

**Advisory Water Commission of the San Joaquin County
Flood Control and Water Conservation District
Wednesday, October 15, 2025, Meeting Minutes**

I. Call to Order/Roll Call

The Advisory Water Commission (AWC) meeting was held at the San Joaquin County Robert J. Cabral Agricultural Center and commenced at approximately 1:00 p.m. Selinda Centeno of San Joaquin County Public Works conducted roll call, which was taken for members only.

Commissioners and Alternates in attendance: Thomas Gau, Dominick Gulli, Sonny Dhaliwal, Dante Nomellini Sr., Dante Nomellini Jr., Jennifer Torres-O’Callaghan, Travis Kahrs, Regina Lackey, Dotty Nygard, Stephanie Reyna-Hiestand, Fritz Buchman, Mary Elizabeth, Charlie Starr, Scot Moody, John Holbrook, Richard Atkins, Dr. Michael Panzer, George Hartmann, Keith Bussman.

II. Approval of July 17, 2025, Minutes:

Motion: George Hartmann

Second: Dante Nomellini Sr.

In favor: Dominick Gulli, Sonny Dhaliwal, Dante Nomellini Sr., Dante Nomellini Jr., Jennifer Torres-O’Callaghan, Travis Kahrs, Regina Lackey, Dotty Nygard, Stephanie Reyna-Hiestand, Fritz Buchman, Mary Elizabeth, Charlie Starr, Scot Moody, John Holbrook, Richard Atkins, Dr. Michael Panzer, George Hartmann, Keith Bussman.

Abstain: Sonny Dhaliwal and Thomas Gau.

III. Discussion/Action Items

- A. Update on SB 552 Drought Resilience Plan – Presented by Tiffany Cacho, Director, San Joaquin County (SJC) Office of Emergency Services (OES): OES, Public Works, and Environmental Health coordinated with the state contractor, Stantec, and presented to the Drought Advisory Working Group an update to SB 552 on October 13, 2025. The main focus of the meeting was the Risk Assessment Process, which involves looking at physical and social vulnerabilities to identify communities that may be impacted by droughts and water shortage events. Stantec has advised that the next steps would be to work with the County and Drought Advisory Workgroup to develop Chapters 4 and 5, which will identify the actions the county will implement in response to droughts and interim water shortage emergencies. The meeting notes, draft assessment, and recording will be posted to the OES website at <https://sjgov.org/department/oes/meetings-committees>.
- B. Presentation of the Spring 2025 Groundwater Report – Presented by C. Ashley Couch, P.E. (AZ), CFM, SJC Water Resources Manager: Mr. Couch began with an overview of the county’s semiannual groundwater monitoring program. He summarized results from a recent data integrity verification effort, which indicated overall reasonable data quality. Mr. Couch summarized hydrologic conditions from Spring 2024 to Spring 2025, noting

that countywide precipitation was 50–75% of average and that reservoir releases remained near normal. Findings showed an average countywide decline in groundwater levels of 1.8 feet during this period. He highlighted one location in southeastern San Joaquin County where groundwater levels showed an increase of more than 60 feet, a result he questioned due to its magnitude. Brandon Nakagawa of the South San Joaquin Irrigation District also raised concerns about this anomaly. Mr. Couch committed to further review of the data and stated that the report would be updated if any errors were confirmed. He concluded by providing a link where attendees can access and download the County’s groundwater reports:

https://www.sjwater.org/Portals/0/ThemePluginPro/uploads/2025/8/13/Spring%202025%20ESJ%20Groundwater%20Monitoring%20Report_Final_08-11-2025_2.pdf

- C. Presentation on Stockton East Water District’s Proposal to Raise Farmington Dam: Stockton East Water District (SEWD) provided an overview of regional water challenges and ongoing efforts. The presentation included background on prior studies and recharge projects, an update on the Farmington Dam Study authorized under the 2024 Water Resources Development Act, and discussion of anticipated regional supply and demand issues related to the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA), the Bay-Delta Plan, and changing weather patterns. SEWD also highlighted its continued recharge efforts to support long-term groundwater sustainability.
- D. Presentation on Coastal Cleanup 2025 – Presented by Selinda Centeno, Administrative Assistant II, SJC Water Resources: Ms. Centeno provided an overview of the 26th Annual Coastal Cleanup Day. This event marks 40 years of international coastal stewardship and continued county participation. The presentation outlined how the County Coordinator (Ms. Centeno) recruits Site Captains, who in turn organize volunteers to collect and document trash and debris at local sites including Lodi Lake, Buckley Cove, Ladd’s Marina, Mormon Slough, and other regional waterways. The event recognizes the collective impact of volunteers who remove trash and debris from waterways.
- E. Discussion on Legislative Efforts to Defeat Any Trailer Bill Intended to Facilitate and Expedite Construction of the State’s Delta Conveyance Project – Presented by Alex Chetley, P.E., Deputy Director of Public Works: Governor Newsom proposed trailer bill language that would have significantly advanced the Delta Conveyance Project by weakening environmental protections, limiting public participation, enabling easier land acquisition, and expanding funding authority. These changes also sought to streamline legal challenges and restrict the ability of stakeholders to protest water rights decisions, which raised major concerns for Delta communities—particularly in San Joaquin County. A broad coalition of tribes, environmental groups, Non-Governmental Organizations, and Delta counties strongly opposed the package, and Delta legislators ultimately succeeded in stopping the bills to protect local interests.

IV. Staff Reports

- A. **San Joaquin Area Flood Control Agency (SJAFCA):** Deputy Executive Director Glen Prasad, P.E., reports progress on multiple flood risk reduction projects.

B. **San Joaquin County Public Works:** Alex Chetley, P.E., Deputy Director of Public Works, announces D.A.W.G. requested representation from AWC, and Mary Elizabeth volunteered to participate.

V. **Public Comment:** None

VI. **Commissioner Comments:**

A. George Hartmann comments that he supports Coastal Cleanup Day expanding and expresses interest in having a site to contribute.

VII. **Adjournment – 2:40 pm**