

## **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, April 21, 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](mailto:general@syrwd.org). All submittals should indicate **"April 21, 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 MARCH 17, 2026**
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) Presentation of Monthly Financial Statements – Revenues and Expenses
      - b) Approval of Accounts Payable
  - B. **OPERATIONS**
    1. General Update
    2. Madera Fence Replacement Project – Phase 2: Consideration and Possible Award
    3. Meadowlark Shaded Parking Area: Consideration and Possible Award
    4. Mesa Verda Road Improvements

9. **REPORT, DISCUSSION, AND POSSIBLE BOARD ACTION ON THE FOLLOWING SUBJECTS:**
  - A. **SUSTAINABLE GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT ACT**
    1. Eastern Management Area (EMA) Update
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 **May 19, 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**

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This Notice and 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 Notice and 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  
MARCH 17, 2026 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, March 17, 2026, 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           Kylie Kelleher  
                                      Dan Drugan           Steve Anderson

**1.   CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL:**

President Clay called the meeting to order at 3:05 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 FEBRUARY 17, 2026**

The Regular Meeting Minutes from February 17, 2026 were presented for consideration.

President Clay asked if there were any changes or additions to the Regular Meeting Minutes of February 17, 2026. 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 February 17, 2026 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 February. Various topics were discussed among the Board and staff.

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

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

**A. DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION**

1. 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 February. 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 eight months ending February 28, 2026. Ms. Cota stated that revenue exceeded expenses by \$197,727.35 and the year-to-date February 2026 net income was \$3,102,858.28.

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 27094 through 27148 in the amount of \$601,043.83.

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 February 18, 2026 through March 17, 2026.

**B. OPERATIONS**

1. General Update

Mr. Drugan reported that field staff continue to perform weed abatement and general site maintenance following the winter rains. He noted that staff will be coordinating with the Central Coast Water Authority (CCWA) for when the District decides to take deliveries of State Water Project supplies. Mr. Drugan also reported that the District recently completed its transition to the ESRI ArcGIS Online platform. Z-World, the District’s GIS consultant, worked closely with staff to onboard the system and establish updated workflows for maintaining GIS data.

2. Madera Fence Replacement Project – Phase 2: Consideration and Possible Award  
Mr. Garcia reported that the District only received one bid in response to its published Request for Proposals (RFP) for the Madera Fence Replacement Project – Phase 2. He noted that staff plans to re-advertise the RFP for the project and conduct additional outreach to increase bidder participation.

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 February 26, 2026 Special Meeting of the Groundwater Sustainability Agency for the Eastern Management Area.

Mr. Garcia summarized several topics that were discussed at the recent EMA GSA meeting. He reported that the next meeting of the EMA Citizens Advisory Group is currently scheduled for Thursday, April 16, 2026.

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 indicated that, similar to the last several years, the District is planning to host an informational booth at the Annual Santa Ynez Airport Day in May, and also at Santa Ynez Days in June.

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 April 21, 2026 at 3:00 p.m.

14. **CLOSED SESSION**

The Board adjourned to closed session at 4:45 p.m.

**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]

The Board reconvened to open session at approximately 5:21 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 5:21 p.m.

**RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,**

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Racel Cota, Secretary to the Board

**ATTEST:**

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Jeff Clay, President

**MINUTES PREPARED BY:**

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Kylie Kelleher, Executive Administrative Assistant

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

April 21, 2026

**Consent Agenda Report**

CA-1. Water Supply and Production Report. The District's total water production in **March 2026 (254 AF)** was 138 AF higher than total production in **February 2026 (116 AF)**, 133 AF higher than the most recent 3-year running average (2023-2025) for the month of **March (121 AF)**, and 95 AF higher than the most recent 10-year running average (2016-2025) for the month of **March (159 AF)**. **Notably, total March production this year was the second highest over the last 10-year period (286 AF was produced in March 2022)**. This above normal production is consistent with the extraordinarily dry month (0.0 inches of recorded rainfall for the month at Santa Ynez Airport and Cachuma Reservoir), thus resulting in higher water demands. As noted in previous Consent Reports, the District's overall demands and production totals 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 **March 2026**, approximately **48 AF** was produced from the Santa Ynez Upland wells, and approximately **206 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, nor were any SWP deliveries made to Cachuma for the South Coast entities, as the Reservoir remained in spill condition for most of the month (on March 20th, USBR declared an end to this year's spill condition). Direct diversions to the County Park and USBR were **1.57 AF**.

The USBR Daily Operations Report for Cachuma Reservoir in **March** (ending March 31, 2026) recorded the end of month reservoir elevation at **753.08'** and end of month storage of **193,523 AF**. USBR recorded total precipitation at the reservoir of **0.00 inches** for the month). Reported reservoir evaporation in **March** was **1,125.2 AF**. Based on the updated maximum storage capacity of 192,978 AF (previously 193,305 AF), as of **April 13, 2026** Cachuma reservoir was reported at **99.7%** of capacity, with then-current storage of **192,481 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. Based on spill conditions that occurred again this year, all Cachuma Member Agencies lost their carryover supplies, which currently 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 (“Table 1 Flows”).*
- *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 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. By Notice dated January 29, 2026 DWR increased the Table A allocation to thirty percent (30%). DWR’s January Notice explained the updated allocation as follows:**

*A series of atmospheric rivers that arrived mid-December and continued until early January provided for above average precipitation and high runoff, contributing to storage increases in California reservoirs. However, the series of storms were warm, snowpack accumulation has been below average, and continuing warm and dry weather in January has resulted in snowpack loss. ... Considering the recent dry and warm conditions and associated forecasts, we will be carefully assessing and evaluating future allocation increases as hydrologic conditions become clearer. ... To determine the available SWP water supplies, DWR considers various factors including SWP contractors’ 2026 carryover supplies and demands, existing storage in SWP conservation facilities, estimates of future runoff, near-term and seasonal climate forecasts, SWP operational, contractual, and regulatory requirements set forth in 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 April 15, 2026 Lake Oroville storage levels were recorded at 95 percent of total capacity and 124 percent of its historic average for this time of year. Notwithstanding these very favorable reservoir conditions, given the extraordinarily dry March and resulting Sierra snowmelt, at this point it appears all but certain that DWR will not increase this year’s Table A allocation above 30 percent.

As reflected in meeting agenda for the March 26, 2026 CCWA Board of Directors meeting, 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 affecting the California Aqueduct; infrastructure improvements; CCWA strategic planning; and the CCWA FY 2026/27 Preliminary Budget. Also, as noted recent Consent Reports, 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 in December 2025. The next regular meeting of the CCWA Board of Directors is currently scheduled for April 23, 2026.



BUREAU OF  
RECLAMATION

Historical Archive and Reports Database  
**Lake Cachuma Daily Operations**  
Run Date: 04/10/2026

March 2026

DAY	ELEV	STORAGE ACRE-FEET		COMPUTED*	CCWA	PRECIP ON			RELEASE - AF.			EVAPORATION		PRECIP	
		IN LAKE	CHANGE	INFLOW AF.	INFLOW AF.	RES. SURF. AF.	TUNNEL	HILTON CREEK	OUTLET	SPILLWAY	AF.	INCH	INCHES		
	754.19	197,003													
1	754.16	196,940	-63	1,403.6	0.0	0.0	48.1	14.6	399.0	967.0	37.9	0.190	0.00		
2	754.10	196,751	-189	1,244.7	0.0	0.0	33.3	14.5	395.0	967.0	23.9	0.120	0.00		
3	754.04	196,562	-189	1,239.2	0.0	0.0	27.8	14.5	392.0	966.0	27.9	0.140	0.00		
4	754.00	196,436	-126	1,212.3	0.0	0.0	38.9	14.5	296.0	965.0	23.9	0.120	0.00		
5	753.97	196,342	-94	1,250.8	0.0	0.0	40.5	14.5	291.0	965.0	33.8	0.170	0.00		
6	753.92	196,184	-158	1,102.9	0.0	0.0	48.6	14.5	197.0	965.0	35.8	0.180	0.00		
7	753.86	195,995	-189	1,064.2	0.0	0.0	50.9	14.5	196.0	964.0	27.8	0.140	0.00		
8	753.82	195,869	-126	1,125.4	0.0	0.0	45.7	13.9	191.0	963.0	37.8	0.190	0.00		
9	753.76	195,680	-189	1,062.4	0.0	0.0	48.1	14.5	191.0	962.0	35.8	0.180	0.00		
10	753.75	195,649	-31	1,112.3	0.0	0.0	48.9	14.5	96.0	962.0	21.9	0.110	0.00		
11	753.71	195,523	-126	1,015.0	0.0	0.0	49.7	14.5	92.0	961.0	23.8	0.120	0.00		
12	753.69	195,460	-63	1,018.7	0.0	0.0	60.4	14.5	12.0	961.0	33.8	0.170	0.00		
13	753.69	195,460	0	1,056.8	0.0	0.0	55.5	14.5	32.0	921.0	33.8	0.170	0.00		
14	753.61	195,208	-252	352.2	0.0	0.0	57.9	14.5	506.0	0.0	25.8	0.130	0.00		
15	753.53	194,958	-250	371.7	0.0	0.0	59.6	14.5	506.0	0.0	41.6	0.210	0.00		
16	753.45	194,709	-249	353.8	0.0	0.0	57.6	14.5	501.0	0.0	29.7	0.150	0.00		
17	753.40	194,553	-156	371.2	0.0	0.0	58.3	14.4	411.0	0.0	43.5	0.220	0.00		
18	753.35	194,397	-156	333.5	0.0	0.0	69.6	14.4	358.0	0.0	47.5	0.240	0.00		
19	753.31	194,272	-125	324.9	0.0	0.0	75.0	14.5	309.0	0.0	51.4	0.260	0.00		
20	753.29	194,210	-62	327.5	0.0	0.0	80.5	14.5	251.0	0.0	43.5	0.220	0.00		
21	753.26	194,116	-94	244.0	0.0	0.0	80.2	14.4	190.0	0.0	53.4	0.270	0.00		
22	753.25	194,085	-31	297.3	0.0	0.0	80.4	14.5	186.0	0.0	47.4	0.240	0.00		
23	753.23	194,022	-63	214.9	0.0	0.0	47.9	14.4	184.0	0.0	31.6	0.160	0.00		
24	753.21	193,960	-62	235.0	0.0	0.0	48.2	14.4	185.0	0.0	49.4	0.250	0.00		
25	753.20	193,929	-31	254.9	0.0	0.0	50.0	14.4	184.0	0.0	37.5	0.190	0.00		
26	753.18	193,866	-63	222.1	0.0	0.0	47.2	14.4	184.0	0.0	39.5	0.200	0.00		
27	753.17	193,835	-31	253.8	0.0	0.0	44.9	14.4	184.0	0.0	41.5	0.210	0.00		
28	753.14	193,742	-93	185.0	0.0	0.0	42.1	14.4	184.0	0.0	37.5	0.190	0.00		
29	753.12	193,679	-63	223.4	0.0	0.0	45.6	14.4	185.0	0.0	41.4	0.210	0.00		
30	753.10	193,617	-62	198.8	0.0	0.0	24.9	14.4	184.0	0.0	37.5	0.190	0.00		
31	753.08	193,523	-94	176.0	0.0	0.0	46.0	14.4	182.0	0.0	27.6	0.140	0.00		
<b>TOTALS</b>			<b>-3,480</b>	<b>19,848.3</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>1,612.3</b>	<b>447.8</b>	<b>7,654.0</b>	<b>12,489.0</b>	<b>1,125.2</b>	<b>5.680</b>	<b>0.00</b>		
<b>AVERAGE</b>		<b>194,953</b>													

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](http://www.countyofsb.org/pwd)

## Rainfall and Reservoir Summary

Updated 8am: 4/13/2026

Water Year: 2026

Storm Number: 12

**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 3day(s)	Month	Year*	% to Date	% of Year*	AI
Buellton (Fire Stn)	233	0.00	0.33	0.38	23.21	148%	140%	
Cachuma Dam (USBR)	332	0.00	0.52	0.59	32.54	173%	164%	
Carpinteria (Fire Stn)	208	0.00	0.31	0.55	20.89	129%	121%	
Cuyama (Fire Stn)	436	0.00	0.05	0.05	10.02	143%	131%	
Figueroa Mtn. (USFS Stn)	421	0.07	1.38	1.41	27.91	139%	131%	6.3
Gibraltar Dam (City Facility)	230	0.00	0.66	0.82	37.35	149%	141%	6.5
Goleta (Fire Stn-Los Carneros)	440	0.00	0.27	0.44	23.32	135%	127%	
Lompoc (City Hall)	439	0.04	0.49	0.51	19.58	141%	133%	6.5
Los Alamos (Fire Stn)	204	0.03	0.67	0.67	19.25	134%	126%	
San Marcos Pass (USFS Stn)	212	0.04	1.39	1.56	49.66	151%	144%	
Santa Barbara (County Bldg)	234	0.00	0.62	0.81	25.53	147%	138%	
Santa Maria (City Pub.Works)	380	0.02	0.37	0.39	14.62	117%	110%	
Santa Ynez (Fire Stn /Airport)	218	0.01	0.32	0.38	21.45	144%	136%	
Sisquoc (Fire Stn)	256	0.21	0.68	0.68	15.57	111%	104%	

Countywide percentage of "Normal-to-Date" rainfall : **140%**

Countywide percentage of "Normal Water-Year" rainfall : **132%**

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)

	Spillway Elev. (ft)	Current Elev. (ft)	Max. Storage (ac-ft)	Current Storage (ac-ft)	Current Capacity (%)	Storage Change Mo.(ac-ft)	Storage Change Year*(ac-ft)
<u><a href="#">Gibraltar Reservoir</a></u>	1,400.00	1,399.75	4,490	4,434	98.8%	-31	2,927
<u><a href="#">Cachuma Reservoir</a></u>	753.**	752.84	192,978	192,481	99.7%	-654	39,314
<u><a href="#">Jameson Reservoir</a></u>	2,224.00	2,223.86	4,587	4,571	99.7%	0	351
<u><a href="#">Twitchell Reservoir</a></u>	651.50	555.03	190,259	10,388	5.3%	-3,276	10,388

[Previous Rainfall and Reservoir Summaries](#)



IN REPLY REFER TO:

United States Department of the Interior  
BUREAU OF RECLAMATION  
California Great-Basin  
South-Central California Area Office  
1243 N Street  
Fresno, CA 93721



SCC-400  
2.2.4.23

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL ONLY

Mr. Matthew Young  
Water Agency Manager  
Santa Barbara County Water Agency  
123 East Anapamu Street  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

Subject: Cachuma Project – Surplus Water Availability – Master Contract No. I75r-1802RB  
(Contract) – Cachuma Project, California

Dear Mr. Young:

This letter follows up on my enclosed March 20, 2026 email regarding the end of surplus water availability. On Friday, March 20, 2026, we resumed “normal” operations and consequently "Surplus Water" was no longer available at the end of the day.

If you have questions, please contact David E. Hyatt, Resources Management Division Chief at (559) 262-0334, via email at [dhyatt@usbr.gov](mailto:dhyatt@usbr.gov) or for the hearing impaired at TTY (800) 877-8339.

Sincerely,

RAIN  
EMERSON

Digitally signed by RAIN  
EMERSON  
Date: 2026.03.24  
11:49:27 -07'00'

Rain Emerson  
Acting Area Manager

Enclosure  
Surplus Water No Longer Available

INTERIOR REGION 10 • CALIFORNIA-GREAT BASIN

CALIFORNIA\*, NEVADA\*, OREGON\*

\* PARTIAL

cc: Ms. Janet Gingras  
Cachuma Operation and Maintenance Board  
3301 Laurel Canyon Road  
Santa Barbara, CA 93105-2017  
jgingras@cachuma-board.org

Ms. Kelley Dyer  
Carpinteria Valley Water District  
1301 Santa Ynez Avenue  
Carpinteria, CA 93013  
kelley@cvwd.net

Mr. David Matson  
Goleta Water District  
4699 Hollister Avenue  
Goleta, CA 93110  
dmatson@goletawater.com

Mr. Nicholas Turner  
Montecito Water District  
583 Ysidro Road  
Montecito, CA 93150  
nturner@montecitowater.com

Mr. Joshua Haggmark  
City of Santa Barbara  
630 Garden Street  
Santa Barbara, CA 93102  
jhaggmark@SantaBarbaraCA.gov

Mr. Paeter Garcia  
Santa Ynez River Water Conservation  
District Improvement District No. 1  
P.O. Box 157  
Santa Ynez, CA 93460  
pgarcia@syrwd.org

**Re: Cachuma Project - Surplus Water Availability**

---

**From** Emerson, Rain L <remerson@usbr.gov>

**Date** Fri 3/20/2026 11:15 AM

**To** Matthew Young <mcyoung@countyofsb.org>; Janet Gingras <jgingras@cachuma-board.org>; Joshua Haggmark <jhaggmark@santabarbaraca.gov>; Nicholas Turner <nturner@montecitowater.com>; Robert McDonald <bob@cvwd.net>; Paeter Garcia <pgarcia@syrwd.org>; David Matson <dmatson@goletawater.com>; Ryan Drake <rdrake@goletawater.com>

**Cc** Buenrostro, Christian <cbuenrostro@usbr.gov>; GONZALEZ, RUFINO <RGonzalez@usbr.gov>; Gallmann, Jeffrey S <JGallmann@usbr.gov>; Hyatt, David E <dhyatt@usbr.gov>; Prieto, Moses J <mprieto@usbr.gov>; Papendick, Jeffrey E <jpapendick@usbr.gov>

Good morning!

As of 1pm today, we will no longer be spilling or making releases in excess of those required for water rights purposes and as such "Surplus Water" is no longer available effective the end of the day today in accordance with Article3(f) (2) of the Amendatory Contract.

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

---

**From:** Emerson, Rain L <remerson@usbr.gov>

**Sent:** Wednesday, December 31, 2025 2:18 PM

**To:** Matthew Young <mcyoung@countyofsb.org>; Janet Gingras <jgingras@cachuma-board.org>; Joshua Haggmark <jhaggmark@santabarbaraca.gov>; Nicholas Turner <nturner@montecitowater.com>; Robert McDonald <bob@cvwd.net>; Paeter Garcia <pgarcia@syrwd.org>; David Matson <dmatson@goletawater.com>; Ryan Drake <rdrake@goletawater.com>

**Cc:** Buenrostro, Christian <cbuenrostro@usbr.gov>; GONZALEZ, RUFINO <RGonzalez@usbr.gov>; Gallmann, Jeffrey S <JGallmann@usbr.gov>; Hyatt, David E <dhyatt@usbr.gov>; Prieto, Moses J <mprieto@usbr.gov>

**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



CENTRAL COAST WATER AUTHORITY

MEMORANDUM

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

April 1, 2026

According to the CCWA revenue meters at each turnout, the following deliveries were made during the month of March 2026:

<u>Project Participant</u>	<u>Delivery Amount (acre-feet)</u>
Chorro .....	125
Lopez.....	133
Shandon .....	0
Guadalupe.....	17
Santa Maria.....	419
Golden State Water Co.....	0
Vandenberg.....	248
Buellton .....	0
Solvang .....	0
Santa Ynez ID#1 .....	0
Bradbury.....	0
<b>TOTAL .....</b>	<b>942</b>

In order to reconcile these deliveries with the DWR revenue meter, which read 978 acre-feet, the following delivery amounts should be used for billing purposes:

<u>Project Participant</u>	<u>Delivery Amount (acre-feet)</u>
Chorro .....	130
Lopez .....	138
Shandon .....	0
Guadalupe.....	18
Santa Maria .....	435*
Golden State Water Co .....	0*
Vandenberg .....	257
Buellton .....	0
Solvang .....	0
Santa Ynez ID#1 .....	0
Bradbury .....	0
<b>TOTAL .....</b>	<b>978</b>

\*Golden State Water Company delivered 0 acre-feet into its system through the Santa Maria turnout. This delivery is recorded by providing a credit of 0 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
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0</b>

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	0
Montecito	0
Morehart	0
Santa Barbara	0
Raytheon	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0</b>

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  
David Trujillo, City of Guadalupe  
Kelley Dyer, 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:** Lisa F. Watkins <lfw@ccwa.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, March 23, 2026 1:29 PM  
**Cc:** David R. Beard  
**Subject:** Polonio Pass Water Treatment Plant Outage for Leak Repair

Via bcc to CCWA Participants and Water Operations:

CCWA has located a leak on the treated water pipeline at the Polonio Pass Water Treatment Plant, and a short-term outage is required to make repairs. The repair work will begin on Monday, April 6 and the outage may last up to five (5) days. Treated water stored in Tank 2 and Tank 5 will be available as a limited source of emergency supplies. If your system requires an emergency source of supply during the shutdown, please contact CCWA to coordinate.

Feel free to contact me if you have any questions about the upcoming outage at (805) 680-2116.

Thank you,

*Sent for*  
David Beard  
Deputy Director  
Central Coast Water Authority  
(805) 680-2116



Lisa Watkins  
Office Manager  
Office: 805-697-5219  
Email: [LFW@ccwa.com](mailto:LFW@ccwa.com)  
[www.ccwa.com](http://www.ccwa.com)

**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:** Lisa F. Watkins <lfw@ccwa.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 2, 2026 8:55 AM  
**Cc:** David R. Beard  
**Subject:** Polonio Pass Water Treatment Plant Outage for Leak Repair

Via bcc to CCWA Participants and Water Operations:

As a reminder, the Polonio Pass Water Treatment Plant (WTP) will be offline beginning on Monday, April 6 to repair a leak on the treated water pipeline.

CCWA has coordinated with Participants that have requested an emergency supply of water during the WTP outage, and all active Turnouts will be switched to minimum flows or shutdown between 8:00-8:30am on Monday, April 6.

WTP operations and pipeline deliveries are scheduled to resume on Friday, April 10. CCWA will purge a portion of the pipeline by delivering water to Lake Cachuma prior to activating Turnouts on the pipeline.

Feel free to contact me if you have any questions about the upcoming WTP outage at (805) 680-2116.

Thank you,

*Sent for*  
David Beard  
Deputy Director  
Central Coast Water Authority  
(805) 680-2116



Lisa Watkins  
Office Manager  
Office: 805-697-5219  
Email: [lfw@ccwa.com](mailto:lfw@ccwa.com)  
[www.ccwa.com](http://www.ccwa.com)

**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:** Lisa F. Watkins <lfw@ccwa.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 8, 2026 2:56 PM  
**Cc:** David R. Beard; Peter K. Thompson  
**Subject:** Polonio Pass Water Treatment Plant Outage for Leak Repair

Via bcc to CCWA Participants and Water Operations:

CCWA Participants-

The work on the treated water pipeline leak at the WTP has concluded and CCWA staff is collecting a water sample prior to returning to normal operations. The laboratory analysis will be available in 24 hours. CCWA anticipates WTP operations and pipeline deliveries will resume the morning of Friday, April 10. A portion of the pipeline will be purged by delivering water to Lake Cachuma prior to activating Turnouts.

Unfortunately, there is still additional work needed to complete the leak repair. CCWA will schedule it for the annual Coastal Branch outage in November.

Feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Thank you,

*Sent for*  
David Beard  
Deputy Director  
Central Coast Water Authority  
(805) 680-2116



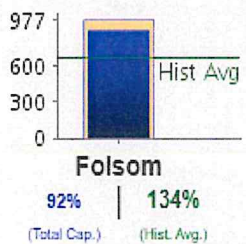
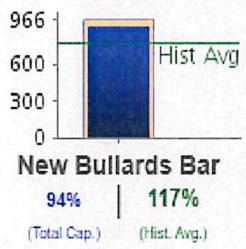
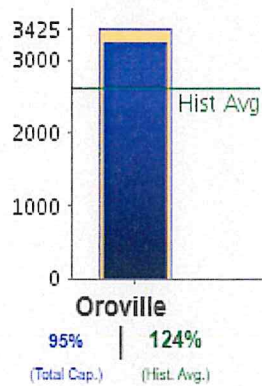
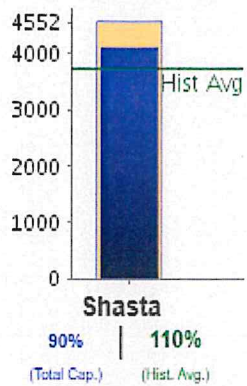
Lisa Watkins  
Office Manager  
Office: 805-697-5219  
Email: [LFW@ccwa.com](mailto:LFW@ccwa.com)  
[www.ccwa.com](http://www.ccwa.com)

**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.

**CURRENT CONDITIONS: MAJOR WATER SUPPLY RESERVOIRS:15-APR-2026**

Data as of Midnight: 15-Apr-2026

Change Date: 15-Apr-2026

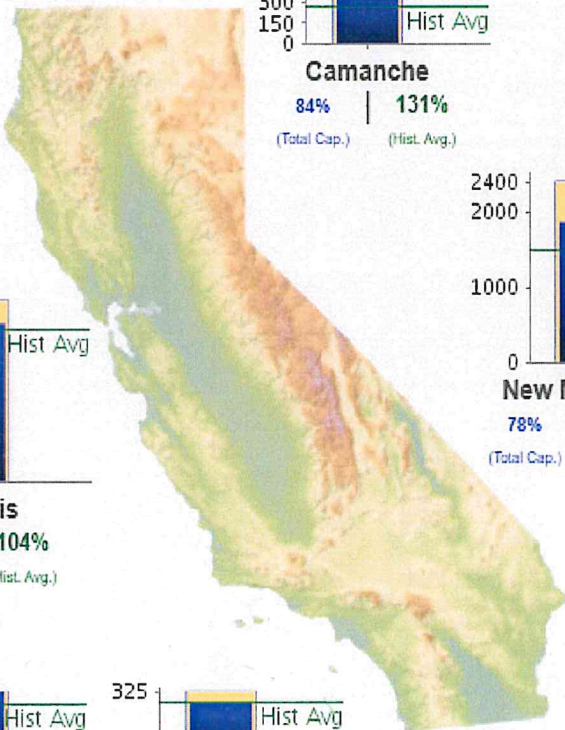
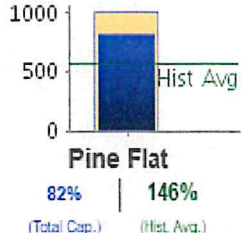
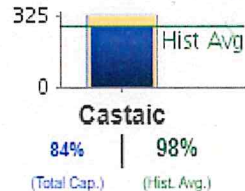
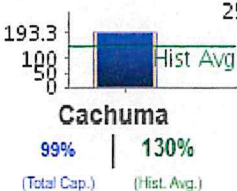
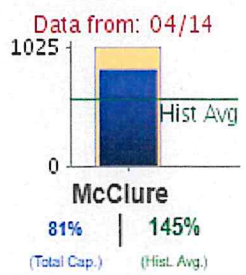
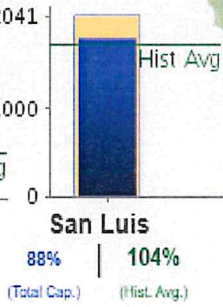
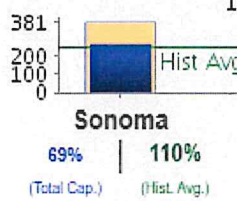
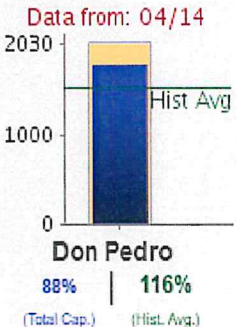
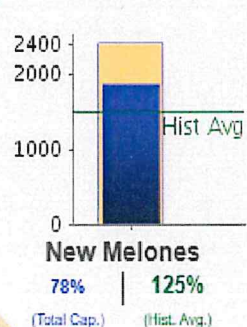
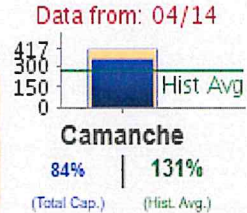
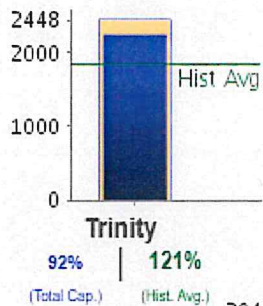


**LEGEND**

- Blue Bar: Storage level for date
- Gold Bar: Total reservoir capacity
- Green Line: Historic level for date.

Capacity (TAF) | Historical Avg Mark

% of Capacity | % Hist. Avg.  
(Click res. 3 char. code for details)



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

Report Generated: 16-Apr-2026 9:28 AM

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



# DRY MARCH LEAVES NO MEASURABLE SNOW FOR APRIL SURVEY

BY DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES APR 1, 2026 WATER NEWS

**SACRAMENTO** – The Department of Water Resources (DWR) today conducted the critical April snow survey at Phillips Station and found no measurable snow, a stark indicator of how record-hot March temperatures and high-elevation rain have erased the Sierra Nevada snowpack months ahead of schedule. The combination of warm storms and unusually hot temperatures rapidly melted what remained of this year’s already sparse snowpack. Statewide, the snowpack is now just 18 percent of average for this date, according to the automated snow sensor network.

Today’s results are the second lowest April measurement on record for Phillips Station, largely because there was still some visible snow on the ground. By contrast, the lowest April reading occurred in 2015 when no snow was present at the site. Although DWR and its partners in the California Cooperative Snow Surveys Program are completing additional surveys across the Sierra Nevada, preliminary data indicates this year’s April 1 snowpack is the second lowest on record.

The April measurement is a critical marker for water managers across the state, as it is typically when the snowpack reaches its maximum volume and begins to melt. However, this year’s extremely hot and dry conditions throughout the month of March, along with a warm atmospheric river system in late February, initiated snowmelt several weeks ahead of schedule. According to automated sensors across the Sierra Nevada, this year’s statewide snowpack likely reached its peak on or near February 24.

“It feels like we skipped spring this year and dropped straight into a summer heatwave,” said DWR Director Karla Nemeth. “What should be gradual snowmelt happened suddenly weeks ago. To me, this is another reminder that aging water systems need to be retrofit for more volatile precipitation patterns. We’re seeing fewer, warmer storms and shorter wet seasons. Future water supplies will depend upon our ability to capture water when it’s available and manage it more efficiently.”

DWR’s water supply forecasts use data from the April 1 snowpack to calculate how much snowmelt runoff will eventually make its way into California’s rivers and reservoirs. This information is critical for reservoir managers, who must balance flood control and water supply goals through the winter and depend on snowmelt to slowly refill reservoirs as demand increases during the dry season.

Given the unprecedented heatwave across the West in March, DWR and its partners expanded monitoring efforts to better track this year’s rapid snowmelt, including 100 additional mid-month snow

surveys across 18 critical watersheds. The California Cooperative Snow Surveys Program has also been working closely with partner agencies to monitor the snowmelt and ensure water managers have the information they need to make informed water management decisions.

DWR has focused efforts over the past five years to understand and track how snowpack accumulation and melt translates into water supply, which has aided efforts to forecast runoff in new extreme climate conditions. New snow hydrology modeling in key watersheds gives DWR better insights into the changing physical state of the snowpack. Expanding data collection efforts with Airborne Snow Observatories Inc. and academic research partners, including UC Berkeley's Central Sierra Snow Lab, now also allow DWR to consider factors like changes in soil moisture and snowpack temperature in its runoff forecasts.

“What makes this year stand out is the disconnect between precipitation and snowpack,” said Andy Reising, manager of DWR’s Snow Surveys and Water Supply Forecasting Unit. “We received near-average precipitation in many parts of the state, but much of it fell as rain instead of snow. That led to one of the lowest April snowpacks on record and one of the earliest peaks we’ve seen in decades — conditions that make forecasting runoff more complex.”

Although some additional snow is forecasted to arrive in the coming days, it is not likely to make up for the rapid snowmelt and hot dry March. In the Northern Sierra Nevada, where the state’s largest water supply reservoirs are located, the snowpack is just 6 percent of average.

DWR conducts four or five snow surveys at Phillips Station each winter near the first of each month, January through April and, if necessary, May.

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

# April 1 is supposed to be peak snow in California. Forget that this year



Record heat is melting the Sierra Nevada snowpack at a fast pace as viewed along the Owens River near Mammoth Lakes, Calif. (George Rose / Getty Images)



**By Ian James**  
Staff Writer | [✕ Follow](#)

April 1, 2026 Updated 1:10 PM PT

- Most of the snow in California’s Sierra Nevada has melted after an extremely warm month.
- The early melt reflects a long-term pattern as global warming accelerates runoff in the mountains.

California’s snowpack is supposed to reach its peak April 1, so state surveyors held their final Sierra snow survey of the year in a meadow near Lake Tahoe.

But instead of peak snow, they found nothing they could measure, just some sparse patches of snow on the bare meadow grass.

“We’re calling today’s measurement zero,” said Andy Reising, manager of snow surveys for the California Department of Water Resources. “It came off really fast.”

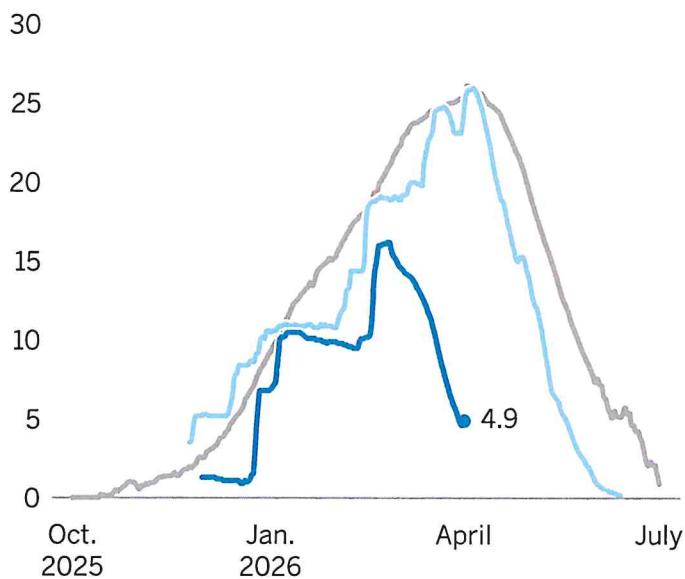
Snow across California’s Sierra Nevada now measures just 18% of average – the second smallest on record since 1950. A month of record-shattering heat thawed the snow and sent runoff coursing into streams and rivers, leaving only minimal water in the mountains as the state heads into dry season.

## March heatwave leaves snowpack at 18% of average

Snow water content, in inches

● 2026 — 2025 — Average





Data as of April 1

[California Dept. of Water Resources](#)

Sean Greene LOS ANGELES TIMES

The early melt is a symptom of global warming that scientists say is becoming more pronounced.

“This particular year is as clear an indication of the influence of climate change as anything we’ve seen,” said Peter Gleick, a leading water scientist and co-founder of the Pacific Institute. “Climate change is influencing California’s water system quickly and severely.”

This year the Sierra snowpack peaked on Feb. 25 at 73% of average.

The summerlike heat in March broke monthly records in many areas of the Western U.S., accelerating the melting of snow in the Rocky Mountains as well.



Light snow is seen on the meadow where the California Department of Water Resources conducts the fourth media snow survey of the 2026 season at Phillips Station in the Sierra Nevada. (Nick Shockey / Calif. Dept. of Water Resources)

Precipitation in California has been nearly average since October, but more of that precipitation is falling as rain, less as snow.

The warmth and premature melt mean the state's forests will dry out a month or more earlier than usual, Gleick said, which increases the risk of wildfires.

“It could be a very bad fire year,” he said. “It also means rivers and streams are going to dry out sooner, and that has bad implications for natural ecosystems and our fisheries.”

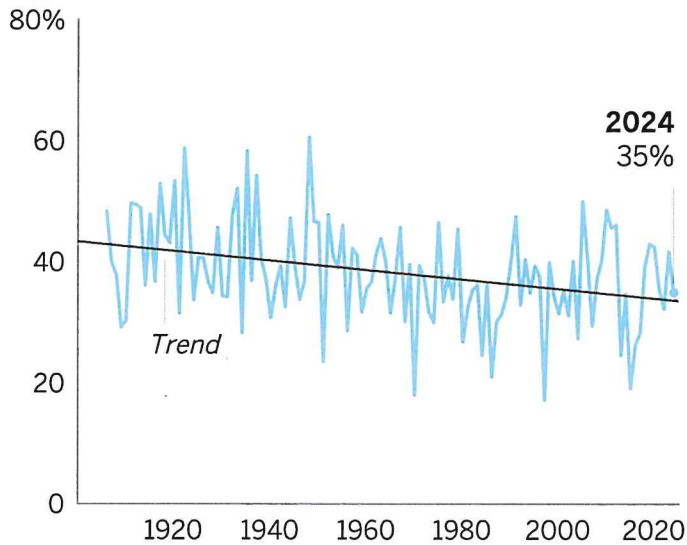
Cities and farms should still have ample water because major reservoirs in Northern California are nearly full. That's because this winter brought decent rain and the three years prior were wet, too.

“We were lucky this year in the sense that even though we have so little snow left, we had an average amount of rainfall,” Gleick said. “There are going to be years, inevitably, where we not only have almost no snow, but we don’t get the rain either.”

## Runoff is diminishing in spring and summer...

As temperatures rise and the Sierra snowpack melts earlier, less runoff is flowing into the Sacramento River in spring and summer.

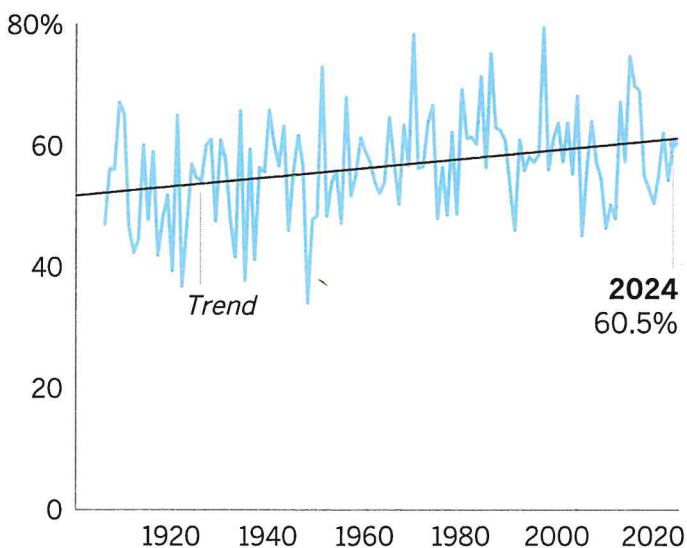
### April-July runoff, as a percentage of annual total



## ...and increasing in winter

More water is running off early in winter instead of being stored as snow.

### October-March runoff, as a percentage of annual total



California's smallest snowpack on record was in 2015, just 5% of average.

Karla Nemeth, director of the California Department of Water Resources, said the minimal snow and high temperatures "are setting us up for what will be a challenging year for water management in the state."

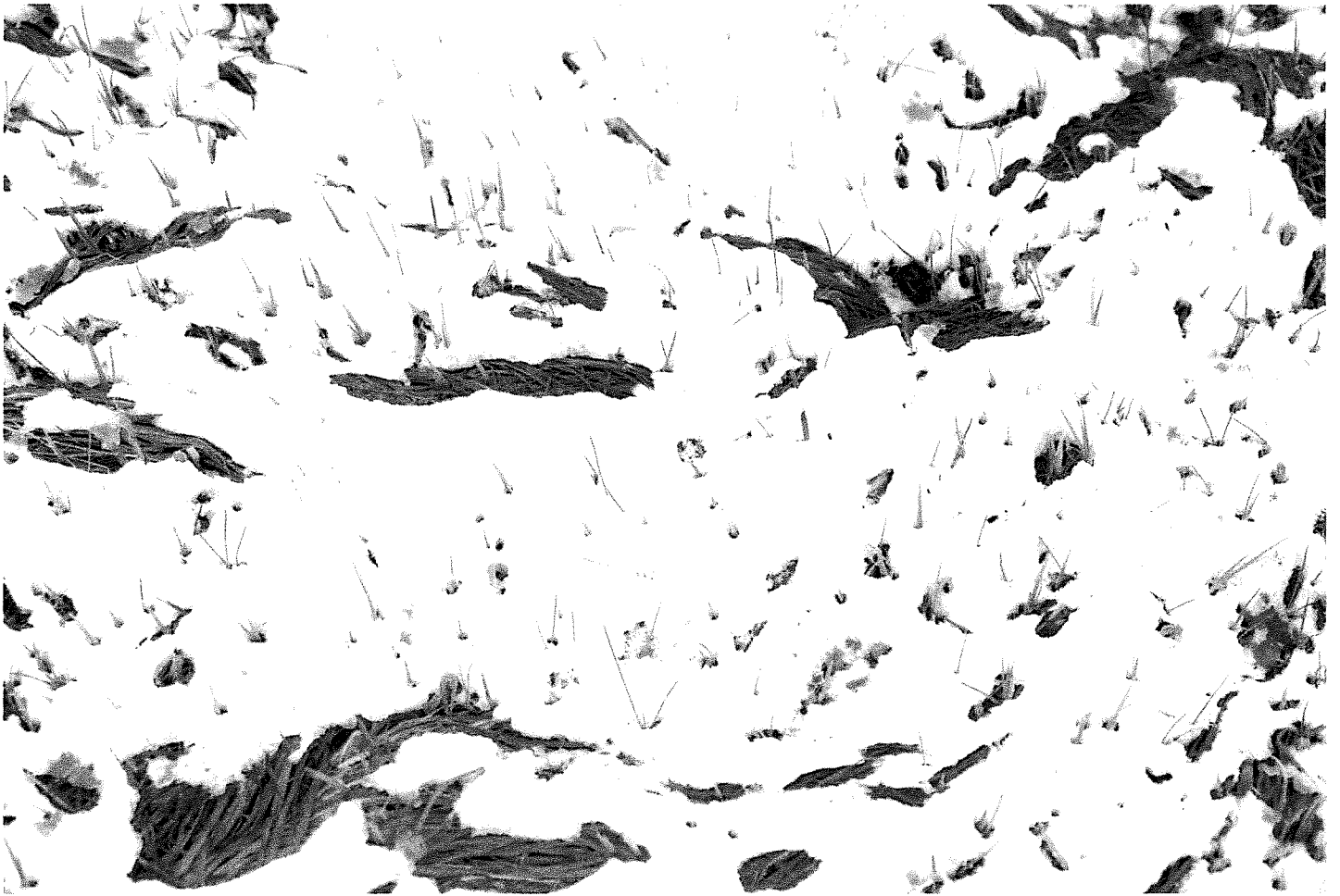
"What we have in our reservoirs in California is all we're going to get," Nemeth said after the snow survey. "This low snowpack means we have limited storage heading into our warm summer months. So it means every Californian needs to use water as carefully as they can."

California traditionally had relied on the Sierra snowpack to hold about 30% of its water.

"We're losing that storage," Gleick said. "If we can't depend on reliable long-term snowpack and snowmelt later in the year, we're going to have to do other things to make our water system more resilient."

When Gleick wrote his dissertation at UC Berkeley in the 1980s, he examined a range of climate scenarios and analyzed how rising temperatures would likely change the timing of runoff in Northern California.

"Current trends precisely match scientific projections from decades ago," he said. "More and more of our annual runoff is occurring in the winter months, and that's because it's more rain, less snow and faster snow melt."



Small blades of natural grasses poke through light snow on the meadow at Phillips Station in the Sierra Nevada.  
(Andrew Nixon / California Department of Water Resources)

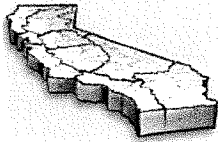
Adapting to these changes requires new thinking and new approaches, he said, including efforts to use water more efficiently, recycle more wastewater, capture more runoff to replenish groundwater, and change how reservoirs are operated.

Gov. Gavin Newsom and his administration are supporting plans for new water infrastructure projects including Sites Reservoir northwest of Sacramento and a 45-mile water tunnel beneath the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta.

As climate change brings shortened and wetter winters, Nemeth said, the state needs to “retrofit our infrastructure to deal with this new pattern.” She said the state also will need to continue to conserve more and recycle more water.

Though California isn’t in a drought, dry conditions have spread in parts of the state. It’s now abnormally dry in about one-fourth of California, largely in the northeast,

according to the [U.S. Drought Monitor](#) website.



CLIMATE & ENVIRONMENT

## Tracking California's water supplies

July 8, 2022

The rapid loss of snow is also affecting the Colorado River, another major water source for Southern California, which has shrunk over the last quarter-century during a [megadrought worsened by rising temperatures](#).

The snowpack in the upper part of the Colorado River watershed has rapidly dwindled over the last month and now measures just 23% of average.

What stood out about this winter across the West was the off-the-charts warmth. Daniel Swain, a climate scientist with UC Agriculture and Natural Resources, [described it](#) as one of the most “extreme heat events ever observed in the American Southwest.”

### More to Read

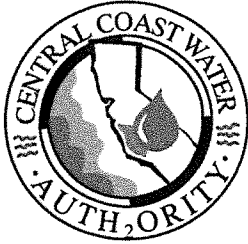
**Rain, not snow: Extraordinary warmth leaves mountains less snowy across the West**

Jan. 26, 2026



**Ian James**

Ian James is a reporter who focuses on water and climate change in California and the West. Before joining the Los Angeles Times in 2021, he was an environment reporter at the Arizona Republic and the Desert Sun. He previously worked for the



**CENTRAL COAST WATER AUTHORITY  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
AGENDA**

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

Thursday, March 26, 2026  
9:00 AM

at 255 Industrial Way, Buellton, California 93427 and  
940 Rose Court, Grover Beach, CA 93433

Members of the public may participate by video call or telephone via  
**Microsoft Teams** Meeting ID: 272 835 923 580 15 Passcode: RN2Eh3tA  
or by dialing +1 323-484-5095, and entering access Code/Meeting ID: 844 078 432#

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](mailto: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**
  - A. **CLOSED SESSION: CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL – ANTICIPATED LITIGATION**  
Government Code section 54956.9(d)(4)  
Initiation of litigation: 1 case
- IV. **Return to Open Session**
  - A. Report on Closed Session Actions (if any)
- V. **Consent Calendar**
  - A. Minutes of the February 26, 2026 Regular Meeting ★
  - B. Bills ★
  - C. Controller’s Report ★
  - D. Operations Report ★
  - E. 2026 Surplus Water Transfer Program Participation Agreement ★  
*Staff Recommendation: Approve the Consent Calendar*

**VI. Executive Directors Report**

- A. Water Supply Situation Report  
*Staff Recommendation:* Informational item only.
- B. Water Transfers Update  
*Staff Recommendation:* Informational item only.
- C. San Luis Reservoir Storage Forecast and Article 21 Procedures  
*Staff Recommendation:* Informational item only.
- D. Report on the Emergency Repair to the Polonio Pass Water Treatment Plant Treated Water Pipeline ★  
*Staff Recommendation:* Informational item only.
- E. CCWA Board of Directors Handbook ★  
*Staff Recommendation:* Adopt Resolution No. 26-04 Approving a Board of Directors Handbook.
- F. Strategic Plan Development — Approval of Budget Authorization ★  
*Staff Recommendation:* Approve inclusion of \$65,000 in the final Fiscal Year 2025–26 budget for development of a 5-year Strategic Plan with an outside consultant.
- G. Resolution No. 26-05 Appointing Peter Thompson To Serve As The Class 5 Representative On The State Water Contractors Board Of Directors ★  
*Staff Recommendation:* Approve Resolution No. 26-05 Appointing Peter Thompson To Serve As The Class 5 Representative On The State Water Contractors Board Of Directors
- H. Approval of Termination of the Water Infrastructure Financing Authority for Water Infrastructure Improvement ★  
*Staff Recommendation:* Adopt Resolution 26-06 Authorizing The Execution And Delivery Of A Termination Agreement Regarding The Water Infrastructure Financing Authority And Authorizing Certain Other Matters In Connection Therewith
- I. CCWA FY 2026/27 Preliminary Budget ★  
*Staff Recommendation:* Informational item only.
- J. State Water Contractors Report  
*Staff Recommendation:* Informational item only.
- K. Legislative Report ★  
*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: April 23, 2026**

**X. Adjournment**





**CENTRAL COAST WATER AUTHORITY  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
AGENDA**

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

Thursday, April 23, 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: 215 906 703 781 32 Passcode: y8hZ9gs9  
or by dialing +1 323-484-5095, and entering access Code/Meeting ID: 399 304 613#

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 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. **Consent Calendar**
  - A. Minutes of the March 26, 2026 Regular Meeting ★
  - B. Bills ★
  - C. Controller’s Report ★
  - D. Operations Report ★

*Staff Recommendation: Approve the Consent Calendar*
- IV. **Executive Directors Report**
  - A. Water Supply Situation Report  
*Staff Recommendation: Informational item only.*
  - B. Water Transfers Update  
*Staff Recommendation: Informational item only.*

## **Executive Directors Report (cont.)**

- C. **Furnishing and Delivering Bulk Treated Water Chemical Contracts ★**  
*Staff Recommendation:* Authorize the Executive Director to execute contracts with the following vendors to furnish and deliver bulk treated water chemicals:
- Chemtrade Chemicals US, LLC for aluminum sulfate at a cost of \$598.33/dry ton (DT)
  - Hill Brothers Chemical Co. for ammonium hydroxide at a cost of \$2,401.26/DT
  - JCI Jones Chemical, Inc. for liquid chlorine at a cost of \$1,910.00/ton
  - JCI Jones Chemical, Inc. for sodium bisulfite at a cost of \$3,225.00/DT
  - Univar Solutions USA, LLC for sodium hydroxide at a cost of \$865.00/DT
  - Univar Solutions USA, LLC for sodium hypochlorite at a cost of \$4.94/gallon (gal)
- D. **FY 2025/26 Third Quarter Investment Report ★**  
*Staff Recommendation:* Accept report.
- E. **Annual Review of the CCWA Investment Policy ★**  
*Staff Recommendation:* Informational item only.
- F. **CCWA FY 2026/27 Final Budget ★**  
*Staff Recommendation:* 1. Approve and adopt the Final FY 2026/27 Budget as outlined in the staff report; 2. Authorize staff to obtain bids for those projects included in the Final FY 2026/27 Budget which require formal bids; and 3. Find the projects included in the Final FY 2026/27 Budget except from the California Environmental Quality Act and direct staff to file the applicable Notices of Exemption.
- G. **2026 Review of Personnel Policy Manual ★**  
*Personnel Committee Recommendation:* Accept proposed changes to the Personnel Policy Manual as detailed in the staff report.
- H. **2027 Compensation and Benefit Survey ★**  
*Personnel Committee Recommendation:* Retain Gallagher Benefit Services, Inc. to perform a compensation and benefit study which will include conducting a comparator analysis as detailed in Option 1 of their March 11, 2026 proposal.
- I. **State Water Contractors Report**  
*Staff Recommendation:* Informational item only.
- J. **Legislative Report ★**  
*Staff Recommendation:* Informational item only.
- K. **Resolution No. 26-07 Commending Ray A Stokes for His 29 years of Service to CCWA and the Central Coast**  
*Staff Recommendation:* Approve Resolution No. 26-07
- V. Reports from Board Members for Information Only**
- VI. Items for Next Regular Meeting Agenda**
- VII. Date of Next Regular Meeting: May 28, 2026**
- VIII. Adjournment**



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

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

Date: April 21, 2026

Subject: Recommendation for Bid Award for Madera Fence Replacement – Phase 2

**Agenda: Item 8.B.2**

**STAFF REPORT**

As part of the District’s Fiscal Year 2025/2026 budget process, staff recommended, and the Board of Trustees approved, a capital improvement project (CIP) to purchase and install iron security fencing and gates along the rear property line of the District’s Headquarters and Shop Building to replace the secured perimeter adjacent to Madera Street. Similar to Phase 1 of the Madera Fence Replacement project (completed in 2025), the fencing improvements under Phase 2 are intended to function as a physical barrier to District property and facilities, deterring unauthorized individuals from accessing the premises, and mitigating losses due to potential vandalism and/or theft.

Components of the Madera Street Fence Replacement – Phase 2 project are summarized below and further depicted in Attachment A:

Component	Phase 2
Security Fencing Linear Footage	175 LF
Gates	1 Automatic Cantilever 3 Manual Roller / Track 1 Manual Swing 2 Pedestrian Gates
Privacy Screening Linear Footage	115 LF
Additional Fencing Linear Footage	50 LF (Cedar Split Rail)

The District initially issued a Request for Bids (RFB) for the Phase 2 project on February 2, 2026, with bids due on February 20, 2026. Only one bid was received. Staff subsequently re-advertised the project on March 23, 2026, with a revised bid due date of April 10, 2026, and conducted additional outreach to increase bidder participation. As a result, the District received four bids, three of which were determined to be responsive to the RFB. Following is a summary of the updated RFB responses:

<b>Description/Contractor</b>	<b>Allied Fence Company</b>	<b>Woodward Fence Inc.</b>	<b>Allco Fence Industries</b>	<b>Fence Factory*</b>
Total Bid	\$280,312	\$184,383	\$176,791	\$95,429

\*Bid is non-responsive

Following review of the bids, staff has determined that Allco Fence Industries is the lowest responsive and responsible bidder. Allco Fence Industries is locally based in Lompoc and has extensive experience working on public agency fencing projects.

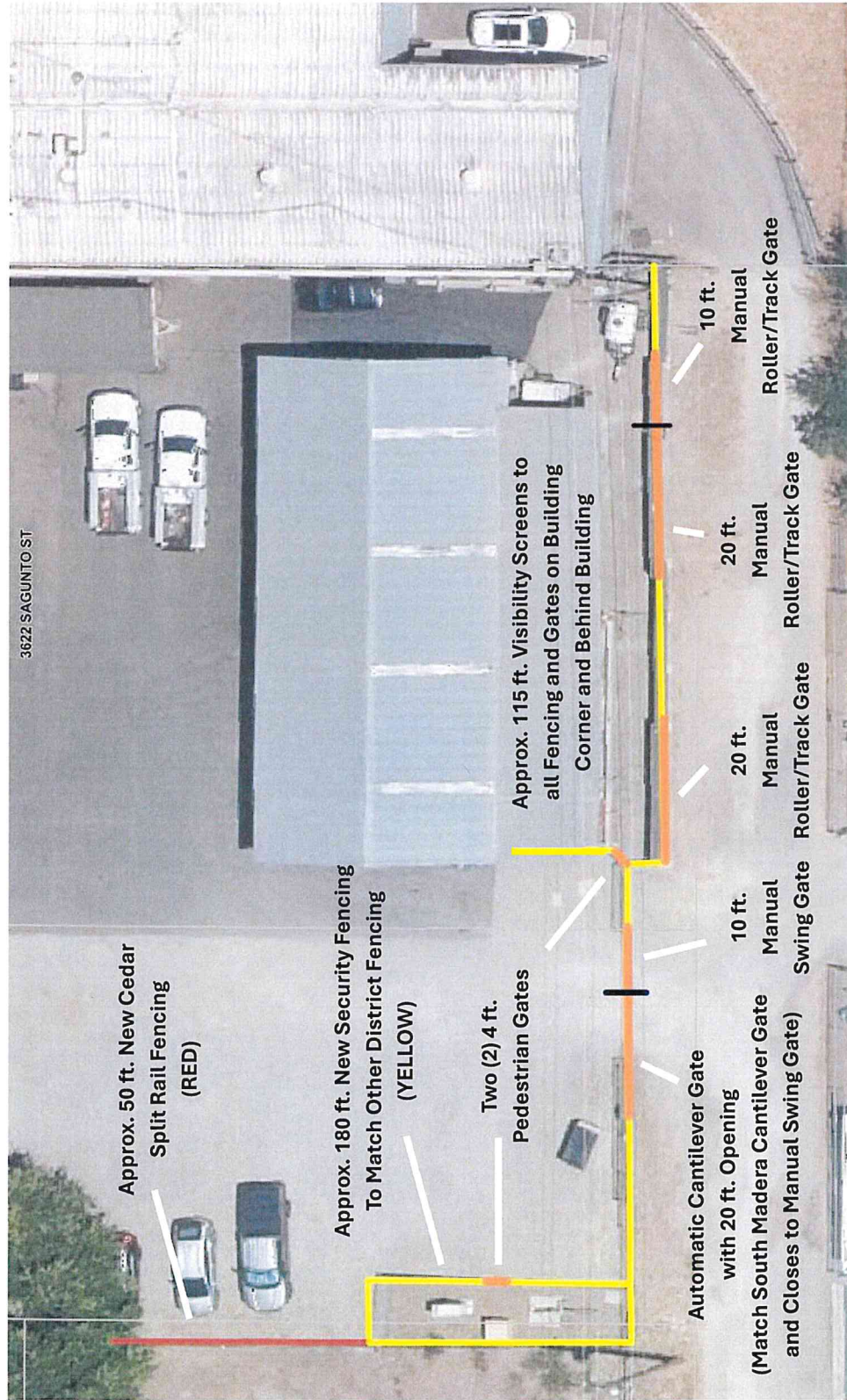
The District’s approved FY 2025/2026 budget includes \$90,000 for the Phase 2 project, and the lowest bid falls above the budgeted amount by approximately \$87,000. For several reasons, staff nevertheless recommends moving forward with the project. First, the budgeted amount of \$90,000 was based on the cost of the Phase 1 project, yet following adoption of the FY 2025/2026 budget staff determined that the Phase 2 project includes several additional features (and associated costs) that were not part of the Phase 1 project, e.g., three additional 10-foot roller/track gates, one additional 10-foot manual gate, two pedestrian gates, 115 feet of metal privacy screening, and 50 feet of cedar split rail fencing. Thus the original budget amount did not account for all components of the Phase 2 project. Second, sufficient funding capacity exists within the broader CIP program of the approved FY 2025/2026 budget to fully fund the Phase 2 project without affecting the projected net revenue balance for this fiscal year end. For example, in the remaining portion of this fiscal year, staff does not foresee expending the \$50,000 budgeted for design and permitting of a new administration building. Nor does staff expect to expend the entire \$50,000 budgeted for security fencing and other measures at various off-site locations, such that up to \$37,000 of those budgeted funds could be used for the Madera Fence Phase 2 project. Combined, these two budget transfers would enable full funding of the Phase 2 project without affecting the projected net revenue balance as set forth in the approved FY 2025/2026 budget. Third, staff believes that labor and material costs for the Phase 2 project will continue to escalate over time, which may weigh in favor of the District awarding a contract now according to the lowest bid amount recently received by the District.

**RECOMMENDATION**

Authorize award of the District’s Madera Fence Replacement – Phase 2 (Project) to Allco Fence Industries and authorize the General Manager to execute a Contract with Allco Fence Industries in the amount of \$176,791 to complete the Project.

# ATTACHMENT A

**YELLOW LINE (SECURITY FENCING), RED LINE (CEDAR FENCING), ORANGE LINE (GATES)** – Remove and properly dispose approximately 300 linear ft. of existing chain link fencing, including multiple gates. Install new wrought iron security detail (pointed top) fencing (approximately 180 linear ft.) and install new wrought iron gate sections as shown in image below. All wrought iron gates (except for the automatic cantilever gate) shall be security detail gates. Install approximately 115 linear ft. of metal visibility screens to all fencing and gates behind building. Install approximately 50 linear ft. of new split rail cedar fencing to match neighboring fence. \*All materials to be used for the Project and all plans for installation must be approved by the District in writing prior to the commencement of any work. \*





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

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

Date: April 21, 2026

Subject: Recommendation for Bid Award for Meadowlark Shaded Parking Area

**Agenda: Item 8.B.3**

**STAFF REPORT**

As part of the District’s Fiscal Year 2025/2026 budget process, staff recommended, and the Board of Trustees approved, a capital improvement project (CIP) to construct a shaded parking area at the Meadowlark Pump Station (MPS) property to house some of the District’s large equipment, trailers, and materials to mitigate weather damage currently being incurred for lack of protective cover.

The three-sided open metal shading unit will be constructed on and securely anchored to an existing 25-foot by 65-foot concrete slab located at the MPS site. The unit will have a height of 14 feet at the high eave and 12 feet at the low eave.

District staff prepared a Request for Bids (RFB) for the Meadowlark Shaded Parking Area project. The RFB was released on March 30, 2026, and bids were due by April 16, 2026. The District received two bids, both of which were determined to be responsive to the RFB. A summary of the RFB responses is as follows:

Description/Contractor	Coast General Contractors	Protective Weather Structures
Total Bid	\$118,867.15	\$87,748.00

Following evaluation of the bids, staff has determined that Protective Weather Structures is the lowest responsive and responsible bidder. Protective Weather Structures is based in San Luis Obispo and has experience working with public agencies on steel parking structures designed to protect equipment and materials.

The District's approved FY 2025/2026 budget includes \$100,000 for this project, and the lowest bid falls below the budgeted amount.

**RECOMMENDATION**

Authorize award of the District's Meadowlark Shaded Parking Area (Project) to Protective Weather Structures and authorize the General Manager to execute a Contract with Protective Weather Structures in the amount of \$87,748 to complete the Project.



**MEETING NOTICE AND AGENDA**

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

**MEETING WILL BE HELD VIRTUALLY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS  
AT 3:00 P.M., THURSDAY, APRIL 16, 2026**

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**Remote public participation is available via Telephone or TEAMS**  
To access the meeting via telephone, please dial: +1 469-998-7311, 418942414# or via the Web at: Join the meeting now

**“Join a Meeting” - Meeting ID: 263 990 233 166 67 Meeting Passcode: Pq7Kj6Bj**

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**MEETING AGENDA**

1. Call to Order and Roll Call
2. 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.)
3. Citizen Advisory Group (CAG) Membership Review
  - a. Membership Information Page on EMA GSA website: <https://www.ema-santaynezwater.org/ema-gsa-cag-information>
4. Final Draft Monitoring Well Design Plan and Specifications Memo (Packet Pages: 3-31)
5. Well Registration and Metering Program
  - a. Watermark Implementation Update
  - b. DWR Facilitation Support Services Update and Scope of Work (Packet Pages: 32-38)
  - c. Information from Action Plan on Above Narrows Alluvium delineation
6. Presentation on Spring 2026 groundwater level monitoring results
7. 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
8. Grant/Financing Opportunities
  - a. IRWM Quarterly Grant Opportunities Newsletter (Packet Pages: 39-50)
  - b. April 8, 2026 Second Quarterly Santa Barbara County IRWM Meeting Grant Opportunities Slides(Packet Pages: 51-61)

9. Future CAG Meeting Date/Time
  - a. Thursday, June 18, 2026 3:00 PM
10. CAG Reports and Requests for Future Agenda Items
11. Future EMA GSA Board meetings
  - a. Thursday, May 28, 2026 4:00 PM
  - b. CAG Report-Out
    - i. Updated format requested by the Board in which the CAG provides a separate report-out for each relevant Board agenda item
12. Adjournment

[This agenda was posted prior to the meeting at [ema-SantaYnezWater.org](http://ema-SantaYnezWater.org). 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.]



CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES

## SUSTAINABLE GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT OFFICE

715 P Street | Sacramento, CA 95814 | P.O. Box 942836 | Sacramento, CA 94236-0001

April 3, 2026

Charlotte Arnao  
[carnao@confluencees.com](mailto:carnao@confluencees.com)

Subject: DWR Facilitation Support Services (FSS): Santa Ynez River Valley Basin (3-015)

Dear Ms. Arnao,

The California Department of Water Resources (DWR) is pleased to notify the Santa Ynez River Valley Groundwater Basin Eastern Management Area Groundwater Sustainability Agency (EMA GSA) of our approval of your application to the Department's Facilitation Support Services (FSS) Program for the Santa Ynez River Valley Groundwater Basin (SYRVGB) (3-015). Attached to this letter is a copy of the FSS scope of work authorized by DWR to assist the EMA GSA in the subbasin in facilitation and outreach actions.

Services to be provided to the EMA GSA will be provided by Stantec's Project Planner/Scientist II, Eileen Takata, and Facilitator I, Emily Ng, available to DWR via Contract #4600015545, AM-05 (Stantec Consulting Services Inc.). The Team of Facilitators will invoice DWR directly, and not EMA GSA, for these services. As described in the attached scope, the total labor hours provided for ISP-91 is 638 with a period of performance ending December 31, 2027.

As always, please do not hesitate to contact your DWR Regional Coordinator if you have any questions.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Christina Boggs-Chavira".

Christina Boggs-Chavira, P.G.  
Senior Engineering Geologist  
Attachment: Implementation Service Plan No. 91 Recipient Copy

## SGMA FACILITATION SUPPORT SERVICES IMPLEMENTATION SERVICE PLAN

ISP No. 91: Santa Ynez River Valley Basin (3-015)  
Eastern Management Area Groundwater Sustainability Agency

### I. PREAMBLE

The Department of Water Resources (DWR) is offering Facilitation Support Services (FSS) to assist Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs) and local water management groups foster discussions that contribute towards implementing the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA).

### II. DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES

Under DWR Contract No. 4600015545, AM-05 Stantec Consulting Services Inc. (Contractor) provides FSS professional services in the nine below listed categories in support of DWR's Sustainable Groundwater Management Program.

1. Stakeholder Assessments
2. Governance Development
3. Stakeholder Communication and Engagement Planning and Support
4. Public and Stakeholder Outreach
5. Targeted Outreach to Underrepresented Groundwater Users
6. Tribal Government Outreach and Engagement
7. Meeting Facilitation
8. Intra-Basin and Inter-Basin Coordination Support
9. Interest-Based Negotiation

Implementation Service Plan (ISP) No. 91: Santa Ynez River Valley Basin (3-015) authorizes Contractor to deliver one or more of the services listed above to support the SGMA Program in the Santa Ynez River Valley Basin.

**DWR has established a not-to-exceed budget of 638 labor hours and \$5,151.75 for travel and other direct costs to execute the Scope of Work by December 31, 2027, unless amended.**

### III. BACKGROUND

This ISP responds to an application for professional facilitation support by the Santa Ynez River Valley Groundwater Basin (SYRVGB) Eastern Management Area Groundwater Sustainability Agency (EMA GSA). In addition to EMA GSA, two additional GSAs manage the SYRVGB via an executed coordination agreement: SYRVGB Central Management Area (CMA) GSA and the SYRVGB Western Management Area (WMA) GSA. The EMA GSA and WMA GSA share a boundary with the San Antonio Basin GSA (San Antonio Creek Valley Basin; 3-014). Groundwater

Sustainability Plans (GSP) prepared by GSAs within the SYRVGB were approved by DWR on January 18, 2024. The ISP provides facilitation support exclusively for EMA GSA. The EMA GSA is led by a five-member Board of Directors, with input provided by the EMA Citizen Advisory Group (CAG).

Significant project and management actions included in the EMA GSA GSP led to development and adoption of a Well Registration Ordinance and the Well Metering and Reporting Ordinance (herein referred to as the “2025 Ordinances”). The action affects approximately 700 domestic and agricultural production wells located within the EMA GSA boundaries. The Well Registration Ordinance seeks full compliance by well operators within 60 days of receiving the registration form from the EMA GSA. In compliance with the Well Metering and Reporting Ordinance, meters must be installed by June 30, 2027. Groundwater extraction reporting will begin October 31, 2027, and will occur biannually thereafter, with reports due April 30 and October 31 of each year. The EMA GSA, via a Prop 68 grant, is acquiring a data management system (DMS) to support well registration and groundwater extraction reporting.

#### IV. KEY FACILITATION TASKS

The focus of this ISP is to assist EMA GSA implement outreach actions in support of implementation of the 2025 Ordinances.

##### **Task 1. Work Plan**

*March 10, 2026 – June 30, 2026*

Developed in close collaboration with the EMA GSA Executive Director, the EMA CAG, and the GSA’s DMS contractor, this task includes development of a work plan that supports roll-out of the GSA’s DMS platform and engagement with groundwater well operators in well registration and reporting. This work plan is to describe data collection methodologies and requirements, and define the tactics, milestones and schedule of communication and engagement actions focused on raising awareness, enrollment and compliance with the 2025 Ordinances. Activities under this task include:

- **Work Plan Initiation Meeting:** Information collection and meeting with EMA GSA Executive Director and DMS contractor to identify, among other things, DMS requirements, schedule and milestones. Task to include collaboration to identify messages and potential outreach tactics. An annotated outline of the work plan will be provided to the EMA GSA Executive Director to gain agreement on topic areas to be covered in the full work plan.
- **EMA CAG Workshop:** Conduct one workshop to Review and receive feedback from members on proposed message and outreach tactics.
- **Work Plan:** Develop draft and final work plan.

##### *Assumptions:*

- Work plan initiation meeting to be held virtually.
- Assumes up to 6 hours for work plan initiation meeting preparation, attendance, and post-meeting coordination.

- Workshop to be held during a normally scheduled virtual CAG meeting and with up to two Stantec staff. Assumes 10 hours for workshop preparation and delivery.
- Draft and final work plan assumed to be up to six (6) pages and assumed at 35 hours.

*Deliverables:*

- Annotated Work Plan Outline
- Draft and Final Work Plan
- CAG Workshop Presentation
- CAG Workshop Summary

*Level of Effort (LOE):*

Name	Classification	ISP 91 Hours
Eileen Takata	Project Planner/Scientist II	23
Emily Ng	Facilitator I	28

**Task 2. Information Materials and Web Content**

*March 10, 2026 – December 31, 2027*

This task supports development of informational materials such as a webpage, fact sheets/flyers/mailers, and newsletters to engage well operators in well registration and reporting.

- **Website Content:** Working in consultation with the EMA GSA Executive Director and the EMA DMS contractor, this task includes preparation of one (1) web page that summarizes and orients users to the structure of the DMS. This task includes preparation of key messages associated with the 2025 Ordinances and input from the EMA GSA Executive Director, the EMA CAG, and the DMS contractor.
- **Outreach Materials:** Includes preparation and graphic design of up to two (2) well registration mailers to be distributed to well operators; up to three (3) fact sheets associated with the 2025 Ordinances; and up to seven (7) email messages.
- **Newsletters:** Includes preparation of up to three (3) newsletters on continuous or upcoming GSA initiatives, including well registration and reporting, for electronic distribution to the interested parties list or in-person distribution at meetings.

*Assumptions:*

- Webpage content development assumed at 30 hours. Website updates are to be completed by GSA staff.
- Direct mailers assumed to average 8 hours each and up to one, two-sided half-page or postcard size. Mailers will be provided to the GSA in electronic format. Printing, postage and management of distribution to groundwater well operators to be provided by the GSA.
- Fact sheets assumed to average 10 hours each and up to one, double-sided page each. Fact sheets will be provided to the GSA in electronic format. One fact sheet may include FAQs.
- Emails assumed to average 1 hour and up to 500 words each, to be delivered to GSA staff for distribution to the interested parties email list.

- Newsletters assumed to average 15 hours each and up to one, double-sided page each. Content for newsletters will be developed in close coordination with GSA staff and relevant technical consultants. Newsletters will be distributed electronically to the interested parties database and posted on the GSA website.

*Deliverables:*

- Webpage
- Emails, Direct Mailers, and Fact Sheets
- Newsletters

*Level of Effort (LOE):*

Name	Classification	ISP 91 Hours
Eileen Takata	Project Planner/Scientist II	33
Emily Ng	Facilitator I	87
Meredith Degner	GIS/Graphic Designer I	8

**Task 3. Meeting Support**

*March 10, 2026 – December 31, 2027*

This activity supports the conduct of public workshops, status presentations to the EMA CAG, and GSA Executive Director meetings.

- **Public Workshops:** Facilitation of up to two (2) well registration workshops and up to four (4) well metering and reporting workshops to support groundwater well operators comply with the 2025 Ordinances. Includes coordination with the EMA GSA Executive Director and DMS contractor through pre- and post-workshop meetings. Each workshop will be guided by a detailed meeting facilitation plan and documented in a meeting summary.
- **Workshop Materials:** Materials for each meeting include PowerPoint presentation, meeting flyer, sign-in sheet, and design of up to eight (8) informational posters, as needed.
- **CAG Meetings:** Includes virtual attendance by one Stantec staff at up to six (6) CAG meetings. A PowerPoint presentation may be prepared for at each meeting.
- **GSA Executive Director Meetings:** Includes monthly meetings with the EMA GSA Executive Director, staff and other parties identified by the Executive Director.

*Assumptions:*

- Public Workshops to be staffed by up to two (2) Stantec staff and be held in-person. Each public workshop, including coordination, facilitation, attendance, and post-meeting communication is assumed at 46 hours, including travel.
- Printing of posters to be provided by the GSA.
- Workshop presentation assumed at 20 slides.
- Workshop Material development is assumed at up to 12 hours per meeting.
- CAG meetings to be attended by one Stantec representative and held virtually. Each meeting is assumed at 5 hours, including preparation of PowerPoint presentation

- GSA Executive Director meetings are held virtually unless conducted in coordination with the delivery of public workshops.
- Meeting support is assumed to average 3 hours each.

*Deliverables:*

- Public Workshop Facilitation Plan
- Public Workshop Meeting Summary
- Public Workshop Informational Materials
- GSA Executive Director Meeting Action Item Summary

*Level of Effort (LOE):*

Name	Classification	ISP 91 Hours
Eileen Takata	Project Planner/Scientist II	168
Emily Ng	Facilitator I	230
Meredith Degner	GIS/Graphic Designer I	28

**Task 4. Contract Management**

*March 10, 2026 – December 31, 2027*

Activities anticipated under this task include:

- Prepare and submit monthly progress reports of activities in support of this ISP.
- Submittal of deliverables identified in this ISP.

*Deliverables:*

- Monthly Progress Report
- Submittal of deliverables identified in this ISP

*Level of Effort (LOE):*

Name	Classification	ISP 91 Hours
Eileen Takata	Project Planner/Scientist II	10
Emily Ng	Facilitator I	23

**V. TERM**

Work will occur in the period of *March 10, 2026 – December 31, 2027*

**VI. BUDGET ASSUMPTIONS**

1. Travel and other direct costs are budgeted at \$5,151.75 and are inclusive of up to 6 trips. The facilitator will work with the GSA to minimize travel and combine with other activities, as appropriate.



2. The GSA will provide for all other direct expenses including photocopies, postage, meeting rooms, refreshments and other related items.
3. All materials will be transmitted electronically.
4. The ISP Budget Worksheet, Appendix A provides the budgeted cost breakdown for DWR.
5. In the event FSS funding provided through this ISP is used for activities that materially deviate from the authorized scope, the Department reserves the right to immediately suspend continued implementation of this ISP via written notification.

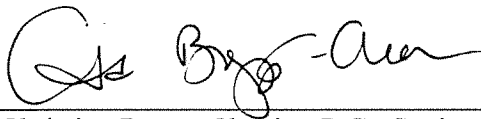
**VII. CONTRACTOR STAFFING**

Contractor will assign the individuals listed below to perform the professional-level services required in this Project. If for some reason anyone listed is unable or unavailable to perform as planned, any replacements or substitutes will be subject to prior approval by DWR.

<b>Job Classification</b>	<b>Assigned Staff</b>
Project Planner/Scientist II	Eileen Takata
Facilitator I	Emily Ng
GIS/Graphic Designer I	Meredith Degner

**VIII. SIGNATURES**

Approved by signature.



Christina Boggs-Chavira, P.G., Senior  
Engineering Geologist, DWR



Haydee Yonamine, Contractor



Craig Moyle, Contractor

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**NOTICE AND AGENDA OF JOINT SPECIAL MEETING  
OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR THE FOLLOWING AGENCIES:**

SANTA YNEZ RIVER VALLEY GROUNDWATER BASIN  
CENTRAL MANAGEMENT AREA GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY AGENCY  
AND

SANTA YNEZ RIVER VALLEY GROUNDWATER BASIN  
EASTERN MANAGEMENT AREA GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY AGENCY  
AND

SANTA YNEZ RIVER VALLEY GROUNDWATER BASIN  
WESTERN MANAGEMENT AREA GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY AGENCY

will be held on Friday, March 13, 2026, at 9:00 A.M.  
at Buellton City Council Chambers, 140 West Highway 246, Buellton, California

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WMA GSA Director and EMA GSA Alternate Director Steve Jordan will be attending the meeting via teleconference from the following location: 46250 East El Dorado, Indian Wells, CA 92210.  
Members of the public may join Director Jordan at that location.

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**Optional remote public participation is available via MICROSOFT TEAMS**

To access the meeting via telephone, please dial: [+1 469-998-7311,854177958#](tel:+14699987311854177958), or via the Web at: [Join the meeting now](#)  
"Join a Meeting" – Meeting ID: 275 096 167 755 03 Meeting Passcode: bq2bf2hC

**\*\*\* 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.

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**AGENDA OF JOINT SPECIAL MEETING**

1. Call to Order
2. Consider Appointment of Moderator to Facilitate Joint GSA Meeting
3. Roll Call
4. Public Comment (Any member of the public may address the Committees relating to any non-agenda matter within the Committees' jurisdictions. The time allotted for each individual public comment shall not exceed three minutes. No action will be taken by the Committees at this meeting on any public comment item.)
5. Receive and consider approval of the Water Year 2025 Joint Annual Report for the Santa Ynez River Valley Groundwater Basin
  - a. CMA GSA Board vote
  - b. EMA GSA Board vote
  - c. WMA GSA Board vote
6. Receive update on Proposition 68 Grant projects, schedule and financial status
7. GSA Board member reports and requests for future agenda items
8. Adjourn Joint Special Meeting

[This agenda was posted 24 hours prior to the scheduled special meeting at 3669 Sagunto Street, Suite 101, Santa Ynez, California, and 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 Water Conservation District at (805) 693-1156. Advanced notification as far as practicable prior to the meeting will enable the GSA to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to this meeting.]

**Paeter Garcia**

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**From:** Eastern Management Area GSA <emagsa@specialdistrict.org>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 12, 2026 3:17 PM  
**To:** Paeter Garcia  
**Subject:** EMA GSA JPA Board Regular Meeting, 4:00 PM - CANCELED - March 26, 2026



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

## EMA GSA JPA Board Regular Meeting, 4:00 PM - CANCELED - March 26, 2026

The regularly scheduled Board Meeting on Thursday, March 26, 2026 at 4:00 PM  
is **CANCELED**.

Eastern Management Area GSA  
CA

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# MONTHLY BRIEFING

A Summary of the Alliance’s Recent and Upcoming Activities and Important Water News  
MARCH 2026 ISSUE #284

## Message from the Alliance Board Chairman



**Don Schwindt**  
Chairman of the Board

As we look across the West today, it’s hard to ignore the strain facing our farms, our water systems, and our communities—but also the strain we’re seeing in how we relate to one another. Today’s national conversations are too often framed in ways that divide rather than solve, pulling attention away from the real work that needs to get done on the ground.

For those of us in agriculture, the path forward has always depended on cooperation—neighbors helping neighbors, water users working across political boundaries, and communities coming together to solve shared challenges. That same spirit is what the Family Farm Alliance was built on. As Chairman, and a first-generation farmer from Southwest Colorado, I have found my work with the Alliance to be deeply rewarding.

At a time marked by persistent drought, uncertain snowpack, and growing pressure on rural economies, it is more important than ever that we focus on practical solutions, align policy and investment with real needs, and work collaboratively across regions and perspectives—ensuring that we “match law to science” in managing water resources.

Our mission remains rooted in education, partnership, and ensuring that family farmers, ranchers, and irrigation districts continue to be the voice that effectively tells our agriculture story. It will take all of us—working together—to meet the challenges ahead.

Farm Bill Update: Progress, Priorities, and the Path Forward for Western Agriculture .....	2
Senate ENR Hearing Focuses on Drought and Western Water Infrastructure .....	5
Columbia and Snake River Litigation Resumes Amid Broader Debate Over ESA and Western Water Management .....	7
Southwest Ag Summit Highlights Water, Policy, and Partnerships in Yuma, Arizona .....	8
USDA Engagement Highlights Urgent Need for Clarity on Water Efficiency Funding .....	10
On the Ground at the Colorado River: A System Under Strain—and a Call for Collaboration .....	11
Boots on the Ground: Advancing Collaboration and Education Across the West .....	13

## Farm Bill Update:

### Progress, Priorities, and the Path Forward for Western Agriculture



After months of delays and uncertainty, Congress is once again moving forward on a long-overdue five-year Farm Bill. The House Agriculture Committee recently considered the Farm, Food, and National Security Act of 2026 (H.R. 7567), marking an important step in what has been a complex and evolving legislative process. While timing and final passage remain uncertain, the direction of the bill provides meaningful insight into how federal policy may shape the future of Western agriculture.

For the Family Farm Alliance, this moment represents both an opportunity and a responsibility: to support

provisions that work, while continuing to advocate for improvements that reflect the realities of water management in the West.

#### Where Things Stand in Congress

Momentum around the Farm Bill has been uneven. Committee action, initially expected earlier this year, was delayed, underscoring the broader political and policy challenges facing Congress. While some funding elements for nutrition and commodity programs were addressed in prior legislation—specifically, last year’s One Big Beautiful Bill Act—this bill carries the core agricultural policy framework that producers depend on.

At the same time, bipartisan negotiations—particularly in the Senate—are ongoing, though disagreements over specific provisions and broader political dynamics could influence the bill’s ultimate path. For producers, irrigation districts, and rural communities, that uncertainty continues to complicate long-term planning.

#### Why This Farm Bill Matters for the West

In the Western United States, agriculture is inseparable from water. The infrastructure and watershed systems that support irrigated agriculture are aging, while pressures from prolonged drought, changing hydrology, and catastrophic wildfire continue to intensify.

“The Farm Bill is one of the most important tools we have to protect Western irrigated agriculture. If we want to keep producing food, fiber, and fuel in this country, we have to invest in the water systems that make that production possible.”

— Samantha Barncastle, Executive Director

## What's in the Farm Bill?

### Strengthening Watershed Infrastructure through PL-566

The bill includes important updates to the Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Program (PL-566), a cornerstone program for rural water infrastructure. Proposed changes would streamline project delivery, scale environmental reviews to project size, and expand state-level decision-making authority. These reforms are a welcome step toward making the program more responsive and accessible—particularly for smaller, locally driven projects that are often critical in Western watersheds.

### Expanding the Reach of RCPP

The Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) continues to evolve into a key tool for addressing large-scale water challenges. The bill broadens its focus to include drought resilience, groundwater protection, and drinking water supply—priorities that align closely with Western needs. RCPP's partnership-driven model allows irrigation districts, conservation groups, and producers to collaborate on basin-scale solutions, making it one of the most promising vehicles for integrated water management.



### Investing in On-Farm Efficiency (EQIP)

Enhancements to the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), including higher cost-share rates and expanded support for precision agriculture, could accelerate adoption of water-saving technologies. For producers facing tightening water supplies, these investments are not just conservation measures—they are essential tools for staying in business.

### Addressing Forest and Watershed Health

The Forestry title also takes meaningful steps forward by expanding authorities for wildfire mitigation, hazardous fuels reduction, and cross-boundary restoration. These efforts are critical in protecting headwaters and reducing the downstream impacts of catastrophic wildfire on water supply and infrastructure.

### Opportunities for Improvement

While the bill includes many positive elements, there is still room to strengthen its impact—particularly for Western water management.

### Increasing Investment in Water Infrastructure

Demand for conservation and watershed programs consistently exceeds available funding. The Alliance continues to emphasize that funding levels must match the scale of need.

“Across the West, we are managing systems that were built generations ago. This is our opportunity to modernize that infrastructure in a way that improves efficiency, strengthens resilience, and supports rural economies. But we need funding levels that reflect that reality.”  
— Samantha Barncastle, Executive Director

## Revamping and Modernizing PL-566

Further improvements to PL-566 could enhance its effectiveness, including raising outdated cost thresholds, prioritizing drought resilience alongside flood control, and ensuring regional balance in project selection. Streamlining the approval process even further would help move critical projects from planning to construction more quickly.

## Making RCPP More User-Friendly

Despite its potential, RCPP's complexity can limit participation. Simplifying program administration and clarifying implementation of Alternative Financing Arrangements (AFAs) would unlock new opportunities for innovation—especially as local partners take on a larger role in project delivery.



## Creating a Coordinated Drought Response

One of the most significant opportunities lies in creating a dedicated drought planning focus within USDA. Such an approach would allow multiple programs—PL-566, EQIP, RCPP, and others—to be coordinated into comprehensive, watershed-scale solutions rather than fragmented efforts. This type of flexibility would better reflect how drought actually impacts agricultural systems across the West, and would also complement the ongoing “One Farmer, One File” system of data and records management USDA is implementing.

## Enhancing CREP Flexibility

The Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) has proven effective in addressing water challenges, but additional flexibility—such as allowing limited agricultural production on enrolled lands for purposes of cover cropping or deficit irrigation—could improve participation while maintaining conservation benefits.

## Supporting Local USDA Capacity

Finally, successful implementation depends on the people delivering these programs. Ensuring adequate staffing and resources for local NRCS and Farm Service Agency offices, along with timely technical assistance, will be essential to translating policy into on-the-ground results.

## Looking Ahead

As the Farm Bill continues to move through Congress, much remains uncertain. However, the current draft reflects growing recognition of the challenges facing Western agriculture—and the importance of addressing them through thoughtful federal policy. The Alliance will continue working with lawmakers to advance practical, durable solutions that keep water flowing, farms productive, and rural communities strong.

“This legislation doesn’t just set policy—it sets the trajectory for rural communities across the West. We have a responsibility to get it right.”

— Samantha Barncastle, Executive Director



## Senate ENR Hearing Focuses on Drought and Western Water Infrastructure

Water policy took center stage in Washington this week as the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Subcommittee on Water and Power convened a legislative hearing on a broad package of bills aimed at addressing drought and strengthening water infrastructure across the West. The hearing comes at a critical moment, as Western states continue to grapple with persistent drought conditions and ongoing negotiations over long-term management of the Colorado River system.

### A Broad Legislative Package

The Subcommittee considered a diverse set of proposals spanning nearly every aspect of water management. The legislation under review includes measures to expand surface and groundwater storage, modernize aging water delivery systems, and improve tools for forecasting and managing water supply.

Other bills focus on increasing investment in water recycling and reuse, advancing agricultural water conservation efforts, and supporting small-scale storage and aquifer recharge projects. Hydropower also featured prominently, with proposals aimed at improving system reliability, increasing transparency in licensing, and exploring new technologies such as micro-hydrokinetic energy.



In addition, lawmakers examined legislation to enhance snowpack monitoring and forecasting, authorize feasibility studies for major water supply projects, and establish new mechanisms to help local communities navigate federal funding opportunities.

### Drought Dominates the Discussion

While the legislative agenda was broad, the underlying theme of the hearing was clear: drought continues to shape water policy across the West. Senators from multiple states highlighted the growing strain on water supplies, agricultural production, and rural communities.

The discussion reflected a shared recognition that no single solution will resolve these challenges. Instead, the conversation increasingly pointed toward the need for integrated strategies that combine storage, conservation, recycling, conveyance improvements, and watershed management.

### Alliance Testimony Highlights Practical Solutions

The Family Farm Alliance submitted detailed written testimony for the hearing, outlining support for a wide range of legislative proposals while emphasizing the need for policies that translate into real, on-the-ground improvements for agricultural water users.

Central to the Alliance's message is the importance of maintaining a balanced and diversified water management portfolio. That includes continued investment in storage—both large and small—alongside conveyance infrastructure, water recycling, conservation, and hydropower.

The testimony supports efforts to reauthorize and expand key programs that improve water supply reliability, including legislation to enhance small-scale storage and groundwater recharge projects. The Alliance also expressed strong support for legislation to extend and improve snowpack forecasting programs, noting that more accurate data and modeling are essential for making timely water management decisions in an increasingly variable climate.

## Infrastructure, Modernization, and Reliability

A consistent theme throughout the Alliance’s testimony is the urgent need to modernize aging water infrastructure. Many irrigation systems and conveyance facilities across the West were built decades ago and require significant upgrades to remain safe, efficient, and reliable.

Legislation aimed at improving canals, expanding conveyance capacity, and reducing water losses was highlighted as a particularly effective way to increase available water supplies without developing entirely new sources. The Alliance also underscored the importance of hydropower as a critical component of the Western water system.

## Supporting Innovation—While Keeping Programs Practical

While expressing support for many of the bills under consideration, the Alliance also offered recommendations to ensure that new and existing programs remain workable and accessible. Our testimony encouraged Congress to simplify program requirements, avoid overly prescriptive frameworks, and maintain flexibility so that projects can be tailored to local conditions.

The Alliance also highlighted the need to prioritize funding for proven strategies—such as irrigation modernization and infrastructure upgrades—while carefully evaluating newer or less-tested approaches. That said, we encourage decision-makers to constantly consider the “all of the above” approach to resolving our aging infrastructure and aridification problem in the West.

## The Need for Scale and Coordination

Perhaps the most significant takeaway from both the hearing and the Alliance’s testimony is the scale of the challenge facing Western water systems. Addressing drought and long-term water reliability will require investment levels and policy coordination that match the magnitude of the problem.

Rather than pursuing fragmented or isolated efforts, the Alliance continues to advocate for a more integrated approach—one that brings together multiple funding streams and program authorities to deliver comprehensive, watershed-scale solutions.

## Looking Ahead

The Subcommittee’s work on this legislative package is expected to continue in the coming weeks. While the path forward for individual bills remains uncertain, the hearing marks an important step in advancing policies that directly impact Western agriculture and rural communities. The Alliance will continue working with lawmakers to advance practical solutions that strengthen water resilience, support food production, and sustain the communities that depend on both.



*Executive Director Sam Barncastle (far right) with Arizona’s Yuma Fresh Vegetable Association and Agribusiness and Water Council Representatives*

## Columbia and Snake River Litigation Resumes Amid Broader Debate Over ESA and Western Water Management



Samantha Barncastle with Board member Clinton Pline at the Sanke River Tour in 2025

Longstanding disputes over the operation of federal dams on the Columbia and Snake rivers have taken center stage, as tribes, states, and conservation groups return to court seeking changes they argue are necessary to protect endangered salmon and steelhead. The renewed litigation follows the collapse of a 2023 multi-stakeholder agreement and reflects a broader, West-wide reckoning over how the Endangered Species Act is applied in an era of prolonged drought, changing hydrology, and competing demands for water and power.

At the heart of the case are eight federally operated dams that play a critical role in hydropower generation, navigation, irrigation, and regional economies throughout the Pacific Northwest. Plaintiffs—including Northwest tribes, the states of Oregon and Washington, and several conservation organizations—argue that current dam operations continue to harm fish populations in violation of the ESA.

On February 25, 2026, U.S. District Judge Michael H. Simon issued a partial preliminary injunction, ordering federal dam operators to maintain reservoir levels similar to 2025 conditions and increase spill during key migration periods. While the ruling stops short of mandating more sweeping changes sought by plaintiffs, it represents a significant development in a case that has spanned decades and multiple presidential administrations.

The litigation resumed after the Trump Administration withdrew from a 2023 agreement negotiated under the Biden Administration, which had paused court proceedings in favor of a collaborative framework. That agreement included a proposed \$1 billion federal commitment toward salmon recovery efforts, as well as funding for studies related to dam removal, energy replacement, and tribal clean energy development. With that framework now dissolved, parties have returned to the courts.

Federal officials have expressed concern that operational changes sought by plaintiffs could have far-reaching impacts. Reduced hydropower generation, increased electricity costs, and disruptions to navigation and irrigation

deliveries are all cited as potential consequences. Even more worrisome is the idea that the less economically beneficial these dams remain, the more likely we are to see increased calls for their removal.

From the Family Farm Alliance perspective, the renewed litigation highlights a persistent challenge in Western water management: the increasing reliance on courts to resolve highly complex, multi-interest disputes. While litigation can provide clarity and enforce statutory requirements, it often results in outcomes that prioritize a narrow set of objectives without fully accounting for the interconnected needs of rural communities, agricultural producers, and regional economies.

This dynamic is not unique to the Columbia Basin. Similar tensions are playing out across the West, including in the Klamath River Basin, where federal agencies are in the process of rewriting ESA-related rules governing water use, species protections, and operational criteria.

Across multiple basins—including the Columbia, Klamath, Sacramento-San Joaquin, and Colorado River systems—stakeholders are grappling with the same fundamental question: how to balance species recovery with the needs of agriculture, communities, and infrastructure in a time of increasing scarcity. Conservation groups caution against weakening environmental protections, while water users argue that rigid, outdated frameworks often force crisis-driven decisions that benefit neither fish nor people in the long term.

In the Klamath Basin, emerging legislative efforts aimed at improving consultation requirements between federal agencies and local irrigation districts signal a potential path forward. These proposals would formalize processes that ensure affected water users have a seat at the table when operational decisions are made—an approach that many in the West believe should be standard practice across all basins.

For the Alliance and its partners in the Pacific Northwest, the immediate focus is on engagement—working to ensure that decision-makers fully understand the range of benefits these river systems provide. The Columbia and Snake rivers are not only critical for fish and ecosystems, but also for irrigation, food production, hydropower, and rural livelihoods.

Ultimately, the current moment underscores the need for durable, collaborative solutions. While litigation may continue to shape outcomes in the near term, long-term success will depend on the willingness of stakeholders to come together, acknowledge competing needs, and develop strategies that work across sectors. The Alliance will continue advocating for balanced approaches that recognize both the importance of species recovery and the essential role of working landscapes in sustaining the West.

## **Southwest Ag Summit Highlights Water, Policy, and Partnerships in Yuma, Arizona**

The Family Farm Alliance was on the ground in Yuma, Arizona this past month for the annual Southwest Ag Summit, where water, technology, infrastructure, and the future of Western agriculture took center stage. The event brought together producers, policymakers, and agency leaders to discuss the challenges facing agriculture in one of the most productive regions in the country—and to reinforce the importance of aligning policy with on-the-ground realities.

### **Engagement with USDA Leadership**

A key component of the visit included meetings with Richard Fordyce, USDA Under Secretary for Farm Production and Conservation to discuss the Colorado River, the needs of Western irrigated agriculture, and USDA's evolving workload. Conversations also touched on implementation of the "One Farmer One File" initiative, which aims to streamline how producers interact with USDA programs.

These discussions provided an important opportunity to share the perspective of Western producers and irrigation districts, and to highlight the importance of ensuring that federal programs remain practical, accessible, and responsive to real-world conditions. Engagement like this remains a core part of the Alliance's mission—helping

ensure that national policymakers and agency leadership understand the unique challenges facing irrigated agriculture in the West.

### Colorado River and Arizona Water Updates



*Undersecretary of USDA, William Fordyce, with Sam Barncastle, Meghan Scott, and Stephanie Knight-Dubien in Yuma, Arizona*

At the Summit, water leaders from across Arizona—including representatives from the Arizona Department of Water Resources and Central Arizona Project—provided updates on Colorado River conditions and the state’s preparations for continued shortages. Presentations underscored the seriousness of current hydrologic conditions, ongoing planning efforts within Arizona, and the broader uncertainty surrounding interstate negotiations on the future of the river.

The on-farm technology showcased during the field trials on the first day were diverse and impactful, offering a host of solutions to farmers who are looking to modernize their technological infrastructure. These conversations reinforced the need for continued collaboration across basin states,

as well as the importance of federal policies that support flexible, locally driven solutions.

### Senator Gallego and the Storage Reauthorization Act

The Summit also provided an opportunity to engage directly with United States Senator Ruben Gallego on legislation critical to the region’s water future. The Family Farm Alliance has been actively supporting Senator Gallego’s Storage Reauthorization Act, which advances meaningful improvements to federal water storage programs.

The bill would expand eligibility for groundwater recharge projects, support both surface and groundwater storage, and ensure that projects moving water to and from storage sites are included—all while maintaining strong protections for state water rights. These provisions are designed to make it easier for local water managers and producers to partner with the federal government on practical, cost-effective projects that enhance drought resilience.

The Alliance has also emphasized the importance of fully reauthorizing and sustaining these programs over the long term, noting that water storage and conveyance infrastructure projects often take decades to plan and build.

### Harvest Festival Banquet

The events concluded with the Yuma Fresh Vegetable Association’s annual harvest festival banquet—an event that serves as both a celebration of the season and a key opportunity to bring together farmers, policymakers, and agency officials. These informal settings often provide some of the most productive conversations, helping bridge the gap

between policy and practice. Hats off to those farmers and their families who put together a wonderful evening for all who attended!

Taken together, the Summit and surrounding meetings and social events underscored the importance of continued education and engagement with federal leaders. The Alliance appreciates the time and attention given by both Under Secretary Fordyce and Senator Gallego and looks forward to continued collaboration to advance solutions that support water reliability, agricultural productivity, and the long-term success of rural communities across the West.



*Sam Barncastle and her husband Rett at the Yuma Fresh Vegetable Association Annual Harvest Banquet in Yuma, AZ*

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## USDA Engagement Highlights Urgent Need for Clarity on Water Efficiency Funding

Following the Southwest Ag Summit in Yuma, the Family Farm Alliance continued its advocacy efforts in Washington, D.C., meeting directly with officials at the U.S. Department of Agriculture to discuss the status of the Ag Water Commodities Savings Grant program. The program, which allocated approximately \$15 million to 18 irrigation districts across the West, was designed to fund critical system improvements that help conserve water and sustain agricultural production during ongoing drought conditions.

Despite signed agreements and strong local support, those funds have not yet been released. Recent reporting has also highlighted broader concerns, noting that hundreds of millions of dollars in congressionally authorized drought assistance remain undistributed, with limited explanation from USDA. USDA officials have raised questions about the structure and intent of the program, including how funds were awarded and how benefits reach producers.



While questions remain about the delay, the Alliance continues to engage with USDA leadership, industry partners, and congressional offices to advocate for clarity and resolution. If the funds can be released, they will provide immediate, on-the-ground benefits to producers and communities. If not, it is critical that stakeholders receive clear guidance so alternative solutions can be pursued. In either case, the need for timely investment in water efficiency and infrastructure has never been more urgent.

### The Alliance Bottom Line

At the heart of the issue is a fundamental disconnect: while USDA programs have traditionally focused on direct payments to farmers, many of these grants were designed to fund irrigation system improvements—projects that strengthen water delivery and efficiency at a system level. In the West, supporting agriculture often means supporting the infrastructure that delivers water to the farm gate. Without reliable water delivery, there is no production.

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## On the Ground at the Colorado River: A System Under Strain—and a Call for Collaboration

The Colorado River was front and center this month as Family Farm Alliance Executive Director Samantha Barncastle joined water leaders from across the West on a multi-day tour of key infrastructure and communities that depend on the river system. The tour, which spanned major facilities from Hoover Dam to agricultural and municipal delivery systems in the Lower Basin, offered a firsthand look at both the scale of the system—and the growing challenges it faces.



Participants represented a wide range of backgrounds, including municipal water providers, federal and state agencies, non-profits, and policy professionals. Much of the tour focused on the vast network of infrastructure that makes life in the arid West possible, highlighting the complexity of storing, moving, and managing water across hundreds of miles and multiple states. reduce agricultural production to free up water for other uses.

“We heard a lot about fallowing as a solution, but very little about what that means for the communities that depend on that land staying in production. That’s a conversation we’ll continue to engage in to ensure all needs are balanced.”

— Samantha Barncastle, Executive Director

## A Worsening Hydrologic Outlook



The tour came at a time of increasing concern about the river’s hydrology. Federal forecasts released earlier this year significantly reduced projections for runoff into Lake Powell, with expected inflows now estimated at roughly half of average conditions—down sharply from already pessimistic projections.

Low snowpack and warmer-than-normal temperatures are driving the decline, raising the possibility that reservoir levels could approach critical thresholds sooner than anticipated. Such conditions threaten not only water deliveries but also hydropower

generation at Glen Canyon Dam, a key component of the region’s energy and water management system. Even worse, lower water levels can present structural problems with the infrastructure itself, which is not designed to be empty.

### Negotiations Stall as Deadlines Pass

Compounding these challenges, negotiations among the seven Colorado River Basin states over post-2026 operating rules recently missed a key federal deadline, underscoring the deep divisions that remain. The lack of agreement has prompted the Department of the Interior to move forward with a federal process to establish new guidelines, signaling that action will continue even in the absence of consensus.

“What stood out to me is how little margin for error there is right now. The system is being pushed to its limits, and that raises the stakes for every decision being made.”

— Samantha Barncastle, Executive Director

Deputy Commissioner for Operations, David Palumbo, testified before the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee this week, stating that while the federal government stands ready to operate the river in accordance with the Law of the River, it is still hopeful state consensus can be reached.

“There’s a shared understanding across the basin states that the federal proposed alternatives in the recent Draft EIS are not going to make anyone happy. That could be the starting point for something more productive.”

— Samantha Barncastle, Executive Director

Notably, feedback on the federal government’s draft operational proposals revealed a rare point of agreement: broad dissatisfaction across states and stakeholders with any of the proposed alternatives.

### Learning Through the Water Leaders Program

Barncastle’s participation in the tour is part of her selection to the Water Education Foundation’s Colorado River Water Leaders cohort, a program that brings together a small group of professionals from across the basin to deepen understanding of the river and develop policy solutions. As part of the program, the cohort will develop a policy paper focused on the concept of Intentionally Created Surplus (ICS) in Lake Powell.

“This program is a valuable opportunity to bring different perspectives together and really dig into complex issues. The challenge is making sure the solutions we develop are practical and actually work for the people on the ground.”

— Samantha Barncastle, Executive Director



## A System That Demands Balance

One of the clearest takeaways from the tour is the need for a balanced, system-wide approach to water management.

“We can’t solve this by focusing on one sector or one state at a time. It’s going to take a coordinated approach that keeps agriculture viable while meeting the needs of a growing region.”

— Samantha Barncastle, Executive Director

The Colorado River does not serve a single purpose or constituency—it supports cities, farms, ecosystems, and energy production across the West. Efforts to address shortages must therefore consider the full range of impacts, particularly on agricultural communities that rely on consistent and reliable water supplies.

## Looking Ahead

Despite the challenges, there are signs of cautious optimism. Shifting weather patterns in recent weeks may bring additional precipitation to parts of the West, offering some short-term relief. More importantly, the ongoing engagement of stakeholders across sectors and states reflects a shared understanding of what is at stake.

Experiences like this tour highlight both the urgency of the situation and the opportunities that exist when people come together to better understand the system and each other’s perspectives. As discussions continue around the future of the Colorado River, that kind of engagement will be essential to developing solutions that are durable, equitable, and grounded in the realities of the West.

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## Boots on the Ground:

### Advancing Collaboration and Education Across the West



The Family Farm Alliance is continuing to build momentum behind its “Boots on the Ground” initiative—an effort grounded in a simple but powerful idea: the best solutions come from the ground up. As conversations around Western water and agriculture grow louder, we are committed to ensuring those discussions are informed by real-

world experience, practical knowledge, and the voices of the farmers, ranchers, and water managers who live these challenges every day.

In the months ahead, the Alliance will be expanding its presence across the West—participating in tours, public events, and community conversations, while also engaging in programs like Ag in the Classroom to help connect broader audiences with the realities of modern agriculture. These efforts are already being strengthened through collaboration with partners who share our commitment to balanced, fact-based dialogue around water, food production, and rural economies.



This work is also being guided by a new strategic initiative approved by the Board, focused on elevating the role of Western irrigated agriculture and strengthening how we communicate its value—not only in Washington, D.C., but across the communities and regions we serve. At its core, this approach emphasizes the importance of aligning policy with on-the-ground realities, where law and science meet at the ditch bank and where decisions have real consequences for people, crops, and communities.

At a time of continued drought, infrastructure challenges, and growing public scrutiny, this kind of engagement is more important than ever. The Alliance will continue developing this path forward in close coordination with our

members and partners, ensuring that our work reflects the needs and priorities of those we represent.

We're also excited to expand our team this summer with a new group of interns, who will play a key role in helping tell these stories and support our efforts in the field—stay tuned for introductions in next month's newsletter!

**Thanks for being a reader and a part of our effort to expand the reach of our collective voices.**

## 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](http://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.



PROTECTING WATER FOR WESTERN IRRIGATED AGRICULTURE



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****APRIL 2026**

1. March 12, 2026 – District received the Notice and Agenda for the Santa Ynez River Water Conservation District Regular Board Meeting on March 17, 2026.
2. March 12, 2026 – District received the Cancellation Notice for the Eastern Management Groundwater Sustainability Agency Regular Board Meeting on March 26, 2026.
3. March 13, 2026 – District received the Notice and Agenda for the Santa Ynez Community Services District Regular Board Meeting on March 18, 2026.
4. March 18, 2026 – District sent Can and Will Serve Letters to two customers.
5. March 18, 2026 – District received the Notice and Agenda for the Cachuma Operation and Maintenance Board Regular Board Meeting on March 23, 2026.
6. March 18, 2026 – District sent a Water Service Requirements Letter to one customer.
7. March 19, 2026 – District received the Notice and Agenda for the Central Coast Water Authority Regular Board Meeting on March 26, 2026.
8. March 23, 2026 – District received the Notice and Agenda for the Santa Ynez Community Services District Community Interface Committee Meeting on March 26, 2026.
9. March 23, 2026 – District sent Past Due Letters to three customers.
10. March 25, 2026 – District sent a Can and Will Serve Letter to one customer.
11. March 26, 2026 – District sent a Billing Card Requirement Letter to one customer.
12. March 28, 2026 – District received the Notice and Agenda for the Los Olivos Community Services District Technical Subcommittee Meeting on April 1, 2026.
13. March 28, 2026 – District received the Notice and Agenda for the Los Olivos Community Services District Finance Subcommittee Meeting on April 3, 2026.
14. March 31, 2026 – District sent a Parcel Map Review letter to one customer.
15. April 2, 2026 – District sent Backflow Test Requirement Letters to sixteen customers.
16. April 2, 2026 – District received the Notice and Agenda for the Santa Ynez Community Services District Finance Committee Meeting on April 7, 2026.
17. April 3, 2026 – District received the Notice and Agenda for the Los Olivos Community Services District Regular Board Meeting on April 8, 2026.
18. April 8, 2026 – District received the Notice and Agenda for the Santa Ynez Community Services District Special Board Meeting on April 13, 2026.

19. April 8, 2026 – District received the Notice and Agenda for the Santa Ynez Community Services District Special Board Meeting on April 13, 2026.
20. April 10, 2026 – District received the Notice and Agenda for the Eastern Management Area Groundwater Sustainability Agency Citizen Advisory Group Meeting on April 16, 2026.
21. April 11, 2026 – District received the Notice and Agenda for the Santa Ynez Community Services District Regular Board Meeting on April 15, 2026
22. April 14, 2026 – District received the Notice and Agenda for the Santa Ynez River Water Conservation District Special Board Meeting and Public Hearing on 48th Annual Report on April 20, 2026.