5,

Reclamation will continue monitoring the hydrology in the area and will make appropriate adjustments as needed.

Thank you,

Christian Buenrostro | Mechanical Engineer | Operations Division
 T 559.822.7288 | C 559.470.4969
 South-Central California Area Office | Operations Division

From: Buenrostro, Christian <cbuenrostro@usbr.gov>
Sent: Saturday, January 3, 2026 5:13 PM
To: Alex Pappas <apappas@syrwcd.com>; Bill Buelow <bbuelow@syrwcd.com>;
 bvanlienden@woodardcurran.com <bvanlienden@woodardcurran.com>; chanson@hansonenv.com
 <chanson@hansonenv.com>; Curtis Lawler <curtislaw@stetsonengineers.com>; drb@ccwa.com
 <drb@ccwa.com>; wrubalc@countyofsb.org <wrubalc@countyofsb.org>; Elisabeth L.
 <EESPOSITO@bhfs.com>; Matthew Young <mcyoung@countyofsb.org>; EHonn@woodardcurran.com
 <EHonn@woodardcurran.com>; elyons@cachuma-board.org <elyons@cachuma-board.org>; Joel Degner
 <jdegner@cachuma-board.org>; Janet Gingras <jgingras@cachuma-board.org>; Joel <Joel.Mulder@icf.com>;
 mloum@bhfs.com <mloum@bhfs.com>; Peter Cattle <pcattle@ccrb-board.org>; Paeter Garcia
 <pgarcia@syrwd.org>; Ray Stokes <RAS@ccwa.com>; shastings@bhfs.com <shastings@bhfs.com>; Scott"
 <sshapiro@downeybrand.com>; Steve Anderson <Steve.Anderson@bbklaw.com>; rwillcox@countyofsb.org
 <rwillcox@countyofsb.org>; Steve Torigiani <storigiani@youngwooldridge.com>; ADoran@countyofsb.org
 <ADoran@countyofsb.org>; Tim Robinson <trobenson@cachuma-board.org>; oemduyofficer@countyofsb.org
 <oemduyofficer@countyofsb.org>; sjohnso@countyofsb.org <sjohnso@countyofsb.org>; cnrfc@noaa.gov
 <cnrfc@noaa.gov>; Matt Griffin <mgriff@countyofsb.org>
Cc: Hyatt, David E <dhyatt@usbr.gov>; Emerson, Rain L <remerson@usbr.gov>; GONZALEZ, RUFINO
 <RGonzalez@usbr.gov>; Papendick, Jeffrey E <jpapendick@usbr.gov>; Gallmann, Jeffrey S

<JGallmann@usbr.gov>; Espinoza, J L <jespinoza@usbr.gov>; Salazar, Edward <ESalazar@usbr.gov>; Alcocer, Hector <halcocer@usbr.gov>; Kyle.Evans@wildlife.ca.gov <kyle.evans@wildlife.ca.gov>; Haga, Erica H <ehaga@usbr.gov>; Baron.Barerra@wildlife.ca.gov <baron.barerra@wildlife.ca.gov>; Garrison-Knecht, Mary Lee <mgarrisonknecht@usbr.gov>; Deena.Hansen@Wildlife.ca.gov <deena.hansen@wildlife.ca.gov>; rick.bush@noaa.gov <rick.bush@noaa.gov>
Subject: Re: Bradbury Dam Releases Update

Good evening Stakeholders,

Reclamation will be making an increase of 500 cfs at 1700 hrs based on the latest hydrological updates. Please see the ramp up schedule below:

Saturday, January 3,			
Time	Ramp Up Releases		
	From Spillway	From R.O.W	To Spillway
1700	4,012	86	

Reclamation will continue monitoring the hydrology in the area and will make appropriate adjustments as needed.

Thank you,

Christian Buenrostro | Mechanical Engineer | Operations Division
T 559.822.7288 | **C** 559.470.4969
 South-Central California Area Office | Operations Division

From: Buenrostro, Christian <cbuenrostro@usbr.gov>
Sent: Saturday, January 3, 2026 11:06 AM
To: Alex Pappas <apappas@syrwcd.com>; Bill Buelow <bbuelow@syrwcd.com>; bvanlienden@woodardcurran.com <bvanlienden@woodardcurran.com>; chanson@hansonenv.com <chanson@hansonenv.com>; Curtis Lawler <curtislawler@stetsonengineers.com>; drb@ccwa.com <drb@ccwa.com>; wrubalc@countyofsb.org <wrubalc@countyofsb.org>; Elisabeth L. <EESPOSITO@bhfs.com>; Matthew Young <mcyoung@countyofsb.org>; EHonn@woodardcurran.com

<EHonn@woodardcurran.com>; elyons@cachuma-board.org <elyons@cachuma-board.org>; Joel Degner <jdegner@cachuma-board.org>; Janet Gingras <jgingras@cachuma-board.org>; Joel <Joel.Mulder@icf.com>; mloum@bhfs.com <mloum@bhfs.com>; Peter Cantle <pcantle@ccrb-board.org>; Paeter Garcia <pgarcia@syrwd.org>; Ray Stokes <RAS@ccwa.com>; shastings@bhfs.com <shastings@bhfs.com>; Scott" <sshapiro@downeybrand.com>; Steve Anderson <Steve.Anderson@bbklaw.com>; rwillcox@countyofsb.org <rwillcox@countyofsb.org>; Steve Torigiani <storigiani@youngwooldridge.com>; ADoran@countyofsb.org <ADoran@countyofsb.org>; Tim Robinson <trobinson@cachuma-board.org>; oemdutyofficer@countyofsb.org <oemdutyofficer@countyofsb.org>; sjohnso@countyofsb.org <sjohnso@countyofsb.org>; cnrfc@noaa.gov <cnrfc@noaa.gov>; Matt Griffin <mgriff@countyofsb.org>

Cc: Hyatt, David E <dhyatt@usbr.gov>; Emerson, Rain L <remerson@usbr.gov>; GONZALEZ, RUFINO <RGonzalez@usbr.gov>; Papendick, Jeffrey E <jpapendick@usbr.gov>; Gallmann, Jeffrey S <JGallmann@usbr.gov>; Espinoza, J L <jespinoza@usbr.gov>; Salazar, Edward <ESalazar@usbr.gov>; Alcocer, Hector <halcocer@usbr.gov>; Kyle.Evans@wildlife.ca.gov <kyle.evans@wildlife.ca.gov>; Haga, Erica H <ehaga@usbr.gov>; Baron.Barerra@wildlife.ca.gov <baron.barerra@wildlife.ca.gov>; Garrison-Knecht, Mary Lee <mgarrisonknecht@usbr.gov>; Deena.Hansen@Wildlife.ca.gov <deena.hansen@wildlife.ca.gov>

Subject: Re: Bradbury Dam Releases Update

Hello Stakeholders,

Please see Reclamation's updated ramp up schedule for Saturday, January 3, 2026, below:

Saturday, January 3, 2026

Time	Ramp Down Releases (CFS)				
	From	From	To	To	Change
	Spillway	R.O.W	Spillway	R.O.W	
1200	2,977	86	3,977	86	1000

Reclamation will continue monitoring the hydrology in the area and will make appropriate adjustments as needed.

Thank you,

Christian Buenrostro | Mechanical Engineer | Operations Division

T 559.822.7288 | **C** 559.470.4969

South-Central California Area Office | Operations Division



— BUREAU OF —
RECLAMATION

From: Buenrostro, Christian <cbuenrostro@usbr.gov>

Sent: Thursday, January 1, 2026 10:23 AM

To: Alex Pappas <apappas@syrwcd.com>; Bill Buelow <bbuelow@syrwcd.com>; bvanlienden@woodardcurran.com <bvanlienden@woodardcurran.com>; chanson@hansonenv.com <chanson@hansonenv.com>; Curtis Lawler <curtisl@stetsonengineers.com>; drb@ccwa.com <drb@ccwa.com>; wrubalc@countyofsb.org <wrubalc@countyofsb.org>; Elisabeth L. <EESPOSITO@bhfs.com>; Matthew Young <mcyoung@countyofsb.org>; EHonn@woodardcurran.com <EHonn@woodardcurran.com>; elyons@cachuma-board.org <elyons@cachuma-

board.org>; Joel Degner <jdegner@cachuma-board.org>; Janet Gingras <jgingras@cachuma-board.org>; Joel <Joel.Mulder@icf.com>; mloum@bhfs.com <mloum@bhfs.com>; Peter Cantle <pcantle@ccrb-board.org>; Paeter Garcia <pgarcia@syrwd.org>; Ray Stokes <RAS@ccwa.com>; shastings@bhfs.com <shastings@bhfs.com>; Scott" <sshapiro@downeybrand.com>; Steve Anderson <Steve.Anderson@bbklaw.com>; rwillcox@countyofsb.org <rwillcox@countyofsb.org>; Steve Torigiani <storigiani@youngwooldridge.com>; ADoran@countyofsb.org <ADoran@countyofsb.org>; Tim Robinson <trobenson@cachuma-board.org>; oemduyofficer@countyofsb.org <oemduyofficer@countyofsb.org>; sjohnso@countyofsb.org <sjohnso@countyofsb.org>; cnrfc@noaa.gov <cnrfc@noaa.gov>; Kyle.Evans@wildlife.ca.gov <kyle.evans@wildlife.ca.gov>; Deena.Hansen@wildlife.ca.gov <deena.hansen@wildlife.ca.gov>; Baron.Barerra@wildlife.ca.gov <baron.barerra@wildlife.ca.gov>
Cc: Hyatt, David E <dhyatt@usbr.gov>; Emerson, Rain L <remerson@usbr.gov>; GONZALEZ, RUFINO <RGonzalez@usbr.gov>; Papendick, Jeffrey E <jpapendick@usbr.gov>; Gallmann, Jeffrey S <JGallmann@usbr.gov>; Espinoza, J L <jespinoza@usbr.gov>; Salazar, Edward <ESalazar@usbr.gov>; Alcocer, Hector <halcocer@usbr.gov>; Haga, Erica H <ehaga@usbr.gov>; Garrison-Knecht, Mary Lee <mgarrisonknecht@usbr.gov>
Subject: Bradbury Dam Releases Update

Good Morning Stakeholders,

Reclamation will maintain the current release from Bradbury and continue to closely monitor hydrology and real-time conditions to ensure appropriate management. We will provide further updates as conditions evolve.

Thank you,

Christian Buenrostro | Mechanical Engineer | Operations Division
T 559.822.7288 | C 559.470.4969
South-Central California Area Office | Operations Division



— BUREAU OF —
RECLAMATION

From: Buenrostro, Christian <cbuenrostro@usbr.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, December 31, 2025 12:19 PM
To: Alex Pappas <apappas@syrwcd.com>; Bill Buelow <bbuelow@syrwcd.com>; bvanlienden@woodardcurran.com <bvanlienden@woodardcurran.com>; chanson@hansonenv.com <chanson@hansonenv.com>; Curtis Lawler <curtisl@stetsonengineers.com>; drb@ccwa.com <drb@ccwa.com>; wrubalc@countyofsb.org <wrubalc@countyofsb.org>; Elisabeth L. <EESPOSITO@bhfs.com>; Matthew Young <mcyoung@countyofsb.org>; EHonn@woodardcurran.com <EHonn@woodardcurran.com>; elyons@cachuma-board.org <elyons@cachuma-board.org>; Joel Degner <jdegner@cachuma-board.org>; Janet Gingras <jgingras@cachuma-board.org>; Joel <Joel.Mulder@icf.com>; mloum@bhfs.com <mloum@bhfs.com>; Peter Cantle <pcantle@ccrb-board.org>; Paeter Garcia <pgarcia@syrwd.org>; Ray Stokes <RAS@ccwa.com>; shastings@bhfs.com <shastings@bhfs.com>; Scott" <sshapiro@downeybrand.com>; Steve Anderson <Steve.Anderson@bbklaw.com>; rwillcox@countyofsb.org <rwillcox@countyofsb.org>; Steve Torigiani <storigiani@youngwooldridge.com>; ADoran@countyofsb.org <ADoran@countyofsb.org>; Tim Robinson <trobenson@cachuma-board.org>; oemduyofficer@countyofsb.org <oemduyofficer@countyofsb.org>; sjohnso@countyofsb.org <sjohnso@countyofsb.org>; cnrfc@noaa.gov <cnrfc@noaa.gov>
Cc: Hyatt, David E <dhyatt@usbr.gov>; Emerson, Rain L <remerson@usbr.gov>; GONZALEZ, RUFINO <RGonzalez@usbr.gov>; Papendick, Jeffrey E <jpapendick@usbr.gov>; Gallmann, Jeffrey S <JGallmann@usbr.gov>; Espinoza, J L <jespinoza@usbr.gov>; Salazar, Edward <ESalazar@usbr.gov>; Alcocer, Hector <halcocer@usbr.gov>; Haga,

Erica H <ehaga@usbr.gov>; Garrison-Knecht, Mary Lee <mgarrisonknecht@usbr.gov>
Subject: Re: Notification of Releases at Bradbury Dam – 7,500 cfs at 9:00 AM

Hello Stakeholders,

Please see Reclamation's updated ramp up schedule for Wednesday, December 31, 2025, below:

Wednesday, December 31, 2025

Time	Ramp Up Releases (CFS)				Change
	From	From	To	To	
	Spillway	R.O.W	Spillway	R.O.W	
1400	935	86	2,935	86	2,000

Reclamation will continue monitoring the hydraulics in the area and will make appropriate adjustments as needed.

Happy New Year to all of you!

Thank you,

Christian Buenrostro | Mechanical Engineer | Operations Division
T 559.822.7288 | C 559.470.4969
South-Central California Area Office | Operations Division



— BUREAU OF —
RECLAMATION

From: Buenrostro, Christian <cbuenrostro@usbr.gov>

Sent: Monday, December 29, 2025 9:44 AM

To: Alex Pappas <apappas@syrwcd.com>; Bill Buelow <bbuelow@syrwcd.com>; bvanlienden@woodardcurran.com <bvanlienden@woodardcurran.com>; chanson@hansonenv.com <chanson@hansonenv.com>; Curtis Lawler <curtis@stetsonengineers.com>; drb@ccwa.com <drb@ccwa.com>; wrubalc@countyofsb.org <wrubalc@countyofsb.org>; Elisabeth L. <EESPOSITO@bhfs.com>; Matthew Young <mcyoung@countyofsb.org>; EHonn@woodardcurran.com <EHonn@woodardcurran.com>; elyons@cachuma-board.org <elyons@cachuma-board.org>; Joel Degner <jdegner@cachuma-board.org>; Janet Gingras <jgingras@cachuma-board.org>; Joel <Joel.Mulder@icf.com>; mloum@bhfs.com <mloum@bhfs.com>; Peter Cattle <pcattle@ccrb-board.org>; Paeter Garcia <pgarcia@syrwd.org>; Ray Stokes <RAS@ccwa.com>; shastings@bhfs.com <shastings@bhfs.com>; Scott <sshapiro@downeybrand.com>; Steve Anderson <Steve.Anderson@bbklaw.com>; rwillcox@countyofsb.org <rwillcox@countyofsb.org>; Steve Torigiani <storigiani@youngwooldridge.com>; ADoran@countyofsb.org <ADoran@countyofsb.org>; Tim Robinson <trobenson@cachuma-board.org>; oemduyofficer@countyofsb.org <oemduyofficer@countyofsb.org>; sjohnso@countyofsb.org <sjohnso@countyofsb.org>; cnrfc@noaa.gov <cnrfc@noaa.gov>

Cc: Hyatt, David E <dhyatt@usbr.gov>; Emerson, Rain L <remerson@usbr.gov>; GONZALEZ, RUFINO <RGonzalez@usbr.gov>; Papendick, Jeffrey E <jpapendick@usbr.gov>; Gallmann, Jeffrey S <JGallmann@usbr.gov>; Espinoza, J L <jespinoza@usbr.gov>; Salazar, Edward <ESalazar@usbr.gov>; Alcocer, Hector <halcocer@usbr.gov>; Haga, Erica H <ehaga@usbr.gov>; Garrison-Knecht, Mary Lee <mgarrisonknecht@usbr.gov>

Subject: Re: Notification of Releases at Bradbury Dam – 7,500 cfs at 9:00 AM

Good Morning Stakeholders,

Please see Reclamation's updated ramp down schedule for Sunday, December 28, 2025, below:

Sunday, December 28, 2025

Time	Ramp Down Releases (CFS)				
	From	From	To	To	Change
	Spillway	R.O.W	Spillway	R.O.W	
1600	1,786	84	1,586	84	200
1700	1,586	84	1,586	84	-
1800	1,586	84	1,386	84	200
1900	1,386	84	1,236	84	150
2000	1,236	84	1,086	84	150
2100	1,086	84	936	84	150

We will be sending today's ramp down later in the afternoon.

Thank you,

Christian Buenrostro | Mechanical Engineer | Operations Division

T 559.822.7288 | C 559.470.4969

South-Central California Area Office | Operations Division



— BUREAU OF —
RECLAMATION

From: Buenrostro, Christian <cbuenrostro@usbr.gov>

Sent: Saturday, December 27, 2025 6:02 PM

To: Alex Pappas <apappas@syrwcd.com>; Bill Buelow <bbuelow@syrwcd.com>; bvanlienden@woodardcurran.com <bvanlienden@woodardcurran.com>; chanson@hansonenv.com <chanson@hansonenv.com>; Curtis Lawler <curtis@stetsonengineers.com>; drb@ccwa.com <drb@ccwa.com>; wrubalc@countyofsb.org <wrubalc@countyofsb.org>; Elisabeth L. <EESPOSITO@bhfs.com>; Matthew Young <mcyoung@countyofsb.org>; EHonn@woodardcurran.com <EHonn@woodardcurran.com>; elyons@cachuma-board.org <elyons@cachuma-board.org>; Joel Degner <jdegner@cachuma-board.org>; Janet Gingras <jgingras@cachuma-board.org>; Joel <Joel.Mulder@icf.com>; mloum@bhfs.com <mloum@bhfs.com>; Peter Cante <pcante@ccrb-board.org>; Paeter Garcia <pgarcia@syrwd.org>; Ray Stokes <RAS@ccwa.com>; shastings@bhfs.com <shastings@bhfs.com>; Scott" <sshapiro@downeybrand.com>; Steve Anderson <Steve.Anderson@bbklaw.com>; rwillcox@countyofsb.org <rwillcox@countyofsb.org>; Steve Torigiani <storigiani@youngwooldridge.com>; ADoran@countyofsb.org <ADoran@countyofsb.org>; Tim Robinson <trobenson@cachuma-board.org>; oemduyofficer@countyofsb.org <oemduyofficer@countyofsb.org>; sjohnso@countyofsb.org <sjohnso@countyofsb.org>; cnrfc@noaa.gov <cnrfc@noaa.gov>

Cc: Hyatt, David E <dhyatt@usbr.gov>; Emerson, Rain L <remerson@usbr.gov>; GONZALEZ, RUFINO <RGonzalez@usbr.gov>; Papendick, Jeffrey E <jpapendick@usbr.gov>; Gallmann, Jeffrey S <JGallmann@usbr.gov>; Espinoza, J L <jespinoza@usbr.gov>; Salazar, Edward <ESalazar@usbr.gov>; Alcocer, Hector <halcocer@usbr.gov>; Haga, Erica H <ehaga@usbr.gov>; Garrison-Knecht, Mary Lee <mgarrisonknecht@usbr.gov>

Subject: Re: Notification of Releases at Bradbury Dam – 7,500 cfs at 9:00 AM

Stakeholders,

Please see Reclamation's updated ramp down schedule for Saturday, December 27, 2025, below:

Saturday, December 27, 2025

Time	Ramp Down Releases (CFS)				Change
	From	From	To	To	
	Spillway	R.O.W	Spillway	R.O.W	
1600	3,697	8	3,273	82	350
1700	3,273	82	3,273	82	-
1800	3,273	82	2,873	82	400
1900	2,873	82	2,523	82	350
2000	2,523	82	2,223	82	300
2100	2,223	82	1,923	82	300
2200	1,923	82	1,773	82	150

If you have any questions or require additional details, feel free to contact Rain Emerson or myself.

Thank you,

Christian Buenrostro | Mechanical Engineer | Operations Division

T 559.822.7288 | C 559.470.4969

South-Central California Area Office | Operations Division



— BUREAU OF —
RECLAMATION

From: Buenrostro, Christian <cbuenrostro@usbr.gov>

Sent: Friday, December 26, 2025 3:47 PM

To: Alex Pappas <apappas@syrwcd.com>; Bill Buelow <bbuelow@syrwcd.com>; bvanlienden@woodardcurran.com <bvanlienden@woodardcurran.com>; chanson@hansonenv.com <chanson@hansonenv.com>; Curtis Lawler <curtisl@stetsonengineers.com>; drb@ccwa.com <drb@ccwa.com>; wrubalc@countyofsb.org <wrubalc@countyofsb.org>; Elisabeth L. <EESPOSITO@bhfs.com>; Matthew Young <mcyoung@countyofsb.org>; EHonn@woodardcurran.com <EHonn@woodardcurran.com>; elyons@cachuma-board.org <elyons@cachuma-board.org>; Joel Degner <jdegner@cachuma-board.org>; Janet Gingras <jgingras@cachuma-board.org>; Joel <Joel.Mulder@icf.com>; mloum@bhfs.com <mloum@bhfs.com>; Peter Cattle <pcattle@ccrb-board.org>; Paeter Garcia <pgarcia@syrwd.org>; Ray Stokes <RAS@ccwa.com>; shastings@bhfs.com <shastings@bhfs.com>; Scott" <sshapiro@downeybrand.com>; Steve Anderson <Steve.Anderson@bbklaw.com>; rwillcox@countyofsb.org <rwillcox@countyofsb.org>; Steve Torigiani <storigiani@youngwooldridge.com>; ADoran@countyofsb.org <ADoran@countyofsb.org>; Tim Robinson <trobenson@cachuma-board.org>; oemduyofficer@countyofsb.org <oemduyofficer@countyofsb.org>; sjohnso@countyofsb.org <sjohnso@countyofsb.org>; cnrfc@noaa.gov <cnrfc@noaa.gov>

Cc: Hyatt, David E <dhyatt@usbr.gov>; Emerson, Rain L <remerson@usbr.gov>; GONZALEZ, RUFINO <RGonzalez@usbr.gov>; Papendick, Jeffrey E <jpapendick@usbr.gov>; Gallmann, Jeffrey S <JGallmann@usbr.gov>; Espinoza, J L <jespinoza@usbr.gov>; Salazar, Edward <ESalazar@usbr.gov>; Alcocer, Hector <halcocer@usbr.gov>; Haga, Erica H <ehaga@usbr.gov>; Garrison-Knecht, Mary Lee <mgarrisonknecht@usbr.gov>

Subject: Re: Notification of Releases at Bradbury Dam – 7,500 cfs at 9:00 AM

Stakeholders,

Reclamation will be following the ramp down schedule below:

Friday, December 26, 2025

Time	Spillway Ramp Down Releases (CFS)		
	From	To	Change
1600	7375	6675	700
1700	6675	6075	600
1800	6075	5475	600
1900	5475	4925	550
2000	4925	4425	500
2100	4425	3925	500
2200	3925	3725	200

If you have any questions or require additional details, feel free to contact Rain Emerson or myself.

Thank you,

Christian Buenrostro | Mechanical Engineer | Operations Division

T 559.822.7288 | C 559.470.4969

South-Central California Area Office | Operations Division



— BUREAU OF —
RECLAMATION

From: Buenrostro, Christian <cbuenrostro@usbr.gov>

Sent: Friday, December 26, 2025 10:04 AM

To: Alex Pappas <apappas@syrwcd.com>; Bill Buelow <bbuelow@syrwcd.com>; bvanlienden@woodardcurran.com <bvanlienden@woodardcurran.com>; chanson@hansonenv.com <chanson@hansonenv.com>; Curtis Lawler <curtisl@stetsonengineers.com>; drb@ccwa.com <drb@ccwa.com>; Elisabeth L. <EESPOSITO@bhfs.com>; EHonn@woodardcurran.com <EHonn@woodardcurran.com>; elyons@cachuma-board.org <elyons@cachuma-board.org>; Joel Degner <jdegner@cachuma-board.org>; Janet Gingras <jgingras@cachuma-board.org>; Joel <Joel.Mulder@icf.com>; mloum@bhfs.com <mloum@bhfs.com>; Peter Cante <pcante@ccrb-board.org>; Paeter Garcia <pgarcia@syrwd.org>; Ray Stokes <RAS@ccwa.com>; shastings@bhfs.com <shastings@bhfs.com>; Scott" <sshapiro@downeybrand.com>; Steve Anderson <Steve.Anderson@bbklaw.com>; Steve Torigiani <storigiani@youngwooldridge.com>; Tim Robinson <trobenson@cachuma-board.org>; oemduyofficer@countyofsb.org <oemduyofficer@countyofsb.org>

Cc: Hyatt, David E <dhyatt@usbr.gov>; Emerson, Rain L <remerson@usbr.gov>; GONZALEZ, RUFINO <RGonzalez@usbr.gov>; Papendick, Jeffrey E <jpapendick@usbr.gov>; Gallmann, Jeffrey S <JGallmann@usbr.gov>; Espinoza, J L <jespinoza@usbr.gov>; Salazar, Edward <ESalazar@usbr.gov>; Alcocer, Hector <halcocer@usbr.gov>; Haga, Erica H <ehaga@usbr.gov>

Subject: Notification of Releases at Bradbury Dam – 7,500 cfs at 9:00 AM

Downstream Stakeholders,

On behalf of the Area Manager, this is to inform you that Reclamation began releases from Bradbury Dam into the Santa Ynez River at 9:00 AM today at a rate of 7,500 cubic feet per second (cfs). This operational decision was based on current lake inflows and precipitation in the area, which have necessitated increased outflow to manage reservoir levels and maintain system safety.

If you have any question, feel free to reach to Rain Emerson or myself.

Thank you,

Christian Buenrostro | Mechanical Engineer | Operations Division

T 559.822.7288 | C 559.470.4969

South-Central California Area Office | Operations Division



— BUREAU OF —
RECLAMATION

WARNING: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Paeter Garcia

From: Emerson, Rain L <remerson@usbr.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, December 31, 2025 2:19 PM
To: Matthew Young; Janet Gingras; Joshua Haggmark; Nicholas Turner; Robert McDonald; Paeter Garcia; David Matson; Ryan Drake
Cc: Buenrostro, Christian; GONZALEZ, RUFINO; Gallmann, Jeffrey S; Hyatt, David E; Prieto, Moses J
Subject: Cachuma Project - Surplus Water Availability

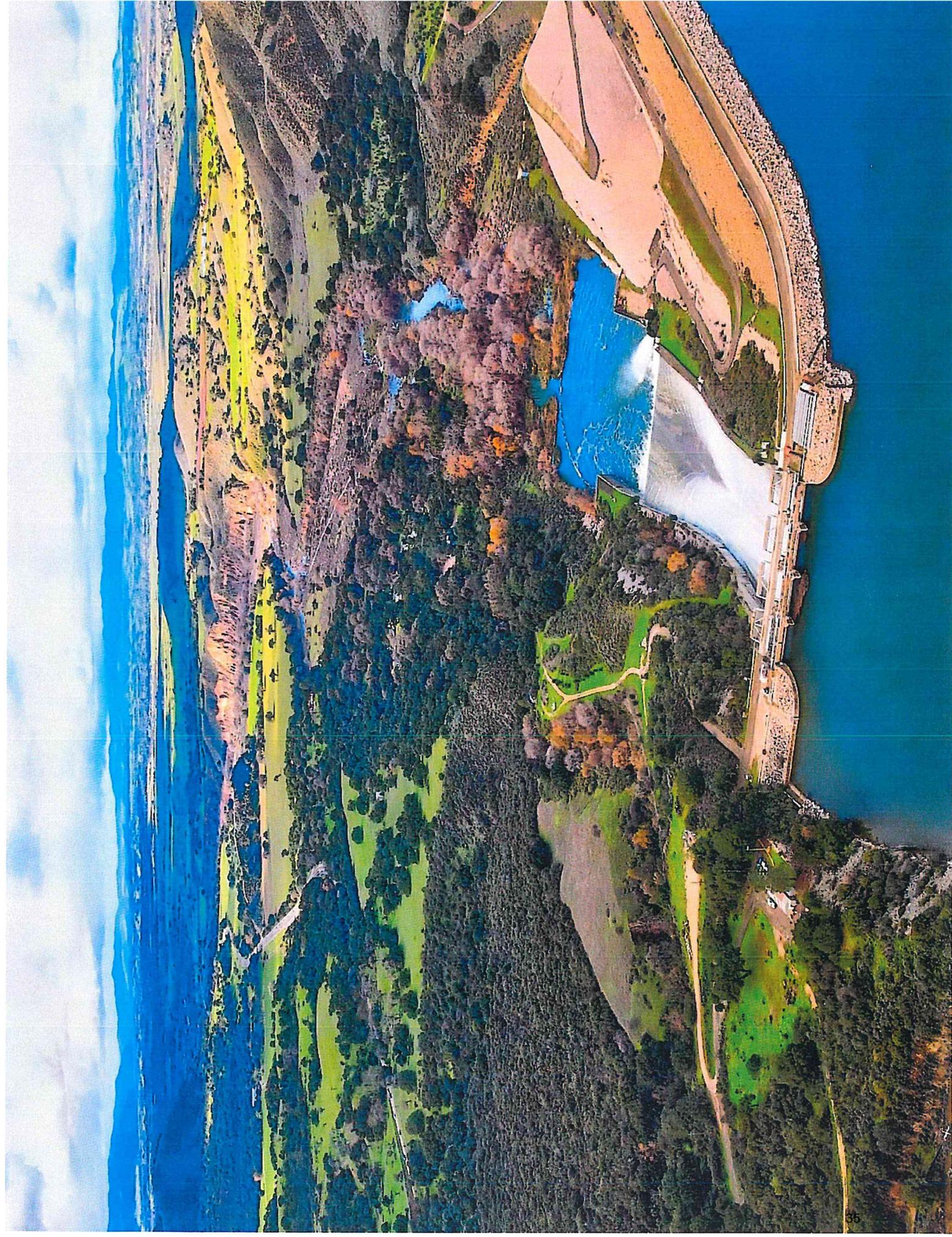
Good afternoon! It is my understanding that all carryover has been deleted as of today. Due to anticipated hydrology, we will be continuing spillway releases into the near future. As a result, "Surplus Water" as defined in the terms of the Amended Contract will be made available starting tomorrow, January 1, 2026. A formal notification will follow.

We will notify you when "Surplus Water" is no longer available.

Rain L. Emerson, M.S.
Acting Area Manager
Bureau of Reclamation
Interior Region 10 - California-Great Basin
South-Central California Area Office
Work Ph: 559-262-0350
Cell Ph: 559-353-4032

WARNING: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

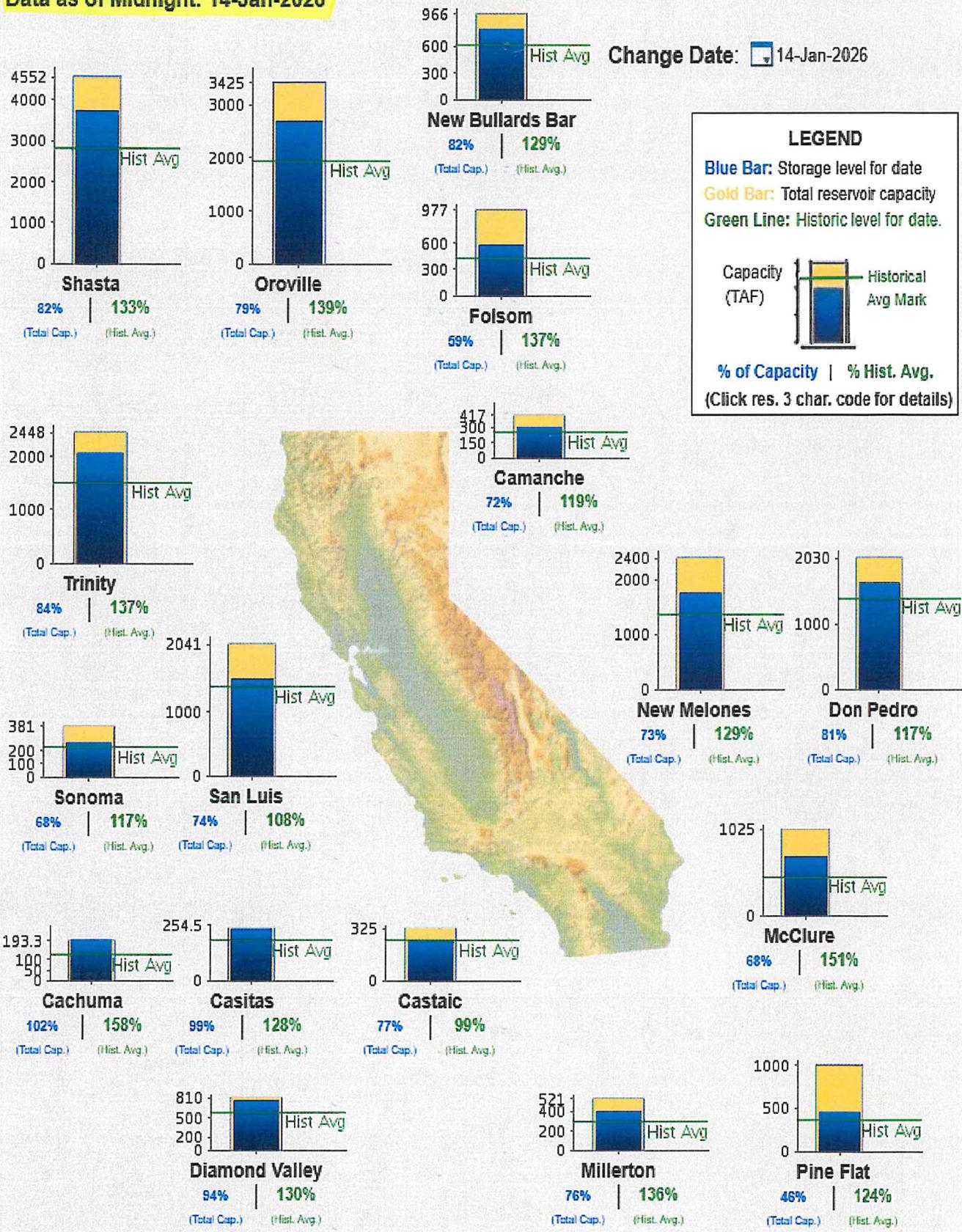
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CURRENT CONDITIONS: MAJOR WATER SUPPLY RESERVOIRS:14-JAN-2026

Data as of Midnight: 14-Jan-2026



[Click to download printable version of current data.](#)

Report Generated: 15-Jan-2026 1:05 PM

The CSI link has been disabled to zoom in, for the lack of historical data.

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Late December Storms Deliver Much-Needed Snowpack and Water Supply for California

Published: Dec 30, 2025

Series of atmospheric rivers provided significant snowpack gains, boosted water supply statewide

SACRAMENTO, Calif. – The Department of Water Resources (DWR) today conducted the first snow survey of the season at Phillips Station. The manual survey recorded 24 inches of snow depth and a snow water equivalent of 5 inches, which is 50 percent of average for this location. The snow water equivalent measures the amount of water contained in the snowpack and is a key component of DWR’s water supply forecast. Statewide, the snowpack is 71 percent of average for this date.

Today’s results are welcome news for water managers who rely on the statewide snow surveys to make water supply decisions for the year ahead. California’s statewide snowpack had been lacking in early December with above-average temperatures and very little storm activity. Recent storms have turned that around and provided a significant boost to the snowpack and the [state’s water supply](#).

“The dry conditions and warmer temperatures in early December delayed our snow-building season, but the return of storm activity, especially in the last week, helped to build a solid base for this year’s snowpack,” said Angelique Fabbiani-Leon, State Hydrometeorologist for DWR. “Thankfully, the recent storms that reached the state were cold enough to provide necessary benefits for the snowpack and our water supply. While California is in a better position now, it is still early in the season and our state’s water supply for this year will ultimately depend on a continued cadence of storms throughout winter and early spring.”

DWR’s electronic readings from 130 stations placed throughout the Sierra Nevada indicate that the statewide snowpack’s snow water equivalent is 6.5 inches, or 71 percent of average for this date, compared to 115 percent on this date last year.

On average, the largest snow-producing months in the Sierra Nevada are January, February, and March. Drought and flood always marked the California climate, but extreme whiplash between wet and dry is becoming more pronounced, not just year to year but often within the same season or month.

“It’s great to see so much fresh snow in the Sierra following a relatively dry December,” said DWR Director Karla Nemeth. “More than any other factor, the rain and snow that falls in these critical winter months dictates how much water can be delivered to Californians and farmland statewide. We make the most of what Mother Nature delivers with advance planning that enables [Forecast Informed Reservoir Operations](#) and [groundwater recharge](#).”

Major reservoirs statewide are currently 123 percent of average thanks to recent precipitation on top of three consecutive years of above-average snowpack conditions.

On average, the Sierra snowpack supplies about 30 percent of California’s water needs. Its natural ability to store water is why the Sierra snowpack is often referred to as California’s “frozen reservoir.” Data from these snow surveys and forecasts produced by DWR’s Snow Surveys and Water Supply Forecasting Unit are key factors in determining how DWR manages the state’s water resources.

DWR conducts four media-oriented snow surveys at Phillips Station each winter near the first of each month, January through April and, if necessary, May. The next survey is tentatively scheduled for February 3.

For California’s current hydrological conditions, visit <https://cww.water.ca.gov>.

Additional Resources

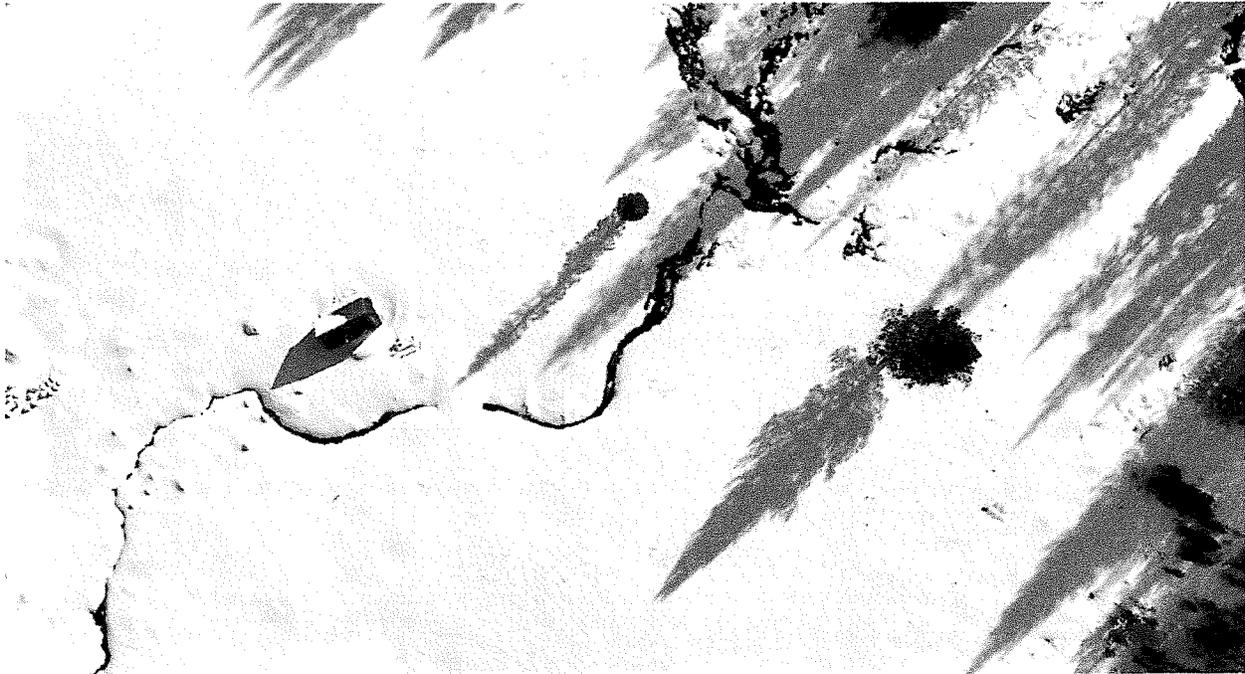
- [Video](#) of today’s Phillips survey

DWR: Late December Storms Deliver Much-Needed Snowpack and Water Supply for California

mavensnotebook.com/2025/12/30/dwr-late-december-storms-deliver-much-needed-snowpack-and-water-supply-for-california/

Hydrology Department of Water Resources (DWR) December 30, 2025

December 30, 2025



Series of atmospheric rivers provided significant snowpack gains, boosted water supply statewide

Press release from the Department of Water Resources



The Department of Water Resources (DWR) today conducted the first snow survey of the season at Phillips Station. The manual survey recorded 24 inches of snow depth and a snow water equivalent of 5 inches, which is 50 percent of average for this location. The snow water equivalent measures the amount of water contained in the snowpack and is a key component of DWR's water supply forecast. Statewide, the snowpack is 71 percent of average for this date.

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NEWS > CALIFORNIA NEWS

California's largest reservoir rises 36 feet as rains boost water supply statewide

Shasta, Oroville and other massive reservoirs continue to fill following big storms



San Luis Reservoir in Merced County, Calif., on Monday, Jan. 5, 2026. The reservoir is about 70 percent full. (Nhat V. Meyer/Bay Area News Group)

By **PAUL ROGERS** | progers@bayareanewsgroup.com | Bay Area News

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When it rains, it pours. And that's good news for California's water supply.

After a relatively slow start to the winter rainy season, a series of atmospheric river storms has sent hundreds of billions of gallons of water pouring into reservoirs across California over the past three weeks, easing the concerns of water managers and significantly reducing the likelihood of shortages next summer.

Since Dec. 16, the state's largest reservoir — Shasta, a massive 35-mile-long lake near Redding — has risen by 36 feet. On Monday, it was 77% full, at 129% of its historical average for this time of year and still rising.

Similarly, the water level at Oroville, the state's second-largest reservoir, has jumped 69 feet over the same three weeks. The reservoir, formed by Oroville Dam in Butte County, was 73% full and at 134% of its historical average as of Monday, having added nearly as much water in the past 24 hours as Crystal Springs Reservoir in San Mateo County holds when full.



"We're in great shape," said Jeffrey Mount, a professor emeritus at UC Davis and senior fellow at the Public Policy Institute of California's water center

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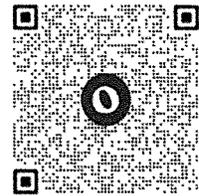
A similar shift has happened in the Sierra Nevada snowpack, the source of one-third of California's water supply. On Dec. 16, it was 18% of normal and ski resorts were struggling to open. On Monday, it was 90% of normal following another weekend of heavy snowstorms that dumped several feet of fresh powder across the Lake Tahoe region.

Typically, California receives most of its rain from December to March.

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"We're not even halfway through the wet season," Mount said. "We don't know how it is going to turn out. We have had other years where we got early rains and then the taps were shut off. But what we do know is that we've seen a huge jump in the past few weeks. That reduces the likelihood of shortages this summer."

The past three winters have been at or above average across Northern California, where most of the big reservoirs are located. That has left more water in the reservoirs as they start the winter season.

As a result, nearly every major reservoir in California on Monday was above

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San Luis Reservoir in Merced County, Calif., on Monday, Jan. 5, 2026. The reservoir is about 70 percent full. (Nhat V. Meyer/Bay Area News Group)

In Southern California, Cachuma Reservoir, the largest in Santa Barbara County, was 100% full and spilling on Monday. Farther south, Diamond Valley Lake in Riverside County, a linchpin of the water supply for 20 million people in the Los Angeles region, was 94% full.

Smaller communities saw similar trends. All seven reservoirs operated by the Marin Municipal Water District were 99% full. And Loch Lomond, the main reservoir for 100,000 people in the Santa Cruz area, hit 100% full on Sunday, and began sending water down the spillway.

"We've gotten a foot of rain since Christmas Eve in the Santa Cruz Mountains," said Chris Coburn, deputy director of the Santa Cruz City Water Department. "As a water manager, it makes me happy. It gives us comfort. For at least the next year, we know we're good on storage and will be able to meet customer demand. We're always happy to see the rain."

Dam operators at some reservoirs, including Shasta, Oroville and Folsom near Sacramento, have increased releases in recent days to preserve space so they can catch more water in a controlled way if there are other big storms in the coming weeks.

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The East Bay Municipal Utility District's seven reservoirs, which serve 1.4 million people in Alameda and Contra Costa counties, were 82% full on Monday.

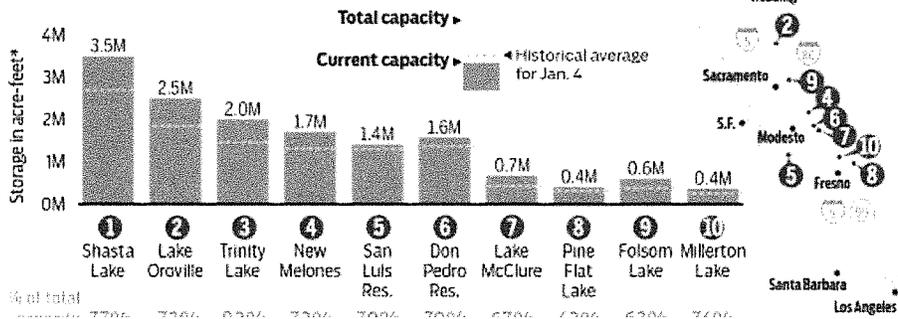


Submerged stairs at Lake Chabot Regional Park on Monday, Jan. 5, 2026, in Castro Valley, Calif. The reservoir is currently at 96% capacity. (Aric Crabb/Bay Area News Group)

“This is all good news,” said Andrea Pook, an East Bay MUD spokeswoman. “We still have a number of months to go. We’ll know more in April. But these wet months are crucial now, so we can refill our reservoirs. We’re hoping for continued storms the rest of the winter and early spring.”

RESERVOIRS IN GOOD SHAPE

After three weeks of rain, reservoirs across California have risen steadily and most are above their historical average levels for this time of year.



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"Make sure your irrigation is not on," Pook said.

Nine reservoirs operated by the Santa Clara Valley Water District, which serves 2 million people in the South Bay, were 50% full on Monday, due in part to the fact that the South Bay received less rain than other areas in recent weeks, and because several of the reservoirs cannot be filled to the top under state rules without earthquake retrofitting. The largest in the district, Anderson Reservoir, near Morgan Hill, is virtually empty as it undergoes construction to rebuild its dam to seismic standards.

So far, Northern California has escaped serious flooding. That luck should continue, as the forecast calls for 10 days of dry weather starting Tuesday.

"The good news is that we have seen just about every spot in the whole state going above normal for precipitation for this time of year," said Jan Null, a meteorologist with Golden Gate Weather Services in Half Moon Bay.

"But starting Tuesday, we're going to dry off. This is a year of big contrasts — multiple weeks of dry, then multiple weeks of wet."



Rental boats in the marina at Lake Chabot Regional Park on Monday, Jan. 5, 2026, in Castro Valley, Calif. The reservoir is currently at 96% capacity. (Aric Crabb/Bay Area News Group)

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**CENTRAL COAST WATER AUTHORITY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

AGENDA

**Chairman – Eric Friedman
Vice Chairman – Jeff Clay**

Thursday, December 18, 2025
9:00 AM
at 255 Industrial Way, Buellton, California 93427

Members of the public may participate by video call or telephone via
Microsoft Teams Meeting ID: Meeting ID: 274 717 013 316 32 Passcode: 7XV9W9s5
or by dialing +1 323-484-5095, and entering access Code/Meeting ID: 780 782 736#

Please note: public participation by video call or telephone is for convenience only and is not required by law. If technical interruptions to the video call/telephone occur, the chair has the discretion to continue the meeting and participants are invited to take advantage of the other participation options above.

Public Comment on agenda items may occur via video call or telephonically, or by submission to the Board Secretary via email at lfw@ccwa.com no later than 8:00 a.m. on the day of the meeting. In your email, please specify (1) the meeting date and agenda item (number and title) on which you are providing a comment and (2) that you would like your comment read into the record during the meeting. If you would like your comment read into the record during the meeting (as either general public comment or on a specific agenda item), please limit your comments to no more than 250 words.

Every effort will be made to read comments into the record, but some comments may not be read due to time limitations. Please also note that if you submit a written comment and do not specify that you would like this comment read into the record during the meeting, your comment will be forwarded to Board members for their consideration.

Pursuant to Government Code section 54957.5, non-exempt public records that relate to open session agenda items and are distributed to a majority of the Board less than seventy-two (72) hours prior to the meeting will be available on the CCWA internet web site, accessible at <https://www.ccwa.com>.

★ indicates written report

- I. Call to Order and Roll Call**
- II. Public Comment – (Any member of the public may address the Board relating to any matter within the Board’s jurisdiction. Individual Speakers may be limited to five minutes; all speakers to a total of fifteen minutes.)**
- III. Closed Session**
PUBLIC EMPLOYEE EMPLOYMENT (Gov. Code Section 54957(b)(1))
Title: Executive Director
Agency Designated Representative: Jeff Dinkin, Stradling
- IV. Return to Open Session**
Report on Closed Session Actions (if any)
- V. Executive Director: Consider Employment Agreement**
Staff Recommendation: N/A
- VI. Executive Director Report**
 - A. Assignment of Water Supply Contract Between The State of California Department of Water Resources and Santa Barbara County Flood Control and Water Conservation District**
Staff Recommendation: Information item only

- B. Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck LLP: Rate Increase ★
Staff Recommendation: None

VII. Reports from Board Members for Information Only

VIII. Items for Next Regular Meeting Agenda

IX. Date of Next Regular Meeting: January 22, 2026

X. Adjournment



**A REGULAR MEETING OF THE OPERATING COMMITTEE
of the
CENTRAL COAST WATER AUTHORITY**

AGENDA

**Chairman – Paeter Garcia
Vice Chairman – Shad Springer**

Thursday, January 8, 2026
9:00 AM
at 255 Industrial Way, Buellton, California 93427

Members of the public may participate by video call or telephone via
Microsoft Teams Meeting ID: 223 751 023 207 67 Passcode: 2Ri6fJ7A

or by dialing +1 323-484-5095, and entering access Code/Meeting ID; 135 674 113#

Please note: public participation by video call or telephone is for convenience only and is not required by law. If technical interruptions to the video call/telephone occur, the chair has the discretion to continue the meeting and participants are invited to take advantage of the other participation options above.

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★ indicates written report

- I. **Call to Order and Roll Call**
- II. **Public Comment – (Any member of the public may address the Committee relating to any matter within the Committee’s jurisdiction. Individual Speakers may be limited to five minutes; all speakers to a total of fifteen minutes.)**
- III. **Consent Calendar**
 - A. Minutes of the October 10, 2025 Operating Committee Meeting ★
Staff recommendation: Approve consent calendar.
- IV. **Executive Director’s Report**
 - A. Santa Ynez River Valley Groundwater Basin Central Management Area Groundwater Sustainability Agency Monitoring Well Installation Request ★
Staff Recommendation: Informational item only.
 - B. Operations Update
Staff Recommendation: Informational item only.
 - C. Water Supply Situation Report
Staff Recommendation: Informational item only.
 - D. Filter Media and Underdrain Nozzle Replacement Project Update ★
Staff Recommendation: Informational item only.

- E. California Aqueduct Coastal Branch Capacity Evaluation ★
Staff Recommendation: Informational item only.
- F. FY 2026/27 Budget Preparation Schedule ★
Staff Recommendation: Informational item only.
- G. State Water Contractors Update
Staff Recommendation: Informational item only.

V. Reports from Committee Members for Information Only

VI. Items for Next Regular Meeting Agenda

VII. Date of Next Regular Meeting: March 12, 2026

VIII. Adjournment



**CENTRAL COAST WATER AUTHORITY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

AGENDA

**Chairman – Eric Friedman
Vice Chairman – Jeff Clay**

Thursday, January 22, 2026
9:00 AM

at 255 Industrial Way, Buellton, California 93427

Members of the public may participate by video call or telephone via
Microsoft Teams Meeting ID: 230 417 939 435 44 Passcode: Zm3aM32h
or by dialing [+1 323-484-5095](tel:+13234845095), and entering access Code/Meeting ID: 382 203 975#

Please note: public participation by video call or telephone is for convenience only and is not required by law. If technical interruptions to the video call/telephone occur, the chair has the discretion to continue the meeting and participants are invited to take advantage of the other participation options above.

Public Comment on agenda items may occur via video call or telephonically, or by submission to the Board Secretary via email at lfw@ccwa.com no later than 8:00 a.m. on the day of the meeting. In your email, please specify (1) the meeting date and agenda item (number and title) on which you are providing a comment and (2) that you would like your comment read into the record during the meeting. If you would like your comment read into the record during the meeting (as either general public comment or on a specific agenda item), please limit your comments to no more than 250 words.

Every effort will be made to read comments into the record, but some comments may not be read due to time limitations. Please also note that if you submit a written comment and do not specify that you would like this comment read into the record during the meeting, your comment will be forwarded to Board members for their consideration.

Pursuant to Government Code section 54957.5, non-exempt public records that relate to open session agenda items and are distributed to a majority of the Board less than seventy-two (72) hours prior to the meeting will be available on the CCWA internet web site, accessible at <https://www.ccwa.com>.

★ indicates written report

- I. Call to Order and Roll Call**
- II. Public Comment – (Any member of the public may address the Board relating to any matter within the Board’s jurisdiction. Individual Speakers may be limited to five minutes; all speakers to a total of fifteen minutes.)**
- III. Closed Session**
CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL – ANTICIPATED LITIGATION
Initiation of litigation pursuant to Government Code section 54956.9(d) (4): 1 case
- IV. Return to Open Session**
Report on Closed Session Actions (if any)
- V. Consent Calendar**
 - A. Minutes of the October 23, 2025 Regular Meeting ★
 - B. Minutes of the November 20, 2025 Regular Meeting ★
 - C. Minutes of the December 18, 2025 Regular Meeting ★
 - D. Bills ★
 - E. Controller’s Report ★
 - F. Operations Report ★

Staff Recommendation: Approve the Consent Calendar
- VI. Executive Director’s Report**
 - A. Water Supply Situation Report
Staff Recommendation: Informational item only.

- B. Water Transfers Update ★
Staff Recommendation: Informational item only.
- C. Amendment No. 7 to Agreement for the Supply and Conveyance of Water by the Department of Water Resources of the State of California Under the Dry Year Water Purchase Program Between the Department of Water Resources and the Central Coast Water Authority, SWP#25-826 ★
Staff Recommendation: Approve and adopt Resolution No. 26-01 Approving Amendment 7 to the Agreement for the Supply and Conveyance of Water by the Department of Water Resources of the State of California Under the Dry Year Water Purchase Program Between the Department of Water Resources and the Central Coast Water Authority SWP #25-826 and find that CCWA's approval of Amendment 7 to the Participation Agreement is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for the reasons set forth in the staff report.
- D. Professional Consulting Services Master Agreement to Carollo Engineers and Task Order No.1 for the Design of the Filter Media and Underdrain Nozzle Replacement Project ★
Staff Recommendation: Authorize the Executive Director to execute a Professional Consulting Services Master Agreement with Carollo Engineers; and Approve Task Order No. 1 in the amount of \$270,200 for the Design of the Filter Media and Underdrain Nozzle Replacement Project.
- E. Professional Consulting Services Agreement for the 2025 Urban Water Management Plan Update ★
Staff Recommendation: Authorize the Executive Director to execute a Professional Consulting Services Agreement with Provost & Pritchard Consulting Group to prepare CCWA's 2025 Urban Water Management Plan in an amount not to exceed \$44,200.
- F. CalPERS Contributions for Executive Director Ray Stokes ★
Staff Recommendation: Approve CalPERS contributions at pre-PEPRA levels pursuant to the terms of Ray Stokes employment agreement and reimburse employee contributions made by Mr. Stokes since July 1, 2017 in the amount of \$28,039.51.
- G. Brownstein Legal Services: Proposed Legal Fee Adjustment ★
Staff Recommendation: Approve.
- H. FY 2025/26 Second Quarter Investment Report ★
Staff Recommendation: Accept report.
- I. FY Ended June 30, 2025 and 2024 Annual Comprehensive Financial Report ★
Staff Recommendation: Accept the FY Ended June 30, 2025 and 2024 Annual Comprehensive Financial Report
- J. FY 2025/26 Budget Preparation Schedule ★
Staff Recommendation: Informational item only.
- K. State Water Contractors Report
Staff Recommendation: Informational item only.
- L. Legislative Report ★
Staff Recommendation: Informational item only.
- M. JPIA President's Special Recognition Award ★
Staff Recommendation: Informational item only.

VII. Reports from Board Members for Information Only

VIII. Items for Next Regular Meeting Agenda

IX. Date of Next Regular Meeting: February 26, 2026

X. Adjournment

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Peter Thompson to Lead Central Coast Water Authority

SOURCE: MARIA MILLER FOR CENTRAL COAST WATER AUTHORITY

December 23, 2025 | 6:06 pm

The Central Coast Water Authority (CCWA) Board of Directors has appointed Peter Thompson as the new executive director, effective May 15. Before serving as executive director, Thompson will serve as the associate director from Feb. 9-May 14.

Ray Stokes, CCWA’s current executive director, will retire in 2026 after nearly 30 years with CCWA and 13 years as its executive director.

“As I conclude my career at the Central Coast Water Authority, I’m excited for what lies ahead for the Authority,” said Stokes.

“The selection of Peter Thompson as the next executive director is an excellent choice, and I’m certain that with Peter’s extensive background and knowledge of the State Water Project, CCWA will

build on the foundations established over the past 35 years to ensure the authority is able to continue to deliver high-quality supplemental water to the entities it serves in Santa Barbara County,” Stokes said.

Thompson brings 25 years of leadership experience in California’s water sector, with a proven track record in advancing regional and state-level water initiatives.

Serving as assistant general manager of the Antelope Valley-East Kern Water Agency (AVEK), general manager of the Antelope Valley State Water Contractors Association (AVSWCA), and administrator of the Antelope Valley Watermaster, Thompson has expertise in State Water Project governance, interagency collaboration and complex water resource strategy.

In the roles, Thompson worked closely with California Department of Water Resources leadership, legislators, boards and regulatory agencies to ensure reliable water supplies for communities.

Dedicated to finding common ground at the intersection of water supply operations, multiagency governance and state-level policy, Thompson champions cooperative solutions for California’s water future.

“As the State Water Project enters a new era of policy changes, financial challenges and capital investment, it is critical that CCWA maintain its statewide leadership,” said CCWA Board Chair Eric Friedman,

“Peter’s experience and unique understanding of the complex State Water Project will ensure that CCWA continues to be a strong voice in these critical decisions,” he said.

“In addition, Peter has an extensive background in water storage and diversification that will benefit the Central Coast as we work to enhance local water security for the residents served by CCWA,” Friedman said.

“On behalf of the CCWA Board of Directors, I am excited to have Peter join CCWA and look forward to working with him to ensure safe, reliable and affordable water for the residents we serve,” he said.

“I am deeply honored to step into this role and serve the Central Coast communities. CCWA’s leadership, staff and board have built a strong foundation of success in overcoming the complexities of water management in our state, and I am committed to continuing that legacy,” Thompson said.

“While we face significant hurdles ahead, including subsidence along the State Water Project and increasingly variable hydrology,” he said.

“I am confident in our ability to navigate them together,” he said. “Through strategic projects, clear advocacy, and inter-agency collaboration, we will ensure a resilient future for our region.”

Thompson received a B.S. in business administration management from Western Governors University, and holds a certificate in special district governance from the California Special Districts Association Leadership Academy, as well as Water Treatment Operator V and Water Distribution Operator V certifications from the California State Water Resources Control Board.

The Central Coast Water Authority, formed in August 1991, is charged with operating the local treatment and conveyance facilities associated with the State Water Project and contracts with California’s Department of Water Resources to deliver state water to Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo counties.

The facilities consist of the Polonio Pass Water Treatment Plant in San Luis Obispo County and a pipeline from the treatment plant to Lake Cachuma in Santa Barbara County.

Central Coast Water Authority Appoints Peter Thompson New Executive Director



By Central Coast Water Authority

Sat Dec 27, 2025 | 4:00pm

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Buellton – Dec. 22, 2025 – The Central Coast Water Authority (CCWA) Board of Directors is pleased to announce that Peter Thompson has been appointed as the new executive director, effective May 15, 2026. Before serving as executive director, Thompson will serve as the associate director from Feb. 9, 2026, to May 14, 2026.

Ray Stokes, CCWA's current executive director, will retire in 2026 after nearly 30 years with CCWA and 13 years as its executive director. "As I conclude my career at the Central Coast Water Authority, I'm excited for what lies ahead for the Authority," said Stokes. "The selection of Peter Thompson as the next executive director is an excellent choice, and I'm certain that with Peter's extensive background and knowledge of the State Water Project, CCWA will build on the foundations established over the past 35 years to ensure the Authority is able to continue to deliver high-quality supplemental water to the entities it serves in Santa Barbara County."

Thompson brings 25 years of leadership experience in California's water sector, with a proven track record in advancing regional and state-level water initiatives. Serving as assistant general manager of the Antelope Valley–East Kern Water Agency (AVEK), general manager of the Antelope Valley State Water Contractors Association (AVSWCA), and administrator of the Antelope Valley Watermaster, Thompson has deep expertise in State Water Project governance, interagency collaboration and complex water resource strategy. In these roles, Thompson worked closely with California Department of Water Resources leadership, legislators, boards and regulatory agencies to ensure reliable water supplies for communities. Dedicated to finding common ground at the intersection of water supply operations, multiagency governance and state-level policy, Thompson champions cooperative solutions for California's water future.

"As the State Water Project enters a new era of policy changes, financial challenges and capital investment, it is critical that CCWA maintain its statewide leadership. Peter's experience and unique understanding of the complex State Water Project will ensure that CCWA continues to be a strong voice in these critical decisions," said CCWA Board Chair Eric Friedman. "In addition, Peter has an extensive background in water storage and diversification that will benefit the Central Coast as we work to enhance local water security for the residents served by CCWA. On behalf of the CCWA Board of Directors, I am excited to have Peter join CCWA and look forward to working with him to ensure safe, reliable and affordable water for the residents we serve."

Thompson added, "I am deeply honored to step into this role and serve the Central Coast communities. CCWA's leadership, staff and board have built a strong foundation of success in overcoming the complexities of water management in our state, and I am committed to continuing that legacy. While we face significant hurdles ahead, including subsidence along the State Water Project and increasingly variable hydrology, I am confident in our ability to navigate them together. Through strategic projects, clear advocacy and inter-agency collaboration, we will ensure a resilient future for our region."

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Resources Control Board.

The Central Coast Water Authority (CCWA), formed in August 1991, is charged with operating the local treatment and conveyance facilities associated with the State Water Project and contracts with the State of California's Department of Water Resources to deliver State water to San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara counties. The facilities consist of the Polonio Pass Water Treatment Plant in San Luis Obispo County and a pipeline from the treatment plant to Lake Cachuma in Santa Barbara County.

Tue Dec 30, 2025 | 23:01pm

<https://www.independent.com/2025/12/27/central-coast-water-authority-appoints-peter-thompson-new-executive-director/>

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**SANTA YNEZ RIVER WATER
CONSERVATION DISTRICT,
IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT NO. 1
JUNE 30, 2025 AND 2024
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**



BARTLETT, PRINGLE & WOLF, LLP
CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS AND CONSULTANTS

**SANTA YNEZ RIVER WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT NO. 1**

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INDEPENDENT AUDITOR’S REPORT

**To the Board of Trustees
Santa Ynez River Water Conservation District,
Improvement District No. 1:**

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of the Santa Ynez River Water Conservation District, Improvement District No. 1 (the District), as of and for the years ended June 30, 2025 and 2024, and the related notes to the financial statements, which collectively comprise the District's basic financial statements as listed in the table of contents.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the District as of June 30, 2025 and 2024, and the changes in financial position and cash flows thereof for the years then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audits in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America (GAAS). Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements section of our report. We are required to be independent of the District, and to meet our other ethical responsibilities, in accordance with the relevant ethical requirements relating to our audits. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Responsibilities of Management for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America, and for the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is required to evaluate whether there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about the District’s ability to continue as a going concern for twelve months beyond the financial statement date, including any currently known information that may raise substantial doubt shortly thereafter.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not absolute assurance and therefore is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with GAAS will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or

the override of internal control. Misstatements are considered material if there is a substantial likelihood that, individually or in the aggregate, they would influence the judgment made by a reasonable user based on the financial statements.

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In performing an audit in accordance with GAAS, we:

- Exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit.
- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, and design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks. Such procedures include examining, on a test basis, evidence regarding the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the District's internal control. Accordingly, no such opinion is expressed.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluate the overall presentation of the financial statements.
- Conclude whether, in our judgment, there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about the District's ability to continue as a going concern for a reasonable period of time.

We are required to communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit, significant audit findings, and certain internal control-related matters that we identified during the audit.

Required Supplementary Information

Accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America require that the Management Discussion and Analysis on pages 4 through 9, the California Public Employees' Retirement System - Schedule of Santa Ynez River Water Conservation District, Improvement District No. 1's Proportionate Share of the Net Pension Liability on page 38, California Public Employees' Retirement System - Schedule of Contributions on page 39, and Other Postemployment Benefits (OPEB) Plan – Schedule of Changes in the Net OPEB Liability and Related Ratios on page 40 be presented to supplement the basic financial statements. Such information is the responsibility of management and, although not a part of the basic financial statements, is required by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board who considers it to be an essential part of financial reporting for placing the basic financial statements in an appropriate operational, economic, or historical context. We have applied certain limited procedures to the required supplementary information in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America, which consisted of inquiries of management about the methods of preparing the information and comparing the information for consistency with management's responses to our inquiries, the basic financial statements, and other knowledge we obtained during our audit of the basic financial statements. We do not express an opinion or provide any assurance on the information because the limited procedures do not provide us with sufficient evidence to express an opinion or provide any assurance.

Supplementary Information

Our audit was conducted for the purpose of forming opinions on the financial statements that collectively comprise the District's basic financial statements. The Supplemental Schedule of Revenues and Expenses – Actual and Budget on page 41 is presented for purposes of additional analysis and is not a required part of the basic financial statements. Such information is the responsibility of management and was derived from and relates directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the basic financial statements. The information has been subjected to the auditing procedures applied in the audit of the basic

financial statements and certain additional procedures, including comparing and reconciling such information directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the basic financial statements or to the basic financial statements themselves, and other additional procedures in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. In our opinion, the Supplemental Schedule of Revenues and Expenses – Actual and Budget is fairly stated, in all material respects, in relation to the financial statements as a whole.

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Santa Barbara, California
January XX, 2026

**SANTA YNEZ RIVER WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT,
IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT NO. 1
MANAGEMENT’S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS**

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This section presents management’s analysis of the Santa Ynez River Water Conservation District, Improvement District No.1's (the District) financial condition and activities for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025. This narrative overview and analysis should be read in conjunction with the accompanying financial statements.

Summary of Organization and Business

The District was formed on July 7, 1959 under the Water Conservation District Law of 1931, Division 21, Section 74000 et seq. of the California Water Code (the Act), for the purpose of furnishing potable domestic (municipal and industrial) and irrigation water within its boundaries. The District has operated continuously since 1959.

Located in the central portion of Santa Barbara County, the District serves the communities of Santa Ynez, Los Olivos, Ballard, the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians, and the City of Solvang on a limited basis. With a population of approximately 7,022 (excluding the City of Solvang), the District currently provides water directly to approximately 2,624 municipal and industrial customers (including domestic/residential, commercial, institutional, rural residential, on-demand, and fire service) and approximately 97 agricultural customers. The District encompasses an area of approximately 10,850 acres (including approximately 1,300 acres within Solvang).

The District obtains its water supplies from the Cachuma Project via exchange of State Water Project supplies, direct diversions from the Cachuma Project (as needed), direct deliveries from the State Water Project, production from the Santa Ynez Uplands Groundwater Basin, and diversions from the Santa Ynez River alluvium. The District’s major activities include acquisition, construction, operation, and maintenance of works and facilities for the development and use of water resources and water rights including, without limitation, works and facilities to divert, store, pump, treat, deliver, and sell water for reasonable and beneficial uses by the District’s customers.

During fiscal year 2024/2025, the District had twenty authorized full-time positions.

The District is governed by a five-member Board of Trustees (the Board), the members of which are elected by the registered voters of the District to staggered four-year terms. Day-to-day management of the District is currently carried out by the General Manager, Administrative & Financial Manager, and the Water Resource Manager.

Overview of Financial Statements

The District operates as an enterprise fund. The enterprise fund is accounted for on a flow of economic resources measurement basis. Under this measurement focus, all assets and liabilities associated with the operation of the District are included on the balance sheet. Enterprise fund operating statements present increases (revenues) and decreases (expenses) in total net position.

Enterprise funds utilize the accrual basis of accounting. Under this method, revenues are recognized when earned, regardless of when received, and expenses are recognized at the time the related liabilities are incurred, regardless of when paid.

**SANTA YNEZ RIVER WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT,
IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT NO. 1
MANAGEMENT'S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS**

DRAFT

Overview of Financial Statements (Continued)

This discussion and analysis provides an introduction and a brief description of the District's financial statements, including the relationship of the statements to each other and the differences in the information they provide.

The District's basic financial statements include four components.

- Balance Sheet
- Statement of Revenues, Expenses, and Changes in Net Position
- Statement of Cash Flows
- Notes to the Financial Statements

The balance sheet includes all the District's assets, deferred inflows of resources, liabilities, and deferred outflows of resources. The difference between total assets/deferred outflows of resources and total liabilities/deferred inflows of resources is reported as net position. Net position may be displayed in the following categories:

- Net investment in capital assets
- Restricted
- Unrestricted

The balance sheet provides the basis for computing rate of return, evaluating the capital structure of the District, and assessing the liquidity and financial flexibility of the District.

The statement of revenues, expenses, and changes in net position presents information which shows how the District's net position changed during the year. All of the current year's revenues and expenses are recorded when the underlying transaction occurs, regardless of the timing of the related cash flows. This statement measures the success of the District's operations over the past year and determines whether the District has recovered its costs through user fees and other charges.

The statement of cash flows provides information regarding the District's cash receipts and cash disbursements during the year. This statement reports cash activity in four categories:

- Operating
- Noncapital financing
- Capital and related financing
- Investing

This statement differs from the statement of revenues, expenses, and changes in net position because the statement accounts only for transactions that result in cash receipts or cash disbursements.

**SANTA YNEZ RIVER WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT,
IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT NO. 1
MANAGEMENT’S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS**

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Overview of Financial Statements (Continued)

The notes to the financial statements provide a description of the accounting policies used to prepare the financial statements and present material disclosures required by Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) that are not otherwise present in the financial statements.

The District’s budget is prepared on an accrual basis and includes the District’s water system. Prior to June 1 of each year, District management submits to the Board of Trustees a proposed budget for the fiscal year commencing the following July 1. The Board conducts public meetings to obtain comments from ratepayers. Subsequent to the public meetings, the Board approves the final budget prior to July 1.

Financial Highlights

During the fiscal year ended June 30, 2025, the District's net position increased by a total of \$4,327,126 (10.3%), resulting from total operating income of \$1,727,117 and non-operating income of \$2,603,255.

Operating revenues increased by \$1,028,497 (9.4%) from the prior year, and operating expenses increased by \$1,061,693 (11.5%). Non-operating income decreased by \$361,220 (12.2%) and non-operating expenses decreased in the current year by \$61,605 (95%).

Balance Sheet

The following table represents a summary of the District’s Balance Sheet with corresponding analysis regarding significant variances:

	2025	2024	2023	2025-2024 Variance		2024-2023 Variance	
				Dollars	Percent	Dollars	Percent
Assets:							
Current assets	\$ 40,429,938	\$ 35,306,931	\$ 31,640,301	\$ 5,123,007	14.51%	\$ 3,666,630	11.59%
Noncurrent assets:							
Restricted assets	119,977	119,972	119,968	5	0.00%	4	0.00%
Capital assets, net	14,871,681	15,403,675	14,875,131	(531,994)	-3.45%	528,544	3.55%
Total Assets	\$ 55,421,596	\$ 50,830,578	\$ 46,635,400	\$ 4,591,018	9.03%	\$ 4,195,178	9.00%
Deferred Outflows of Resources:							
Deferred outflows	\$ 1,505,794	\$ 1,905,546	\$ 2,062,148	\$ (399,752)	-20.98%	\$ (156,602)	-7.59%
Total Deferred Outflows of Resources	\$ 1,505,794	\$ 1,905,546	\$ 2,062,148	\$ (399,752)	-20.98%	\$ (156,602)	-7.59%
Liabilities:							
Current liabilities	\$ 4,159,246	\$ 4,147,633	\$ 4,000,639	\$ 11,613	0.28%	\$ 146,994	3.67%
Long term liabilities	5,348,808	5,275,830	6,129,863	72,978	1.38%	(854,033)	-13.93%
Total Liabilities	\$ 9,508,054	\$ 9,423,463	\$ 10,130,502	\$ 84,591	0.90%	\$ (707,039)	-6.98%
Deferred Inflows of Resources:							
Deferred inflows	\$ 1,166,326	\$ 1,386,777	\$ 1,301,099	\$ (220,451)	-15.90%	\$ 85,678	6.59%
Total Deferred Inflows of Resources	\$ 1,166,326	\$ 1,386,777	\$ 1,301,099	\$ (220,451)	-15.90%	\$ 85,678	6.59%
Net Position:							
Net investment in capital assets	\$ 14,871,681	\$ 15,403,675	\$ 14,875,131	\$ (531,994)	-3.45%	\$ 528,544	3.55%
Restricted	119,977	119,972	119,968	5	0.00%	4	0.00%
Unrestricted, reserved	22,552,881	19,676,775	16,681,709	2,876,106	14.62%	2,995,066	17.95%
Unrestricted, unreserved	8,708,471	6,725,462	5,589,139	1,983,009	29.49%	1,136,323	20.33%
Total Net Position	\$ 46,253,010	\$ 41,925,884	\$ 37,265,947	\$ 4,327,126	10.32%	\$ 4,659,937	12.50%

**SANTA YNEZ RIVER WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT,
IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT NO. 1
MANAGEMENT’S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS**

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Analysis of Balance Sheet

Net position may serve as an indicator of a public governmental agency’s financial status. In the case of the District, assets and deferred outflows of resources exceeded liabilities and deferred inflows of resources by \$46,253,010 and \$41,925,884 as of June 30, 2025 and 2024, respectively.

A significant portion of the District’s total net position is its net investment in capital assets, in the amount of \$14,871,681 at June 30, 2025 and \$15,403,675 at June 30, 2024. This balance reflects the District’s investment in capital assets (which includes land, buildings, infrastructure, and construction in progress) less any related outstanding debt used to acquire those assets. The District uses these capital assets to provide water service to its customers; consequently, these assets are not available for future spending. It should be noted that the funding sources needed to repay any debt must be provided from other financial sources because the capital assets cannot be used to liquidate liabilities.

Capital assets net of accumulated depreciation decreased by \$531,994 as discussed further in the capital assets section of this analysis and Note 4 to the financial statements. This decrease equates to the decrease in total net position invested in capital assets of \$531,994 as noted in the table above.

Restricted net position represents assets which are required by external parties to be used for specific purposes, less any liabilities payable from those assets. The District’s restricted net position was \$119,977 and \$119,972 at June 30, 2025 and June 30, 2024, respectively. See Note 3 for details regarding the specific restrictions.

Unrestricted net position consists of assets and liabilities that do not meet the definition of net investment in capital assets, or restricted net position. The Board of Trustees has designated certain portions of its unrestricted net position for specific uses, which are classified in the balance sheet as unrestricted, reserved. Note 6 provides detailed information regarding the nature of these reserves.

Statement of Revenues, Expenses and Changes in Net Position

The following table shows a summary of the District’s Statement of Revenues, Expenses, and Changes in Net Position with corresponding analysis regarding significant variances:

	2025	2024	2023	2025-2024 Variance		2024-2023 Variance	
				Dollars	Percent	Dollars	Percent
Operating revenues	\$ 12,026,232	\$ 10,997,735	\$ 10,882,579	\$ 1,028,497	9.35%	\$ 115,156	1.06%
Operating expenses	10,299,115	9,237,422	9,129,325	1,061,693	11.49%	108,097	1.18%
Total Operating Income	1,727,117	1,760,313	1,753,254	(33,196)	-1.89%	7,059	0.40%
Non-operating income	2,603,255	2,964,475	932,007	(361,220)	-12.18%	2,032,468	218.07%
Non-operating expense	3,246	64,851	13,177	(61,605)	-94.99%	51,674	392.15%
Total Non-operating Income	2,600,009	2,899,624	918,830	(299,615)	-10.33%	1,980,794	215.58%
Change in net position	4,327,126	4,659,937	2,672,084	(332,811)	-7.14%	1,987,853	74.39%
Net Position at beginning of year	41,925,884	37,265,947	34,593,863	4,659,937	12.50%	2,672,084	7.72%
Net Position at End of Year	\$ 46,253,010	\$ 41,925,884	\$ 37,265,947	\$ 4,327,126	10.32%	\$ 4,659,937	12.50%

**SANTA YNEZ RIVER WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT,
IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT NO. 1
MANAGEMENT’S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS**

DRAFT

Analysis of Statement of Revenues, Expenses, and Changes in Net Position

As described in the table above, the District reported a total increase in net position of \$4,327,126 for the year ended June 30, 2025, as compared to an increase in net position of \$4,659,937 for the year ended June 30, 2024.

Operating revenues increased by \$1,028,497 during the fiscal year ended June 30, 2025, driven by increased water sales of \$905,689, and an increase in state water contract revenue of \$26,203 received from the City of Solvang, which is fully offset by corresponding state water contract expense in the operating expenses section. Water rates remained unchanged in the current fiscal year.

Operating expenses increased by \$1,061,693 during the fiscal year ended June 30, 2025 due to multiple factors. There was an increase in administrative and general expenses of \$1,038,633, which is mainly attributed to an increase in OPEB (\$848,420) and pension (\$66,074) expenses, which were recorded based on the annual actuarial valuations. There was also an increase in pumping expenses of \$126,243.

Non-operating revenues decreased by \$361,220 from the prior year primarily due to the decrease in unrealized gains of \$697,086, which was partially offset by an increase in interest income of \$289,185. The decrease in unrealized gain is due to a decrease in the factor used to adjust year end balances to fair market value, and the increase in interest income is primarily due to an increase in LAIF interest rates.

Non-operating expenses decreased in total by \$61,605 from the prior year. This increase was due to an decrease in the loss on disposal assets of \$61,605.

Capital Assets

The following table represents a summary of the District’s Capital Assets with corresponding analysis regarding significant variances:

	2025	2024	2023	2025-2024 Variance		2024-2023 Variance	
				Dollars	Percent	Dollars	Percent
Land and water rights	\$ 503,317	\$ 503,317	\$ 503,317	\$ -	0.00%	\$ -	0.00%
Utility plant	10,286,229	10,286,229	10,655,511	-	0.00%	(369,282)	-3.47%
Wells and major repairs	20,264,235	19,848,410	19,320,078	415,825	2.10%	528,332	2.73%
Office building	308,393	287,508	274,610	20,885	7.26%	12,898	4.70%
Transportation equipment	930,541	876,654	808,669	53,887	6.15%	67,985	8.41%
Office equipment	153,230	131,538	118,032	21,692	16.49%	13,506	11.44%
Other equipment	836,701	830,357	732,614	6,344	0.76%	97,743	13.34%
Total Capital Assets	\$ 33,282,646	\$ 32,764,013	\$ 32,412,831	\$ 518,633	1.58%	\$ 351,182	1.08%
Less accumulated depreciation	(19,473,129)	(18,518,375)	(17,830,556)	(954,754)	5.16%	(687,819)	3.86%
Subtotal	\$ 13,809,517	\$ 14,245,638	\$ 14,582,275	\$ (436,121)	-3.06%	\$ (336,637)	-2.31%
Construction in progress	1,062,164	1,158,037	292,856	(95,873)	-8.28%	865,181	295.43%
Net Capital Assets	\$ 14,871,681	\$ 15,403,675	\$ 14,875,131	\$ (531,994)	-3.45%	\$ 528,544	3.55%

**SANTA YNEZ RIVER WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT,
IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT NO. 1
MANAGEMENT’S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS**

DRAFT

Capital Assets Analysis (Continued)

The District’s net capital assets as of June 30, 2025 and 2024 including construction in progress were \$14,871,681 and \$15,403,675, respectively. Capital asset additions including construction in progress during fiscal year 2024/2025 totaled \$519,729 which related primarily to the numerous electrical panel upgrade projects, the meter replacement project, and various other improvement projects, tools, and equipment purchases. This increase was offset by depreciation expenses of \$1,038,027. The resulting overall decrease in net capital assets was \$531,994, as noted in the table above. See Note 4 for additions and disposals by asset category.

Economic Factors

The District is subject to various state and federal regulatory requirements. These include regulations impacting water rights, conservation, biological impact and water quality. Complying with these requirements will likely result in higher water costs incurred by the District. For additional information regarding ongoing matters with the State Water Resources Control Board and the United States Bureau of Reclamation see Note 15.

**SANTA YNEZ RIVER WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT,
IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT NO. 1
BALANCE SHEET
June 30, 2025 and 2024**

DRAFT

ASSETS

	2025	2024
Current Assets:		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 33,607,613	\$ 28,626,535
Accounts receivable	1,052,843	1,011,693
Interest receivable	194,038	190,933
Inventories	132,056	127,473
Prepaid expenses	2,617,313	2,706,186
CCWA deposits	2,826,075	2,644,111
Total current assets	40,429,938	35,306,931
Restricted Assets:		
Cash and cash equivalents	119,977	119,972
Total restricted assets	119,977	119,972
Capital Assets:		
Capital assets	33,282,646	32,764,013
Less: accumulated depreciation	(19,473,129)	(18,518,375)
Construction in progress	1,062,164	1,158,037
Net capital assets	14,871,681	15,403,675
Total assets	55,421,596	50,830,578
 <u>DEFERRED OUTFLOWS OF RESOURCES</u>		
Deferred outflows related to pensions	930,225	1,240,759
Deferred outflows related to OPEB	575,569	664,787
Total deferred outflows of resources	1,505,794	1,905,546
Total assets and deferred outflows of resources	\$ 56,927,390	\$ 52,736,124

See accompanying notes

**SANTA YNEZ RIVER WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT,
IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT NO. 1
BALANCE SHEET
June 30, 2025 and 2024**

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LIABILITIES

	2025	2024
Current Liabilities:		
Accounts payable	\$ 216,100	\$ 214,993
Accrued expenses	135,462	193,701
Advances payable	3,807,684	3,738,939
Total current liabilities	4,159,246	4,147,633
Long-term Liabilities:		
Net pension liability	2,825,209	2,835,297
Total OPEB liability	2,523,599	2,440,533
Total long-term liabilities	5,348,808	5,275,830
Total liabilities	9,508,054	9,423,463

DEFERRED INFLOWS OF RESOURCES

Deferred inflows related to pensions	47,099	118,566
Deferred inflows related to OPEB	1,119,227	1,268,211
Total deferred inflows of resources	1,166,326	1,386,777

NET POSITION

Net Position:		
Net investment in capital assets	14,871,681	15,403,675
Restricted	119,977	119,972
Unrestricted, reserved	22,552,881	19,676,775
Unrestricted, unreserved	8,708,471	6,725,462
Total net position	46,253,010	41,925,884
Total liabilities, deferred inflows of resources, and net position	\$ 56,927,390	\$ 52,736,124

See accompanying notes

**SANTA YNEZ RIVER WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT,
IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT NO. 1
STATEMENT OF REVENUES, EXPENSES AND CHANGES IN NET POSITION
For the Years Ended June 30, 2025 and 2024**

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	2025	2024
Operating Revenues:		
Water sales	\$ 9,552,599	\$ 8,646,910
State water contract revenue	2,245,731	2,219,528
Miscellaneous billings and fees	227,902	131,297
Total operating revenues	12,026,232	10,997,735
Operating Expenses:		
Source of supply	1,578,868	1,528,975
State water contract expense	2,245,731	2,219,528
Pumping expense	819,776	693,533
Water treatment	77,968	81,788
Transmission and distribution	1,190,072	1,163,285
Administrative and general	3,034,422	1,995,789
Special programs and study fees	294,497	513,785
Unanticipated and special legal fees	19,754	21,082
Depreciation expense	1,038,027	1,019,657
Total operating expenses	10,299,115	9,237,422
Operating income	1,727,117	1,760,313
Other Income:		
Capital facilities fees	108,636	65,295
Interest income	1,507,407	1,218,222
Unrealized gain	83,564	780,650
Special assessment	903,648	900,308
Total other income	2,603,255	2,964,475
Other Expenses:		
Loss on disposal of assets	3,246	64,851
Total other expenses	3,246	64,851
Change in net position	4,327,126	4,659,937
Net Position - beginning of year	41,925,884	37,265,947
Net Position - end of year	\$ 46,253,010	\$ 41,925,884

See accompanying notes

**SANTA YNEZ RIVER WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT,
IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT NO. 1
STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
For the Years Ended June 30, 2025 and 2024**

DRAFT

	2025	2024
Cash Flows from Operating Activities:		
Cash received from customers for services	\$ 11,985,082	\$ 10,881,230
Cash payments to suppliers for goods and services	(5,909,325)	(6,016,470)
Cash payments for payroll taxes and employee benefits	(1,148,813)	(1,050,397)
Cash payments to employees for services	(2,036,732)	(1,994,322)
Net cash provided by operating activities	2,890,212	1,820,041
Cash Flows from Noncapital Financing Activities:		
Capital facilities fees	108,636	65,295
Special assessments	903,648	900,308
Net cash provided by noncapital financing activities	1,012,284	965,603
Cash Flows from Capital and Related Financing Activities:		
Proceeds from sale of capital assets	10,450	-
Capital assets purchased	(519,729)	(1,613,052)
Net cash used by capital and related financing activities	(509,279)	(1,613,052)
Cash Flows from Investing Activities:		
Interest income received	1,504,302	1,155,272
Fair value adjustment on cash equivalents	83,564	780,650
Net cash provided by investing activities	1,587,866	1,935,922
Net increase in cash and cash equivalents	4,981,083	3,108,514
Cash and cash equivalents, beginning of year	28,746,507	25,637,993
Cash and cash equivalents, end of year	\$ 33,727,590	\$ 28,746,507

Cash and cash equivalents are reported in the balance sheet as follows:

	2025	2024
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 33,607,613	\$ 28,626,535
Restricted cash and cash equivalents	119,977	119,972
	\$ 33,727,590	\$ 28,746,507

See accompanying notes

SANTA YNEZ RIVER WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT,

IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT NO. 1

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

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Note 1 – Reporting Entity and Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

A) Reporting Entity

The Santa Ynez River Water Conservation District, Improvement District No. 1 (the District) was organized on July 7, 1959 under the Water Conservation Law of 1931, part of the California Water Code. The District has operated continuously since 1959 and is located in the central portion of Santa Barbara County and includes the communities of Santa Ynez, Los Olivos, Ballard and the City of Solvang. The District accounts for construction, maintenance and operations of facilities which are for the purpose of producing and furnishing potable domestic and irrigation water within its boundaries.

The Santa Ynez River Water Conservation District (Conservation District) was organized in 1939. It is a separate and distinct district from the Santa Ynez River Water Conservation District, Improvement District No. 1. The Conservation District has a separate purpose for existence, a separate board of directors, and separate accounting records. Its assets and liabilities, as well as its activities, are therefore not included in these financial statements.

B) Accounting Basis

The District reports its activities as an enterprise fund, which is used to account for operations where the intent of the District is that the costs of providing goods and services to the general public on a continuing basis be financed or recovered primarily through user charges. Revenues and expenses are recognized on the accrual basis, as such, revenues are recognized in the accounting period in which they are earned and expenses are recognized in the period incurred. An enterprise fund is accounted for on the "flow of economic resources" measurement focus. This means that all assets and liabilities, whether current or long term, are included on the balance sheet.

The District distinguishes operating revenues and expenses from non-operating items. Operating revenues and expenses generally result from providing services and the producing and delivering of goods in connection with the District's principal ongoing operations. The principal operating revenues of the District are charges to customers for water sales. Operating expenses of the District include the cost of sales and services, as well as administrative expenses. All revenues and expenses not meeting this definition are reported as non-operating revenues and expenses. The District is responsible for funding all of its expenses, regardless of the operation or non-operating classification.

The financial statements of the District have been prepared in conformity with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP). The Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) is the accepted standard setting body for establishing governmental accounting and financial reporting principles.

C) Budgetary Procedures

The District prepares an annual budget which includes estimates of its principal sources of revenue to be received during the fiscal year, as well as estimated expenditures and reserves needed for operation of District facilities.

SANTA YNEZ RIVER WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT,

IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT NO. 1

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

DRAFT

Note 1 – Reporting Entity and Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (Continued)

D) Cash and Cash Equivalents

For purposes of the statement of cash flows, the District considers all highly liquid investments (including restricted assets) with a maturity period, at purchase, of three months or less to be cash equivalents.

E) Basis for Recording Accounts Receivable

The District grants credit to its customers, substantially all of whom are residents and businesses within the unincorporated areas of the County in the District's service area boundaries, in the towns of Santa Ynez, Los Olivos, and Ballard. The City of Solvang is a customer of the District. Accounts receivable are considered to be fully collectible.

F) Capital Assets

Capital assets purchased by the District are recorded at cost. Contributed assets (water line extensions, water wells and modifications constructed by the District and reimbursed by the customer or developer) are recorded at estimated fair market value on the date donated. Capital assets, excluding land, are depreciated using the straight line method over their estimated useful lives, which range from 5 to 99 years.

G) Inventories

The District's inventories are recorded at the lower of cost on the first-in, first-out basis, or market.

H) Prepaid Expenses

Prepaid expenses consist primarily of prepayments made to the Central Coast Water Authority (CCWA) as described in Note 13. Annually, a controlled quantity of water is also purchased by the District from the United States Bureau of Reclamation and, if not used in the current year, is stored in the Lake Cachuma facility for use the following year. In addition, an amount of unused water carried over from prior years, if available, is also stored in the facility. This stored water at Lake Cachuma is subject to loss through evaporation, natural disasters, dam ruptures, and dam spillage due to excess rainfall. The losses are not covered by insurance. The District has its own facilities (various reservoirs) for storing delivered State Water Project water.

I) Compensated Absences

The District's personnel policies provide for the accumulation of vacation and sick leave. The District recognizes a liability for compensated absences related to leave that is attributable to services already rendered, accumulates, and is more likely than not to be used for time off or otherwise paid in cash or settled through noncash means. Unused accrued vacation is paid to employees upon separation from employment in accordance with District policy. Sick leave is accumulated but is not paid upon separation from employment. Accrued compensated absences are included in accrued expenses on the balance sheet.

J) Advances Payable

Advances payable represents the prepayment by the City of Solvang to the District for its share of the Central Coast Water Authority costs for the coming fiscal year and its proportionate share of rate coverage reserve funds.

SANTA YNEZ RIVER WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT,

IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT NO. 1

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

DRAFT

Note 1 – Reporting Entity and Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (Continued)

K) Other Postemployment Benefits (OPEB)

For purposes of measuring the net OPEB liability, deferred outflows of resources and deferred inflows of resources related to OPEB, and OPEB expense as described in Note 9, information about the fiduciary net position of the District’s plan (OPEB Plan) and additions to/deductions from the OPEB Plan’s fiduciary net position have been determined on the same basis. For this purpose, benefit payments are recognized when currently due and payable in accordance with benefit terms.

Generally accepted accounting principles require that the reported results must pertain to liability and asset information within certain defined timeframes. For this report, the following timeframes are used:

Valuation Date	June 30, 2023
Measurement Date	June 30, 2024
Measurement Period	July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024

L) Pension Plan

For purposes of measuring the net pension liability and deferred outflows/inflows of resources related to pensions, and pension expense as described in Note 8, information about the fiduciary net position of the District’s California Public Employees’ Retirement System (CalPERS) plans (Plans) and additions to/deductions from the Plan’s fiduciary net position have been determined on the same basis as they are reported by CalPERS. For this purpose, benefit payments (including refunds of employee contributions) are recognized when due and payable in accordance with the benefit terms. Investments are reported at fair value.

The following timeframes are used for pension reporting:

Valuation Date	June 30, 2023
Measurement Date	June 30, 2024
Measurement Period	July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024

M) Net Position

Net position represents the difference between assets/deferred inflows and liabilities/deferred outflows and is classified into three components as follows:

Net investment in capital assets – This component of net position consists of capital assets, net of accumulated depreciation and reduced by the outstanding balances of any borrowings used for the acquisition, construction or improvement of those assets. Net investment in capital assets excludes unspent debt proceeds.

Restricted – This component of net position consists of constraints placed on net asset use through external constraints imposed by creditors, grantors, or laws or regulations of other governments or constraints imposed by law through constitutional provisions or enabling legislation.

SANTA YNEZ RIVER WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT,
IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT NO. 1
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

DRAFT

Note 1 – Reporting Entity and Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (Continued)

M) Net Position (Continued)

Unrestricted – This component of net position consists of net position that does not meet the definition of “restricted” or “net investment in capital assets.” Unrestricted, reserved net position represents unrestricted assets which are segregated by the Board of Trustees for specific future uses.

When an expense is incurred for purposes for which both unrestricted and restricted resources are available for use, it is the District's policy to apply restricted assets first, then unrestricted resources.

N) Use of Estimates

Management uses estimates and assumptions in preparing financial statements. Those estimates and assumptions affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities, the disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities, and the reported revenues and expenses.

Significant estimates used in preparing these financial statements include useful lives of capitalized assets, the net pension liability, and the liability for other postemployment benefits. It is at least reasonably possible that the significant estimates used will change within the next year.

O) Implemented Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) Statements

For the year ended June 30, 2025, the District implemented the following Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) Statements:

Statement No. 101 " <i>Compensated Absences</i> "	This statement updates the recognition and measurement guidance for compensated absences. This is achieved by a unified model and amends certain previously required disclosures. The requirements of this statement are effective for periods beginning after December 15, 2023. (FY 24/25).
Statement No. 102 " <i>Certain Risk Disclosures</i> "	This statement improves financial reporting by providing users of financial statements with essential information that currently is not often provided. It focuses on providing users with timely information regarding specific concentrations or constraints and related events that could significantly impact a government. The requirements of this statement are effective for periods beginning after June 15, 2024. (FY 24/25)

The adoption of these statements did not have a material impact on the District.

**SANTA YNEZ RIVER WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT,
IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT NO. 1
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

DRAFT

Note 1 – Reporting Entity and Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (Continued)

P) Future Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) Statements

The Governmental Accounting Standards Board Statements listed below will be implemented in future financial statements. These statements will be evaluated by the District to determine if they will have a material impact to the financial statements once effective.

Statement No. 103 <i>"Financial Reporting Model Improvements"</i>	The requirements of this Statement are effective for fiscal years beginning after June 15, 2025. (FY25/26)
Statement No. 104 <i>"Disclosure of Certain Capital Assets"</i>	The requirements of this statement are effective for periods beginning after June 15, 2025. (FY 25/26)

Note 2 – Cash and Investments

Cash and investments are comprised of the following at June 30, 2025 and 2024:

	2025	2024
Cash in banks and on hand	\$ 15,995,801	\$ 11,886,592
Local Agency Investment Fund	17,731,789	16,859,915
Total cash and investments	\$ 33,727,590	\$ 28,746,507

Investments Authorized by the District's Investment Policy

The District's investment policy authorizes the District to invest only in the Local Agency Investment Fund (LAIF), and FDIC insured accounts. This policy does not apply to funds held by the bond trustee that are governed by the provisions of debt agreements of the District, rather than the general provisions of the District's investment policy.

Investment in Local Agency Investment Fund (LAIF)

LAIF is regulated by the California Government Code under the oversight of the Treasurer of the State of California. The fair value of the District's investment in this pool is reported in the accompanying financial statements at amounts based on the District's pro-rata share of the fair value provided by LAIF for the entire LAIF portfolio. The balance available for withdrawal is based on the accounting records maintained by LAIF, which are recorded on the amortized cost basis. LAIF invests some of its portfolio in derivatives. Detailed information on derivative investments held by this pool is not readily available. Investments in LAIF are not rated by a national rating agency.

Interest Rate Risk

The District did not have any investments with fair values that are considered to be highly sensitive to changes in interest rates.

**SANTA YNEZ RIVER WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT,
IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT NO. 1
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

DRAFT

Note 2 – Cash and Investments (Continued)

Custodial Credit Risk

Deposits are exposed to custodial credit risk if they are uninsured and uncollateralized. Custodial credit risk for deposits is the risk that, in the event of the failure of a depository financial institution, the District will not be able to recover its deposits or will not be able to recover collateral securities that are in the possession of an outside party.

All cash deposits are entirely insured or collateralized. The California Government Code requires California banks and savings and loans associations to secure the District’s deposits by pledging government securities, which equal at least 110% of the District's deposits. California law also permits financial institutions to secure the District's deposits by the pledging of first trust deed mortgage notes in excess of 150% of the District's deposits. The District may waive collateral requirements for deposits that are fully insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC).

Credit Risk

Generally, credit risk is the risk that an issuer of an investment will not fulfill its obligation to the holder of the investment. This is measured by the assignment of a rating by a nationally recognized statistical rating organization. The District’s investment in the Local Agency Investment Fund is not rated.

Note 3 – Restricted Cash and Investments

The Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians (Band) made an original deposit with the District of \$4,400 to be used as security against septic system repairs on the Indian Reservation to be paid by the Band. The balance at fiscal year ended June 30, 2025 includes the original deposit and the interest earned on the cash balance.

Restricted main extension fees represent amounts received from customers which must be used for the construction of mains. Restricted development fees are charges paid by water service applicants which must be used for new, expanded or modified water service, to secure new water sources, recapture existing water resources, and develop necessary water supply recovery measures due to the drought and additional State Regulation impacts.

The District’s restricted cash and investments as of June 30 are as follows:

	2025	2024
Santa Ynez Indian Reservation	\$ 10,765	\$ 10,760
Main extension fees	20,550	20,550
Development fees	88,662	88,662
Total restricted cash and cash equivalents	\$ 119,977	\$ 119,972

SANTA YNEZ RIVER WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT, DRAFT
IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT NO. 1
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Note 4 – Capital Assets

The following is a summary of changes in capital assets for the year ended June 30, 2025.

	Balance June 30, 2024	Additions	Disposals	Transfers	Balance June 30, 2025
Utility plant	\$ 10,286,229	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 10,286,229
Wells and major repairs	19,848,410	131,593	(21,344)	305,576	20,264,235
Office building	287,508	-	-	20,885	308,393
Transportation equipment	876,654	129,512	(75,625)	-	930,541
Office equipment	131,538	15,777	-	5,915	153,230
Other equipment	830,357	6,344	-	-	836,701
Total depreciable assets	<u>32,260,696</u>	<u>283,226</u>	<u>(96,969)</u>	<u>332,376</u>	<u>32,779,329</u>
Land and land rights	<u>503,317</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>503,317</u>
Total capital assets	<u>32,764,013</u>	<u>283,226</u>	<u>(96,969)</u>	<u>332,376</u>	<u>33,282,646</u>
Accumulated depreciation	<u>(18,518,375)</u>	<u>(1,038,027)</u>	<u>83,273</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(19,473,129)</u>
Construction in progress	<u>1,158,037</u>	<u>236,503</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(332,376)</u>	<u>1,062,164</u>
Net capital assets	<u>\$ 15,403,675</u>	<u>\$ (518,298)</u>	<u>\$ (13,696)</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 14,871,681</u>

The following is a summary of changes in capital assets for the year ended June 30, 2024.

	Balance June 30, 2023	Additions	Disposals	Transfers	Balance June 30, 2024
Utility plant	\$ 10,655,511	\$ -	\$ (369,282)	\$ -	\$ 10,286,229
Wells and major repairs	19,320,078	156,005	(22,920)	395,247	19,848,410
Office building	274,610	12,898	-	-	287,508
Transportation equipment	808,669	67,985	-	-	876,654
Office equipment	118,032	13,506	-	-	131,538
Other equipment	732,614	102,230	(4,487)	-	830,357
Total depreciable assets	<u>31,909,514</u>	<u>352,624</u>	<u>(396,689)</u>	<u>395,247</u>	<u>32,260,696</u>
Land and land rights	<u>503,317</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>503,317</u>
Total capital assets	<u>32,412,831</u>	<u>352,624</u>	<u>(396,689)</u>	<u>395,247</u>	<u>32,764,013</u>
Accumulated depreciation	<u>(17,830,556)</u>	<u>(1,019,657)</u>	<u>331,838</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(18,518,375)</u>
Construction in progress	<u>292,856</u>	<u>1,260,428</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(395,247)</u>	<u>1,158,037</u>
Net capital assets	<u>\$ 14,875,131</u>	<u>\$ 593,395</u>	<u>\$ (64,851)</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 15,403,675</u>

SANTA YNEZ RIVER WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT, **DRAFT**

IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT NO. 1

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Note 5 – Compensated Absences

Changes in accrued vacation and sick leave benefits for year ended June 30, 2025 is as follows:

Balance as of June 30, 2024	\$ 188,558
Net decrease in the compensated absence liability during the reporting period	<u>(55,346)</u>
Balance as of June 30, 2025	<u><u>\$ 133,212</u></u>

Note 6 – Reserves

The District has reserved a portion of its assets for future construction projects and projected repair and replacement costs. The following is a schedule of the reserves as of June 30, 2025 and 2024:

	2025	2024
Repair and replacement	\$ 8,507,435	\$ 7,390,060
Debt reserve	587,247	614,223
Plant expansion	10,458,199	8,672,492
SWP fund reserve	3,000,000	3,000,000
Total reserves	<u><u>\$ 22,552,881</u></u>	<u><u>\$ 19,676,775</u></u>

Note 7 – Supplemental Schedule of the Statement of Cash Flows

The following is a reconciliation of operating income to net cash provided by operating activities:

	2025	2024
Cash Flows from Operating Activities:		
Operating income	\$ 1,727,117	\$ 1,760,313
Adjustments to reconcile operating income to net cash provided by operating activities:		
Depreciation expense	1,038,027	1,019,657
(Increase) decrease in:		
Accounts receivable	(41,150)	(116,505)
Inventories	(4,583)	53,721
Prepaid expenses and deposits	(93,091)	(432,386)
Deferred outflows of resources - pension	310,534	35,070
Deferred outflows of resources - OPEB	89,218	121,532
Increase (decrease) in:		
Accounts payable	1,107	(8,164)
Accrued expenses	(58,239)	(18,112)
Net pension liability	(10,088)	223,576
Net OPEB obligation	83,066	(1,077,609)
Advances payable	68,745	173,270
Deferred inflows of resources - pension	(71,467)	(67,216)
Deferred inflows of resources - OPEB	(148,984)	152,894
Net cash provided by operating activities	<u><u>\$ 2,890,212</u></u>	<u><u>\$ 1,820,041</u></u>

SANTA YNEZ RIVER WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT, **DRAFT**
IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT NO. 1
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Note 8 – Defined Benefit Pension Plan

Plan Description – All qualified employees are eligible to participate in the District’s Miscellaneous Employee Pension Plan, a cost-sharing multiple employer defined benefit pension plan administered by the California Public Employees’ Retirement System (CalPERS). Benefit provisions under the Plans are established by State statute and local government resolution. CalPERS issues publicly available reports that include a full description of the pension plans regarding benefit provisions, assumptions and membership information that can be found on the CalPERS website. Eligible employees hired after January 1, 2013 that are considered new members as defined by the Public Employees’ Pension Reform Act (PEPRA) participate in the PEPRA Miscellaneous Plan.

Benefits Provided – CalPERS provides service retirement and disability benefits, annual cost of living adjustments and death benefits to plan members, who must be public employees and beneficiaries. Benefits are based on years of credited service, as discussed above. Members with five years of total service are eligible to retire at age 50 or 52 if in the PEPRA Miscellaneous Plan with statutorily reduced benefits. An optional benefit regarding sick leave was adopted. Any unused sick leave accumulated at the time of retirement will be converted to credited service at a rate of 0.004 years of service for each day of sick leave. All members are eligible for non-duty disability benefits after 10 years of service. The system also provides for the Optional Settlement 2W Death Benefit, as well as the 1959 Survivor Benefit. The cost of living adjustments for all plans are applied as specified by the Public Employees’ Retirement Law.

Contributions – Section 20814(c) of the California Public Employees’ Retirement Law requires that the employer contribution rates for all public employers be determined on an annual basis by the actuary and shall be effective on the July 1 following notice of a change in the rate. Funding contributions for both Plans are determined annually on an actuarial basis as of June 30 by CalPERS. The actuarially determined rate is the estimated amount necessary to finance the costs of benefits earned by employees during the year, with an additional amount to finance any unfunded accrued liability. The District is required to contribute the difference between the actuarially determined rate and the contribution rate of employees.

For employees hired prior to January 1, 2013 and for all classic members as defined by PEPRA, the District pays the employee’s contribution in addition to the employer’s contribution. These contributions made on behalf of employees are included in operating expenses on the statement of revenues, expenses, and changes in net position, but are not included in pension expense as disclosed below. For employees hired after January 1, 2013 who are considered new members as defined by PEPRA, the District does not pay any portion of the employee’s required contribution.

SANTA YNEZ RIVER WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT, **DRAFT**
 IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT NO. 1
 NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Note 8 – Defined Benefit Pension Plan (Continued)

The Plan’s provisions and benefits in effect at June 30, 2025 and 2024, are summarized as follows:

	<u>Miscellaneous Plan</u>	
	Prior to January 1, 2013	On or after January 1, 2013
Hire date		
Benefit formula	2% @ 55	2% @ 62
Benefit vesting schedule	5 years of service	5 years of service
Benefit payments	monthly for life	monthly for life
Retirement age	50 - Minimum	52 - Minimum
Monthly benefits, as a % of eligible compensation	1.4% to 2.4%	1.0% to 2.5%
Required employee contribution		
2025	7.00%	8.25%
2024	7.00%	7.25%
Required employer contribution		
2025	12.67%	8.18%
2024	12.63%	8.00%

CalPERS collects employer contributions for the Plan as a percentage of payroll for the normal cost portion as noted in the rates above, and as a dollar amount for contributions toward the unfunded liability. The District’s required contribution for the unfunded liability was \$209,266 and \$171,003 for the fiscal years ended June 30, 2025 and 2024, respectively.

Pension Liabilities, Pension Expenses and Deferred Outflows/Inflows of Resources Related to Pensions

As of June 30, 2025 the District reported a liability of \$2,825,209 for its proportionate share of the net pension liability. The net pension liability was measured as of June 30, 2024, and the total pension liability for the Plan used to calculate the net pension liability was determined by an actuarial valuation as of June 30, 2023 rolled forward to June 30, 2024 using standard update procedures. The District’s proportion of the net pension liability was based on a projection of their long-term share of contributions to the pension plans relative to the projected contributions of all participating employers, actuarially determined.

The District’s proportionate share of the net pension liability as of June 30, 2024 and 2023 (measurement dates) was as follows:

<u>Measurement date June 30, 2024</u>		<u>Measurement date June 30, 2023</u>	
Proportion – June 30, 2024	0.05670%	Proportion – June 30, 2023	0.05582%
Proportion – June 30, 2025	0.05841%	Proportion – June 30, 2024	0.05670%
Increase (Decrease)	<u>0.00171%</u>	Increase (Decrease)	<u>0.00088%</u>

SANTA YNEZ RIVER WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT, **DRAFT**

IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT NO. 1

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Note 8 – Defined Benefit Pension Plan (Continued)

For the fiscal years ended June 30, 2025 and 2024, the District recognized pension expense of \$617,346 and \$551,272, respectively. At June 30, 2025 and 2024, the District reported deferred outflows of resources and deferred inflows of resources related to pensions from the following sources:

	June 30, 2025		June 30, 2024	
	Deferred Outflows of Resources	Deferred Inflows of Resources	Deferred Outflows of Resources	Deferred Inflows of Resources
Pension contributions subsequent to measurement date	\$ 388,365	\$ -	\$ 359,842	\$ -
Differences between expected and actual experience	244,265	(9,531)	144,841	(22,469)
Changes in assumptions	72,614	-	171,180	-
Changes in employer's proportion	55,110	-	105,836	-
Difference between employer's contributions and employer's proportionate share of contributions	7,227	(37,568)	-	(96,097)
Net differences between projected and actual earnings on plan investments	162,644	-	459,060	-
Total	\$ 930,225	\$ (47,099)	\$ 1,240,759	\$ (118,566)

Employer contributions of \$388,365 reported as deferred outflows of resources related to contributions made subsequent to the measurement date will be recognized as a reduction of the net pension liability in the year ended June 30, 2026. Other amounts reported as deferred outflows of resources and deferred inflows of resources related to pensions will be recognized as pension expense as follows:

Fiscal Year Ended June 30	
2026	\$ 175,059
2027	366,491
2028	8,946
2029	(55,735)
	\$ 494,761

IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT NO. 1

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Note 8 – Defined Benefit Pension Plan (Continued)

Actuarial Assumptions – The total pension liabilities in the June 30, 2023 and 2022 actuarial valuations (June 30, 2024 and 2023 measurement dates) were determined using the following actuarial assumptions:

	Miscellaneous Plan
Actuarial Cost Method	Entry-Age Normal Cost Method in accordance with the requirements of GASB Statement No. 68
Actuarial Assumptions:	
Discount Rate	
Measurement Date - 2024	6.90%
Measurement Date - 2023	6.90%
Inflation	
Measurement Date - 2024	2.30%
Measurement Date - 2023	2.30%
Salary Increases	Varies by entry age and service
Investment Rate of Return (1)	
Measurement Date - 2024	6.90%
Measurement Date - 2023	6.90%
Mortality	Derived using CalPERS' Membership Data for all Funds
Post Retirement Benefit Increase	Contract COLA up to 2.3% until Purchasing Power Protection Allowance Floor on Purchasing Power applies

(1) Net of pension plan investment expenses, including inflation

The mortality table used was developed based on CalPERS-specific data. The rates for measurement date June 30, 2024 incorporate Generational Mortality to capture ongoing mortality improvement using 80% of Scale MP 2020 published by the Society of Actuaries. For more details, please refer to the 2021 experience study report that can be found on the CalPERS website.

Discount Rate – The discount rate used to measure the total pension liability was 6.90% for the measurement periods ending June 30, 2024 and 2023. The projection of cash flows used to determine the discount rate assumed that contributions from plan members will be made at the current member contribution rates and that contributions from employers will be made a statutorily required rates, actuarially determined. Based on those assumptions, the Plan's fiduciary net position was projected to be available to make all projected future benefit payments of current plan members. Therefore, the long-term expected rate of return on plan investments was applied to all periods of projected benefit payments to determine the total pension liability.

Long-term Expected Rate of Return – In determining the long-term expected rate of return, CalPERS took into account long-term market return expectations as well as the expected pension fund cash flows. Projected returns for all asset classes are estimated and, combined with risk estimates, are used to project compound (geometric) returns over the long term. The discount rate used to discount liabilities was informed by the long-term projected portfolio return.

IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT NO. 1

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Note 8 – Defined Benefit Pension Plan (Continued)

The expected real rates of return by asset class are as follows:

Asset Class	Measurement Date June 30, 2024		Asset Class	Measurement Date June 30, 2023	
	Net Strategic Allocation	Real Return Years 1 - 10(a)		Net Strategic Allocation	Real Return Years 1 - 10(a)
Global equity - cap-weighted	30.00%	4.54%	Global equity - cap-weighted	30.00%	4.45%
Global equity non-cap-weighted	12.00%	3.84%	Global equity non-cap-weighted	12.00%	3.84%
Private Equity	13.00%	7.28%	Private Equity	13.00%	7.28%
Treasury	5.00%	0.27%	Treasury	5.00%	0.27%
Mortgage-backed Securities	5.00%	0.50%	Mortgage-backed Securities	5.00%	0.50%
Investment Grade Corporates	10.00%	1.56%	Investment Grade Corporates	10.00%	1.56%
High Yield	5.00%	2.27%	High Yield	5.00%	2.27%
Emerging Market Debt	5.00%	2.48%	Emerging Market Debt	5.00%	2.48%
Private Debt	5.00%	3.57%	Private Debt	5.00%	3.57%
Real Estates	15.00%	3.21%	Real Estates	15.00%	3.21%
Leverage	-5.00%	-0.59%	Leverage	-5.00%	-0.59%

(a) An expected inflation of 2.30% used for this period.
 Figures are based on the 2021-22 Asset Liability Management study.

Sensitivity of the Proportionate Share of the Net Pension Liability to Changes in the Discount Rate – The following presents the District’s proportionate share of the net pension liability calculated using the discount rate of 6.90%, as well as what the District’s proportionate share of the net pension liability would be if it were calculated using a discount rate that is one percentage point lower or one percentage point higher than the current rate:

	Fiscal Year	
	2025	2024
1% Decrease	5.90%	5.90%
Net Pension Liability	\$ 4,443,900	\$ 4,373,567
Current Discount Rate	6.90%	6.90%
Net Pension Liability	\$ 2,825,209	\$ 2,835,297
1% Increase	7.90%	7.90%
Net Pension Liability	\$ 1,492,788	\$ 1,569,169

Pension Plan Fiduciary Net Position – Detailed information about the Plan’s fiduciary net position is available in the separately issued CalPERS financial reports.

Note 9 – Other Postemployment Benefits (OPEB)

The District’s plan is a single-employer defined benefit OPEB plan which provides retiree medical and prescription drug coverage to eligible retirees and their dependents. Employees who attain age 55 and 10 years of service and retire from active employment are eligible to receive pro-rated benefits from the Plan. Medical coverage is offered under a fully-insured PPO plan option and a fully-insured HMO plan option, through the Association of California Water Agencies Health Plan, consistent with the coverage provided under the CalPERS Health Program.

SANTA YNEZ RIVER WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT, **DRAFT**
 IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT NO. 1
 NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Note 9 – Other Postemployment Benefits (OPEB) (Continued)

Employees Covered

At the June 30, 2024 actuarial valuation, the following current and former employees were covered by the benefit terms under the OPEB plan.

Participating active employees	16
Inactive employees or beneficiaries currently receiving benefits	<u>9</u>
Total	<u><u>25</u></u>

Funding Policy

The District funds the plan on a pay-as-you-go basis. The District contributes up to the amount of the monthly premium for ACWA Advantage coverage for employee and family, plus administrative fees and Contingency Reserve Fund assessments. The specific contribution percentage is based on District years of credited service.

Total OPEB Liability

The District’s total OPEB liability was measured as of June 30, 2024 and the total OPEB liability used to calculate the net OPEB liability was determined by an actuarial valuation dated June 30, 2023, based on the following actuarial methods and assumptions:

	<u>OPEB Plan</u>
Actuarial Cost Method	Entry-Age Normal, Level Percent of Pay
Actuarial Assumptions:	
Discount Rate	
Measurement Date - 2024	3.93%
Measurement Date - 2023	3.65%
Payroll Growth (1)	
Measurement Date - 2024	2.75%
Measurement Date - 2023	2.75%
Mortality	2021 CalPERS Retiree Mortality for Miscellaneous and Schools Employees
Turnover	2021 CalPERS Turnover for Miscellaneous Employees
Retirement	2021 CalPERS 2.0%@55 Rates for Miscellaneous Employees; 2021 CalPERS 2.0% @62 Rates for Miscellaneous Employees
Healthcare Trend Rate	
Measurement Date - 2024	4.00%
Measurement Date - 2023	4.00%

(1) Benefits are not dependent upon salary. Rate is used in applying the level percentage of projected payroll amortization method.

SANTA YNEZ RIVER WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT, **DRAFT**
 IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT NO. 1
 NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Note 9 – Other Postemployment Benefits (OPEB) (Continued)

Assumption Changes

The discount rate was increased from 3.65% to 3.93% for the measurement period ending June 30, 2024. The discount rate was increased from 3.54% to 3.65% for the measurement period ending June 30, 2023.

Discount Rate

The discount rate used to measure the total OPEB liability was 3.93% for the measurement period ending June 30, 2024, based on the Bond Buyer 20 Bond Index. The discount rate used to measure the total OPEB liability was 3.65 % for the measurement period ending June 30, 2023, based on the S&P municipal Bond 20-Year High Grade Rate Index.

Changes in the OPEB Liability

The changes in the OPEB liability are as follows:

	Total OPEB Liability (a)	Plan Fiduciary Net Position (b)	Net OPEB Liability/(Asset) (a) - (b)
Balance at June 30, 2024 <i>(Measurement Date June 30, 2023)</i>	\$ 2,440,533	\$ -	\$ 2,440,533
Changes Recognized for the Measurement Period:			
Service cost	161,344	-	161,344
Interest on Total OPEB Liability	90,765	-	90,765
Contributions - Employer	-	83,910	(83,910)
Benefit Payments	(83,910)	(83,910)	-
Expected versus actual experience	14,910	-	14,910
Assumption changes	(100,043)	-	(100,043)
Benefit Terms changes	-	-	-
Net Changes	<u>83,066</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>83,066</u>
Balance at June 30, 2025 <i>(Measurement Date June 30, 2024)</i>	<u>\$ 2,523,599</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 2,523,599</u>

IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT NO. 1

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Note 9 – Other Postemployment Benefits (OPEB) (Continued)

Sensitivity of the Total OPEB Liability to Changes in the Discount Rate

The following presents the total OPEB liability of the District if it were calculated using a discount rate that is one percentage point lower or one percentage point higher than the current rate, for fiscal years ended June 30, 2025 and 2024:

	Fiscal Year	
	2025	2024
1% Decrease	2.93%	2.65%
Net OPEB Liability	\$ 2,900,075	\$ 2,806,132
Current Discount Rate	3.93%	3.65%
Net OPEB Liability	\$ 2,523,599	\$ 2,440,533
1% Increase	4.93%	4.65%
Net OPEB Liability	\$ 2,222,578	\$ 2,142,393

The following presents the total OPEB liability of the District if it were calculated using health care cost trend rates that are one percentage point lower or one percentage point higher than the current rate, for fiscal years ended June 30, 2025 and 2024:

	Fiscal Year	
	2025	2024
Trend 1% Lower	3.00%	3.00%
Net OPEB Liability	\$ 2,138,880	\$ 2,082,599
Health Care Cost Trend	4.00%	4.00%
Net OPEB Liability	\$ 2,523,599	\$ 2,440,533
Trend 1% Higher	5.00%	5.00%
Net OPEB Liability	\$ 3,005,747	\$ 2,895,317

Recognition of Deferred Outflows and Deferred Inflows of Resources

Gains and losses related to changes in total OPEB liability and fiduciary net position are recognized in OPEB expense systematically over time. Amounts are first recognized in OPEB expense for the year the gain or loss occurs. The remaining amounts are categorized as deferred outflows and deferred inflows of resources related to OPEB and are to be recognized in future OPEB expense.

The recognition period differs depending on the source of the gain or loss. The difference between projected OPEB plan investment earnings and actual earnings is amortized over a five year period. The remaining gains and losses are amortized over the expected average remaining service life, which was 6.9 years at measurement date June 30, 2024.

SANTA YNEZ RIVER WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT, **DRAFT**
 IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT NO. 1
 NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Note 9 – Other Postemployment Benefits (OPEB) (Continued)

OPEB Expense and Deferred Outflows/Inflows of Resources Related to OPEB

For the fiscal years ended June 30, 2025 and 2024, the District recognized OPEB expense (benefit) of \$129,147 and (\$719,273), respectively. At June 30, 2025 and 2024, the District reported deferred outflows of resources related to OPEB from the following sources.

	June 30, 2025		June 30, 2024	
	Deferred Outflows of Resources	Deferred Inflows of Resources	Deferred Outflows of Resources	Deferred Inflows of Resources
OPEB contributions subsequent to measurement date	\$ 105,849	\$ -	\$ 83,910	\$ -
Differences between expected and actual experience	23,933	(340,484)	13,432	(418,442)
Changes in assumptions	445,787	(778,743)	567,445	(849,769)
Total	<u>\$ 575,569</u>	<u>\$ (1,119,227)</u>	<u>\$ 664,787</u>	<u>\$ (1,268,211)</u>

Employer contributions of \$105,849 reported as deferred outflows of resources related to contributions made subsequent to the measurement date will be recognized as a reduction of the net OPEB liability in the year ended June 30, 2026. Other amounts reported as deferred outflows of resources and deferred inflows of resources related to OPEB will be recognized as OPEB expense as follows:

Fiscal Year Ended June 30	
2026	\$ (122,962)
2027	(122,962)
2028	(121,639)
2029	(142,322)
2030	(128,519)
Thereafter	(11,103)
	<u>\$ (649,507)</u>

Note 10 – Deferred Compensation Plan

The District offers its employees a deferred compensation plan created in accordance with Internal Revenue Code Section 457. The plan permits participating employees to defer a portion of their salary until future years. The District does not contribute to this plan and all contributions are made voluntarily by the employee. The deferred compensation is not available to employees until termination, retirement, death or unforeseeable emergency. All assets of the plan were placed in trust for the exclusive benefit of participants and their beneficiaries. The requirements of the IRC Section prescribes that the District no longer owns the amounts deferred by employees, including the related income on those amounts. Accordingly, the assets and the liability for the compensation deferred by plan participants, including earnings on plan assets, are not included in the District's financial statements.

SANTA YNEZ RIVER WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT, **DRAFT**
IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT NO. 1
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Note 11 – Cachuma Project Authority/Cachuma Operations and Maintenance Board

The original master contract for the Cachuma Project was entered into by the United States Bureau of Reclamation (USBR) and the Santa Barbara County Water Agency on September 12, 1949. Prior to expiration of the original contract, the District and other Cachuma Project Member Units formed the Cachuma Project Authority (CPA) in 1993 to represent their interests in negotiating the Cachuma Project Renewal Master Contract, the Cachuma Project Member Unit Contracts, and related environmental review processes. The Cachuma Project Renewal Master Contract (Contract No. I75r-1802R) was renewed on April 14, 1996 for a term to expire on September 30, 2020. On September 28, 2020, an Amendment to the Renewal Master Contract was entered to extend its term through September 30, 2023 (Contract No. I75r-1802RA). On September 29, 2023, a Second Amendment to the Renewal Master Contract was entered to extend its term through September 30, 2026 (Contract No. I75r-1802RB).

Effective September 30, 1996, the CPA merged into the Cachuma Operations and Maintenance Board (COMB), which continues to be responsible for operation and maintenance of the “Transferred Project Works” and certain administrative responsibilities and reporting to USBR on behalf of the Cachuma Project Member Units. All assets and liabilities of the CPA were transferred to COMB.

On May 26, 2016, at a Special Meeting of the District’s Board of Trustees, the Board unanimously voted to formally separate from COMB and withdraw from the “1996 Amended and Restated Agreement for the Establishment of a Board of Control to Operate and Maintain the Cachuma Project – Cachuma Operation and Maintenance Board.” Effective August 23, 2018, the District and the remaining agencies of COMB signed the Cachuma Operation and Maintenance Board Joint Powers Authority Separation Agreement (Separation Agreement) finalizing the withdrawal and severance of the District from COMB effective as of May 27, 2016. The Separation Agreement sets forth certain continuing obligations of the District, some of which conclude upon the expiration of the Renewal Master Contract or other triggering events. Effective July 30, 2020 the District and COMB entered into the First Amendment to the Separation Agreement to streamline implementation of the Separation Agreement. Except as expressly required by the Separation Agreement and the First Amendment to the Separation Agreement, the District shall have no obligation or responsibility for any liabilities, financial obligations, or other activities of COMB.

During FY 2024-25, the Board continued to monitor and receive reports regarding the Cachuma Project and related regulatory matters.

Note 12 – Risk Management

The District participates in the Association of California Water Agencies/Joint Powers Insurance Authority (ACWA/JPIA), a public entity risk pool of California water agencies, for general and auto liability, public officials’ liability, property damage, and fidelity insurance. ACWA/JPIA provides insurance through the pool up to a certain level, beyond which group-purchased commercial excess insurance is obtained.

IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT NO. 1

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Note 12 – Risk Management (Continued)

The District pays an annual premium to ACWA/JPIA that includes its pro-rata share of excess insurance premiums, charges for the pooled risk, claims adjusting and legal costs, and administrative and other costs to operate the ACWA/JPIA. ACWA/JPIA may be terminated at any time by written consent of three-fourths of voting members at which time the members may be required to pay their share of any additional amount of premium in accordance with the loss allocation formulas for final disposition of all claims and losses covered by the joint powers agreement. To obtain complete financial information contact ACWA/JPIA at P.O. Box 619082 Roseville, CA 95661.

At June 30, 2025 the District participates in the ACWA/JPIA pooled programs for liability, and property programs as follows:

Coverage	Deductible	Coverage Limit
General, Auto and Public Officials liability	None	\$5,000,000 - \$55,000,000
Cyber liability	None	\$5,000,000
Property	\$500 - \$100,000	\$2,500,000 - \$150,000,000
Crime	\$1,000	\$1,000,000
Workers' Compensation	None	Statutory

Note 13 – Joint Ventures

Central Coast Water Authority

In 1991, the District’s electorate approved participation in the State Water Project (SWP). As a result, the District joined in the formation of the Central Coast Water Authority (CCWA) in September 1991. The purpose of the CCWA is to provide for the financing, construction, operation, and maintenance of certain local (non-state owned) facilities required to deliver water from the SWP to certain water purveyors and users in Santa Barbara County. In September 1997, the project began delivering state water to the District.

The District has entered into a Water Supply Agreement with the City of Solvang for 75% of the District’s 2,000 acre-foot State Water Project entitlement. The agreement calls for the City to reimburse the District for its allocated share (72.75%) of all costs associated with the SWP. The difference between the 75% allocation of water and the 72.75% allocated share of costs is due to the fact that costs attributed only to the District increased its revenue bond allocation percentage, causing its overall cost percentage to be 72.75%.

Each project participant, including the District has entered into a Water Supply Agreement to provide for the development, financing, construction, operation and maintenance of the CCWA Project. The purpose of the Water Supply Agreement is to assist in carrying out the purposes of CCWA with respect to the CCWA Project by:

- 1) requiring CCWA to sell, and the project participants to buy, a specified amount of water from CCWA ("take or pay"); and
- 2) assigning the Santa Barbara project participant's entitlement rights in the State Water project to CCWA.

Although the District does have an ongoing financial interest pursuant to the Water Supply Agreement between the District and CCWA, the District does not have an equity interest as defined by GASB.

SANTA YNEZ RIVER WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT, **DRAFT**
IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT NO. 1
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Note 13 – Joint Ventures (Continued)

Central Coast Water Authority (Continued)

The District and each project participant is required to pay to CCWA an amount equal to its share of the total cost of "fixed project costs" and certain other costs in the proportion established in the Water Supply Agreement. This includes the project participant's share of payments to the State Department of Water Resources (DWR) under the State Water Supply Contract (including capital, operation, maintenance, power and replacement costs of the DWR facilities) debt service on CCWA bonds and all CCWA operating and administrative costs.

Each project participant is required to make payments under its Water Supply Agreement solely from the revenues of its water system. Each project participant has agreed in its Water Supply Agreement to fix, prescribe and collect rates and charges for its water system which will be at least sufficient to yield each fiscal year net revenues equal to 125% of the sum of (1) the payments required pursuant to the Water Supply Agreement, and (2) debt service on any existing participant obligation for which revenues are also pledged.

CCWA is composed of eight members, all of which are public agencies. CCWA was organized and exists under a joint exercise of power agreement among the various participating public agencies. The Board of Directors is made up of one representative from each participating entity. Votes on the Board are approximately apportioned between the entities based upon each entity's allocation of State water entitlement. The District's weighted voting allocation based upon number of acre-feet of water is 7.64%. Operating and capital expenses are allocated among the members based upon various formulas recognizing the benefits of the various project components to each member.

In August 2006, CCWA issued the Series 2006A Refunding Revenue Bonds for \$123,190,000 with an average interest rate of 4.24% to refund \$142,985,000 of outstanding 1996 Revenue Bonds with an average interest rate of 5.47%. The 1996 Revenue Bonds were issued to advance refund the 1992 Revenue Bonds. The 1992 Revenue Bonds were issued by the Authority for the benefit of its participants to finance a portion of the costs of developing a pipeline and water treatment plant, to reimburse certain project participants for costs incurred in connection with the State Water Project, and to finance certain other liabilities.

On June 18, 2016 the Authority issued Series 2016A refunding revenue bonds for \$45,470,000, which refunded the outstanding \$59,645,000 Series 2006A revenue bonds on October 1, 2016. The 2016A refunding revenue bonds were issued to realize the benefits of lower interest rates, which were issued at a true interest cost of 1.355% compared to the 4.24% true interest costs of the 2006A bonds. The bond refunding transaction was completed at the close of escrow on July 21, 2016 and the bonds were repaid in full on October 21, 2023.

Based on the Water Supply Agreement with the City of Solvang described above, below are the projected required costs of the State Water Project for the District and City of Solvang. Because the District is the "Project Participant" in CCWA, it is obligated to make all fixed and variable charge payments to CCWA and then is reimbursed by the City of Solvang for the City's share of the annual funding in accordance with the Agreement.

SANTA YNEZ RIVER WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT, **DRAFT**

IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT NO. 1

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Note 13 – Joint Ventures (Continued)

Central Coast Water Authority (Continued)

District's Share:

	<u>Fixed Costs</u>	<u>Variable Costs</u>	<u>Other Credits</u>	<u>Total</u>
2026	\$ 1,180,099	\$ 244,070	\$ (327,854)	\$ 1,096,315
2027	1,245,704	250,989	-	1,496,693
2028	1,369,605	333,505	-	1,703,110
2029	1,383,199	-	-	1,383,199
2030	1,419,648	-	-	1,419,648
2031 - 2037	10,438,662	-	-	10,438,662
Total	\$ 17,036,917	\$ 828,564	\$ (327,854)	\$ 17,537,627

City of Solvang's Share:

	<u>Fixed Costs</u>	<u>Variable Costs</u>	<u>Other Credits</u>	<u>Total</u>
2026	\$ 2,197,963	\$ 229,878	\$ (11,995)	\$ 2,415,846
2027	2,268,391	269,622	-	2,538,013
2028	2,524,004	271,374	-	2,795,378
2029	2,495,412	-	-	2,495,412
2030	2,529,233	-	-	2,529,233
2031 - 2037	16,868,189	-	-	16,868,189
Total	\$ 28,883,192	\$ 770,874	\$ (11,995)	\$ 29,642,071

The above fixed and variable costs include both DWR and CCWA charges. Variable costs are dependent on actual water deliveries taken or to be taken. The “fixed costs,” “variable costs,” numbers were obtained from CCWA’s five-year projected cost schedules.

Additional information and complete financial statements for the CCWA are available for public inspection at 255 Industrial Way, Buellton, CA, between the hours of 8 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday.

SANTA YNEZ RIVER WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT, **DRAFT**
IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT NO. 1
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Note 13 – Joint Ventures (Continued)

Santa Ynez River Valley Groundwater Basin, Eastern Management Area Groundwater Sustainability Agency

Pursuant to a 2017 Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), the District, the City of Solvang (Solvang), the Santa Ynez River Water Conservation District (SYRWCD), and the Santa Barbara County Water Agency (SBCWA) formed the Eastern Management Area Groundwater Sustainability Agency (EMA GSA) to oversee implementation of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) within the EMA portion of the Santa Ynez River Valley Groundwater Basin. Effective July 16, 2024, the District, Solvang, SYRWCD, and SBCWA entered into a Joint Powers Agreement (JPA Agreement) to form a new Joint Powers Authority to serve as the EMA GSA. Under the JPA Agreement, the EMA GSA is now governed by a five-member Board of Directors comprised of one Director and one Alternate Director from each of the four Member Agencies, and one Director and one Alternate Director specifically representing the agricultural interests of the EMA, which Agricultural Director and Alternate are appointed by the Member Agency Directors. For all actions and decisions of the EMA GSA, each Director casts one vote. In accordance with SGMA, the EMA GSA prepared and adopted a Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) for the EMA in January 2022, and the California Department of Water Resources approved the EMA GSP in January 2024. Pursuant to a process involving formal Requests for Qualifications (RFQs), the EMA GSA retained an Executive Director, Legal Counsel, and Rate Consultant.

The JPA Agreement specifies that certain actions and decisions of the EMA GSA must be passed by a super majority four-fifths vote, whereas other actions and decisions not requiring a super majority approval can be adopted by simple majority. During fiscal year 2023/2024, the District paid \$12,439 as its cost share contribution toward expenses of the EMA GSA. Pursuant to the JPA Agreement, the District, Solvang, SYRWCD, and SBCWA are each required to contribute an additional \$50,000 toward ongoing expenses of the EMA GSA, which payment was made by the District in October 2024. In May 2025, the District made another reimbursable contribution to the EMA GSA. Notably, all fiscal year 2023/2024 and fiscal year 2024/2025 cost share contributions made by the District to the EMA GSA are required to be reimbursed to the District by December 2026 unless that date is extended by the District and the other contributing Member Agencies. In May 2025, the District's Board of Trustees approved a request from the EMA GSA to extend the payback period such that the above-described cost contributions by the District will be repaid to the District during fiscal year 2027 to fiscal year 2030 with a three percent (3%) annual percentage yield starting after December 2026 for any outstanding balance owed to the District. Financial statements for the EMA GSA can be obtained by contacting its Executive Director, Confluence Engineering Solutions, at (805) 459-8498.

Note 14 – Commitments

Water Entitlement Exchange

In 1993, the District entered into the Santa Ynez River/State Water Exchange Agreement with the South Coast Cachuma Member Units (Carpinteria Valley Water District, Goleta Water District, Montecito Water District, and the City of Santa Barbara), the La Cumbre Mutual Water Company, and the Central Coast Water Authority (CCWA) to exchange the District's share of Cachuma Project water entitlement for an equal amount of the South Coast agencies' State Water Project entitlement.

SANTA YNEZ RIVER WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT, **DRAFT**
IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT NO. 1
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Note 14 – Commitments (Continued)

Bradbury Dam

On July 1, 2002, COMB and USBR entered into the Contract for Repayment of Funds Expended for Federally Performed Safety of Dams Act Modification Program (SOD Contract) for seismic modifications to Bradbury Dam. Under the SOD Contract, COMB reimburses the United States on behalf of the Cachuma Member Units for a portion of Safety of Dams Act funds the United States expended to preserve the structural integrity of Bradbury Dam and related Cachuma Project facilities. The SOD Contract calls for a repayment of the cost over a 50-year period.

COMB assesses the District annually for amounts equal to the District's share of the obligation due to the United States. The District has a commitment equal to 10.31% of total contract repayment. Currently, the District's annual payment is \$26,976.

Note 15 – Contingent Liabilities

SWRCB Hearings

The District, along with other local water agencies and several state and federal regulatory entities, are signatories to a 2001 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for Cooperation in Research and Fish Maintenance – Santa Ynez River concerning fishery resources in the Lower Santa Ynez River below Bradbury Dam. These agencies are also involved in ongoing analyses ordered by the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) in connection with the Cachuma Project permits held by the United States Bureau of Reclamation (USBR) on behalf of the Cachuma Member Units. In September 2019, the SWRCB issued a final Water Rights Order for operation of the Cachuma Project to ensure protection of public trust resources and downstream water rights below Bradbury Dam (WRO 2019-0148). Pursuant to WRO 2019-0148, USBR is required to prepare and undertake various reports and studies regarding potential impacts to fishery resources in the Lower Santa Ynez River. Complying with these requirements will result in higher Cachuma Project water costs to the District in the form of higher water rates from USBR and/or voluntary expenses incurred annually by the District and other agencies in providing support to USBR in its compliance activities.

In addition to the SWRCB proceedings, the District is involved with various local, state, and federal agencies as part of the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA), Section 7 reconsultation process for operation and maintenance of the Cachuma Project for the protection of Southern California steelhead in the Lower Santa Ynez River. For purposes of the ESA, the Cachuma Project is currently governed by the 2000 Biological Opinion issued by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). Pursuant to the ongoing Section 7 reconsultation process, NMFS may issue a new Biological Opinion in 2026, which will prescribe the manner in which USBR is required to operate the Cachuma Project. The new Biological Opinion will impose specific water release requirements from Bradbury Dam, which may result in additional impacts to Cachuma Project water supplies, including the amount of water the District receives under its contractual entitlement. The new Biological Opinion will also impose certain monitoring, reporting, study, and other requirements on USBR. Complying with these requirements will result in higher Cachuma Project water costs to the District in the form of higher water rates from USBR and/or voluntary expenses incurred annually by the District and other agencies in providing support to USBR in its compliance activities.

SANTA YNEZ RIVER WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT, **DRAFT**
IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT NO. 1
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Note 15 – Contingent Liabilities (Continued)

New Legislation - Hexavalent Chromium-6

In July of 2014, the State of California enacted a new standard for Hexavalent Chromium (Cr6) which required all water systems to comply with a lowered maximum contaminant level (MCL) of 10 parts per billion (ppb) of Cr6 in drinking water. Public water systems were required to achieve compliance with this new standard at the earliest feasible date prior to January 1, 2020.

In order to comply with the new State standard and meet current and future water demands, the District conducted pilot studies to determine the best available water treatment technology for its water system, prepared preliminary engineering design for treatment and/or blending facilities, performed feasibility and cost analysis for each option, and developed a District-specific Cr6 remediation program. The primary solution involved investing in a new centralized water treatment facility with the capability of treating Cr6 produced from the District's groundwater supply. The costs associated with new treatment and blending facilities varied, and were estimated at that time to be as much as \$12.5 million. On May 5, 2017, a California Superior Court ruled that, in establishing the Cr6 standard, the State failed to adequately assess the economic feasibility of complying with the new 10 ppb MCL, and the MCL was invalidated.

On June 16, 2023, the State Water Resources Control Board (State Board) issued a notice of public hearing for a new proposed Cr6 MCL of 10 ppb, and the State Board issued a final Cr6 MCL of 10 ppb in April of 2024. The effective date of the revised Cr6 MCL is October 1, 2024 and the District has three years to comply with the new standard. Accordingly, the District has resumed work to evaluate water treatment and/or replacement water supply alternatives for its system, prepare preliminary engineering designs, and estimate the capital and annual operation and maintenance costs of a water treatment and/or alternative water supply facilities.

Note 16 – Legal Contingencies

In the ordinary course of conducting business, various legal proceedings may be pending, however, in the opinion of the District's management, the ultimate disposition of these matters will have no significant impact on the financial position of the District.

Note 17 – Subsequent Events

Subsequent events have been evaluated through January 20, 2026, the date the financial statements were available to be issued.

Required Supplementary Information

SANTA YNEZ RIVER WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT, IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT NO. 1
CALIFORNIA PUBLIC EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM
SCHEDULE OF SANTA YNEZ RIVER WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT, IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT NO. 1'S
PROPORTIONATE SHARE OF THE NET PENSION LIABILITY
FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2025
LAST 10 YEARS

	2025	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Proportion of the net pension liability	0.02330%	0.02273%	0.02261%	0.01973%	0.01965%	0.01933%	0.01898%	0.01922%	0.01908%	0.01874%
Proportionate share of the net pension liability	\$ 2,825,209	\$ 2,835,297	\$ 2,611,721	\$ 1,067,187	\$ 2,138,465	\$ 1,981,106	\$ 1,828,856	\$ 1,905,629	\$ 1,651,018	\$ 1,285,968
Covered payroll	\$ 1,909,830	\$ 1,611,299	\$ 1,620,263	\$ 1,571,534	\$ 1,533,069	\$ 1,608,531	\$ 1,501,838	\$ 1,349,875	\$ 1,299,691	\$ 1,190,037
Proportionate Share of the net pension liability as percentage of covered payroll	147.93%	175.96%	161.19%	67.91%	139.49%	123.16%	121.77%	141.17%	127.03%	108.06%
Plan fiduciary net position as a percentage of the total pension liability	76.45%	75.07%	75.98%	89.47%	76.90%	78.07%	77.89%	75.85%	76.34%	80.35%
Measurement date	06/30/24	06/30/23	06/30/22	06/30/21	06/30/20	06/30/19	06/30/18	06/30/17	06/30/16	06/30/15
Valuation date	06/30/23	06/30/22	06/30/21	06/30/20	06/30/19	06/30/18	06/30/17	06/30/16	06/30/15	06/30/14

Notes to Schedule:

Benefit changes: The figures above do not include any liability impact that may have resulted from plan changes which occurred after the June 30, 2023 valuation date.

SANTA YNEZ RIVER WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT, IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT NO. 1
CALIFORNIA PUBLIC EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM
SCHEDULE OF CONTRIBUTIONS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2025
LAST 10 YEARS

DRAFT

	<u>2025</u>	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>2016</u>
Contractually required contribution (actuarially determined)	\$ 388,365	\$ 359,842	\$ 327,569	\$ 298,532	\$ 271,204	\$ 239,699	\$ 271,802	\$ 244,533	\$ 218,450	\$ 201,660
Contributions in relation to the actuarially determined contribution	\$ 388,365	\$ 359,842	\$ 327,569	\$ 298,532	\$ 271,204	\$ 239,699	\$ 271,802	\$ 244,533	\$ 218,450	\$ 201,660
Contribution deficiency (excess)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Covered payroll	\$ 1,948,072	\$ 1,909,830	\$ 1,611,299	\$ 1,620,263	\$ 1,571,534	\$ 1,533,069	\$ 1,608,531	\$ 1,501,838	\$ 1,349,875	\$ 1,299,691
Contributions as a percentage of covered payroll	19.94%	18.84%	20.33%	18.42%	17.26%	15.64%	16.90%	16.28%	16.18%	15.52%

Notes to Schedule:

The actuarial methods and assumptions used to set the actuarially determined contributions for fiscal year 2024-2025 were derived from the June 30, 2022 funding valuation report.

SANTA YNEZ RIVER WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT, IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT NO. 1
OTHER POSTEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS (OPEB) PLAN
SCHEDULE OF CHANGES IN THE NET OPEB LIABILITY AND RELATED RATIOS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2025
LAST 10 YEARS*

DRAFT

	<u>2025</u>	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
Total OPEB liability:							
Service cost	\$ 161,344	\$ 203,330	\$ 278,160	\$ 254,721	\$ 181,296	\$ 155,826	\$ 151,287
Interest on the total OPEB liability	90,765	126,267	89,539	81,313	99,577	93,707	85,855
Expected versus actual experience	14,910	(363,767)	526	(110,833)	(18,166)	(67,721)	26,104
Assumption changes	(100,043)	(23,656)	(808,185)	383,429	592,289	(50,028)	30,994
Benefit payments	(83,910)	(81,537)	(95,795)	(123,401)	(99,659)	(72,323)	(72,323)
Changes of benefit terms	-	(938,246)	-	-	-	-	-
Net change in total OPEB liability	83,066	(1,077,609)	(535,755)	485,229	755,337	59,461	221,917
Total OPEB liability - beginning	2,440,533	3,518,142	4,053,897	3,568,668	2,813,331	2,753,870	2,531,953
Total OPEB liability - ending (a)	<u>\$ 2,523,599</u>	<u>\$ 2,440,533</u>	<u>\$ 3,518,142</u>	<u>\$ 4,053,897</u>	<u>\$ 3,568,668</u>	<u>\$ 2,813,331</u>	<u>\$ 2,753,870</u>
Fiduciary Net Position							
Employer contributions	\$ 83,910	\$ 81,537	\$ 95,795	\$ 123,401	\$ 99,659	\$ 72,323	\$ 72,323
Benefit payments	(83,910)	(81,537)	(95,795)	(123,401)	(99,659)	(72,323)	(72,323)
Net change in fiduciary net position	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total fiduciary net position- beginning	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total fiduciary net position - ending (b)	<u>\$ -</u>						
Net OPEB liability - ending (a) - (b)	\$ 2,523,599	\$ 2,440,533	\$ 3,518,142	\$ 4,053,897	\$ 3,568,668	\$ 2,813,331	\$ 2,753,870
Plan fiduciary net position as a percentage of the total OPEB liability	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Covered - employee payroll	\$ 2,004,888	\$ 1,726,720	\$ 1,719,151	\$ 1,666,259	\$ 1,729,605	\$ 1,672,296	\$ 1,556,210
Net OPEB liability as a percentage of covered-employee payroll	125.87%	141.34%	204.64%	243.29%	206.33%	168.23%	176.96%
Measurement date	6/30/2024	6/30/2023	06/30/22	06/30/21	06/30/20	06/30/19	06/30/18
Valuation date	6/30/2023	6/30/2023	06/30/21	06/30/21	06/30/19	06/30/19	07/01/17

Notes to Schedule:

* Historical information is required only for measurement periods for which GASB 75 is applicable. Future year's information will be displayed up to 10 years as information becomes available.

Other Supplementary Information

**SANTA YNEZ RIVER WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT,
IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT NO. 1
SUPPLEMENTAL SCHEDULE OF REVENUES AND EXPENSES - ACTUAL AND BUDGET
For the Year Ended June 30, 2025
With Comparative Actual Amounts at June 30, 2024**

DRAFT

	2025 Actual	2025 Budget	2025 Over/(Under)	2024 Actual
Operating Revenues:				
Water sales	\$ 9,552,599	\$ 8,928,880	\$ 623,719	\$ 8,646,910
State water contract revenue	2,245,731	2,297,460	(51,729)	2,219,528
Miscellaneous billings and fees	227,902	138,000	89,902	131,297
Total operating revenues	12,026,232	11,364,340	661,892	10,997,735
Operating Expenses:				
Source of supply	1,578,868	1,738,436	(159,568)	1,528,975
State water contract expense	2,245,731	2,297,460	(51,729)	2,219,528
Pumping expense	819,776	740,000	79,776	693,533
Water treatment	77,968	107,000	(29,032)	81,788
Transmission and distribution	1,190,072	1,220,102	(30,030)	1,163,285
Administrative and general	3,034,422	3,250,344	(215,922)	1,995,789
Special programs and study fees	294,497	894,750	(600,253)	513,785
Unanticipated and special legal fees	19,754	115,000	(95,246)	21,082
Depreciation expense	1,038,027	-	1,038,027	1,019,657
Total operating expenses	10,299,115	10,363,092	(63,977)	9,237,422
Operating income	1,727,117	1,001,248	725,869	1,760,313
Other Income:				
Capital facilities fees	108,636	75,000	33,636	65,295
Interest income	1,507,407	937,500	569,907	1,218,222
Unrealized gain	83,564	-	83,564	780,650
Special assessment	903,648	875,000	28,648	900,308
Total other income	2,603,255	1,887,500	715,755	2,964,475
Other Expenses:				
Loss on disposal of assets	3,246	-	3,246	64,851
Total other expenses	3,246	-	3,246	64,851
Change in net position	\$ 4,327,126	\$ 2,888,748	\$ 1,438,378	\$ 4,659,937

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STRADLING YOCCA CARLSON & RAUTH, LLP

MEMORANDUM

TO: Racel Cota **FILE NUMBER:** 102870-0001

FROM: Jared W. Speier
Lindsay L. Bowden

DATE: January 13, 2026

SUBJECT: Suggested Revisions to Personnel Policy Manual

We have reviewed the District's Personnel Policy Manual and have the following suggested revisions based on an assessment of existing policies and changes in the law since the last review of the Manual.

California Assembly Bill 406 expanded the reasons employees can take leave under California's Healthy Workplaces Healthy Families Act (HWHFA), the statewide paid sick and safe time law, and under California Government Code section 12945.8, which provides job-protected unpaid leave for various reasons.

Effective January 1, 2026, employers are required to allow employees to use leave if they or a family member are a victim of *certain* crimes and are attending judicial proceedings related to that crime, including, but not limited to, any delinquency proceeding, a post-arrest release decision, plea, sentencing, postconviction release decision, or any proceeding where a right of that person is an issue. For this covered use only, the law defines "victim" as a person against whom a violent felony, serious felony, and/or felony theft or embezzlement is committed. Additionally, it includes a person who suffers direct or threatened physical, psychological, or financial harm due to the commission or attempted commission of the following crimes or delinquent acts: vehicular manslaughter while intoxicated; felony child abuse likely to produce great bodily harm or a death; assault resulting in the death of a child under eight years old; felony domestic violence; felony physical abuse of an elder or dependent adult; felony stalking; solicitation for murder; a serious felony; hit-and-run causing death or injury; felony driving under the influence causing injury; sexual assault.

Effective on October 1, 2025, the *paid* leave law was also revised to incorporate by reference covered uses that already exist under the *unpaid* leave law: An employee (including one who is a victim of *any* crime) is appearing in court as a witness to comply with a subpoena or other court order (California Government Code section 12945.8(a)(2)); and an employee is serving on an inquest jury or trial jury (California Government Code section 12945.8(a)(1)).

Accordingly, it is recommended that the following language be added to the Manual as redlined below:

SECTION 3 (4). SICK LEAVE

For any employee eligible for paid sick leave, accrued paid sick leave may be used to diagnose, care, or treat an existing health condition, or for preventative care for the employee or for the employee's child, spouse, domestic partner, parent, parent of

employee's spouse or domestic partner, grandparent, grandchild, sibling, or designated person (only one person may be designated per 12-month period). Any employee eligible for paid sick leave who is a victim or whose family member is a victim of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking may also use sick leave for certain purposes as required by law as described in Labor Code sections 230(c) and 230.1(a) including to seek medical attention, obtain services from a shelter or crisis center, obtain counseling, participate in safety planning or take other actions to increase safety, or go to court. Additionally, employee eligible for paid sick leave who is a victim of any crime, may use sick leave to appear in court as a witness to comply with a subpoena or other court order, or if the employee is serving on an inquest jury or jury trial as described in California Government Code sections 12945.8(a)(2) and 12945.8(a)(1).

Legislation effective January 1, 2025 greatly expanded the rights of employees to take unpaid leave when they or a family member are a victim of a crime. Employees must be informed of these rights upon hire, annually, upon request and any time an employees informed their employer that the employee or their family member is a victim of a crime. The Civil Rights Department also developed a form about these rights in May 2025 that can be accessed using the following link: <https://calcivilrights.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/32/2025/07/Survivors-Right-to-Time-Off-English-B.pdf>

Based on these updated requirements, we suggest the following minor revisions to the Manual:

SECTION 3 (17). VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, SEXUAL ASSAULT, OR STALKING AND OTHER CRIMES

In addition to providing time off to victims of domestic violence, sexual assault or stalking and other crimes and abuse as required by law, and not discriminating or retaliating against such employees as provided by law, SYRWCD ID#1 further makes reasonable accommodation for employees who are victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking or other crimes and abuse as required by law who requests an accommodation for the safety of the employee while at work to the extent provided by law. The nature of these rights are discussed in the notice from the California Civil Rights Department entitled Survivors of Violence and Family Members of Victims Right to Leave and Accommodations, a copy of which is provided to new employees upon hire and can be requested at any time from Human Resources.

This section previously directed employees to the California Department of Fair Employment and Housing and made reference to the California Fair Employment and Housing Council. However, they have been renamed the California Civil Rights Department and California Civil Rights Council, respectively.

SECTION 4 (17). HARASSMENT, DISCRIMINATION AND RETALIATION PREVENTION POLICY

Sexual harassment and retaliation for opposing sexual harassment or participating in investigations of sexual harassment are illegal. In addition to notifying SYRWCD ID#1 about harassment or retaliation complaints, affected employees may also direct their

complaints to the [California Civil Rights Department \(CRD\)](#), which has the authority to conduct investigations of the facts. The deadline for filing complaints with the [CRD](#) is one (1) year from the date of the alleged unlawful conduct. If the [CRD](#) believes that a complaint is valid and settlement efforts fail, the [CRD](#) may seek an administrative hearing before the [California Civil Rights Council \(CRC\)](#) or file a lawsuit in court. Both the [CRC](#) and the courts have the authority to award monetary and non-monetary relief in meritorious cases. Employees can contact the nearest [CRD](#) office listed in SYRWCD ID#1's [CRD](#) poster or by visiting civildrights.ca.gov.

SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE AND FAMILY MEMBERS OF VICTIMS RIGHT TO LEAVE AND ACCOMMODATIONS

NOTICE



Civil Rights
Department
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Note: Employers must provide this information to workers when hired, annually, upon request, and to any worker who informs the employer that they are a victim of violence or the family member of a victim of violence. Victims of violence include victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, violent threats, acts involving the use or presence of a dangerous weapon, or any violence causing injury.

YOUR RIGHT TO TAKE TIME OFF

- You have the right to take time off work for jury service or to appear in court as a witness to comply with a subpoena or court order. All employees have this right, no matter the size of the employer.
- If you are a victim of violence, you have the right to take time off work to get relief (like a restraining order) to protect you or your child's health, safety, or welfare. All employees have this right, no matter the size of the employer.
- If you are a victim of violence or the family member of a victim of violence, and your employer has 25 or more workers, you have the right to take time off work for any of the following reasons:
 - To take part in safety planning or other actions to help keep you or your family member safe from future violence
 - To prepare for, participate in, or attend civil, administrative, or criminal legal proceedings, such as a court hearing, related to the violence
 - To seek, get, or provide childcare or care to a dependent adult if the care is necessary to keep the child or adult safe after an act of violence
 - To care for a family member recovering from injuries caused by violence
 - To get, or help a family member get, the following services relating to the violence: civil or criminal legal services; a restraining order or other relief; medical attention for injuries; services from a domestic violence shelter or program, rape crisis center, or victim services organization or agency; psychological counseling; mental health services; or housing, including relocating, securing temporary or permanent housing, and enrolling children in a new school or childcare
- If you are a victim of violence or the family member of a deceased victim of violence, you can take up to 12 weeks off work for any of these reasons. If you are the family member of a living victim of violence but are not yourself a victim, you may take up to 10 days off work for these reasons, with the exception of relocation, for which you can take up to five days.
- You may use available vacation, paid time off, personal leave, or paid sick leave to take time off for any of the reasons described in this notice.
- You must give your employer advance notice before taking time off, unless it is not possible. If you do not give advance notice, your employer cannot discipline you if you provide documentation to the employer within a reasonable time supporting the reason for your absence.

YOUR RIGHT TO CONFIDENTIALITY

- If you are a victim or the family member of a victim, your employer must keep information about your request for time off or reasonable accommodation confidential unless federal or state law requires disclosure, or disclosure is necessary to protect your safety at work. If your employer plans to disclose information about you or your circumstances, your employer must tell you in advance.

SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE AND FAMILY MEMBERS OF VICTIMS RIGHT TO LEAVE AND ACCOMMODATIONS



NOTICE

YOUR RIGHT TO REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION FOR YOUR SAFETY

- If you or your family member is a victim of violence, you have the right to ask for a reasonable accommodation to make sure you are safe at work. Your employer must work with you to see what changes can be made.
- Your employer can ask you for a statement certifying that your request is related to being a victim or the family member of a victim.

YOUR RIGHT TO BE FREE FROM RETALIATION AND DISCRIMINATION

Your employer cannot discipline you, treat you differently, or fire you because:

- You are a survivor or the family member of a victim or survivor of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, violent threats, or violence causing injury.
- You asked for time off work to recover from or get help related to the violence.
- You asked for accommodations to make sure you are safe at work.

YOU MAY ALSO HAVE PROTECTIONS UNDER OTHER LAWS:

- **Wage Replacement:** You may be eligible for wage replacement if you are unable to work because of your health or because you need to care for a family member with a serious health condition. **State Disability Insurance (SDI)** provides short-term wage replacement when you are temporarily disabled from working. **Paid Family Leave (PFL)** provides short-term wage replacement so you can care for a seriously ill family member, among other reasons. Learn more or file a claim for wage replacement by contacting the Employment Development Department (EDD) online (<https://edd.ca.gov/>) or by phone at 800-480-3287 (for SDI) or 877-238-4373 (for PFL).

- **Family and medical leave:** Under the California Family Rights Act, you may have the right to take time off work for your own or a family member's serious health condition or because of the birth, adoption, or foster care placement of a child. Learn more about family and medical leave by visiting bit.ly/CRD-leave. You can file a complaint with CRD if you believe your rights have been violated.
- **Bereavement leave:** Bereavement leave allows eligible employees to take up to five days off work within three months of the family member's death. Leave does not need to be taken all at once. Learn more about bereavement leave protections by visiting bit.ly/CRD-Bereavement. You can file a complaint with CRD if you believe your rights have been violated.
- **Leave to attend court for certain crimes:** If you are a victim of certain crimes or the family member of a victim of certain crimes, you have the right to take time off work to attend related court proceedings under Labor Code sections 230.2 and 230.5. You can learn more information or file a complaint with the Labor Commissioner's Office within the Department of Industrial Relations by visiting bit.ly/DIR-Retaliation.

TO FILE A COMPLAINT

Contact the Civil Rights Department if you have questions about your rights or to file a complaint:

Civil Rights Department

Online at <http://ccrs.calcivilrights.ca.gov/s/>

By mail at 651 Bannon Street, Suite 200, Sacramento, CA 95811

By calling 800-884-1684 (voice), 800-700-2320 (TTY), or California's Relay Service at 711

For more information about your right to leave and accommodations as a victim or the family member of a victim, visit bit.ly/CRD-Survivors-of-Violence-FAQ

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RESOLUTION NO. 858

**A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE
SANTA YNEZ RIVER WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT, IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT NO. 1
AMENDING THE DISTRICT'S PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL**

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees previously adopted, and has subsequently updated and revised, by Resolutions, the Santa Ynez River Water Conservation District, Improvement District No.1 ("District") Personnel Policy Manual, which sets forth certain terms and conditions of employment for employees of the District; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees desires to update and revise certain provisions of the Personnel Policy Manual, including but not limited to, revisions to ensure compliance with new and revised employment standards under federal and state law, as applicable; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees has the authority to adopt updates, revisions, and amendments to the Personnel Policy Manual; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees has reviewed the proposed revisions to the Personnel Policy Manual, including Section 3.4 - Sick Leave; Section 3.17 - Victims of Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault, or Stalking and Other Crimes; and Section 4.17 - Harassment, Discrimination and Retaliation Prevention Policy, which revisions are attached hereto and incorporated herein by this reference.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Trustees of the Santa Ynez River Water Conservation District, Improvement District No.1, as follows:

1. Revisions to Section 3.4 - Sick Leave; Section 3.17 - Victims of Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault, or Stalking and Other Crimes; and Section 4.17 - Harassment, Discrimination and Retaliation Prevention Policy, within the District's Personnel Policy Manual are approved, adopted, and incorporated into the personnel policies and procedures of the District.
2. Except where otherwise required by contract or law, the provisions of the District's Personnel Policy Manual shall apply to and govern the terms and conditions of employment of all current and future employees of the District, and a copy of the Personnel Policy Manual and any revisions and additions thereto shall be provided to all current employees of the District and shall be provided to all new employees immediately upon hire.
3. The General Manager, working in conjunction with his or her designee(s), is hereby authorized to implement the policies, provisions, and procedures of the District's Personnel Policy Manual.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Resolution shall take effect immediately.

WE, THE UNDERSIGNED, being the duly qualified President and Secretary, respectively, of the Board of Trustees of the Santa Ynez River Water Conservation District, Improvement District No.1, do hereby certify that the above and foregoing Resolution was duly and regularly adopted and passed by the Board of Trustees of said District at a Regular meeting held on January 20, 2026 by the following roll call vote:

AYES, and in favor thereof, Trustees:

NOES, Trustees:

ABSENT, Trustees:

Jeff Clay, President

ATTEST:

Racel Cota, Secretary to the Board of Trustees

Personnel Policy Manual



Santa Ynez River Water Conservation District, Improvement District No. 1

Board-Adopted: January 20, 2026~~May 20, 2025~~

Regular and probationary hourly and part-time employees will accrue vacation monthly based on a pro-rata basis. Vacation will not accrue during any unpaid leaves of absence or while on unpaid disability leave. Temporary and casual employees are ineligible for vacation benefits.

Vacation time earned may be taken after it is accrued subject to the advance approval of the General Manager. Insofar as possible, vacations will be scheduled on a voluntary basis with consideration given to seniority, the choice of the employee, and the convenience of SYRWCD ID#1. For exempt employees only, absences of less than one (1) day for reasons covered under this subsection shall not be charged against the employee's accrued vacation time balance.

The maximum amount of unused vacation benefits that a non-exempt employee may accrue is the annual vacation benefit available to the employee for the current year, times three. After an employee has accrued the maximum amount, no further vacation benefits will accrue until the employee uses some portion of the maximum amount or becomes eligible for additional vacation benefits because of his/her years of service. When an employee uses vacation benefits so that his/her accrued but unused vacation benefits fall below the maximum, or when an employee is entitled to additional vacation benefits, the employee will resume earning vacation benefits from that date forward until the employee again has accrued the maximum amount.

For exempt employees, the maximum amount of unused vacation benefits that may be carried over from year-to-year is the annual vacation benefit available to the employee for the current year, times three. In the event at the end of any calendar year an exempt employee has accrued more than three times his or her annual vacation benefit, he or she will be paid for the vacation time accrued as of the end of that calendar year in excess of that maximum amount at his or her then current base rate of pay.

Vacation time accrued prior to September 18, 1996, shall remain as a separate accrual balance and shall not be considered in determining whether the employee has reached the accrual maximum. Employees may use this pre-September 18, 1996 vacation balance for taking vacation time off subject to the provisions of this section.

Should an employee be absent due to illness at the time of his/her scheduled vacation, the employee will be permitted to change his/her vacation to a subsequent date which will not conflict with another employee's vacation. If an employee becomes sick after his/her vacation time becomes effective, the employee may, upon notifying his/her supervisor and providing appropriate documentation, take the balance of vacation at a subsequent date so long as it does not conflict with another employee's vacation period.

No non-exempt employee will receive pay in lieu of vacation except on separation from employment at which time the employee shall be paid for all accrued but unused vacation at the employee's base rate at the time of separation.

4. SICK LEAVE

Regular and probationary full-time employees shall accrue one (1) day of sick leave per month. Regular and probationary hourly employees will accrue sick leave monthly based on a pro-rata basis, but in no event shall the accrual rate be less than one (1) hour of sick leave for every thirty (30) hours worked. Limited Service, Temporary and Casual employees are eligible for paid sick leave as provided for in this paragraph after their thirtieth (30th) day of employment. Limited Service, Temporary and Casual

employees will accrue paid sick days at the rate of one (1) hour for every thirty (30) hours worked but may not begin using accrued paid sick leave until their ninetieth (90th) day of employment.

Limited Service, Temporary and Casual employees eligible for paid sick leave may use accrued paid sick leave up to a maximum of forty (40) hours per year. Unused accrued sick leave will carry over to the following year up to a maximum of eighty (80) hours for Limited Service, Temporary and Casual employees. For purposes of this policy, the “year” for Limited Service, Temporary and Casual employees hired on or before July 1, 2015 is July 1 through June 30, and the “year” for employees hired after July 1, 2015 begins on their first day of employment (their “anniversary date”).

For any employee eligible for paid sick leave, accrued paid sick leave may be used to diagnose, care, or treat an existing health condition, or for preventative care for the employee or for the employee’s child, spouse, domestic partner, parent, parent of employee’s spouse or domestic partner, grandparent, grandchild, sibling, or designated person (only one person may be designated per 12-month period). Any employee eligible for paid sick leave who is a victim or whose family member is a victim of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking may also use sick leave for certain purposes as required by law as described in Labor Code sections 230(c) and 230.1(a) including to seek medical attention, obtain services from a shelter or crisis center, obtain counseling, participate in safety planning or take other actions to increase safety, or go to court. Additionally, employee eligible for paid sick leave who is a victim of any crime, may use sick leave to appear in court as a witness to comply with a subpoena or other court order, or if the employee is serving on an inquest jury or jury trial as described in California Government Code sections 12945.8(a)(2) and 12945.8(a)(1).~~of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking may also use paid sick leave to seek medical attention, obtain services from a shelter or crisis center, obtain counseling, or go to court.~~

Any employee eligible for paid sick leave who is unable to work due to illness, emergency or disability is required to notify his/her supervisor, or someone designated to receive such notice, orally or in writing, as promptly as possible for each day he or she is absent due to illness, emergency, injury, or disability.

SYRWCD ID#1 may require a satisfactory statement from a qualified health care provider to confirm that paid sick leave was used for a purpose consistent with this section. Although a health care provider’s statement normally will not be requested for sick leave absences of less than three (3) working days, SYRWCD ID #1 may request such a statement in situations where it determines that it is warranted.

Accrued sick leave must be taken by eligible employees in at least ½ hour increments for non-exempt employees. Exempt employees shall not be charged against their accrued sick leave balance for absences of less than one (1) day. Sick leave will not accrue during any unpaid leaves of absence or while on unpaid disability leave. No employee eligible for paid sick leave will receive pay in lieu of sick leave and will not receive pay for any unused sick leave upon termination of employment.

5. STATUTORY FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE

Since SYRWCD ID#1 does not employ at least 50 employees within a 75-mile radius, SYRWCD ID#1 employees are not eligible for leave under the federal Family and Medical Leave Act. However, SYRWCD ID#1 does provide leave consistent with the requirements of the California Family Rights Act as discussed in this provision.

14. ABSENCE FOR MILITARY DUTY

Employees will be granted a leave of absence without pay as required by law for the purpose of fulfilling any required military obligation. Employees are required to provide reasonable advance notice of any need for such leave. A regular or probationary employee who is a member of a reserve military organization of the United States, or a member of the National Guard of California, and who attends a regular military training camp, will be given the necessary time off, with pay, for such training, and this will not be considered vacation time provided the employee has been employed by SYRWCD ID#1 for a period of one year or more.

15. JURY DUTY

An employee must inform his/her supervisor immediately upon receipt of a jury summons. Regular compensation will be paid to regular or probationary employees absent for jury duty up to a maximum of ten (10) days, but employees are required to turn in to SYRWCD ID#1 any compensation received from the court for such jury duty. In addition, exempt employees who are absent for jury duty will be compensated as required by state and federal law. An employee who is called to report for jury duty and is excused before noon must report for work for the remainder of the workday.

16. OTHER LEGALLY REQUIRED LEAVES OF ABSENCE

In addition to the leaves of absence provided for under this Manual, SYRWCD ID#1 will provide employees other leaves of absence when required by law, including for appearance as a witness in a legal proceeding, appearance by a parent at school when requested as provided for in the Education Code, or performance of emergency duty by a volunteer fire fighter, reserve peace officer or emergency rescue personnel. Where possible, reasonable advance notice of the need for a legally required leave of absence shall be provided by employees. This leave will be unpaid for non-exempt employees. For exempt employees, this leave will be unpaid only when the employee is off work for a full workweek. However, when the exempt employee is on a paid leave for a partial workweek, salary during leave may be offset by any amounts received as witness fees. When the employee is on leave due to appearance as a witness, they will be required to return to work for any day or portion of that day that they are not called as a witness.

17. VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, SEXUAL ASSAULT OR STALKING AND OTHER CRIMES

In addition to providing time off to victims of domestic violence, sexual assault or stalking and other crimes and abuse as required by law, and not discriminating or retaliating against such employees as provided by law, SYRWCD ID#1 further makes reasonable accommodation for employees who are victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking or other crimes and abuse as required by law who requests an accommodation for the safety of the employee while at work to the extent provided by law. [The nature of these rights are discussed in the notice from the California Civil Rights Department entitled Survivors of Violence and Family Members of Victims Right to Leave and Accommodations, a copy of which is provided to new employees upon hire and can be requested at any time from Human Resources.](#)

18. LACTATION ACCOMMODATION

The SYRWCD ID#1 will provide a reasonable amount of break time and a secure environment to any female employee desiring to express breast milk for her infant child. Wherever possible, the break time must run concurrently with any break time already provided to the employee and in such circumstances

13. CARE OF EQUIPMENT

SYRWCD ID#1 equipment, issued for individual as well as for collective use (e.g., computers, telephone units, instrumentation, furniture or supplies) must be guarded by SYRWCD ID#1 personnel against abuse, misuse and waste.

14. TOOLS

SYRWCD ID#1 shall furnish all tools required to perform work assigned to SYRWCD ID#1 operations staff. A complete set of tools to carry out repairs must always be available in the District Field Vehicles since equipment failures can occur at any time. Tools are not permitted to be checked out for personal use. The employee will be responsible for replacing any lost tools, or tools that are damaged or broken not resulting from normal wear and tear.

15. UNIFORMS

For operations field positions, as determined by the General Manager, SYRWCD ID#1 employees shall be provided and required to wear uniform-type clothing and safety boots. Upon leaving SYRWCD ID#1 service, all clothing issued shall be returned.

16. RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS

Within one year of employment, operations staff are required to reside within a 30-mile radius of the District office in order to provide TIMELY EMERGENCY RESPONSE to facilities operations. Written approval from the General Manager is needed for residency beyond the required 30-mile radius, which approval may be granted only in exceptional circumstances at the sole discretion of the General Manager.

17. HARASSMENT, DISCRIMINATION AND RETALIATION PREVENTION POLICY

SYRWCD ID#1 is committed to providing a workplace free of sexual harassment or discrimination (which includes harassment or discrimination based on pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions) as well as unlawful harassment or discrimination based on such factors as race (inclusive of traits associated with race, including, but not limited to, hair texture and protective hairstyles), color, religious creed, national origin, ancestry, age for individuals over forty years of age, physical disability, mental disability, medical condition, genetic information, marital status, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, gender expression, citizenship status, military and veteran status, denial or use of family and medical care leave, and any other factor made unlawful by federal, state, or local law. SYRWCD ID#1 also prohibits discrimination, harassment or retaliation based on a combination of two or more of these protected characteristics. SYRWCD ID#1 further prohibits discrimination, harassment or retaliation based on a perception that the person has any of these protected characteristics, or any combination of characteristics, or that the person is associated with a person who has, or is perceived to have, any of these protected characteristics, or any combination of characteristics.

SYRWCD ID#1 strongly disapproves of and will not tolerate unlawful harassment or discrimination against employees by managers, supervisors, or co-workers, as well as by third parties in the workplace or with whom the employee comes into contact in connection with her or his employment. This policy applies to all SYRWCD ID#1 employees, paid or unpaid interns, volunteers, and any other persons providing services to SYRWCD ID#1 pursuant to a contract.

Harassment includes verbal, physical, and visual conduct, as well as communication through electronic media of any type, that creates an intimidating, offensive or hostile working environment or interferes with work performance. Such conduct constitutes harassment when (1) submission to the conduct is made either an explicit or implicit condition of employment; (2) submission to or rejection of the conduct is used as the basis for an employment decision; or (3) the harassment interferes with an employee's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment. Harassing conduct can take many forms and includes, but is not limited to, slurs, jokes, statements, gestures, pictures, or cartoons regarding an employee's sex, race (inclusive of traits associated with race, including, but not limited to, hair texture and protective hairstyles), color, national origin, religion, age, physical disability, medical condition, ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity veteran status, or other protected status.

Sexually harassing conduct in particular includes all of these prohibited actions as well as other unwelcome conduct such as requests for sexual favors, unwelcome sexual advances, verbal conduct of a sexual nature (like name calling, suggestive comments, or lewd talk) or physical conduct (including assault, unwanted touching, intentionally blocking normal movement or interfering with work because of sex or any other protected basis). An employee who unlawfully harasses a co-worker may be personally liable for the harassment.

If an employee believes he or she or a co-worker has been subjected to any form of unlawful discrimination or harassment, including sexual harassment, the employee should immediately contact the employee's supervisor, the General Manager or his/her designee or the General Manager, either orally or in writing. A manager or supervisor who learns of any misconduct which may be in violation of this policy or learns of an employee's complaint or concern about a possible violation of this policy must immediately report the issue to the General Manager.

Upon receipt of any complaint, SYRWCD ID#1 will immediately undertake a prompt, impartial, and thorough investigation conducted by qualified personnel, preserving confidentiality to the extent possible. The investigation will provide all parties appropriate due process and reach reasonable conclusions based on the evidence collected, as well as determine appropriate options for remedial action to resolve the situation. If an employee has a complaint being investigated under this policy, the employee can find out about the progress of the investigation by contacting the General Manager or his/her designee.

If SYRWCD ID#1 determines that unlawful discrimination or harassment has occurred, the employee involved in the improper conduct will be disciplined, up to and including termination. Appropriate action will also be taken to deter any future discrimination.

Retaliation against SYRWCD ID#1 employees or any other person for the good faith reporting of possible acts or incidents of discrimination or harassment, as well as participation in any workplace investigation, will not be tolerated. If an employee believes he or she or a co-worker has been subjected to any form of unlawful retaliation, the employee should immediately contact the employee's supervisor, the General Manager or his/her designee or the General Manager, either orally or in writing. Upon receipt of a retaliation complaint, SYRWCD ID#1 will undertake an investigation consistent with the provisions of this policy. SYRWCD ID#1 employees shown to have engaged in such retaliation will be disciplined, up to and including discharge.

Sexual harassment and retaliation for opposing sexual harassment or participating in investigations of sexual harassment are illegal. In addition to notifying SYRWCD ID#1 about harassment or retaliation complaints, affected employees may also direct their complaints to the California [Civil Rights Department of Fair Employment and Housing \(DFEH-CRD\)](#), which has the authority to conduct investigations of the facts. The deadline for filing complaints with the [DFEH-CRD](#) is one (1) year from the date of the alleged unlawful conduct. If the [DFEH-CRD](#) believes that a complaint is valid and settlement efforts fail, the [DFEH-CRD](#) may seek an administrative hearing before the California [Fair Employment and Housing Civil Rights Council \(FEHCCRC\)](#) or file a lawsuit in court. Both the [FEHC CRC](#) and the courts have the authority to award monetary and non-monetary relief in meritorious cases. Employees can contact the nearest [DFEH-CRD](#) office ~~or the FEHC at the locations~~ listed in SYRWCD ID#1's [DFEH-CRD](#) poster or by ~~checking the state government listings in the local telephone directory~~ [visiting calcivilrights.ca.gov](http://visiting.calcivilrights.ca.gov).

18. WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

SYRWCD ID#1 recognizes that workplace violence is a growing concern among employers and employees across the country. SYRWCD ID#1 is committed to providing a safe, violence-free workplace and strictly prohibits employees, consultants, customers, visitors, or anyone else on the SYRWCD ID#1 premises or engaging in SYRWCD ID#1 business or sponsored activity from behaving in a violent or threatening manner. As part of this policy, SYRWCD ID#1 seeks to prevent workplace violence before it begins and may take preventative action to address potential workplace violence prior to any violent or threatening behavior occurring. SYRWCD ID#1 believes that prevention of workplace violence begins with recognition and awareness of potential early warning signs, and prompt reporting of any workplace violence related concerns.

Workplace violence includes, without limitation: (1) verbal or physical threats of violence; (2) physically aggressive or violent behavior, (3) attempts to instill fear of physical harm in others; (4) other behavior that suggests a propensity toward violence, which can include belligerent speech, excessive arguing or swearing, sabotage, or threats of sabotage of SYRWCD ID#1 property, or a demonstrated pattern of refusal to follow SYRWCD ID#1 policies and procedures; (5) defacing SYRWCD ID#1 property or causing physical damage to the facility; or (6) bringing weapons or firearms of any kind onto SYRWCD ID#1 premises, in SYRWCD ID#1 parking lots, in SYRWCD ID#1 vehicles, or while conducting SYRWCD ID#1 business. As part of this policy, employees are strictly prohibited from bringing weapons or firearms of any kind onto SYRWCD ID#1 premises, in SYRWCD ID#1 parking lots, in SYRWCD ID#1 vehicles, or while conducting SYRWCD ID#1 business.

If any employee observes or becomes aware of any of the above-listed actions or behaviors by an employee, customer, consultant, visitor, or anyone else in connection with SYRWCD ID#1, or otherwise has concerns regarding potential workplace violence, he or she should immediately notify his/her supervisor, the General Manager or his/her designee. Further, employees should notify his/her supervisor or the General Manager or his/her designee if any restraining order is in effect, or if a potentially violent non-work-related situation exists that may relate to or result in violence in the workplace. If any employee feels there is an immediate threat to safety, the employee should take steps to get to a safe space and contact law enforcement.

All good faith reports of workplace violence will be taken seriously and will be investigated promptly and thoroughly. In appropriate circumstances, SYRWCD ID#1 will inform the reporting individual of

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To: Board of Trustees
Santa Ynez River Water Conservation District, Improvement District No.1

From: Dan Drugan, Water Resources Manager
Paeter Garcia, General Manager

Date: January 20, 2026

Subject: Recommendation for Hydrogeologic Consulting Services

Agenda: Item 8.B.2

STAFF REPORT

As part of the District's Water Supply Portfolio and Treatment Alternatives strategy, including efforts to mitigate the impacts of the State's newly adopted water quality standard for hexavalent chromium (Cr6), District staff issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) in October 2025 for hydrogeologic consulting services. These services are intended to support the siting, design, and potential installation and testing of a new groundwater production well. One of the primary objectives identified in the RFP is to develop a production well capable of producing approximately 1,000 gallons per minute (GPM) or greater, ideally with Cr6 concentrations consistently below the State maximum contaminant level (MCL) of 10 µg/L.

The District received four proposals in response to the RFP. A common theme among the proposals was the use of zonal analysis to inform well design. Through zonal testing and analysis, a hydrogeologist can evaluate the water quality and yield contributions from discrete depth intervals and subsequently refine well design elements, such as screen intervals, gravel-pack materials, and seal depths, to optimize overall water quality and production from the well.

District staff evaluated the proposals and determined that GSI Water Solutions, Inc. (GSI) submitted a comprehensive and clearly articulated proposal that best meets the objectives and requirements outlined in the RFP. GSI also proposed the lowest total cost among the respondents (see attached costs ranging from \$195,657 to \$275,014). In addition, GSI is a regional firm with substantial experience and expertise within the Santa

Ynez Valley Groundwater Basin, including many years of supporting Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) efforts in the Basin and providing other hydrogeologic services in the Santa Ynez Valley.

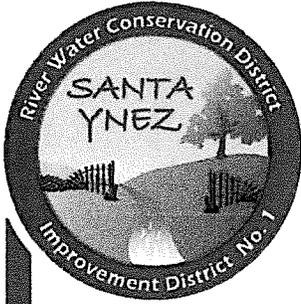
GSI's total bid proposal is \$195,657. Notably, roughly 25-30% of this total involves preliminary work in evaluating whether to pursue the construction of a new production well at a particular location. Based on that preliminary work, if the District decides not to move forward with a new well, the remaining 70-75% of the consulting cost (well design, drilling and construction oversight, aquifer/zone testing, etc.) would not be incurred. From a budgeting standpoint, staff anticipates being able to complete the preliminary work in this fiscal year and reasonably within existing budget parameters. To the extent it appears the District will pursue a new well, GSI's remaining consulting work, along with other contractor costs for well drilling and construction services, will be proposed as part of the upcoming FY 2026-2027 budget.

RECOMMENDATION

Authorize the General Manager to execute a Professional Services Agreement with GSI Water Solutions, Inc. for hydrogeologic consulting services in an amount not to exceed \$195,657.

Review: Hydrogeologic Consulting Services for Siting, Design, Installation, and Testing of a Groundwater Production Well
(RFP Close Date: 11/7/25)

SOW Description	Dudek	WSC	INTERA	GSI
Task 0. Project Management Services	\$10,460	\$48,235	\$40,869	\$14,270
Task 1. Preliminary Hydrogeologic Assessment	\$19,221	\$19,700	\$43,352	\$25,190
Task 2. Well Design	\$17,010	\$34,910	\$47,200	\$27,962
Task 3. Drilling and Construction Oversight	\$150,305	\$97,470	\$84,655	\$88,277
Task 4. Aquifer and Pumping Test	\$17,253	\$20,425	\$23,906	\$11,620
Task 5. Water Quality Sampling and Analysis	\$1,652	\$1,900	\$10,422	\$5,568
Task 6. Reporting and Recommendations	\$12,370	\$26,280	\$24,610	\$22,770
OPTIONAL TASK - Zone Isolation Testing	(Included in Task 3.)	\$24,375	(Not Included)	(Included in Task 3.)
OPTIONAL TASK - Dynamic Well Profile Survey	(Not Included)	(Not Included)	\$46,000	(Not Included)
OPTIONAL TASK - Monitoring Well Installation	(Not Included)	(Not Included)	(Not Included)	\$39,290
TOTAL	\$228,271	\$273,295	\$321,014	\$234,947
TOTAL W/O OPTIONAL TASKS	\$228,271	\$248,920	\$275,014	\$195,657



October 16, 2025

Request for Proposals - Hydrogeologic Consulting Services for Siting, Design, Installation, and Testing of a Groundwater Production Well

HONORARY TRUSTEE:
Harlan J. Burchardi
1969-2020

TRUSTEES:

DIVISION 1
Mark Moniot

DIVISION 2
Jeff Clay

DIVISION 3
Nick Urton

DIVISION 4
Michael Burchardi

TRUSTEE-AT-LARGE
Brad Joos

GENERAL MANAGER
Paeter E. Garcia

1. Project Overview

The hydrogeology consulting company ("Consultant") will provide professional services to support the development of a new groundwater production well for the Santa Ynez River Water Conservation District, Improvement District No.1 (ID-1). ID-1's goal is to have a new production well capable of producing near or above 1,000 gpm, ideally with hexavalent chromium (Cr6) concentrations consistently below the State Maximum Contaminant Level of 10 ug/L. Services will include hydrogeologic evaluation, well siting, design specifications, oversight of well drilling and construction, aquifer testing, water quality sampling, and documentation.

2. Objectives

- Review existing information developed by ID-1 and others for the most suitable location for a new production well based on nearby wells, hydrogeologic conditions, water demand, infrastructure, and regulatory constraints.
- Develop detailed well design specifications suitable for bidding to ensure optimal yield, efficiency, and water quality.
- Oversee drilling and installation to industry and regulatory standards.
- Conduct aquifer testing and water quality analysis to confirm well performance and suitability.
- Provide comprehensive reporting and recommendations for long-term use and management.

3. Scope of Services

Task 1. Preliminary Hydrogeologic Assessment

- Review existing data (e.g., previous assessments provided by ID-1, geologic maps, well logs, pumping records, data from the Eastern Management Area (EMA) Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP)).
- Review potential well sites identified by ID-1 based on aquifer characteristics, accessibility, infrastructure, land use, and regulatory setbacks.

- Conduct site reconnaissance and evaluate hydrogeologic setting.
- Provide siting recommendations based upon assessment.

Task 2. Well Design

- Develop preliminary and final well design documents and well design schematic including dimensions and materials for upper casing, sanitary seal, production casing, screen intervals, screen slot size, gravel pack, sounding tube, gravel feed/video access tube, and identify anticipated well depth. Include performance criteria for drilling fluids, water management, formation sampling, mud and waste management, well development, video surveys, plumbness and alignment, assumed test pump total head and yield, and sand pumping. Identify need for noise abatement and security fencing, if necessary.
- Ensure design complies with state and local regulations.
- Prepare technical specifications and bid documents suitable for bidding. Assume pre-selected drilling contractors will be invited to bid on the project.
- Recommend potential drilling contractors capable of constructing the well in accordance with the specifications.
- Provide an engineering estimate of the contractor costs for installing and testing the well.

Task 3. Drilling and Construction Oversight

- Provide field oversight during drilling, logging, sanitary seal installation, casing, screen installation, gravel pack placement, and well development.
- Collect lithologic samples and prepare a geologic log.
- Document drilling progress, construction methods, and material quantities.
- Ensure contractor compliance with design and specifications.

Task 4. Aquifer and Pumping Test

- Install pressure transducers in the production well and observation wells, as applicable.
- Collect pre-test water levels and measure water levels during drawdown and recovery.
- Monitor flow rate and sand production during testing.
- Analyze test results to determine transmissivity, storativity, specific capacity, and sustainable pumping rates.

Task 5. Water Quality Sampling and Analysis

- Collect groundwater samples from the production well at the conclusion of the aquifer test.
- Coordinate laboratory analysis for drinking water parameters (e.g., Title 22 / EPA standards) and other analytes identified by ID-1.
- Compare results with regulatory and client requirements.

Task 6. Reporting and Recommendations

- Prepare draft and final completion report summarizing siting, design, construction, test results, and water quality findings.
- Provide pumping capacity recommendations and operational guidelines.

- Include construction diagrams, logs, test data, and regulatory compliance documentation.

4. Deliverables

- Well siting memorandum with recommended location(s).
- Preliminary well design and specifications for ID-1 review.
- Final well design drawings and specifications.
- Contractor cost estimate.
- Daily field notes and lithologic logs.
- Pumping test data and analysis report.
- Final comprehensive well completion report.

5. Schedule

- The Consultant will coordinate with ID-1 to develop a detailed schedule.
Typical duration:
 - Siting and design: 2–4 weeks
 - Permitting, as applicable: 4–12 weeks (depending on agencies)
 - Drilling and installation: 4–8 weeks
 - Testing and reporting: 2–4 weeks

6. Budget

- The Consultant will provide a time and materials, not to exceed, budget by task for all consulting services. Identify personnel responsible for project management, design, and field observation. Include all expenses and identify subcontractors.

7. Responsibilities

- **Consultant:**
 - Provide professional hydrogeologic expertise and project oversight.
 - Work shall be performed or overseen by a licensed geologist/hydrogeologist.
 - Weekly check-ins with ID-1.
 - Ensure compliance with industry standards and regulations.
 - Maintain accurate documentation.
- **ID-1:**
 - Provide access to site and existing records.
 - Provide funding for drilling contractor and laboratory services.
 - Administer permit and regulatory requirements, as applicable.
 - Review and approve deliverables.

8. Exclusions (if applicable)

- Drilling contractor services, construction costs, and equipment are excluded.
- As applicable, permitting, regulatory, and environmental review are excluded.

9. Proposal Submittal Requirements

Project Team and Qualifications

Please identify key project team members including project manager, lead hydrogeologist, field geologists, and any subcontractors Consultant plans to use on the project. Include a description of their respective roles, years of related experience, licenses, and any special skills. Provide resumes that describe relevant experience with design and installation of water supply production wells and experience working in the Santa Ynez groundwater basin. Identify the office where each team member resides.

Project Scope of Work

Please describe any suggested changes or clarifications to the scope of work presented in this RFP.

References

Please provide three references for work completed in the last 5 years for the design and construction of water supply wells, including owner names, phone numbers, and email addresses.

Project Schedule (in addition to the schedule discussed in this RFP)

Please provide a suggested schedule for completing the tasks described in the RFP.

Proposal Submittal

Please submit a response to this RFP by: Friday November 7th, 2025

Submit proposal electronically (via email) to:

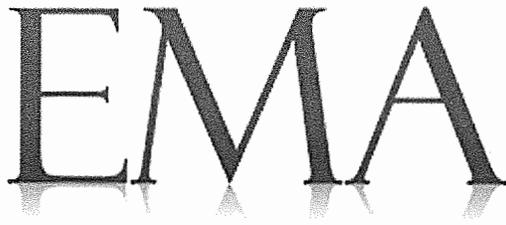
Dan Drugan, Water Resources Manager

Santa Ynez River Water Conservation District, ID-1

ddrugan@syrwd.org

ID-1 reserves the right to select a consultant based on reasonable criteria it deems necessary to best serve the needs of the District. ID-1 may request a phone interview.

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Santa Ynez Basin
(<http://santaynezwater.org>)

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Eastern Management Area
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[EMA GSA JPA BOARD MEETINGS \(/EMA-GSA-JPA-BOARD-MEETINGS\)](/EMA-GSA-JPA-BOARD-MEETINGS)

DEC
18
2025

EMA GSA JPA Board Special Meeting, 4:00 PM - CANCELED

The Special Board Meeting scheduled for Thursday, December 18, 2025 at 4:00 PM is CANCELED.

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P.O. BOX 7098, LOS OSOS CA 93412

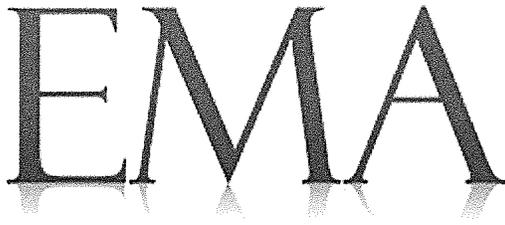
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JAN
22
2026

EMA GSA JPA Board Regular Meeting, 4:00 PM

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NOTICE AND AGENDA OF SPECIAL MEETING

CITIZEN ADVISORY GROUP (CAG)
FOR THE EASTERN MANAGEMENT AREA
IN THE SANTA YNEZ RIVER VALLEY GROUNDWATER BASIN

SPECIAL MEETING WILL BE HELD AT
SANTA YNEZ COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT, MEETING ROOM
1070 FARADAY STREET, SANTA YNEZ, CA
AT 4:00 P.M., THURSDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2025

Optional remote public participation is available via Telephone or TEAMS
To access the meeting via telephone, please dial: +1 469-998-7311, 618956266# or via the Web at: [Join the meeting now](#)

“Join a Meeting” - Meeting ID: 216 717 481 236 24 Meeting Passcode: ir7iF7kZ
*** Please Note ***

The above teleconference option for public participation is being offered as a convenience only and may limit or otherwise prevent your access to and participation in the meeting due to disruption or unavailability of the teleconference line. If any such disruption of unavailability occurs for any reason the meeting will not be suspended, terminated, or continued. Therefore in-person attendance of the meeting is strongly encouraged.

AGENDA OF SPECIAL MEETING

1. Call to Order and Roll Call
2. Presentations of DMS/well registration and reporting platform to the EMA GSA CAG
3. Public Comment (Any member of the public may address the CAG relating to any non-agenda matter within the CAG’s jurisdiction. The time for public comment allotted for each individual shall not exceed three minutes.)
4. Citizen Advisory Group (CAG) Membership Review
5. EMA GSA Initiatives Update
 - a. Water Year 2025 Annual Report
 - b. 5-Year Groundwater Sustainability Plan Evaluation
 - c. Groundwater Extraction Fee
 - d. Proposition 68 Grant
6. EMA GSA Bylaws
7. Future CAG Meeting Dates/Times and Online vs. In-Person Format
 - a. Tentative meeting Thursday, February 19, 2026 3:00 PM
8. CAG Reports and Requests for Future Agenda Items
9. Future EMA GSA Board meetings
 - a. Thursday, January 22, 2026 4:00 PM

10. Adjournment

[This agenda was posted at least 24 hours prior to the special meeting at 3669 Sagunto Street, Suite 101, Santa Ynez, California, and ema-SantaYnezWater.org in accordance with Government Code Section 54954. In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to review agenda materials or participate in this meeting, please contact the Santa Ynez River Valley Groundwater Basin Eastern Management Area Groundwater Sustainability Agency at (805) 457-5065. Advanced notification as far as practicable prior to the meeting will enable the GSA to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to this meeting.]

**AGREEMENT REGARDING
ASSIGNMENT, ASSUMPTION, AND RELEASE
OF THE STATE WATER SUPPLY CONTRACT FOR SANTA BARBARA COUNTY**

This **AGREEMENT REGARDING ASSIGNMENT, ASSUMPTION, AND RELEASE OF THE STATE WATER SUPPLY CONTRACT FOR SANTA BARBARA COUNTY** (the “**Agreement**”) is made by and between the Santa Barbara County Flood Control and Water Conservation District (the “**District**”), the Central Coast Water Authority (“**CCWA**”), and the California Department of Water Resources (“**DWR**”) (each, a “**Party**” and collectively, the “**Parties**”), with reference to the following facts and intentions. This Agreement is effective as of December 16, 2025, which is the last date of signature by all Parties hereto (the “**Effective Date**”).

RECITALS

A. On or about February 23, 1963, the District entered into a Water Supply Contract with DWR (the “**State Water Supply Contract**”) with respect to the delivery of 60,000 acre feet per year of water from the State Water Project to Santa Barbara County. In 1965, the District and DWR executed Amendment No. 2 to the State Water Supply Contract whereby this delivery amount was revised to 57,700 acre feet per year of water. Said quantity of water is set forth in “**Table A**” to the State Water Supply Contract and is referred to as the “**Maximum Annual Table A Amount**.” As permitted by Article 45(e) of the State Water Supply Contract, the District elected to delay construction of the facilities that would be required to permit delivery of the Maximum Annual Table A Amount.

B. In 1981, the District and DWR executed Amendment No. 9 to the State Water Supply Contract whereby the District agreed to reduce its annual deliveries by 12,214 acre feet per year to 45,486 acre feet per year. The balance of the Maximum Annual Table A Amount, which is 12,214 acre feet per year, is referred to herein as the “**Suspended Table A**” water. Pursuant to the “**Stipulation for Settlement and Compromise and Order**” dated March 12, 1987 (Judicial Council Coordination Proceeding No. 1879; Santa Barbara Sup. Ct., No. 142195), DWR granted to the District the option to reacquire any amount of the Suspended Table A water which the District relinquished under Amendment No. 9.

C. On various dates between 1985 and 1988, the District entered into a series of agreements, each called a “**Water Supply Retention Agreement**,” with various public water providers and end users of water (each a “**Contractor**” and collectively, the “**Contractors**”). Each Water Supply Retention Agreement provided that the District “**assign[ed]** all rights and obligations under the State Water Contract” with respect to a specified portion of the water supply and conveyance capacity made available by the State Water Supply Contract to the Contractor.

D. By letter dated April 2, 1991, certain Contractors, in coordination with the District, formally requested that DWR approve the assignment of rights embodied in the Water Supply Retention Agreements. By letter dated August 13, 1991, DWR expressly approved the Water Supply Retention Agreements insofar as those agreements pertained to the District transferring or

setting over its rights pursuant to the State Water Supply Contract to the Contractors, but DWR declined to release the District from its obligations to DWR pursuant to the State Water Supply Contract.

E. On August 1, 1991, eight of the Contractors, each a public agency and public water provider (each, a “**Member**” and collectively, the “**Members**”) formed CCWA when they each executed a Joint Exercise of Powers Agreement pursuant to Government Code section 6500, et seq. As of the Effective Date, each Member, or its successor-in-interest, remains a member of CCWA.

F. Following its formation, CCWA entered into a series of agreements, each called a “**Water Supply Agreement**,” with 13 of the Contractors, including the Members. Each party to a Water Supply Agreement with CCWA is referred to as a “**Participant**” and collectively, as the “**Participants**.” Each of the Water Supply Agreements includes a provision that the rights held by each Participant under its Water Supply Retention Agreement with the District were assigned to CCWA, in return for CCWA’s delivery of the water made available by those rights to the Participant. The remaining Contractors elected to terminate their participation in the State Water Project and assigned their respective rights under their Water Supply Retention Agreement with the District to CCWA. The terminating Contractors have no retained, remaining, or other rights whatsoever under such agreements.

G. On November 12, 1991, CCWA and the District entered into a “**Transfer of Financial Responsibility Agreement**” under which CCWA agreed, *inter alia*, to accept responsibility for all financial obligations of the District under the State Water Supply Contract.

H. On June 3, 1993, the District and CCWA entered into an “**Assignment Agreement**” pursuant to which the District assigned all of its retained right to 250-acre feet that was not previously transferred or set over pursuant to a Water Supply Retention Agreement to CCWA.

I. In August 1997, CCWA completed construction of the transportation and treatment system by which water under the State Water Supply Contract would be delivered to Santa Barbara County and the first delivery of water pursuant to the State Water Supply Contract was made to CCWA, which in turn delivered the water to the Participants pursuant to the Water Supply Agreements.

J. On December 12, 2017, the Members amended the 1991 Joint Exercise of Powers Agreement creating CCWA to include the power to “contract with DWR for delivery of water from the State Water Project, along with all necessary and incidental powers as may be required by [CCWA] to carry out [CCWA’s] rights and obligations under the State Water Supply Contract, including, but not limited to, the right to levy a tax or assessment on all properties within the jurisdiction of [CCWA] not exempt from taxation, as mandated by the California Water Code and the State Water Supply Contract.”

K. In reliance on DWR's consent and release, as set forth below, the Parties enter into this Agreement to assign the District's rights, title, and interest in the State Water Supply Contract, and to effectuate an assumption and release of the District's obligations under the State Water Supply Contract. It is the intention of the Parties that the result of this Agreement shall be that the District shall no longer have any rights or obligations under the State Water Contract and that CCWA shall replace the District as a party to the State Water Contract as if CCWA were the original counterparty with DWR.

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the mutual promises set forth below and the foregoing recitals, which are incorporated into the operative provisions of this Agreement by this reference, and for other good and valuable consideration, the receipt, adequacy and sufficiency of which are hereby acknowledged, the Parties agree as follows:

1. Assignment. The District hereby assigns, transfers, and sets over to CCWA, without recourse and without representation or warranty of any kind, all of the District's rights, title, and interest in, to, and under the State Water Supply Contract (including, but not limited to, the right to delivery of the Table A water, inclusive of the right to reacquire the Suspended Table A water, and the reimbursement provided for in Amendment No. 9 (Article 45(j)) of the State Water Supply Contract), along with all liabilities and obligations of the District arising from or under the State Water Supply Contract. This assignment is absolute and presently effective.

2. Assumption. CCWA accepts such assignment without recourse and without representation or warranty of any kind, and assumes all of the District's liabilities and obligations arising from or under the State Water Supply Contract, including any and all obligations to make payments, indemnifications or reimbursements thereunder, and agrees to be bound by and to keep, perform and observe the terms, covenants and conditions placed on the District under the State Water Supply Contract. CCWA agrees to be bound by the State Water Supply Contract to the same extent as if it had been an original party to said instrument and accepts and agrees to perform all of the District's obligations therein.

3. CCWA Indemnification and Release.

a. CCWA Indemnifies District. CCWA releases, forever acquits, discharges and indemnifies the District from and against any and all liabilities (at law or in equity), obligations, liens, claims, orders, rulings, losses, damages, assessments, fines, penalties, injuries, demands, actions, judgments, suits, costs, expenses, or disbursements of any kind (including reasonable attorneys' fees and costs) which may at any time on or after the Effective Date be imposed on, incurred by, or asserted against the District by any third party, based on, resulting from, in any way relating to, in connection with, or arising out of the State Water Supply Contract, except to the extent caused by the District's gross negligence or willful misconduct. In the event the District's right to indemnification under this Section is triggered by an administrative proceeding or legal action by a third party seeking to invalidate or otherwise limit the effectiveness of this Agreement, CCWA shall be entitled to appoint the counsel of its choice to represent the District at CCWA's expense and, to the extent CCWA appears in such action, the District consents to such counsel jointly representing the District and CCWA and will agree in writing to waive any

potential legal conflict that might arise as a result of such joint representation, unless impermissible pursuant to the California Rules of Professional Responsibility or as a matter of law, in which case the District shall be entitled to appoint the counsel of its choice to represent the District at the District's expense.

b. **CCWA Indemnifies DWR.** CCWA agrees to defend and hold DWR, its officers, employees, and agents harmless from any direct or indirect loss, liability, lawsuits, cause of action, judgment or claim, and shall indemnify DWR, its officers, employees, and agents from all lawsuits, costs, damages, judgments, attorney's fees, and liabilities that DWR, its officers, employees and agents incur as a result of this Agreement, except to the extent resulting from the sole negligence or willful misconduct of DWR, its officers, employees and agents.

4. **DWR Consent and Release.** DWR consents to and approves the assignment, transfer, and assumption of the State Water Supply Contract to and by CCWA, as described in this Agreement, and releases the District from all liabilities and obligations arising from or under the State Water Supply Contract. DWR shall hold CCWA, as the contracting party pursuant to this Agreement, responsible for all liabilities and obligations arising from or under the State Water Supply Contract to the same extent as if CCWA had been an original party to said instrument. Upon the Effective Date, all references in the State Water Supply Contract to the "Santa Barbara County Flood Control and Water Conservation District," or "District," or "Agency" shall be deemed to refer to CCWA.

5. **Termination of Other Agreements**

a. **Transfer of Financial Responsibility Agreement.** Upon the Effective Date, the Transfer of Financial Responsibility Agreement shall automatically terminate and this Agreement shall supersede all provisions of the Transfer of Financial Responsibility Agreement.

b. **Water Supply Retention Agreements.** Upon the Effective Date, the Water Supply Retention Agreements shall automatically terminate and this Agreement shall supersede all provisions of the Water Supply Retention Agreements.

c. **Contingent Revival of Prior Agreements.** (i) If a court of competent jurisdiction determines in a final non-appealable order that this Agreement or the assignment contemplated herein is void, unenforceable, or otherwise fails to take legal effect, or (ii) if DWR determines in its sole discretion that a final non-appealable order from a court of competent jurisdiction issued in connection with litigation arising from this Agreement or the assignment is likely to result in a downgrade of the ratings issued by Moody's Investor Services or S&P Global Ratings for bonds issued under DWR's 1986 General Bond Resolution, as amended or (iii) if following the Effective Date of this Agreement and prior to January 31, 2026, Moody's Investor Services or S&P Global Ratings provides a rating (including, if applicable an indicative rating) for bonds issued under DWR's 1986 General Bond Resolution, as amended, that is lower than the last rating issued for such bonds prior to the assignment contemplated herein, which includes a statement or finding that the reduction in rating is, in whole or in substantive part (as determined by DWR), a result of such assignment, then, prior to the revival and reinstatement described in this

Section 5.c. below (“**Revival**”), the Parties shall have sixty (60) days from the date of such court order, DWR determination following such court order, or such rating to assess, attempt to cure, or otherwise address the matter consistent with the intentions, purpose, and directives of this Agreement. During such sixty (60) day period, the Parties shall confer in good faith and use reasonable best efforts to identify and implement measures to avoid Revival, provided that each Party shall retain sole discretion as to whether any such measures are acceptable. If, following the expiration of such sixty (60) day period or any additional period as may be agreed to by the Parties in writing pursuant to Section 9.a of this Agreement, the matter has not been resolved to the satisfaction of the Parties in their sole discretion, then the Transfer of Financial Responsibility Agreement and the Water Supply Retention Agreements shall automatically be revived and reinstated as if they had never been terminated, effective as of the date of the determination described in clause (i) or (ii) or the indicative rating described in clause (iii) hereof. The sixty (60) day cure period established in this Section may be extended upon the written Agreement of the Parties in accordance with Section 9.a of this Agreement.

6. Representations and Warranties. CCWA represents and warrants that it has the power, authority, ability and intent to fulfill each and every one of its obligations under the State Water Supply Contract upon and after the assignment contemplated by this Agreement including, but not limited to, obligations imposed by Article 15 of the State Water Supply Contract.

7. Further Agreements. As soon as reasonably practical following execution of this Agreement by the Parties, District and CCWA agree to execute an amendment to the State Water Supply Contract in form and substance acceptable to the DWR memorializing the assignment of the State Water Supply Contract to CCWA accomplished by this Agreement. In connection therewith, CCWA agrees to provide the map contemplated by Article 15(c) of the State Water Supply Contract delineating CCWA’s boundaries as of the date of this Agreement. Said map shall be included as an exhibit to the amendment.

8. Compliance with the Environmental Quality Act. Each Party shall be responsible for complying with the California Environmental Quality Act (“**CEQA**”), if applicable, in connection with such Party’s approval of this Agreement.

9. General Provisions

a. **Amendment.** This Agreement may only be modified or amended by a writing signed by all of the Parties. Each Party waives its right to assert that this Agreement was affected by oral agreement, course of conduct, waiver or estoppel.

b. **Authorization.** Each signatory represents and warrants that he or she has the appropriate authorization to enter into this Agreement on behalf of the Party for whom he or she signs.

c. **Construction and Interpretation.** The Parties agree and acknowledge that the terms of this Agreement have been negotiated by the Parties and the language used in this Agreement shall be deemed to be the language chosen by the Parties to express their mutual intent.

This Agreement shall be construed without regard to any presumption or rule requiring construction against the party causing such instrument to be drafted, or in favor of the party receiving a particular benefit under this Agreement.

d. **Counterparts; Electronic Signatures; Delivery by Email.** This Agreement may be executed in counterparts, each of which shall be deemed an original, and all of which when taken together shall constitute one and the same document. Counterparts may be delivered via electronic mail (including PDF or any electronic signature complying with the federal Electronic Signatures in Global and National Commerce (ESIGN) Act of 2000 (P.L. 106-229), e.g., www.docuSign.com) or other transmission method and any counterpart so delivered shall be deemed to have been duly and validly delivered and be valid and effective for all purposes.

e. **Entire Agreement.** Other than the Settlement Agreement and Release entered between CCWA and the District on October 6, 2025, this Agreement is the entire understanding of the Parties in respect of the subject matter hereof. There are no other promises, representations, agreements or warranties by any of the Parties.

f. **Governing Law and Jurisdiction.** This Agreement and all matters relating to this Agreement shall be governed by the laws of the State of California. Venue for any disputes under this Agreement shall be in Santa Barbara County, California.

g. **Notices.** All communications or notices in connection with this Agreement shall be in writing and either hand-delivered or sent by U.S. first class mail, postage prepaid, or electronic mail followed by written notice sent by U.S. mail and addressed to the Parties as follows, or at such other address as any Party may from time to time specify to the other Party in writing, provided that no notice of a change of address shall be effective until actual receipt of the notice by the receiving Party:

Santa Barbara County Flood Control and Water Conservation District
Matthew Young, Water Agency Manager
130 East Victoria Street, Suite 200
Santa Barbara, CA 93101-2019
Tel: (805) 568-3440
mcyoung@countyofsb.org

Central Coast Water Authority
Ray Stokes, Executive Director
255 Industrial Way
Buellton, CA 93427-9565
Tel: (805) 697-5214
ras@ccwa.com

California Department of Water Resources
John Yarbrough, State Water Project Deputy Director
715 P Street
Sacramento, CA 95814
Tel: (916) 653-5791
JohnYarbrough@water.ca.gov

h. **Waiver.** Any waiver or failure to declare a breach as a result of the violation of any term or condition of this Agreement shall not constitute a waiver of that term or condition and shall not provide the basis for a claim of estoppel or waiver by any Party to that term or condition.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Parties have entered into this Agreement as of the Effective Date.

—signatures following on next page—

**SANTA BARBARA COUNTY FLOOD
CONTROL AND WATER
CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

By: Chris Sneddon
Chris Sneddon
County Public Works Director

By: Amber Holderness
Amber Holderness
Santa Barbara County Office of County
Counsel

Date: 12/12/2025

CENTRAL COAST WATER AUTHORITY

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

By: Ray Stokes
Ray Stokes, Executive Director

By: Stephanie Osler Hastings
Stephanie Osler Hastings
Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck, LLP

Date: 12/9/2025

**CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF WATER
RESOURCES**

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

By: Karla Nemeth
Karla A. Nemeth, Director

By: AKB
Ann K. B. Carroll, General Counsel
Department of Water Resources

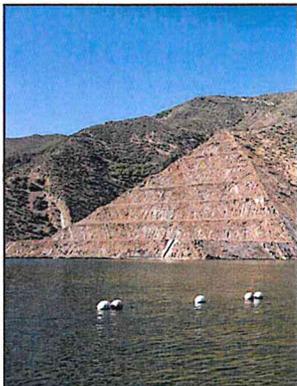
Date: 12/16/2025

2025 Annual Review of the construction and operation of the State Water Project

DRAFT

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On the cover: Pyramid Lake, a reservoir in Los Angeles County is formed by Pyramid Dam on Piru Creek near Castaic, California. Photo by Xavier Mascareñas/DWR

2025 CALIFORNIA WATER COMMISSION

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Jose Solorio

INTRODUCTION

The State Water Project (SWP) is the nation's largest state-built, multi-purpose water project that is paid for by its beneficiaries – primarily the water agencies that it serves. Planned, constructed, and operated by the Department of Water Resources (DWR) – in coordination with the federal United States Bureau of Reclamation's (USBR) Central Valley Project (CVP) – the SWP remains one of the most affordable and cost-effective sources of water in the state. The SWP is considered an engineering marvel that has helped fuel California's population boom and economic prosperity since its initial construction in the 1960s. The SWP is a no-fail system. Its continued operation through weather extremes such as flooding and drought is essential to the viability of California.

The SWP consists of 36 water storage facilities and 705 miles of rivers, pipelines, and canals that supply water to 27 million people and irrigate 750,000 acres of farmland. In addition to its primary purpose of supplying water, the SWP also provides flood protection, offers recreational opportunities such as boating and hiking, and generates hydroelectric power. Strategic planning by DWR balances environmental considerations with water management, while navigating external challenges, such as climate change and aging infrastructure, and internal efforts, such as safety and workforce development.

One of the main roles of the California Water Commission (Commission) is to serve as a public forum for discussing water management issues in California. The Commission uses this forum, in part, to provide additional transparency around the operations of the SWP. Water Code section 165 requires the Commission to conduct an annual review of the progress of the construction and operation of the SWP and to provide that report to the Legislature. The Commission's annual report of the SWP gives an update on DWR's progress on implementing the prior year's findings, summarizes the year's SWP presentations, and provides findings and future recommendations.

California Water Commission

The nine-member California Water Commission uses its public forum to explore water management issues from diverse perspectives to advise State decision-makers on equitable ways to improve water policy, planning, and management in response to California’s changing hydrology. For more information regarding the California Water Commission, visit cwc.ca.gov.

In 2024, the theme of the State Water Project presentations and the Commission’s Annual Review and Recommendations was “Elevate to 28”, the State Water Project’s Strategic Plan. In 2025, the presentations focused on the “Past, Present, and Future of the State Water Project”. In 2025, SWP made a total of 14 presentations to the Commission, four of which provided updates on current SWP operations. These presentations help the public stay informed of DWR’s efforts and provide the basis of the findings and recommendations that the Commission makes to DWR and the Legislature regarding SWP operations and construction activities in 2025.

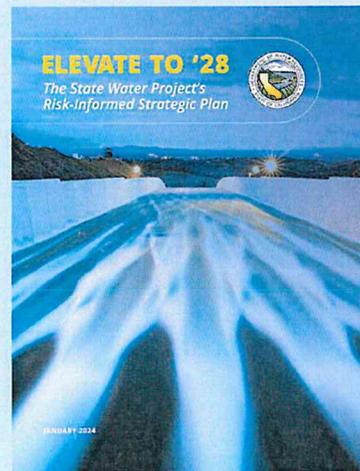
Elevate to '28

The SWP’s strategic plan, “Elevate to '28”, details SWP’s mission, vision, and purpose; the core values that guide its work; and the goals and objectives it sets out to achieve. Elevate to '28 supports the goals of DWR’s strategic plan and defines cross-divisional activities through initiatives to meet the strategic needs of DWR and the SWP.

Elevate to 28 contains five key goals:

1. Advance an industry-leading safety culture.
2. Be the employer of choice.
3. Accelerate adaptation and strengthen resiliency for a changing climate.
4. Promote awareness of the State Water Project’s significance.
5. Optimize infrastructure, financial integrity, and operations.

- The SWP mission is to sustainably manage the water resources of California, in cooperation with other agencies, to benefit the state’s people, and to protect, restore, and enhance the natural and human environments.
- The SWP vision is to be the most reliable, sustainable, and resilient water provider for the people and environment of California, now and for future generations.
- The SWP purpose is to operate the SWP as one team to provide safe, reliable, and affordable water for the well-being and prosperity of California.

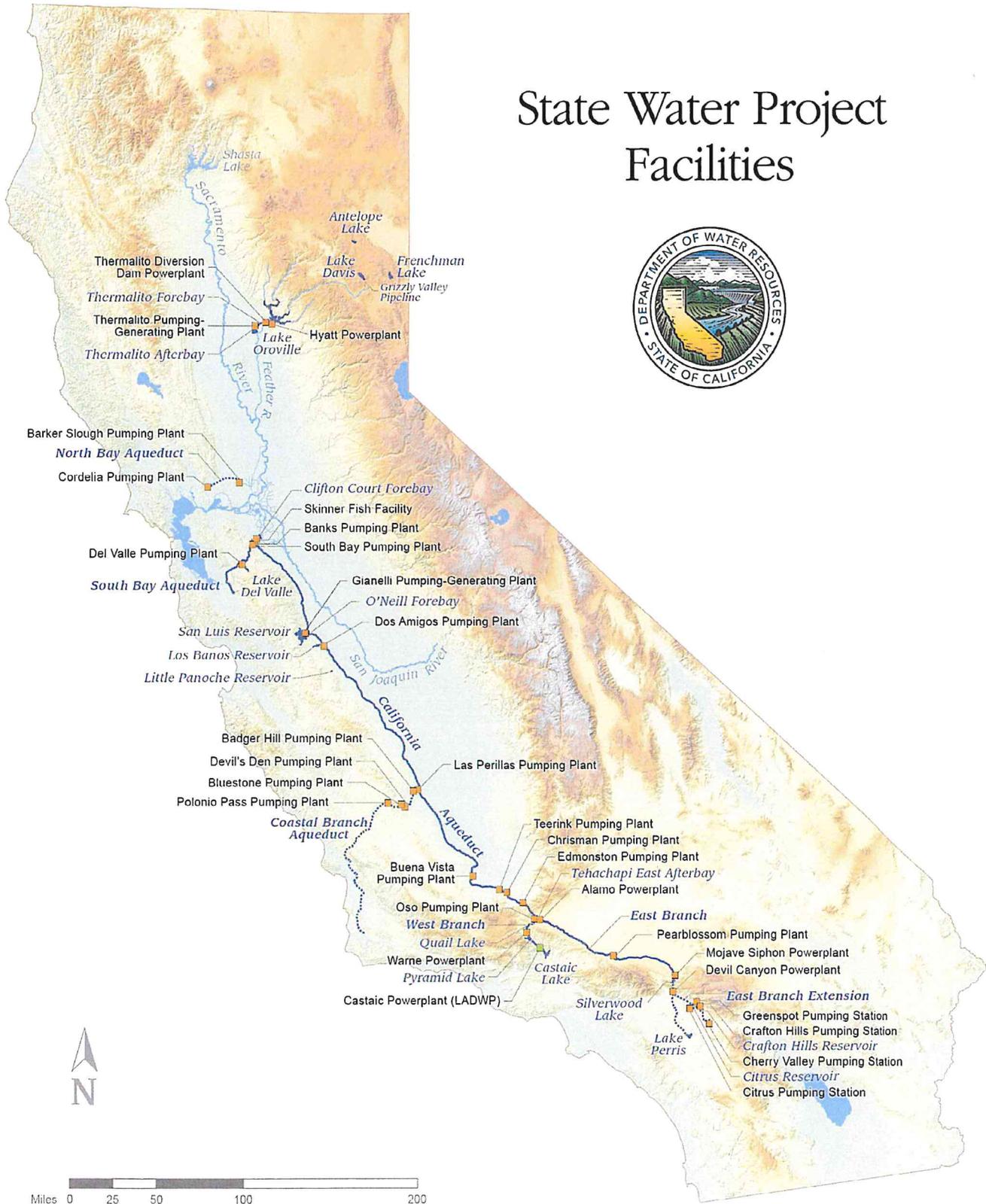


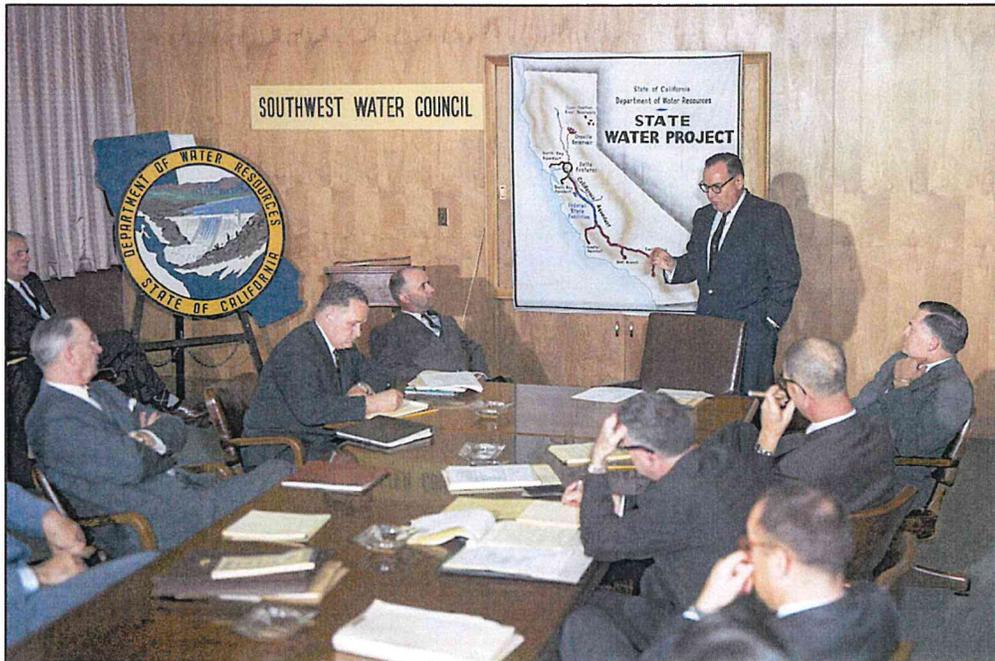
PROGRESS ON 2024 RECOMMENDATIONS

In 2024, the Commission made six recommendations to DWR for SWP operations. Progress was made in all six throughout 2025.

2024 RECOMMENDATIONS	PROGRESS ON RECOMMENDATIONS
Maintain open and transparent communication with the Commission; State, local, and federal agencies; Tribes, interested parties; and the public as they prepare the SWP for water year 2025.	DWR maintained open and transparent communication with the Commission, giving 14 presentations on various topics throughout 2025, and worked with federal agencies on joint-operated facilities.
Implement a workforce strategy plan to attract and retain skilled replacements, as one-third of the water sector workforce approaches retirement.	DWR began development of a Risk Informed Workforce Strategy that is scheduled to be implemented in 2026.
Move boldly and swiftly to incorporate natural and innovative infrastructure solutions to address challenges associated with climate change, including completion of the Climate Adaptation Plan, and the implementation of interim action projects to mitigate subsidence in the California Aqueduct.	<p>DWR released the State Water Project Adaptation Strategy, which examines how a combination of strategies can help the SWP maintain reliable water deliveries despite hotter temperatures, more extreme storms, more severe droughts, and higher sea levels.</p> <p>DWR added an addendum to the 2024 Delivery Capability Report (DCR), which provides information to water managers to help them prepare for future water supply conditions, and analyzes how ongoing subsidence will impact the operation of the SWP.</p>
Accelerate operational changes that allow the SWP to better address extreme hydrology, such as Forecast-Informed Reservoir Operations (FIRO), sub-seasonal routing forecasts, snow surveys, and downstream river stage forecast models.	DWR continues to invest in research and development efforts such as FIRO, which uses the best available science to optimize and inform its reservoir operations. In 2025, DWR coordinated early releases of water prior to strong atmospheric rivers to create additional reservoir capacity to manage incoming inflows. DWR coordinated with numerous inter-agency partners on this critical public safety initiative at two locations: Lake Oroville and New Bullards Bar.
Work in conjunction with State Water Project Contractors and other water users to capture excess stormwaters and runoff to refill reservoirs and recharge groundwater basins.	The SWP's Adaptation Strategy increases the ability of public water agencies to save and store water during wetter times to address acute water shortages during droughts, and plan for the projected changes in the future water supply reliability. Recent efforts include consideration of local and regional storage, replumbing for local and regional flexibility, water recycling, conservation and efficiency projects, and long-term transfers or exchange agreements that enable individual public water agencies to secure a future with reliable water supplies.
When briefing the Commission, include high-level information on the topic, explain its importance and what it is meant to achieve, and how it relates to other priorities of the administration and/or DWR's Strategic Plan.	DWR's presentations in 2025 were insightful, informative, and covered topics that were relevant to not only the Commission, but to a wide array of interested parties throughout the state. The presentations were followed by public comments from the State Water Contractors, a local farmer, and a water district executive.

State Water Project Facilities





Vince Arrant/DWR

In this photo from 1960, California Governor Edmund G. Brown addresses the Southwest Water Council from his office in downtown Sacramento about the future construction of the State Water Project. The project would stretch from the Sierra Nevada Mountains in Plumas County to the flatlands of Riverside County in Southern California. Today, it conveys water through more than 20 pumping plants and 30 storage facilities (lakes and reservoirs), five hydroelectric power plants, and 705-plus miles of aqueducts and pipelines.

PAST: CREATING AND CONSTRUCTING THE STATE WATER PROJECT

Ten-thousand years prior to European influences, an estimated 300,000 indigenous people lived amongst unimpeded rivers and streams that flowed through and into expansive ecosystems across all of California. The Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta (Delta) – today a critical hub for California’s water supplies – was a lot larger pre-European contact. In the late 1700s, Spanish settlers arrived, built missions alongside rivers and streams, and began to divert water for human use. Human migration into California was slow until 1849, when the Gold Rush changed the area overnight, growing the population by 100,000 within the year.

Seasonal flooding was an issue. The great flood of 1862 had a devastating effect on California, which put Sacramento under 10 feet of water. In 1878, the first state engineer, William Ham Hall, concluded the Central Valley should be developed in a systematic manner, with integrated flood control systems featuring levees, weirs, and bypasses. Though his plan was not implemented at the time, it is the first concept of flood control management that inspired the system we see today.



DWR FILE PHOTO

In this photo from 1970, construction takes place on the large-diameter discharge lines from the Wind Gap Pumping Plant in Kern County. Today, the iconic lines are visible from Interstate 5 and the State Water Project pumping plant is located on the California Aqueduct downstream from Teerink Pumping Plant. Construction took place from 1966 to 1973 and was renamed the Ira J. Chrisman Wind Gap Pumping Plant in April 1986, for the former member of the California Water Commission (1960-1976), mayor of Visalia (1954-1955), and Tulare County rancher.

Before 1930, water development planning and infrastructure construction were primarily performed at the local level. An example of the State supporting local projects for water management was the passage of the Wright Act of 1887. This State law allowed communities and farmers to create irrigation districts to pool resources together and build infrastructure for water resource management needs. These water management projects were designed and built without the benefit of a statewide framework to provide guidance and coordination.

In 1921, the California Legislature authorized a statewide water resource investigation. Years of detailed research led by State Engineer Edward Hyatt resulted in the State Water Plan (1930) and the Central Valley Project Act. Voters approved the project, but, by 1933, during the Great Depression, the bonds became unmarketable. To help move water management forward, the federal government authorized the USBR to construct and operate the CVP. It was the first water infrastructure project to move water north to south through the Delta.

Between 1940 and 1955, the state's population doubled. In 1951, State Engineer Arthur Edmonston presented to the Legislature the Feather River Project, a precursor to the SWP, which proposed a multi-purpose dam and reservoir on the Feather River that included water transport facilities to the San Francisco Bay Area, San Joaquin Valley, and Southern California.



DWR FILE PHOTO

In this photo from 1960, DWR Director Harvey O. Banks, left, and California Department of Agriculture Director William E. Warne, look at a DWR water development system map, which highlights the State Water Project. Warne was appointed by Governor Edmund G. Brown and served as DWR director from 1961 to 1967 and the first Resources Agency secretary from 1961-1963. Warne managed DWR during its peak construction of the State Water Project.

State Water Project Construction Completion

1962: South Bay Aqueduct immediately began delivering water to the South Bay.

1967: Upper Feather River Watershed lakes, North Bay aqueduct.

1968: Lake Oroville and Dam, still the tallest dam in the nation.

1973: Edmonston pumping plant, which pumps water almost 2,000 feet in elevation over the Tehachapi mountains.

1998: Coastal Branch, which brought water to the Central Coast.

On Christmas Day 1955, a levee along the Feather River broke, inundating Sutter County in and around Yuba City with water and contributed to the loss of many lives and significant damages to properties. In response, the Legislature created the Department of Water Resources in 1956. This was a consolidation of 52 business functions across different state agencies.

In 1957, the Legislature authorized DWR emergency appropriations of \$25 million to start construction of the SWP and continued with annual appropriations until the proper funding mechanisms were in place.

In 1959, the Legislature adopted the California Water Resources Development Bond Act, known and cited as the Burns-Porter Act. The Legislature submitted the bond act to voters for approval. Led by the then Governor Pat Brown, Californians approved the issuance of \$1.75 billion in general obligation bonds to assist in the financing of the immediate construction of the SWP.

Today, the SWP is the largest state-built and operated storage and water conveyance system in the nation. SWP facilities support the multi-purposes of water supply, flood protection, environmental protection, hydropower generation, and recreation.

Built nearly 60 years ago, the SWP has seen some significant changes since initial construction. A changing climate, aging infrastructure, updated construction standards, subsidence impacts, and environmental needs are all constraining the SWP's ability to sustain its value.

PRESENT: MANAGING SWP OPERATIONS, MAINTENANCE, AND CONSTRUCTION

EMPLOYEE SAFETY METRICS AND DATA COLLECTION

For the SWP, safety is a core value, not a priority: priorities change, but core values do not. Advancing a safety driven culture not only safeguards the well-being of personnel and facilities but also enables the safe delivery of water and power across California. Prioritizing safety at every level of SWP operations reinforces its commitment to deliver reliable service. The continuous improvement plan for overall health and safety at DWR highlights the enhancements and improvements made over the past 15 years that showcase DWR’s commitment to enhancing the safety culture among its employees.

The program’s success is monitored at both the program and executive levels. At the program level, performance is measured using a series of metrics, including reportable and recordable incidents, avoidable and non-avoidable vehicular accidents, safety audits conducted at SWP work locations, and the completion of action items identified during those audits. The performance indicators include an employee-level validation of the safety program’s performance to ensure employee comprehension and use of the safety program.

At the executive level, annual risk assessments are conducted at all SWP work locations to validate the overall effectiveness of the SWP safety program and its measures. Since the program’s inception in 2011, DWR has reduced workplace safety incidents by at least five percent annually.

2025 safety targets were to complete the same number of, if not more, safety audits, and to bring down the number of injury incidents and vehicle accidents. These are tracked through the Total Recordable Incident Rates (TRIR) and Days Away, Restricted, Transferred (DART). The table below shows DWR Operations & Maintenance (O&M) year-to-date DART and TRIR numbers compared to other government and private utilities, with the goal of being in line with the private utilities.

Comparison	2023		2024		2025	
	DART ¹	TRIR ²	DART ¹	TRIR ²	DART ³	TRIR ³
Government Utilities	2.9	4.9	1.4	2.1		
Private Utilities	1.1	1.5	1.1	1.5		
DWR O&M	2.8	4	1.5	2.5	2.54	4.32

¹ Recordable injuries resulting in medical restrictions for every 200,000 hours worked.

² All recordable/reportable incidents including hearing loss, fatalities, skin disorder, chronic exposures which may not be a DART incident for every 200,000 hours worked.

³ 2025 Government and Private Utility DART and TRIR numbers will not be updated by the Bureau of Labor Statistics until the second quarter of 2026.



STATE WATER PROJECT WATER DELIVERIES

Table A Water: Table A Water is an allocation of SWP water that DWR makes available for delivery to an SWP Contractor during a calendar year. The Table A water allocation is typically a percentage of a contracted maximum amount of Table A water (in Table A of Article 6), which an SWP Contractor may request from DWR for that year. The maximum Table A amounts also form the basis for a substantial portion of the payments SWP Contractors pay to DWR under their long-term water supply contracts.

Article 56 Carryover Water: An SWP Contractor can elect to store (carryover) its Table A water and non-SWP water in SWP conservation facilities for delivery in a subsequent year or years.

Article 21 Interruptible Water: Interruptible Water is SWP water available as determined by DWR that is not needed for fulfilling SWP Contractors' annual Table A water deliveries or for meeting SWP operational requirements. Interruptible Water is typically available on a short-term basis during wetter conditions and may be delivered to an SWP Contractor upon request. Interruptible Water is supplied in addition to other SWP water types.

Flexible Storage Withdrawal Water: Three SWP Contractors participating in the repayment of capital cost of Castaic Lake and Lake Perris have a contractual right under Article 54 of the water supply contracts to borrow a limited amount of SWP water from those lakes in excess of their other SWP supplies. The borrowed water must be replenished by the SWP Contractor to the SWP within five years using approved SWP or non-SWP water.

Advanced Table A Water: Three North of Delta SWP Contractors have a contractual right under Article 45 of their water supply contracts to borrow a limited amount of Table A water in excess of their other SWP supplies. The borrowed water must be replenished by the SWP Contractor to the SWP within five years unless water in Lake Oroville reaches certain levels, which resets the Advanced Table A balance to zero.

Human Health & Safety: A special allocation of SWP water under Article 18(a) of the water supply contracts to meet SWP Contractors' minimum demands for domestic supply, fire protection or sanitation (human health and safety needs). This allocation is subject to justification, DWR's approval, and multiple use restrictions, and is generally considered only during severe drought conditions.

Non-SWP deliveries: Under Article 55 of the water supply contracts, SWP Contractors may request delivery through the SWP facilities for water they acquire from non-SWP sources. Also, DWR may allow non-SWP Contractors (e.g., Central Valley Project contractors) to convey non-SWP water through the SWP facilities, subject to available capacity and payment of costs.

SWP WATER DELIVERIES, POWER GENERATION, AND USE

The SWP delivered 2,130,703 acre-feet of water in Water Year 2025. Every year, SWP Contractors receive an “allocation” of water, which is a percent of the total amount of SWP water allowable per their contract terms with DWR. The initial allocation to SWP Contractors was five percent on December 1, 2024, then increased to 15 percent in late December, 20 percent in January 2025, 35 percent in February, 40 percent in March, with a final allocation of 50 percent in April. Allocations are tracked monthly, with adjustments made as needed, driven by the hydrology forecast, planned storage and exports, Delta water quality and flow requirements, SWP Contractor demands, and CVP operations. The contractors’ allocations were based on their maximum Table A amount, which equals 4,172,786 acre-feet for all 29 SWP Contractors combined. During 2025, SWP facilities generated 3,840 gigawatt hours (GWh) of energy. During the same period, the SWP used 5,870 GWh of energy. In general, SWP power usage increases with SWP water deliveries.

2025 PLANNING AND OPERATIONS

The SWP is operated in real time, adjusting the rate of releases from water storage facilities and the rate of exports from the Delta to meet water supply and downstream flow and water quality requirements. Many factors influence this real-time decision making. The SWP’s objectives are to deliver water to meet minimum health and safety needs, preserve upstream storage for future dry year and drought protection, meet regulatory requirements, deliver water based on priority, and maximize diversion to storage and delivery of water supply.

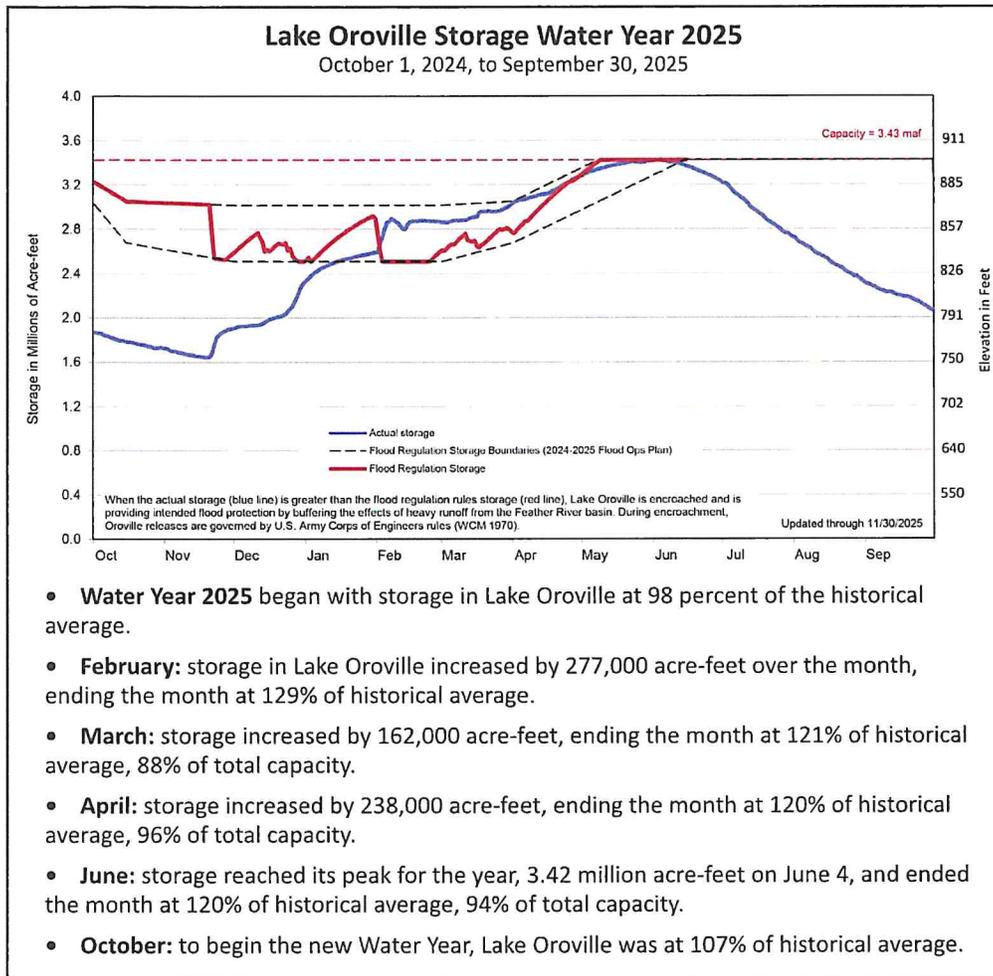
Water Year 2025, which began on October 1, 2024, started with storage in Lake Oroville, SWP’s largest water storage facility, at 98 percent of the historical average for that date. DWR reduced releases to preserve storage for future requirements. The SWP Contractors were able to carryover more than 800,000 acre-feet of storage in San Luis Reservoir, which helped shore up their supplies in the event of a dry year ahead.

As of February 10, Lake Oroville was at 135 percent of historical average for that date. DWR took advantage of the Storm Flex Provision in the Incidental Take Permit (ITP), which allowed the SWP to increase pumping levels and capture 16,000 acre-feet of storm runoff during a one-week period. DWR also increased releases from the Feather River beginning in late January to balance flood control, storage conservation, and downstream water supply needs. Flood control releases continued through April, before the refill period began.

Export operations during winter and spring are adjusted to capture storm flows in accordance with State and federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) operating permits, and to put that storage into San Luis Reservoir to meet future demands. From December 2024 to June 2025, State and federal ESA operating permits limited water exports through the Delta for fishery purposes, ensuring adequate

Summary of SWP water deliveries, energy generation, and usage¹					
Year	Water Delivered (acre-feet)	Allocation	Power Generated (GWh/year)	Power Used	Net Power Acquired (GWh/year)
2000	3,584,667	90%	6,832	8,518	1,686
2001	2,042,118	39%	4,588	6,358	1,770
2002	2,850,215	70%	5,631	8,191	2,560
2003	3,167,604	90%	6,117	8,862	2,845
2004	3,119,578	65%	6,887	9,661	2,774
2005	3,627,004	90%	5,661	8,282	2,621
2006	3,691,568	100%	7,515	9,109	1,594
2007	2,996,629	60%	6,410	9,276	2,866
2008	1,950,968	35%	4,100	5,701	1,601
2009	1,933,735	40%	4,255	5,438	1,183
2010	2,660,960	50%	4,368	7,184	2,816
2011	3,596,749	80%	5,258	8,583	3,325
2012	2,848,082	65%	4,810	7,404	2,594
2013	2,107,572	35%	3,679	5,721	2,042
2014	1,079,839	5%	1,426	2,780	1,354
2015	1,375,536	20%	1,699	3,483	1,784
2016	2,299,679	60%	3,535	6,598	3,063
2017	3,732,527	85%	5,011	9,652	4,641
2018	1,984,723	35%	2,933	5,723	2,790
2019	3,049,485	75%	4,842	7,662	2,820
2020	1,457,500	20%	2,484	3,877	1,393
2021	1,160,082	5%	1,371	2,771	1,400
2022	1,267,989	5%	1,891	2,434	543
2023	3,415,279	100%	3,809	8,226	4,417
2024	1,987,597	40%	4,076	5,550	1,474
2025	2,130,703	50%	3,840	5,870	2,030

¹ Source: Department of Water Resources' State Water Project Analysis Office. (In addition to Table A water, reported deliveries include Article 56 carryover water, Article 21 interruptible water, Flexible Storage withdrawal water, Advanced Table A water, Human Health & Safety water, and other non-SWP deliveries.)



conditions for protected fish species. DWR works in close coordination with USBR, California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), National Marine Fisheries Service, and United States Fish and Wildlife Service on Delta operations. They also meet twice a month with the SWP Contractors on water supply planning and operations.

In June, because the Water Year was classified as above normal, DWR began tidal operation of the Suisun Marsh Salinity Control Gates (SMSCG) for 60 days, in compliance with its ITP. With tidal operation of the SMSCG, the gates are opened during the outgoing tide to allow fresh water into Suisun Marsh and closed during incoming tide to keep higher salinity water out of the Marsh. Suisun Bay is the largest brackish water wetland on the West Coast, where salt water from San Francisco Bay meets fresh water from the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. The Marsh provides a unique habitat that is essential for sensitive, endemic species that are not found elsewhere in the state. Tidal operation of the SMSCG is one of the mechanisms DWR uses to ensure the water quality is fresh enough to promote waterfowl habitat.

Lake Oroville began July at 120 percent of the historical average. Total storage continued to decrease throughout the rest of the Water Year. July through September were primary months for moving stored water from Oroville to support exports from the Delta, and to manage temperatures in the Feather River, essential for the survival of Chinook salmon. Because of the Above Normal Water Year classification, there were additional actions implemented to improve habitat for the endangered Delta smelt, a fish endemic to the Delta.

By October 1, precipitation statewide for Water Year 2025 was about average. However, there was a notable disparity in the amount of precipitation in the northern and southern watersheds, with the Sacramento Valley classified as above normal, and the San Joaquin Valley classified as below normal. The majority of precipitation came from storms in late November/early December 2024, and again in late January/early February 2025. Peak storage at Oroville (3.42 million acre-feet) was reached on June 4.

Long-Term Operations Incidental Take Permit

Under the California Endangered Species Act (CESA), DWR is required to obtain an Incidental Take Permit (ITP) to minimize, avoid, and fully mitigate impacts to threatened or endangered species that may result from SWP operations. An ITP allows a permittee to take a CESA-listed species if such taking is incidental to, and not the purpose of, carrying out an otherwise lawful activity. In November 2024, CDFW issued an ITP to DWR that allows for the taking of five CESA-listed fish species at the SWP's Harvey O. Banks Pumping Plant in the South Delta: spring-run salmon, winter-run salmon, Delta smelt, longfin smelt, and white sturgeon. The ITP requires DWR to manage the water it exports through the Delta and to the San Joaquin Valley and Southern California carefully, adapting operations to minimize impacts to five listed species when they are present in the system. This new set of operational rules provide species protection for listed species while generating water supply reliability.

Working with CDFW, DWR has designed a robust science and monitoring program to help provide real-time information for managing take of listed species at the SWP pumps. In addition, the ITP invested in the construction of a non-physical barrier at Georgiana Slough that is intended to keep migrating juvenile salmon in the Sacramento River, rather than the interior Delta where they are subject to take at the pumps. Initial studies show the migration barrier has been approximately 85% effective in keeping salmon moving down the Sacramento River. DWR is also using newly developed state-of-the-art DNA tools to confirm species identification within hours of collection at the SWP fish screening facility. Real-time exports are modified based on these genetic tests that determine listed salmon runs from non-listed salmon runs. Other conservation measures include salmonids protection during multi-year droughts, investments in science to advance salmon forecasting tools for real-time management, and a longfin smelt culture program.

ANNUAL BUDGET AND COST PLANNING

The SWP has long-term, legally binding contracts with the 29 local public water agencies, known as the SWP Contractors. The SWP operates as an enterprise fund for the State, charging external users, as opposed to government entities, and its debt is backed solely by the SWP Contractor charges.

The 29 SWP Contractors are responsible for the reimbursable costs of operating the SWP, which includes water supply and power, water storage, water conveyance, operations and maintenance (O&M), and regulatory compliance, which in total amounts to more than 95 percent of the SWP’s revenue. Non-reimbursable costs – or those not covered by SWP Contractors – include the cost-sharing portion of joint-use facilities with the CVP, and flood control purposes. Recreation, and fish and wildlife enhancement, are paid for by other means, such as through annual State General Fund appropriations, but in recent years the SWP Contractors have covered any shortfall in funding.

Major State Water Project Programs

SWP’s \$1.2 billion annual revenue supports more than 100 programs, including:

- Strategic Plan & Strategic Risk Management
- SWP Operations Planning/Model Development
- Long-Term Operations Biological Opinion and Incidental Take Permit Compliance
- Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) Relicensing
- Power Planning and Contracts
- Financial Management Enhancement Program
- Strategic Asset Management
- California Aqueduct Subsidence Program

Capital improvements to the SWP are financed through the issuance of water system revenue bonds. Full repayment of these bond funds is being made by SWP Contractors, rather than by California taxpayers.

The 2025 SWP budget is \$1.128 billion. \$720 million of that is the expense of O&M. \$408 million is for planned capital projects expenditures. Power is a variable cost and is planned separately and depends on dynamic power markets, hydrology, and water delivery. For example, in 2024 the net cost of power was \$188.5 million.

DWR continues operating the SWP with stable revenues provided by the SWP Contractors. DWR requires that all program expenditures are managed

within the annual budget. Federal funding challenges impact capital planning for the SWP-CVP joint-use facilities. DWR is actively working with its federal partners on navigating those challenges.

The SWP costs are increasing. Despite pressures on the affordability of the SWP from climate change, infrastructure needs, and regulatory requirements, the SWP is considered the most economical water source in California. Currently, total SWP assets are reported in its financial statement at approximately \$9.3 billion, benefiting California’s people and environment. Continued investment to maintain and enhance the SWP is critical to California’s economy.



PHOTO COURTESY DWR

Foundation work takes place for a 400,000-gallon water storage tank as part of the fire safety modernization project at the Dos Amigos Pumping Plant in Merced County.

Top Capital Projects in 2025-2026 Planning*

- San Luis Field Division Fire Safety Modernization - \$66.9M
- Perris Dam Remediation Project, Emergency Release Facilities - \$57.4M
- Yolo Bypass Salmonid Habitat Restoration and Fish Passage Project (Big Notch) - \$41.6M
- Oroville River Valve Outlet System - \$33.7M
- Sisk Dam Remediation Construction - \$29.5M
- Subsidence and Groundwater Monitoring - \$26.4M
- Oroville Dam 13.8KV Feeder Line and Fiber Optic Cable Replacement - \$22.4M
- Joint-Operation Center Relocation Project Construction - \$18.3M
- Oroville Emergency Response – Site Restoration - \$17.9M

* State Water Plan planning is on calendar year basis. Total planned capital expenditure is \$408 million for 2025 and \$356 million for 2026 (planning completed December 2024). Capital expenditure is typically around one third of the total operation expenditure (excluding power).



PHOTO COURTESY DWR

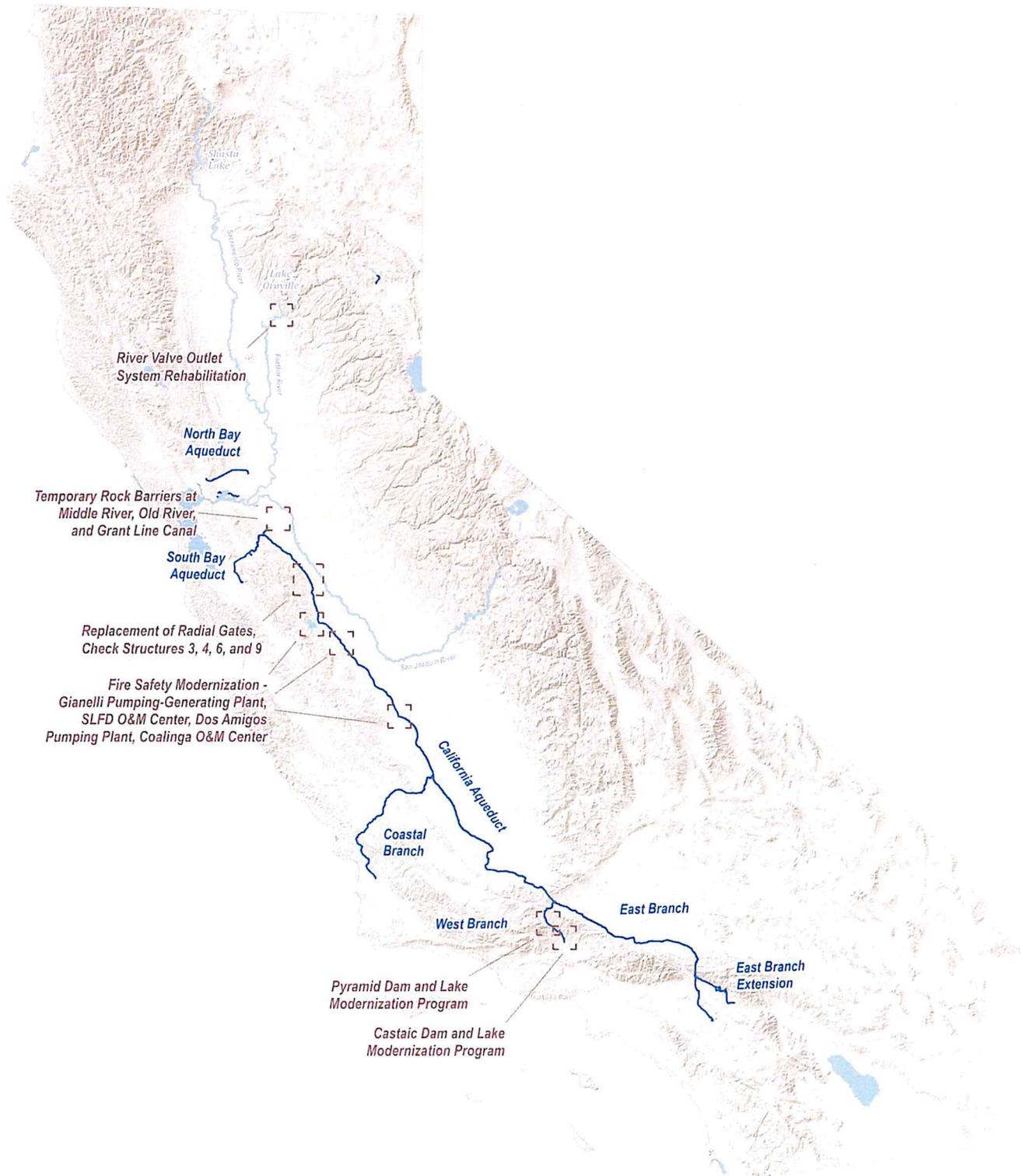
Installation of a radial gate on the California Aqueduct. Check structures control the water level and flow by raising and lowering the radial gates.

2025 SWP CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

One of the largest expenses for the SWP is construction and maintenance of their facilities. These facilities ensure adequate water supplies are available under various hydrologic and legal conditions while maintaining operational flexibility. The system is aging and there is a lot of work that takes place to optimize performance. Key construction activities undertaken in the past year to manage and maintain the SWP occurred across its entire length and included all major facility types – dams, canals, pipelines, and pumping and generating plants. The four examples that follow are a sampling of the more than 26 active projects and programs in 2025 that contribute to the no-fail operation of the SWP.

Replacement of Radial Gates and Check Structures 3, 4, 6, and 9

Check structures control the water level and flow on the California Aqueduct by raising and lowering the radial gates. Located south of Sacramento, these gates and structures are near each other, so they were consolidated under a single contract. Some need repairs based on their condition, others need to be completely replaced. Once they reach a certain level of deterioration it is more feasible to replace the entire gate.





ANDREW NIXON/DWR

Large valves are transported on a barge up the Diversion Pool to Oroville Dam. DWR is updating Oroville Dam's River Valve Outlet System (RVOS) to ensure the ability to discharge cold water to the Feather River to maintain water temperatures necessary for fish health, especially during periods of drought.

Eight Construction contracts completed in 2025

Total amount: \$64 million

- River Valve Outlet System Rehabilitation, Oroville Dam Diversion Tunnel No. 2
- Temporary Rock Barriers, Middle River, Old River, and Grant Line Canal
- Electric vehicle charging station infrastructure
- Abandoned pipes and conduits removal, Sacramento River
- Canal improvements, Palermo Canal
- Roofing replacement, Edmonston Pumping Plant
- Roofing replacement, Operations and Maintenance Center surveillance unit and vehicle storage buildings
- Chippis Island Phase 2B north parcel interim management and levee repairs

River Valve Outlet System Rehabilitation - Oroville Dam Diversion Tunnel No. 2

This is a diversion tunnel underneath the Oroville Dam. In the original construction of the Oroville Dam, the diversion tunnels allowed the water to go by as the dam was built up. Diversion Tunnel 2 was also used to allow water to pass through the dam (low-level outlet) during the initial filling of the reservoir. It went unused until 20 years ago when cold water requirements in the river required them to re-engage and use the low-level outlet on a routine basis.

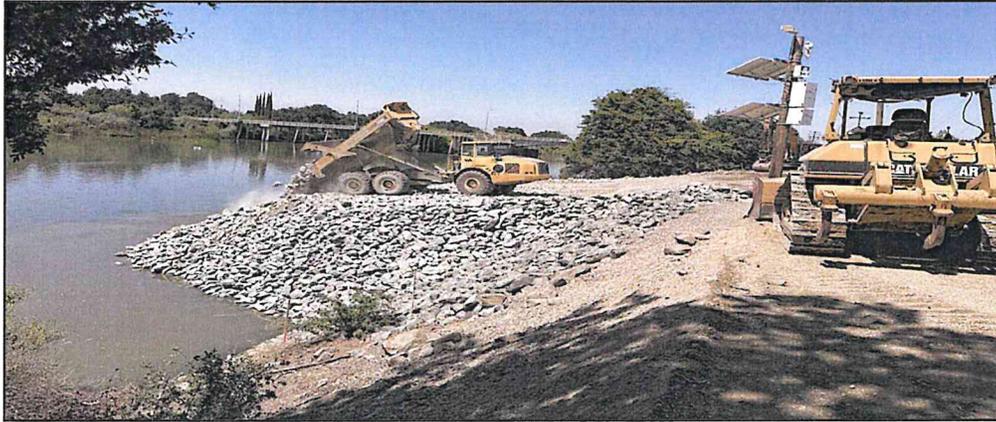


PHOTO COURTESY DWR

A temporary rock barrier is being installed on the Grant Line Canal. Rock barriers prevent salinity from going upstream, allowing higher water levels so agriculture can pull water safely.

Because of the added use, there was a need to maintain and update the two upstream valves. Since there is no way to isolate them from the high-pressure water flow from the dam, two new valves were added on the downstream side, and a much-reduced section of a thrust wall that carries the load of all the water pressure (650-foot water elevation) was put in. More than two million pounds of force is carried through the thrust wall.

Fire Safety Modernization

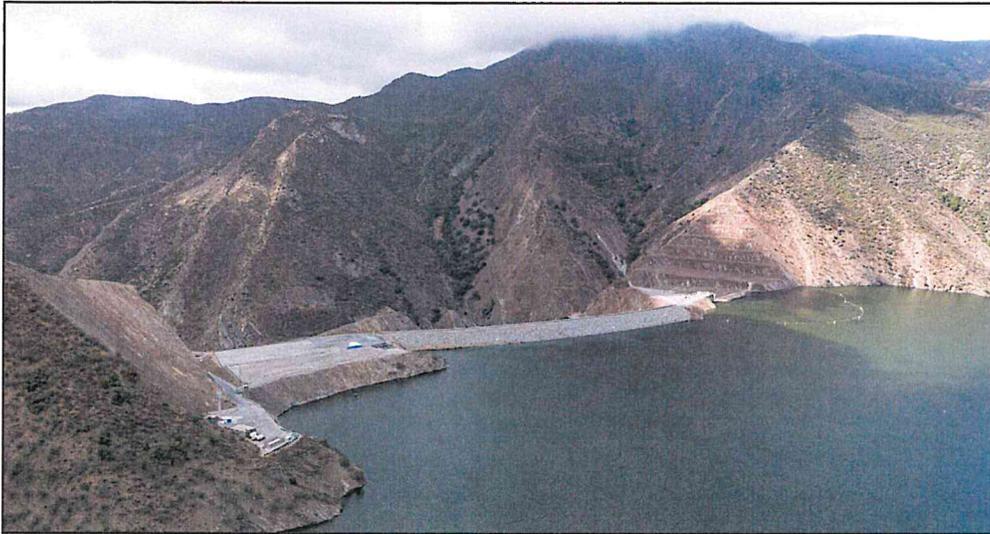
Fire safety modernization is currently underway at the Gianelli Pumping-Generating Plant, San Luis Field Division Operations and Maintenance Center, Dos Amigos Pumping Plant, and Coalinga Operations and Maintenance Center. When these facilities were first put into operation the fire safety was not as in-depth as it is now. The modernization project includes much needed updates including the installation of water tanks and an emergency egress.

Temporary Rock Barriers

Rock barriers are installed on a frequent basis around the Delta for water quality control. They prevent salinity from going upstream, allowing higher water levels upstream so agriculture can pull water safely. Large-diameter rip rap forms much of the barrier. Culverts allow for regulated water control. They are installed and removed annually so they are not in place during flood season. Current rock barriers being installed are on the Middle River, Old River, and Grant Line Canal.

Pyramid Dam Modernization Program

Pyramid Dam and Lake provide regulatory storage for the Castaic Powerplant, serve as an afterbay for the William E. Warne Powerplant, and emergency storage for SWP deliveries. Constructed between 1969 and 1973, Pyramid Dam is a 400-foot-high, zoned earth and rockfill dam, with a 1,090-foot crest length, and impounds 169,090 acre-feet of water. The Angeles Tunnel conveys water to and from Pyramid Lake to Castaic Powerplant for power generation. Operation of the



XAVIER MASCAREÑAS/DWR

Pyramid Lake and Dam. Pyramid Lake, a reservoir located in Los Angeles County, is formed by Pyramid Dam on Piru Creek near Castaic, California.

lake is governed by the pump-back operations, which involves pumping water from a lower reservoir to an upper reservoir, typically for hydroelectric or water management purposes. The lake level depends on whether the Los Angeles Water and Power Department is pumping or generating.

Initiated in 2018, the Pyramid Dam Modernization program evaluates facility performance and original design in consideration of current seismic and hydrologic loadings (the understanding of faults and ground motions). It also considers modern standards and analysis methodologies, which are far more robust than what they had in the 1960s, when the dam was built.

Key milestones accomplished to date include:

- Between 2018 and 2021, DWR completed detailed inspections, invasive coring, and structural analysis of the spillway chute.
- In 2019, DWR established winter operations for Pyramid Lake to reduce the likelihood of using the emergency spillway while studies are underway to understand its erodibility.
- In 2020, DWR completed the Level 2 semi-quantitative risk analysis for Pyramid Dam.
- In 2020, DWR completed a geotechnical investigation of the emergency spillway, including the installation of piezometers. The investigation helped inform a Phase 1 erodibility analysis completed in 2022. A more sophisticated Phase 2 erodibility analysis will be completed in 2026.
- In 2022, DWR completed the investigation of the Palomas segment of the San Gabriel fault to better understand potential ground motions. The fault segment is located about three kilometers from Pyramid Dam.



KEN JAMES/DWR

Castaic Lake in Los Angeles County is part of the West Branch of the State Water Project and is created by the Castaic Dam on Castaic Creek.

- In 2022, DWR completed a structural analysis of the low-level outlet's intake tower and Angeles Tunnel intake tower with current earthquake ground motions.
- In 2025, DWR completed the Pyramid Dam Safety Assessment, which leveraged the investigations and studies performed over the past few years to examine, evaluate, and prioritize potential vulnerabilities to the facility, and identify potential risk reductions measures that DWR may consider implementing as part of its overall risk management of SWP infrastructure.

Consistent with modern dam safety best practices and the regulatory requirements of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), which has regulatory oversight of Pyramid Dam, DWR uses risk-informed decision-making to inform the need for and prioritization of studies and future improvements to the dam. It is anticipated that future modifications of Pyramid Dam would include gated spillway seismic retrofits, emergency spillway erosion protection, and outlet works/valve seismic retrofits.

Castaic Dam Modernization Program

Castaic Lake and the 425-foot-high zoned earthen embankment dam are the terminus of the West Branch of the California Aqueduct. Constructed between 1966 and 1974, the 320,000-acre-foot capacity lake provides water supply for more than five million Californians, as well as regulatory and emergency storage. Recreation is managed by the Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation.

The Castaic Dam Modernization program was initiated in 2018 to evaluate facility performance and design by considering current seismic and hydrologic loadings, modern standards, and analysis methodologies. Consistent with its

other modernization programs, DWR's SWP uses risk-informed decision-making to inform the need for and prioritization of studies and future improvements. Focused studies include instrumentation upgrades, seismic loading on the high and low towers and left abutment, and how much movement is left in terms of expansion on the spillway due to its expanding clay bedrock foundation.

Key milestones to date included the following:

- In 2019, DWR established winter operations for Castaic Lake to reduce the likelihood of using the spillway while studies are underway to understand the rate and distribution of the uplift of concrete panels, and deflections to the spillway walls driven by the expansive foundation rock.
- Between 2019 and 2024, DWR performed a geotechnical investigation, installed additional dam safety instrumentation, and performed stability analyses for the left abutment area of the dam which experienced instability during construction of the dam.
- Between 2020 and 2022, DWR completed a geotechnical investigation and installed dam safety instrumentation within the spillway to better understand the geologic conditions and distribution and rate of deflections caused by the underlying expansive rock foundation. Uplift and deflections to the spillway have been monitored since its construction and appears to be driven by the slow penetration of groundwater into the expansive clay bedrock foundation. The new instrumentation will better inform alternatives and designs for the spillway's rehabilitation.
- In 2021, DWR completed the Level 2 semi-quantitative risk analysis for Castaic Dam.
- In 2021, DWR completed retrofits of the Tower Bridge which included the addition of carbon-fiber reinforcement to bridge piers to improve seismic performance. This required advanced communication and planning with local partners and the community due to the reservoir drawdown needed to complete construction.
- In 2024, DWR completed the Castaic Dam Safety Assessment, which leveraged the investigations and studies performed in prior years to examine, evaluate, and prioritize potential vulnerabilities to the facility and identify potential risk reductions measures that DWR may consider implementing as part of its overall risk management of the SWP.
- In 2025, the SWP advanced the design of a debris containment risk reduction measure for the low-level outlet works which would increase the post-earthquake reliability of the outlet works. DWR plans to finalize the design in 2026 with construction spanning 2027 and 2028.
- In 2025, DWR developed plans for the replacement of aging dam safety instrumentation, with installation planned for 2026 and 2027.

It is anticipated that future modifications of Castaic Dam would include outlet tower debris mitigation, instrumentation upgrades, and spillway rehabilitation.

FUTURE: PREPARING FOR UNCERTAINTY



NINA SHOCKEY/DWR

A view of newly installed equipment from the California Department of Water Resources' Sustainable Groundwater Management Office to enhance the monitoring and understanding of land subsidence in California. The newly installed GPS station and remote sensing calibration equipment are firmly anchored into the ground to ensure precise positioning and detect vertical movement of the Earth's surface.

CLIMATE ADAPTATION STRATEGIES

In August 2025, DWR released a new report, State Water Project Adaptation Strategy, that examines how a combination of strategies can help the SWP maintain reliable water deliveries to 27 million Californians despite hotter temperatures, more extreme storms, more severe droughts, and higher sea levels. This first-ever report details more than a dozen different actions DWR is already taking or evaluating.

If there is not a continued investment in the system, and if subsidence is not addressed, there will be a steep decline in delivery capability over the next 20 years. If the only actions taken are to address subsidence and maintain the system, there will be a decline in the ability to operate because of the changing hydrology due to climate change. If new features are added, such as Forecast Informed Reservoir Operations (FIRO) and the Delta Conveyance Project (DCP), as well as new storage, that set of actions will help improve the system's yield even with the effects of climate change.

Currently the SWP's average annual delivery capability is approximately 2.19 million acre-feet/year. By 2043 the combined actions could help the SWP exceed current delivery capability by 200,000 acre-feet/year. By 2085 the combined

Key Takeaways of the Climate Adaptation Strategy

- Continued maintenance and restoration of SWP infrastructure is the highest priority.
- On its own, the Delta Conveyance Project (DCP) is the single most effective strategy to adapt to a changing climate and maintain water supply reliability. It also amplifies the effectiveness of other strategies.
- FIRO is a safe, effective, and low-cost strategy. It should be implemented as soon as possible in coordination with United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) approvals.
- Additional South-of-Delta water storage is also a promising strategy. Additional storage, especially when paired with the DCP, can help improve drought resilience.
- DWR should continue to pursue adaptation strategies like water supply forecast improvements and Feather River watershed management. These may be difficult to value, but likely will deliver real benefits and foster future adaptations.
- Each strategy responds to different climate stressors such as increasing drought frequency, more extreme precipitation, earlier runoff, and sea level rise, and a combination of responses is needed.
- Implementation of a portfolio of strategies brings greater adaptation than the sum of individual strategies.

actions could help the SWP maintain delivery capability close to current levels.

The Climate Adaptation Strategy describes 17 strategies that the SWP is pursuing to address anticipated effects of climate change. It quantitatively evaluates five of these to show how they would be expected to change the future of SWP reliability, enhance resilience, increase flexibility and efficiency, minimize risks, and ensure the sustainability of the system.

The plan concludes that, while climate change will alter the state's hydrology leading to less water for delivery, and subsidence in the California Aqueduct will reduce the SWP's ability to deliver water, a portfolio of actions can offset much of the decline.

DELIVERY CAPABILITY REPORT ADDENDUM: IMPACTS OF SUBSIDENCE

The Delivery Capability Report (DCR) is used widely both within and outside the SWP for water supply planning. The information in these reports is a key component of the drought planning done by the SWP and is fundamental to the drought planning done by the Public Water Agencies that receive SWP and Central Valley Project water. This year, DWR issued an addendum to the report that also analyzes how ongoing subsidence will impact the operation of the SWP.

It predicts what the effects of climate change will be 20 years from now, how that will change the ability to move water through the system, and what will happen if we do not take actions to address subsidence.

In 2025, there was a three percent reduction in the ability to move water due to subsidence. Twenty years out, this report outlines that there could be an 18 to 87 percent reduction, which is profoundly significant. The DCR explains why interim projects to address subsidence are necessary, but a comprehensive project in the future is also vital for future conveyance. Through the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA), DWR is working with Groundwater Sustainability Agencies to stabilize subsidence.

FORECAST-INFORMED RESERVOIR OPERATIONS

DWR, along with federal and local water agencies, has developed a Forecast Informed Reservoir Operations (FIRO) program. This program leverages recent advancements in scientific forecasting of atmospheric rivers (AR) to anticipate and manage large storm events while maximizing opportunities to increase water supply. FIRO is one of the ways DWR is optimizing its operations to proactively respond to some of the greatest risks and opportunities posed by a changing climate and extreme weather.

DWR, in coordination with U.C. San Diego Scripps Institution of Oceanography Center for Western Weather and Water Extremes (CW3E), USACE, Yuba Water Agency, and the National Weather Service are working on this critical initiative at two locations: Lake Oroville and New Bullards Bar. Starting in 2019, the agencies participated in a five-year effort through the development of the Yuba-Feather FIRO Steering Committee to assess the viability of FIRO in the Yuba Feather watershed. The Final Viability Report was posted on the Scripps website in Spring 2025.

Research has found that AR type storms produce essentially all the flooding in California, and about 50 percent of annual rain. The number, size, and strength of ARs annually make or break the Water Year in the West. In northern California, 85 percent of the variance in annual precipitation is due to the variance in the five percent of the wettest days each year, which are almost all AR events.

How FIRO works:

FIRO leverages improved forecasting tools into the operational decision making.

FIRO assesses the possibility of giving the reservoir operator more flexibility to keep a little more water in the reservoir after a storm, in case there is not another storm coming. If there is a big storm coming, they can let more water go.

This creates additional reservoir capacity to manage incoming inflows. Additionally, there is potential to improve water supply reliability and increase hydropower generation, both valuable assets.



ANDREW NIXON/DWR

Leaders from the USACE, Sonoma Water, University of California San Diego's Scripps Institution of Oceanography and DWR pose for a photo after they commemorated the signing of a new water control manual for Coyote Valley Dam and Lake Mendocino. The revised manual redefines the operating rules around flood control schedules for the first time in the dam's 66-year history by incorporating the principles of modern-day forecast-informed reservoir operations, or FIRO, to enhance the facility's dual mission of flood risk management and water supply security.

AR reconnaissance over the Pacific Ocean improves forecasting abilities of anticipated rain, snow, and flooding on the west coast of the United States. AR reconnaissance combines data collection by aircraft with specialized ocean and satellite observations, and research on weather models, and.

At Lake Mendocino, in Northern California, reservoir operators use FIRO and AR forecasts to support operations in both drought and flood years. In Water Year 2025, more than 10,000 acre-feet of additional water was stored, meaning more water for the summer.

The USACE is evaluating the use of FIRO in all new Water Control Manual (WCM) updates. The WCM contains specifications for storage and releases from reservoirs and outlines policies and data protocols for flood risk management operations and drought contingency operations. This opens the door for California to explore implementing FIRO broadly as an adaptation strategy to climate change. It is one of many tools the State and its federal and local agency partners are using to reduce the risk of flooding and improve water supply in wet years as California adapts to a hotter, drier future.

DWR meets regularly with the USACE to coordinate flood operations and to balance flood risk reduction operations and water supply conservation within the rules of the WCM. In Water Year 2025, with extensive coordination with USACE water managers, DWR made controlled water releases from Lake Oroville to maintain the required flood space.

2025 FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

2025 FINDINGS

The Commission finds that, in 2025, DWR:

- Operated the SWP to provide water supply to meet minimum health and safety needs, meet environmental needs to protect endangered species, conserve water storage to meet future critical needs, provide downstream flood risk reduction, and deliver water based on priority or water rights. (see pages 11-14)
- Responded to the annual precipitation and snowpack conditions, capturing and storing stormwaters, and increasing storage in its reservoirs. (see pages 11-14)
- Showed a commitment to enhancing the safety culture among its employees by making use of safety metrics and data collection to identify trends and reduce injuries, illnesses, and unsafe conditions. (see page 9)
- Used the best available science to optimize and inform its operations. (see pages 24-27)
- Made efforts to minimize, avoid, and fully mitigate impacts to threatened or endangered species that may result from SWP operations. (see page 14)
- Improved long-term project planning to anticipate and adapt to climate change, infrastructure needs, and regulatory requirements. (see pages 24-27)
- Apprised the Commission of its financial goals, SWP budget, and cost projections, indicating that its 2025 approved SWP budget was \$1.128 billion, including operations and capital costs. (see page 15)
- Informed the Commission about key construction activities undertaken in the past year to manage and maintain the SWP, including the replacement of several radial gates and check structures, the rehabilitation of Oroville Dam's river valve outlet system, and modernization programs at Pyramid and Castaic Lakes. (see pages 18-23)

2025 RECOMMENDATIONS

The Commission recommends that DWR:

- In recognition of the pressing water management challenges subsidence presents, work closely with other government agencies and private entities to mitigate subsidence on the California Aqueduct that reduces operating flexibility and capacity.
- Explore the alignment of additional financial mechanisms and funding sources, like beneficiary pay models, to support the long-term operation, maintenance, and resilience of the SWP, especially in lean fiscal years.



COURTESY/CALIFORNIA WATER COMMISSION

The California water Commission held their November meeting at Pyramid Lake in Southern California, followed by a tour of Castaic Dam and Lake.

- Support ecosystem functions and the protection of listed species through water management that adheres to environmental regulations.
- Inform the Commission of current construction activities and long-term plans for aging infrastructure repair.
- Inform the Commission of efforts to advance the SWP Adaptation Strategy, including the overall importance of the Delta Conveyance Project.

CONTINUING RECOMMENDATIONS

The Commission recommends that DWR continue to:

- Reduce its carbon footprint and make the SWP’s power portfolio 100 percent renewable and carbon neutral by December 2035. (2023 Annual Review)
- Move boldly and swiftly to incorporate natural and innovative infrastructure solutions to address challenges associated with climate change, including implementation of the Climate Adaptation Plan, and the completion of interim action projects to mitigate subsidence in the California Aqueduct. (2024 Annual Review)
- Accelerate operational changes that allow the SWP to better address extreme hydrology, such as Forecast-Informed Reservoir Operations, sub-seasonal ridging forecasts, snow surveys, and downstream river stage forecast models. (2024 Annual Review)
- Work in conjunction with State Water Project Contractors and other water users to capture excess stormwaters and runoff to refill reservoirs and recharge groundwater basins. (2024 Annual Review)

CONCLUSION

This document fulfills the Commission's requirement to review the progress of the construction and operation of the SWP. The Commission has determined that DWR is working to maintain the operations of the SWP, preparing for and responding to climate extremes, and maintaining operational flexibility so that the SWP continues to benefit California. The Commission requests that DWR continue to keep the Commission informed of operations and construction activities in 2026. These findings and recommendations will be presented to DWR and the Legislature.



California Water Commission
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Appellate court's ruling delivers a setback to state water tunnel plans



A VIEW of the Sacramento River last year. (Josh Edelson For The Times)

BY IAN JAMES

In a decision that could complicate Gov. Gavin Newsom's push to build a giant water tunnel and remake California's water system, a state appeals court has rejected the state's plan for financing the project.

The 3rd District Court of Appeal ruled against the state Department of Water Resources' plan to issue billions of dollars in bonds to build the 45-mile tunnel beneath the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta.

The decision is a win for California ratepayers and taxpayers, said Roger Moore, a lawyer representing six counties in Northern California and two water agencies in the Delta region.

He said it underlines that state agencies "have to take real steps to make sure that there is transparency and accountability."

Upholding a 2024 decision by a Sacramento County Superior Court judge, the court [ruled](#) the water agency does not have the authority under a 1959 law to issue bonds for a new "unit" of the State Water Project, which delivers water from the Delta to farms and cities, and "exceeded its delegated authority" in planning to finance the tunnel through bonds.

Kirsten Macintyre, a spokesperson for the department, said the court didn't say the Department of Water Resources lacks the authority to build the project or borrow funds to pay for it, but rather that the description the state presented in the case was "overly broad."

“While DWR respectfully disagrees with that conclusion, we have taken additional steps to resolve the issue,” she said in an email.

Last year, the agency opened a second court case in an effort to confirm its bond-issuing authority, a step that Macintyre said was taken to “address the court’s concerns.”

If the appeals court decision stands and the ongoing case doesn’t bring a different conclusion, it might lead the Newsom administration to revise its plan for financing the project. Officials could also petition for the California Supreme Court to hear the case.

The state [estimated in 2024 that](#) the tunnel would cost \$20.1 billion, while opponents say it could cost [three to five times more](#) than that.

State officials have said that the tunnel, called the [Delta Conveyance Project](#), ultimately would be paid for by participating water agencies that agree to [repay the bonds](#).

The tunnel would create a second route to transport water from new intakes on the Sacramento River to the south side of the Delta, where pumps send water into the aqueducts of the State Water Project.

The system of aqueducts and pipelines transports water from the Delta to 27 million people in cities from the Bay Area to San Diego, and to 750,000 acres of farmland.

In 1960, California voters approved bonds for the construction of the State Water Project. Legislation in 1959 had given the Department of Water Resources the authority to build the Feather River Project, an initial component of the State Water Project.

But in the ruling last week, the court said DWR officials were wrong to rely on that provision. The three judges said it doesn’t allow the agency to issue bonds “under the guise of a ‘further modification’ ” of that original water system.

Newsom has said the project is essential for the state’s future and has made it a central priority of his administration.

State officials and supporters of the project have said the tunnel would [modernize the state’s water system](#) for more severe droughts and deluges with climate change, and would withstand sea level rise and the risks of a major earthquake in the region.

Opponents, including environmental advocates, fishing groups and tribal leaders, argue the project would harm the Delta’s communities and ecosystem.

NOTEBOOK FEATURE: Protecting public health: Inside the Division of Drinking Water

mavensnotebook.com/2026/01/13/notebook-feature-protecting-public-health-inside-the-division-of-drinking-water/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery

Water quality, Maven

January 13, 2026



Water quality

Maven

The State Water Board's Division of Drinking Water (DDW) plays a critical role in ensuring the safety and reliability of drinking water for communities across the state. With regulatory authority over public drinking water systems, the DDW is responsible for enforcing both state and federal drinking water standards under the Safe Drinking Water Act. This includes overseeing water quality monitoring, permitting, and compliance for thousands of water systems, ranging from small rural providers to large urban utilities. The division also works to protect public health by addressing emerging contaminants, supporting infrastructure improvements, and providing technical assistance to water systems.

The November meeting of the California Water Quality Monitoring Council included several presentations from staff from the State Water Board's Division of Drinking Water. These presentations provided an overview of the division's role, explored the complexities of drinking water data, and addressed the challenges posed by wildfires to

the safety and reliability of drinking water systems. This article focuses on the Division of Drinking Water, while part two will delve into the impacts of wildfires on drinking water safety and reliability.

The Division of Drinking Water, originally established in 1915 as the Bureau of Sanitary Engineering under the Department of Public Health, was created in response to waterborne disease outbreaks, including a typhoid outbreak in Santa Ana.

The Division oversees public water systems, defined as those that provide water for human consumption through pipes or other constructed conveyances. These systems must have at least 15 service connections or regularly serve a minimum of 25 individuals daily for at least 60 days per year. The term “public” in this context refers to serving the public, regardless of whether the system is privately or publicly governed. For example, private water companies that provide water to the public are still classified as public water systems.

Types of “Public” Water Systems

Public Water System is defined as system for the provision of human consumption through pipes or constructed conveyance that has 15 or more service connections or regularly serves at least 25 individuals daily at least 60 days out of the year.

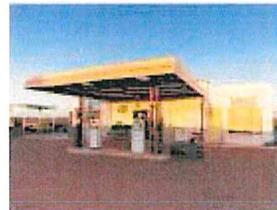
Community Water Systems



Non-community



Non transient – non community



Transient

California Water Boards

Public water systems are divided into two main categories:

- **Community water systems:** These include municipal water systems and large utilities that serve residential populations.
- **Non-community water systems:** These include systems at businesses or schools, as well as transient water systems, such as those found in state parks, roadside restaurants, or gas stations, where individuals typically visit for short periods.

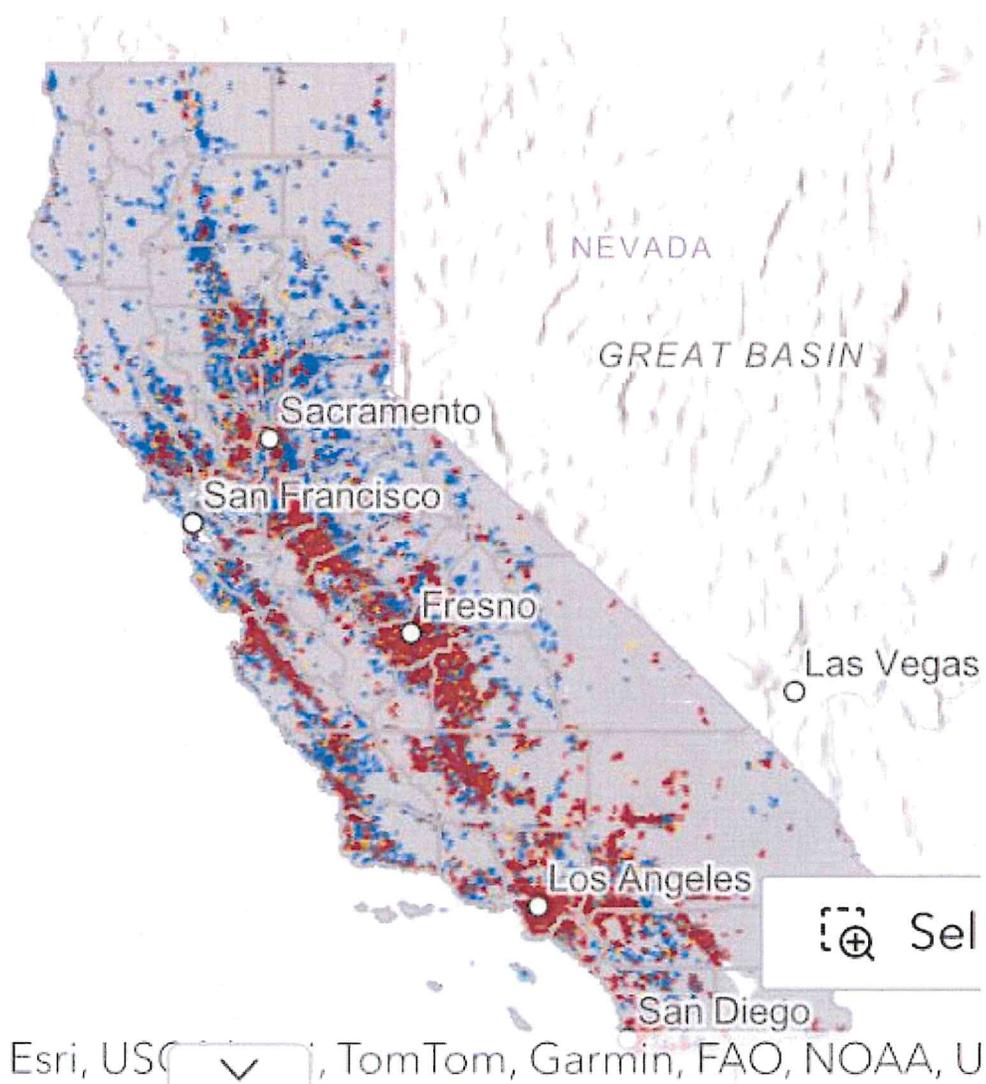
This distinction is significant because community water systems are subject to comprehensive water sampling due to the long-term exposure of residents. In contrast, transient water systems are not tested for certain substances because individuals are

only exposed to the water for short periods.



Certain county environmental health departments serve as designated Local Primacy Agencies (LPAs), responsible for regulating water systems with fewer than 200 connections. Examples of these counties include Contra Costa, Plumas, and Kings, among others. These counties are highlighted in blue on the slide.

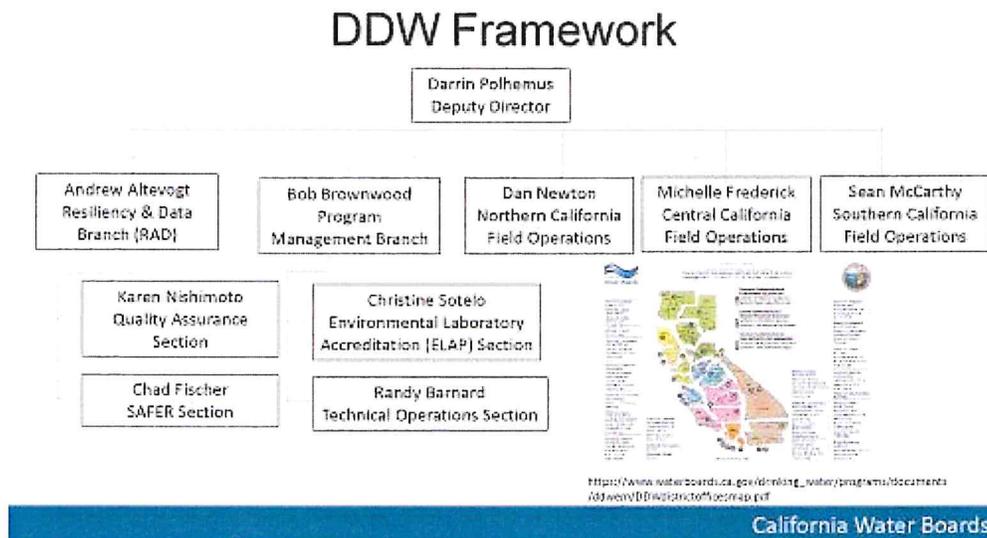
State Small Water Systems (SSWS) are smaller-scale water systems that typically serve between 5 and 14 connections. While they provide drinking water, they do not meet the size thresholds required for classification as larger public water systems. These systems often supply water to rural areas, mobile home parks, or small subdivisions. County environmental health departments oversee State Small Water Systems and may also have additional regulatory requirements for domestic wells.



As part of the Safe and Affordable Funding for Equity and Resiliency (SAFER) program, the Division of Drinking Water (DDW) developed the aquifer risk map to identify potential contaminants that may be present in the groundwater used by state small water systems and domestic wells. This map is shared with county environmental health teams to provide insight into possible groundwater risks within their areas.

It is important to note that the aquifer risk map highlights contaminants that might be present in the groundwater based on available data, but it does not confirm their presence. Testing is required to verify whether these contaminants are actually present in the groundwater.

Division of Drinking Water Organization



The Division of Drinking Water (DDW) is organized into five branches, each with distinct responsibilities to ensure safe and reliable drinking water across California:

Resiliency and Data Branch: This branch focuses on data management, mapping tools, needs assessments, and the SAFER program. It includes:

- **Quality Assurance Section:** Ensures the accuracy, validity, and legal defensibility of data within drinking water management systems.
- **SAFER Drinking Water Section:** Works to provide safe, affordable, and accessible drinking water to all Californians by utilizing funding tools and collaborating with water systems and communities to address water quality issues.

Program Management Branch: This branch oversees technical operations, recycled water programs, and the Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program (ELAP). It includes:

- **Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program (ELAP):** Evaluates and accredits environmental testing laboratories.
- **Technical Operations Section:** Supports the development and implementation of regulations and standards to ensure an effective drinking water program and public health protection.

Field Operations Branches (Northern, Central, and Southern California): Divided into Northern, Central, and Southern California regions, these branches enforce the federal and California Safe Drinking Water Acts (SDWAs) and oversee approximately 7,300 public water systems. Responsibilities include emergency response, inspections,

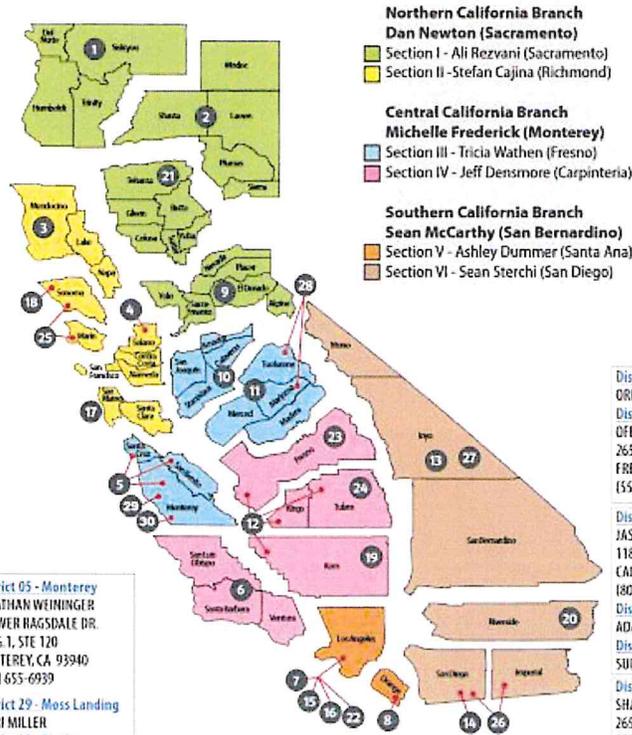
permitting, enforcement, reviewing water quality data, and promoting drought preparedness and water conservation. Field staff also conduct source water assessments, evaluate recycled water projects, and support water system security.



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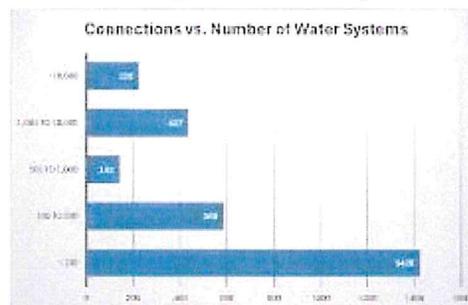
California's public drinking water systems

Range of Water Systems in CA

Number of Water Systems

- 2,820 Community WS
- 1,450 Non-transient WS
- 2,997 Transient WS

Size Range of Community WS



Greater than 10,000 connections represents 33 million people.

The Division of Drinking Water oversees a network of approximately 7,300 public water systems across California, each playing a vital role in delivering safe drinking water to communities.

These systems break down into three main categories:

- **Community water systems:** Around 2,800 systems serve residential areas, ranging from massive utilities to tiny neighborhood co-ops. Notably, just 226 of these systems supply water to 33 million Californians, highlighting the scale of some of the state's largest providers. On the other end of the spectrum, about 1,400 community systems have fewer than 100 connections, often run by small mutual water companies or local well-sharing groups.
- **Non-transient water systems:** Approximately 1,450 systems serve places like rural elementary schools and business parks, where people rely on the water daily but don't live on-site.
- **Transient water systems:** Nearly 3,000 systems serve short-term visitors at locations such as gas stations along remote highways or state parks.

California's water system landscape is as diverse as its geography, from sprawling urban networks to tiny rural setups, all working to keep the state hydrated.

"Once upon a time, some of these were maybe more sustainable than they are now, when there wasn't contamination, when it was just a well and maybe a chlorinator," said Michelle Frederick, Assistant Deputy Director, Central CA Branch, Division of Drinking Water. "But over the years, it has become harder and harder for our small water systems to meet all the regulations and to do all the monitoring. The vast majority of our violations occur in these smaller groups."

The Division of Drinking Water has a boundary mapping tool that displays the service areas of water systems. The map uses a color-coded system: green indicates compliance, yellow signals potential risk, and red highlights systems currently in violation. While the map does not include the largest water systems, it provides valuable insights into smaller systems, helping to identify areas where compliance issues may exist.

Regulatory framework for water quality

Water quality samples are collected from two primary locations: at the water source or post-treatment, and at distribution system sampling points. The sampling location depends on the potential source of contamination. For example, if contamination is suspected from volatile organic compounds (VOCs) or groundwater, samples are typically collected at the source and, if applicable, after treatment.

Sampling at the water source and/or post-treatment includes tests for bacteriological contaminants (such as total coliform and E. coli), inorganic chemicals (like nitrate and arsenic), VOCs and semi-volatile organic compounds (SVOCs), radiological chemicals, turbidity, and disinfectants. In contrast, distribution system sampling focuses on lead, copper, and disinfection byproducts.

When drinking water systems start failing MCLs, a number of actions are taken. First, there is public notification: if there is a problem, they want people notified. The Division of Drinking Water will also take enforcement action, including issuing compliance orders and imposing fines. Larger systems are usually not out of compliance because they have a large customer base to spread the costs over. So with smaller systems, they take a softer approach, sometimes working to find funding for upgrades.

“There is a balance for us between collaboration and enforcement because we really need our water systems to proactively call us,” she said. “I don’t want to wait until they are in violation and people are drinking bad water; I want them to be comfortable calling me beforehand, so that we can really get there and fix things ahead of time.”

Drinking water quality regulation is constantly evolving, with new contaminants and regulatory standards regularly emerging. Upcoming changes include new Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCLs) and updated regulations for substances such as lead and copper, hexavalent chromium, manganese, per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), microplastics, and harmful algal blooms (HABs). For more detailed information and updates on regulations, visit [this page](#).

Drinking water data: Why data is important

The Division of Drinking Water (DDW) collects extensive data to maintain a comprehensive understanding of public water systems, ensure compliance with regulatory requirements, and verify that systems are performing effectively to provide safe drinking water to the public.

This data includes chemical, physical, biological, and radiological water quality information, as well as detailed public water system data, including system characteristics, population served, service connections, and infrastructure. These insights help assess the status of each system and ensure that regulatory requirements are applied appropriately.

DDW also gathers compliance and monitoring data, including information on treatment effectiveness, violations, enforcement actions, and Consumer Confidence Reports. As new contaminants become regulated, DDW focuses on ensuring that treatment

processes are functioning as intended. Additionally, the division oversees enforcement of violations and supports public reporting efforts, such as the annual Consumer Confidence Reports provided to communities.

“There’s a whole host of data that we collect in many different ways to support public water systems and ensure the people of California are protected,” said Karen Nishimoto, Section Chief, Quality Assurance.

Water quality data

Water quality monitoring frequencies are determined by regulations and are based on the characteristics of each water system. For example, community water systems, which pose higher exposure risks due to long-term use, are subject to more frequent monitoring. In contrast, non-transient or transient systems, such as gas stations or offices where people have limited exposure, have less stringent monitoring requirements under the regulatory framework.



Regulations establish baseline monitoring expectations for all systems. However, the Field Operations Branches further tailor the monitoring approach by issuing permits and including additional provisions specific to the needs and conditions of each water system. Additional permit provisions are designed to address risks and the potential for system failure. For systems with acute risks, such as elevated nitrate levels, monitoring frequencies are increased to ensure that any issues are identified and addressed promptly. Monitoring schedules also account for factors such as source variability and seasonal effects. Certain contaminants may become more prevalent during specific times of the year, prompting heightened monitoring during those periods to capture worst-case scenarios. This targeted approach helps create a robust, effective monitoring schedule tailored to each water system’s unique needs and risks.

“This is to make sure that while we have our baseline monitoring and we don’t go below that, we can go above for system-specific situations, especially where there may be complicated treatment or different combinations of different water,” said Ms. Nishimoto. “We want to make sure that the monitoring is really appropriate to understand the water that is being provided by that water system.”

The primary monitoring location for water quality is at the water source or the entry point to the distribution system. This allows for an assessment of source water quality and helps determine the necessary treatment processes. Monitoring also focuses on treatment processes and effluent from treatment plants to ensure that the water produced meets regulatory standards, that the treatment systems are functioning as intended, and that the overall treatment process is optimized.

Additional monitoring occurs within the distribution system. While most chemical monitoring is conducted at the source and treatment plants, the distribution system is monitored for bacteriological contaminants, lead and copper, disinfection byproducts, and, in specific cases such as post-fire events, benzene. This comprehensive approach ensures water quality is maintained throughout the entire system.

Submitting water quality monitoring data

Water quality monitoring data is submitted through multiple reporting methods.

- **The primary method for receiving water quality data is the California Laboratory Intake Portal (CLIP)**, where accredited laboratories submit test results. High contaminant levels are flagged, allowing staff to address issues promptly. This data is entered into databases and eventually made publicly available.
- **Additional monitoring data is submitted directly to regulatory offices across the state.** This includes treatment process data, field measurements such as chlorine residuals, and data from field instruments or online analyzers that are not processed through accredited labs but are essential for evaluating treatment effectiveness.
- **The U.S. EPA also collects water quality data through the Safe Drinking Water Accession and Review System (SDWARS 5).** This system focuses on unregulated contaminants under evaluation for potential future regulation based on occurrence and other criteria.

Routinely reviewing monitoring data is essential to ensure that the water provided to the public is safe, meets all treatment requirements, and protects public health, as some of the most harmful contaminants in drinking water are not visible

“You can’t see things like nitrate or TCP in the water,” said Ms. Nishimoto. “A good, robust monitoring schema is important to identify these invisible contaminants, so that acute and chronic concerns can both be identified and addressed. It’s important that the public gets notified of potential risks so they can make informed decisions about their own health.”

Where to find water quality data

- Data Publication – https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/drinking_water/certlic/drinkingwater/EDTlibrary.html
- Public Drinking Water Watch – <https://sdwis.waterboards.ca.gov/PDWW/>
- Consumer Confidence Reports – An annual summary of a community’s drinking water provided by the water supplier

Coming soon: The Water Technical Access Portal or Water TAP



DDW is working to envision how drinking water data is managed and to develop a new system called the Water Technical Access Portal (Water TAP). It is still in the early stages of development, but it will be a one-stop shop with role-based user controls.

“What that means is it’s being designed first for the regulators so that they can manage water systems, but also it’s the single point of access for water systems to report to us and our partner agencies to get data, for academia and NGOs to get our Water data, and even for the public to be able to access and see what’s going on, all in one spot with the drinking water view,” said Ms. Nishimoto. “This will really help move us towards not only statewide consistency, but also transparency, of being able to show the whole flow of water from the source to the distribution system and being able to show what water quality is truly being provided to the public.”

The Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program: Ensuring reliable data for public health

Christine Sotelo serves as the program manager for the State Water Board's Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program (ELAP), leading a team of 27 chemists, scientists, and microbiologists. This program is responsible for regulating environmental laboratories across California and conducting investigations into potential fraud or improper laboratory practices.

ELAP accredits approximately 500 laboratories, both within and outside of California, that produce data for various state regulatory agencies. The program conducts thorough inspections of laboratories to ensure they produce reliable, defensible data for state agencies' programs and regulatory decisions. Regular evaluations assess the quality system, staff expertise, facilities, equipment maintenance, test method proficiency, and report accuracy to confirm the lab's capability to deliver high-quality data.

The 1974 Safe Drinking Water Act granted states the authority, known as "primacy," to enforce federal drinking water regulations and oversee public water systems. Later amendments required the primacy agencies to operate a Laboratory Accreditation Program to retain enforcement authority over drinking water programs and to ensure that data used to make regulatory decisions come from accredited laboratories. The Act also required that the inspectors, also known as assessors, be certified EPA drinking water certification officers. Laboratory certification officers must pass a rigorous test in Ohio covering disciplines such as inorganic chemistry, organic chemistry, and microbiology. With a low passing rate, the test ensures only highly qualified individuals are certified to work in laboratories.

However, to implement those federal regulations, California had to adopt its own regulations, so the state adopted the Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Act in 1988. In addition to drinking water testing, the Act established a program for all environmental testing throughout California for other regulatory agencies. These include CalEPA, the Water Boards, the Department of Water Resources, the Department of Toxic Substances Control, the Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Department of Pesticide Regulation, and others.

"This unified the oversight of laboratories in California," said Ms. Sotelo. "Before the Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Act, every agency put requirements on how they wanted their laboratories to operate and what the requirements were, so the Act strengthened and made consistent oversight of lab accreditation in California."

She noted the accreditation is only for regulatory purposes, such as permits, policies, orders, or plans. “We only accredit laboratories that run analyses that are tied to this regulatory purpose,” she said. “It’s not for research purposes. It doesn’t extend to a laboratory that might be doing some novel exploratory method, or any research labs outside of the regulatory framework.”



Photo by Andrew Nixon / DWR

For example, work is being done to standardize eDNA testing, and there is a water quality monitoring workgroup for eDNA, but the labs doing that work are not required to be accredited because it’s not in any agency’s regulatory framework.

“This is an important distinction, because we really are there to safeguard the regulatory compliance integrity,” said Ms. Sotelo. “We don’t want to inhibit any innovation and any research work that’s done in those laboratories to help look for that latest contaminant of emerging concern, or onboard the new method that a laboratory has developed. We want all of that to happen, so we don’t want to inhibit that work.”

During emergencies, laboratories must balance routine compliance testing with urgent environmental emergency samples, activating response plans to meet increased demands. All drinking water samples must be accredited by ELAP, allowing flexibility to contract with any of California’s 500 accredited labs. This network provides surge capacity, ensuring reliable, defensible data during crises.

During emergencies, laboratories face the dual challenge of maintaining routine compliance testing while addressing urgent environmental samples, often under rushed, high-pressure conditions. Emergencies, such as fires, can disrupt or even shut down laboratory operations, further complicating their ability to meet these demands. To support labs during such crises, ELAP collaborates with the State Water Boards’ Emergency Management Program to track affected laboratories and ensure continuity of service. Using geolocation mapping, ELAP identifies laboratories within emergency zones, providing rapid situational awareness and enabling a coordinated response. This approach helps pinpoint which laboratories can continue routine water compliance sampling and intake emergency samples, ensuring critical testing is not interrupted. By leveraging California’s network of 500 accredited laboratories, which all maintain quality systems, ELAP ensures regulatory monitoring continues despite disruptions, safeguarding public health and providing reliable, defensible data during crises.

The Environmental Response Laboratory Network (ERLN) is a national network established to provide critical chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and analytical support during emergencies. Participation in the ERLN requires a rigorous application process, including accreditation by the laboratory’s home state and the implementation of a robust quality system to ensure reliability and accuracy. Currently, 11 California laboratories are part of the ERLN, contributing to the network’s surge capacity and enhancing the state’s ability to respond effectively to environmental crises.

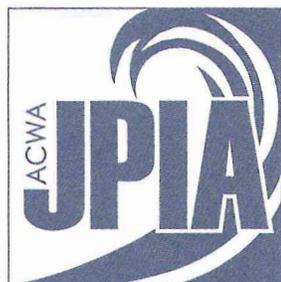
Ms. Sotelo concluded by commending the trusted network of ELAP-accredited laboratories across California, which ensures the production of reliable and defensible data. She highlighted California’s strong environmental preparedness, emphasizing the state’s ability to support monitoring across multiple matrices and environmental programs, extending well beyond drinking water.

“To me, accreditation is like a safety vest,” she said. “I see it as your way to defensible and reliable data. Especially during high-stakes emergency situations, we have that network in place. I’m really proud of our network of 500 laboratories. They don’t know that they’re there for surge capacity, but it’s really a default.”

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- People
- Service
- Integrity
- Innovation

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General Manager:

Each year at Fall Conference, the JPIA recognizes members that have a Loss Ratio of 20% or less in either of the Liability, Property, or Workers' Compensation programs (loss ratio = total losses / total premiums).

The members with this distinction receive the "**President's Special Recognition Award**" certificate for each Program that they qualify in.

The JPIA is extremely pleased to present Santa Ynez River WCD No. 1 with this special recognition and commends the District on the hard work in reducing claims.

Congratulations to you, your staff, Board, and District. Keep up the good work!

The JPIA wishes you the best in 2026.

Sincerely,

Melody McDonald
President

Enclosure: President's Special Recognition Award(s)

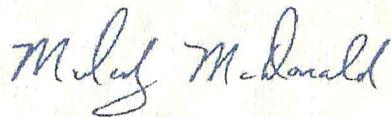
President's Special Recognition Award

*The President of the
ACWA JPIA*

Hereby presents Special Recognition Award to

*Santa Ynez River Water Conservation District Improvement
District No. 1*

In recognition of outstanding performance in the Property program, demonstrated by maintaining exceptionally low claim costs relative to contributions during the period 07/01/2021 - 06/30/2024 announced at the ACWA JPIA Board of Director's meeting held in San Diego, California.



Melody McDonald, President



December 01, 2025

Water cuts could hit SoCal hard

With rules governing the overused Colorado River set to expire, the Trump administration presents painful options for dealing with ongoing shortages



LAKE POWELL and other Colorado River reservoirs have declined dramatically amid unrelenting dry conditions since 2000. (Rebecca Noble Getty Images)

BY IAN JAMES

The Trump administration has released an outline of four new options for dealing with the Colorado River's deepening water shortages, and they could dramatically cut the amount of water available for Southern California.

Several of the alternatives are “alarming” because they could mean major water cutbacks for Southern California, said Shivaji Deshmukh, general manager of the Metropolitan Water District, which distributes water in the region.

He said any of the alternatives would probably “lead to lengthy litigation.”

“The various alternatives highlight the significant risks we could face if we don’t reach an agreement,” Deshmukh said. “Our Colorado River supply cannot be randomly slashed.”

Officials from seven Western states are deadlocked over how to address the water crisis. The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation report addresses water cutbacks that will have to be made after 2026, when current rules for handling water shortages expire.

The Trump administration apparently intends to “limit the pain” for the upper basin states, because the alternatives don’t clearly spell out significant cuts for those states, and instead would have California, Arizona and Nevada bear the brunt, said Kyle Roerink, executive director of the Great Basin Water Network.

He said that would mean “unprecedented pain” through substantial cutbacks under all the proposals.

Federal officials stressed the importance of quickly putting a plan in place, ideally one the seven states can agree on.

“In the face of an ongoing severe drought, inaction is not an option,” said Andrea Travnicek, assistant Interior secretary for water and science.

Representatives of California and six other states that depend on the river have been meeting regularly over the last two years to hash out a long-term plan to address shortages.

Scott Cameron, the Bureau of Reclamation’s acting commissioner, has urged state officials to negotiate an agreement by mid-February.

As the Trump administration released its draft environmental review Friday, Cameron said his agency hasn’t chosen from among the four alternatives detailed in the report, “given the importance of a consensus-based approach.” An agreement is expected to “incorporate elements or variations of these five alternatives,” he said.

One of the four alternatives is just “basic coordination,” which the federal report says could be done absent an agreement among the states. Others include different ways of apportioning water cuts, with plans blandly titled “enhanced coordination,” “maximum operational flexibility” or “supply driven,” as well as a “no action” alternative.

The Colorado River provides water for cities from Denver to San Diego, 30 Native tribes and farming communities from the Rocky Mountains to northern Mexico. It has long been overused, and its reservoirs have declined dramatically amid unrelenting dry conditions since 2000.

In the last quarter-century, the river has lost about 20% of its flow. Research has shown that the warming climate, driven largely by the use of fossil fuels, has intensified the long stretch of mostly dry years.

Lake Mead, the river’s largest reservoir, is now just 33% full. And Lake Powell, its second-largest reservoir, is at 27% of capacity.

JB Hamby, California's lead negotiator, said the federal report "underscores the seriousness and urgency of this moment."

Hamby said that California is prepared to shoulder a portion of the necessary water cuts to help prevent reservoirs from declining to critically low levels, and that participation by other states will be key.

"The river will not wait. A sustainable solution requires all seven states to contribute," he said.

The negotiations have been mired in disagreements over how mandatory water cuts should be divided among the states. The three downstream, or lower basin, states — California, Arizona and Nevada — are at odds with the four states in the river's upper basin — Colorado, Utah, Wyoming and New Mexico.

Becky Mitchell, lead negotiator for Colorado, said her state is committed to protecting its "significant interests in the Colorado River and continues to work towards a consensus-based, supply-driven solution."

The impasse has raised the possibility that the states could sue one another, a path riddled with uncertainty that water managers in both camps say they hope to avoid.

The Bureau of Reclamation is accepting public comments on its draft environmental document until March 2 and plans to issue a final decision by Oct. 1.

The federal report acknowledges that the existing rules, which were adopted in 2007, have not "sufficiently reduced risk," as reservoir levels have continued to decline despite a series of temporary water-saving deals, including one reached in 2023.

It says Interior Secretary Doug Burgum intends the new rules to be in effect for 20 years, but also says he "remains open to a shorter duration or phased implementation."

The report warns of potentially "large and unprecedented" mandatory reductions in water use. It says that the Colorado River Basin is "experiencing increased aridity due to climate variability" and that "long-term drought" is expected in the future.

The report's 63-page summary does not mention human-caused climate change, even though scientific research has long shown that warming temperatures are exacerbating drought.

"Whether the document has those words or not, the reality is that it has been warmer and drier over the last 25 years than it has in centuries," said Sinjin Eberle, a spokesperson for the environmental group American Rivers. "And certainly the science behind warmer temperatures basically removing water from the Colorado River system overall is what's of most concern."

"These warmer temperatures and dry soils are really having an impact on water supplies," he said.

This winter has been warmer than average so far in much of the West, and the snowpack that feeds the Colorado River remains far below average for this time of year.

“Ultimately, we would hope that all of the states and the federal government combined recognize that without the river being healthy and sustainable, industry is going to suffer, agriculture is going to suffer, communities are going to suffer,” Eberle said. “Hopefully the states can respond to that in a way that is comprehensive and allows for sustainability.”



MONTHLY BRIEFING

A Summary of the Alliance’s Recent and Upcoming Activities and Important Water News

Message from the Executive Director

A new year brings new energy, familiar challenges, and no shortage of work ahead. Across the West, farmers, ranchers, and water managers are once again being asked to do more with less—less water, less certainty, and in some cases, less federal support—while continuing to feed this country and steward the land. The Family Farm Alliance enters 2026 with energy, focus, and resolve. We are on Capitol Hill, in the agencies, and at the table where decisions are made. Pressing for water policies and investments that recognize western irrigated agriculture as a national asset, not an afterthought. This newsletter reflects that work: clear-eyed, practical, and grounded in the needs of those who keep water moving and food on America’s tables.

~ Samantha “Sam” Barncastle
Executive Director



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Alliance Testifies for 100th Time Before Congress, this time on Forest Health, Water Security, and the Cost of Inaction

This week, the Family Farm Alliance appeared before Congress to deliver a clear and urgent message: healthy forests are inseparable from reliable water supplies, and continued inaction on forest management is no longer an option for the American West.

Alliance Board Member Ea'mon O'Toole, a sixth-generation Wyoming rancher and owner of Ladder Livestock Company, testified before the U.S. House Committee on Natural Resources, Subcommittee on Water, Wildlife and Fisheries, during a hearing titled *"Fix Our Forests for Affordable and Reliable Water and Power Supplies."* His testimony underscored the growing connection between deteriorating forest health, catastrophic wildfire, and mounting risks to Western water infrastructure, agriculture, and rural communities.

This hearing marked a significant milestone for the Alliance — our 100th oral testimony before Congress — and it was fitting that Mr. O'Toole followed in the footsteps of his late father, longtime Alliance leader Pat O'Toole, in representing Western irrigated agriculture at this critical moment.

Forests as Water Infrastructure

As Mr. O'Toole emphasized, Western forests are not just scenic backdrops — they are natural infrastructure that store snowpack, regulate runoff, filter sediment, and deliver clean, predictable water to rivers and reservoirs. Nearly 90 percent of people served by public water systems in the West rely on water originating from federal forestlands, many of which were set aside explicitly to protect headwaters.

Decades of mismanagement, constrained budgets, and litigation—compounded by changing water supply conditions—have pushed many of these forests into a non-functioning state. Overgrown stands, dead and dying trees, and excessive fuel loads now impair watershed function even before wildfire enters the picture.

"When forests are unhealthy," O'Toole told lawmakers, "they stop doing the job they were meant to do—long before they burn."

Wildfire: A Watershed Hazard Multiplier

The testimony highlighted how today's wildfires are fundamentally different from historic fire regimes. Larger, hotter, and more destructive fires now strip vegetation, alter soils, and transform watersheds in ways that can persist for decades.

Alliance members across the West are living with the consequences. High-severity fires damage diversion structures, canals, reservoirs, and power infrastructure. Post-fire flooding and debris flows clog intakes, reduce storage capacity, degrade water quality, and force costly shutdowns of irrigation systems during critical growing periods. Wildfire impacts continue to reverberate years after the flames are out with residual water quality issues and infrastructure replacement.

From the Yakima Basin to Southern Oregon, Northern California, New Mexico, and Colorado, the Alliance shared concrete examples of how unmanaged forests and catastrophic wildfire undermine water reliability, increase costs for farmers and rural communities, and threaten long-term agricultural productivity.

Wildfire is no longer a standalone disaster — it is a watershed hazard multiplier that directly affects food production, hydropower, drinking water, habitat, fisheries, and rural economies.

A Call for Proactive, Risk-Based Management

The Alliance's message to Congress was straightforward: we can no longer afford a reactive approach that spends billions suppressing fires while starving prevention and restoration efforts.

Mr. O'Toole urged lawmakers to prioritize active, science-based forest management at the pace and scale of the problem. Strategic thinning, prescribed fire, managed grazing, and targeted timber harvest are proven tools that restore forest structure, improve soil infiltration, reduce evapotranspiration, and lower wildfire risk. Used together, these tools rebuild resilient watersheds that support both ecological function and working lands.

Equally important, the Alliance stressed the need to reduce unnecessary procedural barriers that delay projects for years — even when they are designed to improve habitat and reduce risk. Streamlining environmental review, discouraging frivolous litigation, and empowering land managers to act are essential to breaking the destructive cycle of inaction.

Fix Our Forests Act and Legislative Path Forward

In his testimony, O'Toole voiced strong support for the bipartisan Fix Our Forests Act (H.R. 471 / S. 1472), which would provide practical tools to accelerate forest restoration, improve coordination among federal, state, tribal, and local partners, and prioritize treatments in high-risk watersheds near vulnerable communities and infrastructure.

The Alliance has joined a broad coalition supporting the legislation, which builds on bipartisan momentum from the previous Congress. While no single bill will solve the forest health crisis, the Fix Our Forests Act represents a meaningful step toward durable, action-oriented solutions.

From Policy to Practice

The Alliance also highlighted real-world restoration efforts already underway, including large-scale, collaborative initiatives like the Headwaters of the Colorado project in Wyoming and Colorado and the North Yuba Forest Partnership in California. These efforts demonstrate that when stakeholders are empowered to work together, forest restoration can protect water supplies, reduce wildfire risk, support wildlife, and sustain rural economies.

Water Infrastructure at a Crossroads: Congress Wrestles with Funding Priorities Critical to Western Agriculture

As Congress returns to Washington with just weeks remaining before the January 30 funding deadline, water infrastructure for Western agriculture is once again caught at the center of a high-stakes appropriations debate. While leaders in both chambers publicly commit to finishing full-

Looking Ahead

This hearing comes at a time of growing bipartisan recognition that forest health, water security, and energy reliability are deeply intertwined. The Alliance appreciates the leadership of Chairwoman Hageman and Subcommittee members for elevating this issue and providing a forum for voices from the ground.

The choice before us is clear: manage forests proactively, or continue paying the escalating costs of catastrophic fire and damaged watersheds after the fact. The Family Farm Alliance will continue working with Congress, federal agencies, and partners across the West to advance practical, durable solutions that protect forests, water supplies, and the agricultural communities that feed the nation.

For a copy of the Alliance's written testimony or to follow up on these issues, please contact samantha@familyfarmalliance.org.

Pictured: Rep. Harriet Hageman (R-Wyo.) with Alliance Board Member Ea'mon O'Toole



year spending bills, deep policy disagreements and internal political pressures continue to complicate the path forward.

In December, Senate Republicans released a draft Energy and Water Development appropriations bill without Democratic support—

an uncommon move that underscored the growing divide over funding priorities for the Department of Energy, the Army Corps of Engineers, and the Bureau of Reclamation. The proposal boosted funding for the Corps and fossil energy programs while cutting clean-energy investments and significantly reducing Reclamation's budget, despite the agency's expanding role in addressing drought, aging infrastructure, and long-term water reliability across the West.

For Western irrigated agriculture, the message is concerning: water supply challenges are growing, but federal investment is moving in the opposite direction.

Reclamation Cuts Raise Red Flags

Under the Energy & Water bill included in the House-Senate minibus now moving through Congress, Reclamation funding would total roughly \$1.6 billion, a reduction of more than \$286 million from FY 2025 levels. Several programs critical to agricultural water users face sharp reductions, including WaterSMART grants, drought response planning, water recycling under Title XVI, and cooperative watershed management.

Of particular concern was the Senate proposal to transfer \$200 million out of Reclamation's Aging Infrastructure Account (AIA)—a popular, bipartisan loan program originally funded through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act—to cover annual operations. While that transfer was ultimately not included in the final package as of publication, the proposal itself highlights the ongoing vulnerability of long-term infrastructure programs when budgets tighten.

Reclamation's mission has never been more important. Western farmers and ranchers are being asked to do more with less water, modernize aging delivery systems, and invest in efficiency—all while navigating drought, regulatory uncertainty, and rising costs. Federal funding must reflect that reality.

Corps Funding Grows, but Balance Matters

In contrast, the Army Corps of Engineers received a substantial boost, with total funding reaching \$10.4 billion, including major increases for construction and investigations. The Alliance supports robust investment in Corps projects, many

of which play a critical role in flood control, navigation, and regional water management.

But this moment also underscores the need for balance. Western water reliability depends on both the Corps and Reclamation working effectively—and cutting one to fund the other does not strengthen the system as a whole.

WIFIA: A Bipartisan Bright Spot—With Caveats

Amid the broader appropriations challenges, water infrastructure financing continues to enjoy bipartisan support. Congress is advancing legislation to expand and improve the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA), with a focus on increasing access for rural and agricultural communities.

At the national level, EPA recently announced \$7 billion in new WIFIA funding, including \$6.5 billion for water systems and \$550 million for states. WIFIA remains popular because modest federal investments leverage large-scale, low-cost financing for projects that might otherwise be out of reach.

In December, the Alliance led a coalition of 30 Western organizations in support of these WIFIA reforms, emphasizing the importance of financing tools that actually work for agricultural water providers. Bipartisanship, however, does not guarantee success—progress still depends on sustained congressional attention and follow-through.

A Veto and a Warning

That reality was underscored by President Trump's veto of the Finish the Arkansas Valley Conduit Act, a bipartisan bill passed by voice vote in both chambers. The project is designed to deliver clean drinking water to roughly 50,000 residents in rural southeastern Colorado and has long been supported by local communities.

The veto, citing concerns about federal costs, complicates future financing and highlights the ongoing tension between fiscal restraint and rural infrastructure needs. A congressional override was unsuccessful following the veto, and the episode serves as a reminder: rural water projects remain vulnerable—even when bipartisan consensus exists.

What Comes Next

House and Senate appropriators have now agreed on topline funding levels and advanced a three-bill minibuss that includes Energy & Water, Interior & Environment, and Commerce–Justice–Science. The House passed the package on January 8, and the Senate has begun floor consideration. Whether lawmakers can clear remaining hurdles and avoid another shutdown remains uncertain.

At the same time, broader debates over federal workforce capacity, agency reorganization, and permitting reform will shape how effectively water programs are implemented—even when funding is available. Further reliance on local Federal partners, such as farmers, ranchers, and irrigation managers is going to be necessary to bridge the gap between on the ground need and federal agency capability going forward.

Congress Moves Aggressively on Permitting and Environmental Reform

After decades of delay, litigation, and regulatory gridlock that have stalled investment across the West, Congress—particularly the House—has moved forcefully in recent months to update environmental and permitting laws that govern infrastructure, water projects, and land management. For Western farmers, ranchers, and irrigation districts operating infrastructure that is often 75 to 100 years old or more, these actions reflect a growing recognition that the status quo is not working.

Across multiple bills, House lawmakers are advancing sweeping changes to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Clean Water Act, and the Endangered Species Act, with the stated goal of accelerating project timelines, reducing litigation risk, and providing regulatory certainty for long-term investments. While the approaches differ—and remain controversial—the direction is clear: Congress is no longer content to rely solely on agency-level reforms to modernize the federal permitting system.

SPEED Act Targets NEPA Delays

At the center of the House effort is the SPEED Act (H.R. 4776), led by House Natural Resources Chair Bruce Westerman. The bill would impose firm timelines on NEPA reviews, narrow analyses to impacts directly tied to a project,

The Alliance’s Bottom Line

Western agriculture depends on reliable, affordable water. That means funding infrastructure in rural America, listening to the producers and water managers who operate these systems every day, and crafting bipartisan, grassroots led solutions that reflect real-world needs—not just budget targets.

Fiscal discipline matters. But so does food security and so do our rural communities.

As Congress works to finalize spending bills, the Family Farm Alliance will continue pressing a simple message: supporting agriculture means investing in water. Without it, the ability of Western farmers and ranchers to feed America is at risk—and that is a cost the nation cannot afford.

expand the use of categorical exclusions, and allow agencies to rely on existing state, tribal, or prior federal environmental reviews. Importantly for water users, it also includes “permit certainty” provisions that would prevent agencies from rescinding or weakening approved permits absent a court order.

The House passed the bill after a contentious process that exposed fault lines on both sides of the aisle—Democrats raised concerns tied to recent offshore wind decisions, while some Republicans argued the bill does not go far enough. Still, bipartisan support underscores broad frustration with multi-year delays that affect water storage, conveyance, drought resilience, and forest management projects across the West.

From the Alliance’s perspective, many SPEED Act provisions align with long-standing priorities for Western agriculture: reducing duplicative reviews, improving coordination among agencies, and limiting litigation-driven delays that increase costs without improving environmental outcomes.

Clean Water Act and ESA Also in the Crosshairs

House Republicans have also advanced broader environmental reforms through measures like the PERMIT Act, which passed the House in

December and proposes a package of changes to Clean Water Act permitting. Supporters argue the bill would provide regulatory certainty by narrowing jurisdiction, setting firm litigation deadlines, and curbing last-minute permit challenges that have derailed infrastructure projects—including irrigation works, dams, and levees. Democrats largely opposed the measure, citing concerns about water quality and enforcement authority.

The House Natural Resources Committee also advanced the ESA Amendments Act of 2025, which seeks to restore the Endangered Species Act's focus on recovery while reducing litigation-driven outcomes. The bill requires economic and national security analyses, clarifies the "jeopardy" standard, streamlines permitting, and increases transparency—reforms supported by many agricultural and landowner groups who argue the current ESA framework has too often stalled projects without measurable gains for species.

Bipartisanship Tested in the Senate

While the House has moved decisively, Senate permitting reform discussions have slowed amid rising partisan tension. Democratic leaders paused negotiations after the administration canceled several offshore wind projects, citing concerns about trust and process. Meanwhile, calls from some Republicans to bypass the filibuster highlight the growing frustration—but also the difficulty—of achieving durable, bipartisan reform.

Despite these challenges, momentum for permitting reform remains strong, driven by the reality that aging infrastructure and growing water scarcity demand faster, more predictable federal processes.

WOTUS Rulemaking Moves Forward as Alliance Mobilizes Western Agriculture

The Trump Administration's expedited permitting agenda continues to move quickly, with major implications for Western farmers, ranchers, and water managers. In late November, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers released a sweeping proposal to revise the definition of "Waters of the United States" (WOTUS) under the Clean Water

Why This Matters for Western Agriculture

For Alliance members, these debates are not abstract. Aging canals, reservoirs, diversion structures, and hydropower facilities cannot be modernized—or even maintained—if projects spend years navigating duplicative reviews and litigation risk. Conservation, water efficiency, and resilience investments depend on timely approvals and regulatory certainty.

Producers are not seeking to avoid environmental compliance, but regulations that meet producers at the field level are key. "Western agriculture needs environmental laws that work *with* producers, not against them," said Sam Barncastle, Executive Director of the Family Farm Alliance. "Durable reform means protecting our natural resources while giving farmers and irrigation districts the flexibility and certainty they need to invest in water infrastructure that feeds America."

The Alliance is encouraged to see Congress engaging directly on these issues. Legislative solutions—crafted openly, debated publicly, and enacted through Congress—offer a more stable path forward than regulatory whiplash driven solely by agency action.

Looking Ahead

The outcome of these House-passed reforms remains uncertain in the Senate, but their advancement signals a turning point. Congress is taking a heavy-handed—but necessary—look at environmental laws that have long stalled common-sense water and infrastructure projects in the West. The Alliance will continue working to ensure that agriculture, water reliability, and rural communities remain central to any final reforms.

Act—one of the most consequential regulatory issues facing irrigated agriculture.

The proposal is intended to fully implement the U.S. Supreme Court's 2023 *Sackett v. EPA* decision, which sharply narrowed federal Clean Water Act jurisdiction to waters with a "relatively permanent" presence and a "continuous surface connection" to navigable waters. For Western

agriculture, the rule signals a long-awaited shift toward regulatory clarity after more than a decade of uncertainty, litigation, and regulatory whiplash.

“For farmers, ranchers, and irrigation districts, knowing what *is* and *is not* federally regulated is not an academic exercise—it directly affects whether projects move forward, fields get worked, and water gets delivered,” said Sam Barncastle. “This proposal is an important step toward restoring common sense and predictability, and we applaud the agencies for their hard work.”

Alliance Engagement: Coordinated, Substantive, and Grassroots

From the outset, the Alliance has been deeply engaged in the WOTUS rulemaking process. Working closely with other agricultural organizations and water providers, the Alliance helped develop coordinated comments emphasizing the unique hydrology and infrastructure of the West—where irrigation canals, ditches, drains, and ephemeral features are integral to food production but have too often been swept into federal jurisdiction or the grey area.

The Alliance’s comments underscore that wetlands must be truly adjacent and hydrologically connected to be considered jurisdictional under *Sackett*, and that vague or expansive interpretations risk unintended consequences for irrigation systems, water delivery infrastructure, and routine agricultural activities.

At the same time, the Alliance launched a grassroots outreach effort to ensure Western producers were heard directly by the agencies. Alliance Members were provided a set of draft comments specific to the ‘on the ground’ issues and encouraged to submit individualized responses based on their own operations and local conditions. Many did so.

“A strong administrative record matters,” Barncastle said. “It’s critical that EPA and the Corps hear directly from the people who manage water on the ground every day and understand what works—and what doesn’t—in real agricultural landscapes.”

The public comment period closed January 5, 2026. The Alliance will remain engaged as the agencies move toward finalizing the rule.

New Tools, New Questions

One notable feature of the proposal is the introduction of a “wet season” concept and the use

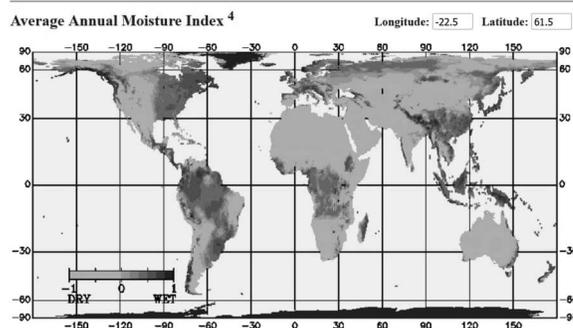
of a new mapping tool—known informally as Web WIMP—to help determine jurisdiction. While intended to provide clarity, these tools will play a significant role in how the rule is implemented on the ground.

Alliance members are encouraged to explore the tool and evaluate whether it aligns with their on-the-ground understanding of local hydrology and historic jurisdictional determinations. The tool, a University of Delaware interactive model is here: http://cyclops.deos.udel.edu/wimp/public_html/index.html

“This is where theory meets reality,” Barncastle noted. “Implementation will matter just as much as the words on paper.”

Pictured: WebWIMP Tool Developed by the University of Delaware

Click on the location where you would like to evaluate the Climatic Water Balance.



[Return to the WebWIMP Front Page](#)

States Begin to Respond

As federal Clean Water Act jurisdiction narrows, some Western states are already moving to fill perceived regulatory gaps. Colorado recently adopted a comprehensive state-level permitting framework to protect streams and wetlands that lost federal coverage after *Sackett*. Likewise, New Mexico and others are engaged in a similar process. The rules, thus far, include exemptions and clarifications aimed at balancing environmental protection with the operational needs of agriculture and water providers—particularly around irrigation ditches and canals.

The Alliance expects other states to follow suit, with legislation, rulemaking, and otherwise. These developments further underscore the importance of a clear, durable federal definition that avoids a patchwork of inconsistent state requirements.

What Comes Next

The WOTUS proposal represents a significant pivot in federal water policy and is likely to face legal challenges. But for now, it offers a clearer framework for Western producers who have long operated under shifting and often conflicting interpretations of the Clean Water Act.

The Alliance will continue engaging with EPA, the Army Corps, partner organizations, and state regulators as the rule advances and implementation begins.

“Our goal remains the same,” Barncastle said. “Protecting water resources while ensuring Western agriculture has the certainty it needs to plan, invest, and continue feeding the country.”

ESA Regulatory Reset: Alliance Engages as Administration Advances Long-Awaited Reforms

The Administration is moving decisively to recalibrate how the Endangered Species Act (ESA) is implemented—and the Family Farm Alliance is fully engaged to ensure Western farmers, ranchers, and water providers are heard clearly and early.

In November, the Department of the Interior and NOAA Fisheries released four coordinated proposed rules that collectively roll back the Biden-era ESA framework and restore key elements of the 2019–2020 regulations. These proposals address species listings, critical habitat designations, interagency consultation procedures, and threatened-species protections, and are intended to bring ESA implementation back into alignment with statutory text, congressional intent, and recent Supreme Court precedent—including *Loper Bright*, which reaffirmed limits on agency discretion.

For Western irrigated agriculture, where ESA implementation directly affects water deliveries, grazing operations, and infrastructure investment, this rulemaking effort represents a critical opportunity to restore clarity, predictability, and common sense to a law that too often has been implemented through uncertainty and litigation rather than outcomes on the ground.

Alliance Comments: Focused on Water, Infrastructure, and Workable Conservation

In December, the Alliance submitted formal comments on all four ESA rulemaking dockets, strongly supporting the Administration’s direction while offering detailed recommendations grounded in decades of experience working at the intersection of species protection and water management. Working with partners to prepare comments, the Alliance ensured our Members’ unique experiences were included in the record.

Our comments emphasize several core principles:

- Clear, science-based standards for listing decisions and determinations of the “foreseeable future,” to avoid speculative regulation untethered from real-world conditions;
- Tighter limits on critical habitat designations, particularly unoccupied areas, and restoration of the ability to decline designations that provide negligible conservation value;
- Restoration of the 2019 consultation framework, including clear differentiation between the environmental baseline and the effects of a proposed action—an issue of central importance for Bureau of Reclamation projects and other congressionally authorized infrastructure;
- Elimination of the blanket rule for threatened species, replacing it with species-specific 4(d) rules that reflect actual conservation needs while avoiding unnecessary exposure to liability for producers and water users; and
- Meaningful consideration of economic and national security impacts in critical habitat exclusion decisions, as Congress intended.

Across all four rules, the Alliance underscored that ESA implementation must allow Western irrigators to maintain reliable water supplies while continuing to contribute meaningfully to species recovery. Predictability matters—not just for producers, but for conservation outcomes, infrastructure investment, and long-term watershed planning. Transparency also matters, with many key comments focused on problems that result when Federal Agencies refuse to work with local partners toward durable solutions.

Why This Matters in the West

Federal water projects in the West were built to provide certainty—certainty that has steadily eroded as ESA interpretations expanded beyond statutory limits. Over time, irrigation supplies once viewed as firm have been layered with consultation requirements, operational constraints, and litigation risk, often without clear evidence of conservation benefit.

The Administration's proposal to restore the 2019 regulatory framework is an important step toward reversing that trend. By reintroducing clear definitions, limiting speculative analysis, and refocusing consultation on discretionary actions, these reforms can reduce unnecessary procedural burdens while still protecting listed species.

At the same time, the Alliance recognizes that states are increasingly stepping in as federal jurisdiction narrows. This evolving regulatory landscape reinforces the need for a federal ESA framework that is transparent, predictable, and workable—so that producers are not caught between overlapping or inconsistent requirements.

Leadership Signals Matter

The Alliance is also encouraged by recent leadership developments, including the confirmation of Tim Petty, which we view as a positive step toward more pragmatic, informed

decision-making within the federal water and environmental policy space. Strong leadership that understands Western water systems—and the consequences of regulatory uncertainty—is essential as these ESA reforms move from proposal to implementation.

What Comes Next

The public comment period on these rules closed December 22, and litigation is likely. Meanwhile, Congress continues to explore broader ESA reforms, and additional agency leadership confirmations are moving forward.

The Alliance will remain closely engaged—tracking implementation, participating in follow-on discussions, and continuing to advocate for an ESA framework that works for species and for the people who steward Western landscapes every day.

If you would like a copy of the Alliance's ESA comments or have questions about how these changes may affect your operation or water project, please contact Sam Barncastle at: samantha@familyfarmalliance.org.

Western irrigated agriculture is a strategic national asset. Ensuring the ESA is implemented in a way that protects species without sacrificing food security, rural communities, or water reliability remains one of the Alliance's top priorities—and we will continue pressing that case in every forum available.

Positive Momentum for California Water Supply: Federal Action Improves Operational Flexibility

Recent Federal action on California Delta operations marks a constructive step toward improving water supply reliability for California agriculture, and the Alliance is encouraged by the direction of travel. The Administration has finalized updated operational rules for the Central Valley Project (CVP) that allow for increased pumping from the Sacramento–San Joaquin Delta when hydrologic conditions support it—following through on a commitment to better align project operations with real-time water availability.

For irrigated agriculture south of the Delta, this change could translate into meaningful gains in annual average supplies, particularly in wetter years when excess flows would otherwise move out to the ocean. At a time when California farmers are

still recovering from years of severe drought, responsibly capturing available water is essential.

A Stronger Water Outlook, Paired with Ongoing Negotiations

These changes come as California's water picture looks comparatively strong. Reservoir storage across much of the state remains in good shape following recent wet years, and snowpack conditions—while always subject to change—have provided a more stable starting point than growers have seen in some time. That combination makes flexible, science-based operations all the more important.

At the same time, Delta management remains complex. California continues to advance

Governor Newsom’s proposed voluntary agreements as a state-led alternative to rigid regulatory restrictions, aiming to balance agricultural water supply needs with ecosystem protection. Discussions between state and federal agencies are ongoing, and differences remain over water quality standards, legal risk, and long-term implementation.

A Constructive Path Forward

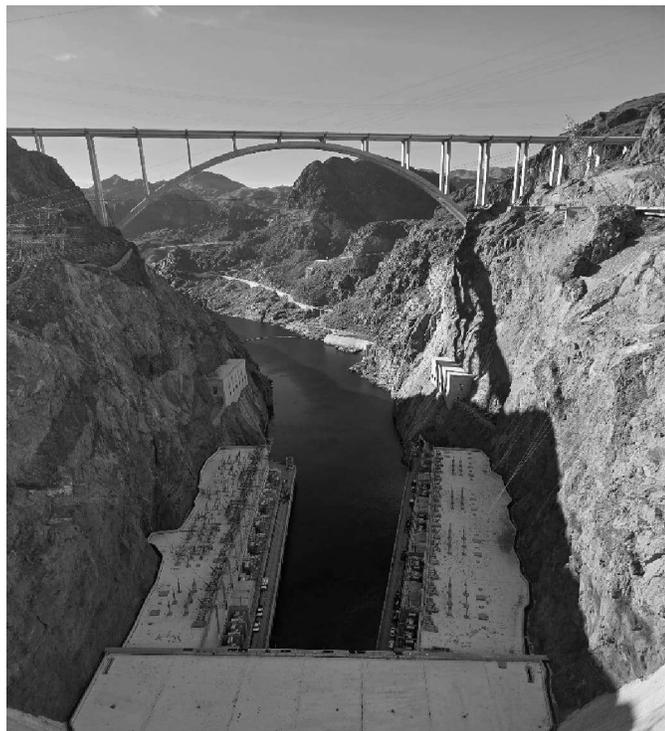
The Alliance will continue to closely monitor these developments. While regulatory uncertainty and litigation threats persist, we believe progress depends on collaboration,

operational flexibility, and durable solutions grounded in real-world hydrology.

We also want to recognize the Bureau of Reclamation and its staff. As a long-standing partner to Western agriculture, Reclamation operates some of the most complex water systems in the country under challenging and often competing mandates. The Alliance appreciates the professionalism and commitment of Reclamation’s team and their continued efforts to manage water supplies responsibly for farmers, communities, and ecosystems alike.

This is not the final word on Delta operations—but it is a positive step in the right direction.

Colorado River in Crisis: Agriculture Must Remain Central to the Path Forward



Pictured: Colorado River at Hoover Dam

Negotiations Miss a Deadline, Stakes Continue to Rise

The Colorado River once again dominated Western water headlines in December, as negotiations among the seven Basin states missed a key federal deadline and underscored how difficult—but necessary—the road ahead will be. Despite months of discussions, the states were

unable to deliver a preliminary agreement to the Department of the Interior by November 11 on post-2026 operating rules. While negotiators continue to report “collective progress,” the fundamental divide remains unchanged: Lower Basin states are pressing for basin-wide mandatory reductions during dry years, while Upper Basin states maintain that they already live within the limits of hydrology and should not be subject to formal cutbacks.

This impasse comes as the system operates with very little margin for error. Lake Mead and Lake Powell remain roughly one-third full, and the current operating guidelines expire in 2026. In response, the Department of the Interior has released its Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) outlining potential post-2026 operational strategies and has given the states until mid-February to submit a detailed, consensus-based alternative. Absent agreement, Interior has made clear it will proceed with a federal plan—an outcome that could reshape Western water management for decades.

Science Points to a Drier Future

New scientific assessments continue to reinforce what Western irrigators already experience on the ground. The report *Colorado River Insights 2025: Dancing with Deadpool* suggests the Basin may already be operating in a “new normal” of permanently reduced water supplies driven by warming temperatures,

declining snowpack, and long-term changes in precipitation.

Scientists are sounding similar alarms this winter. Much of the West is experiencing a widespread “snow drought,” with snow-water equivalent well below average in many basins. Warmer storms are delivering rain instead of snow, reducing natural storage and threatening the reliability of spring and summer runoff that agriculture depends on.

Agriculture Is Not the Problem—It Is Part of the Solution

As these discussions move forward, the Alliance remains focused on one core principle: agriculture in both the Upper and Lower Basins must remain *part* of the solution, but not *the* solution. Too often, agricultural water use is portrayed as an easy target simply because it represents a large share of demand. That framing ignores the essential role Western irrigated agriculture plays in food production, rural economies, wildlife habitat, land stewardship, and national food security.

“Western agriculture depends on reliable water, but it also depends on flexibility,” said Sam Barncastle. “If we want durable solutions on the Colorado River, they must protect water resources *and* recognize that farmers and ranchers need workable, adaptive tools—not one-size-fits-all mandates—to continue feeding the nation.”

Any long-term operating framework that sidelines agriculture risks undermining not only rural communities, but the broader food system that depends on them.

Setting the Record Straight: Agriculture in the Media

Over the past month, irrigated agriculture has once again found itself in the media spotlight—too often framed as part of the problem rather than a cornerstone of the solution. A series of recent articles on Western water use and public lands grazing reflect a troubling pattern: complex systems reduced to simplistic narratives that overlook history, infrastructure, and the essential role agriculture plays in feeding the nation.

Several high-profile stories, including coverage tied to a University of California, Los Angeles/Natural Resources Defense Council report, have focused on water pricing disparities

Why This Process Matters Beyond the Basin

The implications of the Colorado River negotiations extend far beyond the Basin itself. The assumptions, regulatory approaches, and risk-sharing mechanisms adopted here are likely to influence future federal water policy across the West. For that reason, this process matters to Alliance members both on and off the Colorado River.

Whether the outcome emphasizes collaboration, infrastructure investment, and adaptive management—or instead defaults to rigid, top-down controls—will help set the tone for how federal agencies approach agricultural water use in a hotter, drier future.

Call to Action: Engage Now

The Alliance urges our members to review the Draft Environmental Impact Statement and work with us as we prepare formal comments. Input from farmers, ranchers, irrigation districts, and water managers across the West is essential to ensuring agriculture is positioned for success—not sidelined—in this precedent-setting process.

This river may be the testing ground for future federal regulation, legal precedent, and innovative technology and community collaboration. We must make sure the record reflects the realities of Western agriculture and the critical role it plays in feeding America. The next few months will be pivotal, and the Alliance stands ready to advocate for solutions grounded in hydrologic reality, flexibility, and long-term water security for rural communities.

between urban users and agricultural districts in the Colorado River Basin and California. Headlines suggest that farmers receive “cheap” or even “free” water, while cities shoulder the true cost of scarcity. What’s missing is context. Agricultural water pricing reflects long-standing contracts, repayment obligations, and massive upfront investments—many of which were financed by farmers themselves to build the dams, canals, and delivery systems that later enabled urban growth across the West.

These narratives also ignore the reality on the ground: Western farmers are already

absorbing significant cutbacks, adapting to shrinking supplies, and investing heavily in efficiency and conservation. Water is not “wasted” in agriculture—it is converted into food, fiber, habitat, and economic stability for rural communities that depend on it.

Similar themes appeared in recent coverage of public lands grazing, where selective anecdotes were used to paint ranchers as avoiding accountability rather than navigating a complex regulatory system that governs working landscapes. Responsible grazing, predictable permitting, and collaboration with land managers rarely make headlines—but they are the norm across much of the West.

Taken together, these stories risk distorting public understanding of water scarcity and land stewardship by casting agriculture as an easy

target, while downplaying the real drivers of strain on Western resources: changes in hydrology, aging infrastructure, and decades of underinvestment.

That’s why the Family Farm Alliance is doubling down on telling agriculture’s story—clearly, accurately, and directly. In the coming year, we are launching a “Boots on the Ground” education initiative, highlighting real-world projects where farmers, ranchers, and irrigation districts have strengthened rural communities, improved resilience, and delivered water responsibly. We will be out in the West, meeting people where they live and work, and showcasing what’s possible when agriculture is treated as a partner, not a punching bag.

Get excited—and stay tuned. We’re just getting started!

DONOR SUPPORT

What’s The Secret to our Success? Grassroots Members Like You

Join our membership of agricultural producers, agribusiness, water purveyors, supporting industries, local governments, and community members. Your membership will strengthen our advocacy and connect you to cutting-edge research, analysis, and insight on the policies impacting **agricultural water**.

We encourage you to visit the **RESOURCES** page on our website: www.familyfarmalliance.org to view Reports, Insightful Monthly Briefings and Information Water Reviews. We believe our accomplishments and activities speak for themselves. While you’re there, join our email list to be kept up-to-date on our efforts on your behalf.



LEARN MORE 

Defending Western Irrigated Agriculture

The Family Farm Alliance is a powerful advocate for family farmers, ranchers, irrigation districts, and allied industries in seventeen Western states. The Alliance is a focused organization. **Everything we do supports one mission — to ensure the availability of reliable and affordable irrigation water supplies to Western farmers and ranchers.**

CORRESPONDENCE LIST
JANUARY 2026

1. December 10, 2025 - District sent Past Due Letters to three customers.
2. December 11, 2025 - District sent a Can and Will Serve Letter to one customer.
3. December 11, 2025 - District received the Notice and Agenda for the Central Coast Water Authority Regular Board Meeting on December 18, 2025.
4. December 11, 2025 - District received the Notice and Agenda for the Cachuma Operation and Maintenance Board Regular Board Meeting on December 15, 2025.
5. December 11, 2025 - District received the Notice and Agenda for the Santa Ynez River Water Conservation District Regular Meeting & Public Hearing on December 16, 2025.
6. December 12, 2025 - District sent an Existing Water Service Letter to one customer.
7. December 12, 2025 - District received the Notice and Agenda for the Eastern Management Area Groundwater Sustainability Agency Citizen Advisory Group Public Meeting on December 18, 2025.
8. December 14, 2025 - District received the Notice and Agenda for the Santa Ynez Community Services District Regular Board Meeting on December 17, 2025.
9. December 18, 2025 - District sent a Preliminary Water Availability Letter to one customer.
10. December 18, 2025 - District sent Can and Will Serve Letters to five customers.
11. December 19, 2025 - District received the Notice for the Santa Ynez River Valley Groundwater Basin Joint Management Area Meeting on March 13, 2026.
12. December 24, 2025 - District received the Notice and Agenda for the Los Olivos Community Services District Grants Subcommittee Meeting on December 29, 2025.
13. December 31, 2025 - District received the Notice and Agenda for the Santa Ynez Community Services District Special Board Meeting on January 7, 2026.
14. December 31, 2025 - District received the Notice and Agenda for the Central Coast Water Authority Operating Committee Meeting on January 8, 2026.
15. January 7, 2026 - District sent Backflow Test Requirements Letters to forty-six customers.
16. January 9, 2026 - District received the Notice and Agenda for the Los Olivos Community Services District Regular Board Meeting on January 14, 2026.
17. January 15, 2026 - District received the Notice and Agenda for the Central Coast Water Authority Regular Board Meeting on January 22, 2026.