



UPPER
WATER

**UPPER SAN GABRIEL VALLEY
MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT**

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS
REGULAR MEETING**

**June 24, 2026
4:30 p.m.**



626 443 2297



www.upperdistrict.org



248 E. Foothill Blvd., Suite 200 - Monrovia, CA. 91016



info@usgvmwd.org

Securing Water Resilience for the San Gabriel Valley

AGENDA

1. CALL TO ORDER
2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
3. ROLL CALL OF BOARD OF DIRECTORS
4. ADOPTION OF AGENDA [1]
5. PUBLIC COMMENT

As provided under Government Code Section 54954.3, members of the public may address the Board on items considered on this agenda as well as those not on the agenda but in the jurisdiction of the Board of Directors. Please complete the appropriate speaker's card and submit it to the Board Secretary. A three-minute time limit on remarks is requested.

6. COMMITTEE REPORTS [2] – None
7. CONSENT CALENDAR [1]

(a) Minutes of public hearing and meeting of the Board of Directors held on June 10, 2026 at 4:30 p.m.

8. PRESENTATIONS
- (a) "Being Water Wise Is..." 2026 Art Contest Winners

9. ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS [1]
- (a) Upper Water's Integrated Resources Plan (*Staff memorandum enclosed*)

Recommendation

Staff recommends the Board of Directors adopt the 2026 Integrated Resources Plan and direct staff to implement the plan recommendations.

- (b) ACWA's Vision for Our Water Future Resolution (*staff memorandum enclosed*)

Recommendation

Staff recommends the Board of Directors adopt Resolution 06-24-682 expressing support for ACWA's Vision for Our Water Future.

- (c) CSDA's Board of Directors Election – Southern Network, Seat C (*staff memorandum enclosed*)

Recommendation

Staff requests the Board of Directors provide direction to the General Manager on the Board's desired candidate for election to CSDA's Board Directors for the Southern Network, Seat C, and cast the agency's vote via the online ballot.

- (d) Cooperative Water Exchange Agreement (Alhambra Exchange 1975)
(presentation)

Informational Item Only

10. INFORMATION ITEMS [2]

- (a) Press Releases and News Articles.

11. ATTORNEY'S REPORT [2]

12. GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT [2]

13. METROPOLITAN REPORT [2]

14. WATER QUALITY REPORT [2]

15. DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS [2]

16. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS [1]

17. ADJOURN TO CLOSED SESSION - None

18. ADJOURNMENT – To a regular meeting of the Board of Directors to be held on July 8, 2026, at 4:30 p.m. at 248 E. Foothill Blvd. Room #103, Monrovia, CA 91016.

LEGEND: [1] INDICATES ACTION ANTICIPATED BY BOARD OF DIRECTORS ON THIS ITEM
[2] INDICATES INFORMATION ITEM - NO BOARD ACTION NECESSARY

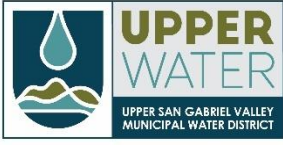
PRESIDENT Katarina Garcia, PRESIDING



American Disabilities Act Compliance (Government Code Section 54954.2(a))



To request special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the District office at (626) 443-2297.



UPPER SAN GABRIEL VALLEY MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT
A Public Hearing and Regular Board Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, June 10, 2026 | 4:30pm

A public hearing and regular meeting of the Board of Directors was called to order at 4:30pm at the district office located at 248 E. Foothill Blvd, Rm. 103, Monrovia, California. The presiding officer was President Katarina Garcia.

ROLL CALL

DIRECTORS Treviño, Chavez, Santana, Fellow, and Garcia
PRESENT:

DIRECTORS None
ABSENT:

STAFF Tom Love, General Manager; Patty Cortez, Assistant
PRESENT: General Manager; Martin Koczanowicz, District
 Counsel; Albert Trinh, Finance Manager; Priscilla Lu,
 Accounting/Finance Analyst; Cyndi Karp, Interim
 Executive Assistant/Board Secretary I; Jessica
 Hernandez, Administrative/Accounting Assistant;
 Katherine Vasquez, Water Resources Analyst I, Alexis
 Silva, Public Affairs Assistant

OTHERS PRESENT

Jenny Savron, Stan Chen, Jose Martinez, Anteneh Tesfaye, Kelly Gardner and Ariel Amador

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

On motion by Treasurer Chavez, second by Vice President Fellow, the agenda was adopted by the following roll call vote:

AYES: TREVIÑO, CHAVEZ, SANTANA, FELLOW, AND GARCIA
NOES: NONE
ABSTAIN: NONE
ABSENT: NONE

PUBLIC COMMENT

One written public comment was received via email from Mary Urquhart of South Pasadena and was read into the record by Cyndi Karp.

In-person public comments were received from Rosemary Garidia, Sam Burgess, and Karen Vance.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

- (a) Water Resources and Facility Management Committee (Treviño, Chair – Garcia, Vice Chair) Minutes of meeting held on June 1, 2026, enclosed.
- (b) Administration and Finance Committee (Santana, Chair - Treviño, Vice-Chair) Minutes of meeting held on June 2, 2026, enclosed.
- (c) Government Affairs and Community Outreach Committee (Fellow, Chair-Chavez, Vice-Chair) Minutes of meeting held on June 3, 2026, enclosed.

CONSENT CALENDAR

On motion by Director Treviño, second by Secretary Santana, the consent calendar was approved by the following roll call vote:

AYES: TREVIÑO, CHAVEZ, SANTANA, FELLOW, AND GARCIA

NOES: NONE
ABSTAIN: NONE
ABSENT: NONE

- (a) Minutes of a regular meeting of the Board of Directors held on May 13, 2026 at 4:30 p.m.
- (b) List of Demands
- (c) Financial Reports – April 2026
 - 1. Financial Summary and Statements as of April 30, 2026
 - 2. Director’s Public Outreach
- (d) Approve and authorize the General Manager to execute a professional services amendment with Kelly Associates Management Group to provide management consulting services for a term commencing July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2027, with a total not-to-exceed amount of \$75,000.

PUBLIC HEARING #1

President Garcia opened the public hearing for comments regarding the proposed reauthorization of a water availability standby charge for fiscal year 2026/27.

The General Manger provided background on the proposed reauthorization of the Water Availability Standby Charge for Fiscal Year 2026/27. Notice of the public hearing was published on May 27th and June 3rd in three publications and in three languages.

President Garcia asked if there were any public comments to come before the board; there being none, the President closed the public hearing.

CLOSE PUBLIC HEARING

ADOPTION OF ORDINANCE NO. 26-1, IMPOSING STANDBY CHARGES FOR FISCAL YEAR COMMENCING JULY 1, 2026

On motion by Director Treviño, seconded by Vice President Fellow, Ordinance No. 26-1, Imposing Standby Charges for Fiscal Year Commencing July 1, 2026 was adopted by the following roll call vote:

AYES: TREVIÑO, CHAVEZ, SANTANA, FELLOW, AND GARCIA
NOES: NONE
ABSTAIN: NONE

PUBLIC HEARING #2

President Garcia opened the public hearing for comments regarding proposed adoption of the 2025 Urban Water Management Plan and Water Shortage Contingency Plan.

Stan Chen of Stetson provided a presentation on the adoption of the 2025 Urban Water Management Plan and Water Shortage Contingency Plan.

President Garcia asked if there were any public comments to come before the board; there being none, the President closed the public hearing.

CLOSE PUBLIC HEARING

ADOPTION OF RESOLUTION NO. 06-10-678, APPROVING THE 2025 URBAN WATER MANAGEMENT PLAN

On motion by Vice President Fellow, seconded by Treasurer Chavez, Resolution No. 06-10-678, approving the 2025 Urban Water Management Plan was adopted by the following roll call vote:

AYES: TREVIÑO, CHAVEZ, SANTANA, FELLOW, AND GARCIA
NOES: NONE
ABSTAIN: NONE
ABSENT: NONE

ADOPTION OF RESOLUTION NO. 06-10-679, APPROVING THE 2025 WATER SHORTAGE CONTINGENCY PLAN

On motion by Vice President Fellow, seconded by Director Treviño, Resolution No. 06-10-679, approving the 2025 Water Shortage Contingency Plan was adopted by the following roll call vote:

AYES: TREVIÑO, CHAVEZ, SANTANA, FELLOW, AND GARCIA
NOES: NONE
ABSTAIN: NONE

ADOPTION OF THE FISCAL YEAR 2026/27 AND 2027/28 BIENNIAL BUDGET

The General Manager reported that the item was reviewed by the Administration and Finance Committee, where questions were raised and addressed by staff. The budget presentation was also presented to the Upper Water Producers, where additional questions were addressed.

On a motion by Director Treviño, second by Vice President Fellow, the Fiscal Year 2026/27 and 2027/28 Biennial Budget was approved by the following roll call vote:

AYES: TREVIÑO, CHAVEZ, SANTANA, FELLOW, AND GARCIA
NOES: NONE
ABSTAIN: NONE
ABSENT: NONE

ADOPTION OF ORDINANCE NO. 26-2, APPROVING THE WATER RATES AND CHARGES FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2027

The General Manager presented the Upper Water surcharge remains unchanged at \$103 an acre foot.

On a motion by Director Treviño and second by Vice President Fellow, Ordinance No. 26-2, approving the Water Rates and Charges for Calendar Year 2027 was approved by the following roll call vote:

AYES: TREVIÑO, CHAVEZ, SANTANA, FELLOW, AND GARCIA
NOES: NONE
ABSTAIN: NONE
ABSENT: NONE

ADOPTION OF RESOLUTION NO. 06-10-680, APPROVING A COST-OF-LIVING ADJUSTMENT AND ESTABLISHING PAY STRUCTURES FOR EMPLOYEES

The General Manager informed the Board that there is a revised Resolution No. 06-10-680 for the staff pay ranges. Adjustments were made to the Executive Assistant/Secretary of the Board I and II, based on updated salary survey information.

On a motion by Secretary Santana, second by Vice President Fellow, Resolution No. 06-10-680, approving a Cost-of-Living Adjustment and Establishment Pay Structures for Employees was approved by the following roll call vote:

AYES: TREVIÑO, CHAVEZ, SANTANA, FELLOW, AND GARCIA
NOES: NONE
ABSTAIN: NONE
ABSENT: NONE

ADOPTION OF RESOLUTION NO. 06-10-681, PERMITTING THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY REGISTRAR-RECORDER/COUNTY CLERK TO RENDER ELECTION SERVICES FOR AN ELECTION OF UPPER SAN GABRIEL VALLEY MWD TO BE HELD ON NOVEMBER 3, 2026

The Assistant General Manager informed the Board that two elections are scheduled for November. The item is procedural and requires Board approval of a resolution to be submitted to the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors for authorization. Once authorized, the County will conduct and canvass the upcoming elections.

On a motion by Treasurer Chavez, second by Director Treviño, Resolution No. 06-10-681, permitting the Los Angeles County Registrar Recorder/County Clerk to render election services for an election of Upper San Gabriel Valley MWD to be held on November 3, 2026 was approved by the following roll call vote:

AYES: TREVIÑO, CHAVEZ, SANTANA, FELLOW, AND GARCIA
NOES: NONE
ABSTAIN: NONE
ABSENT: NONE

INFORMATION ITEMS

The following items listed on the agenda were presented as informational items and ordered received and filed:

- Press Releases and News Articles

ATTORNEY'S REPORT

District Counsel reported that he has been working with staff on several contractual matters related to the new JPA Agreement, as well as existing agreements. He also briefly introduced Ariel Amador, a summer law clerk with his firm.

ENGINEER'S REPORT

The District Engineer reported that Stetson has completed the final draft of the Integrated Resources Plan, which is now available on the Upper Water website. The Plan will be presented to the Board for adoption at its June 24th meeting. Following adoption, the final report will be posted on the website.

The District Engineer also reported that the Urban Water Management Plan has been completed. It will be submitted through the DWR online portal, and the final Urban Water Management Plan will then be made available on the website.

GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

The General Manager mentioned that per the District Engineer, the final IRP will be presented at the June 24th Board meeting for Board consideration and adoption. In addition, there will be a presentation on the Alhambra Exchange Agreement.

The General Manager then asked the Assistant General Manager to give the Board an update on the Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee hearing held yesterday.

The Assistant General Manager reported that the General Manager, Jose Reynoso of the San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District, Kelly Gardner of Watermaster and Linda Noriega of California Domestic Water Company, and herself traveled to Sacramento to participate in the committee hearing on AB 1894. The hearing went very well, and the bill passed unanimously out of the Senate committee. The next step is review by the Senate Appropriations Committee, followed by a vote of the full Senate before being sent to the Governor's Office for consideration.

METROPOLITAN REPORT

Vice President Fellow reported that the Metropolitan Water District (MWD) Board met this past Monday and Tuesday. With the budget process now complete, MWD Directors have shifted their focus to several key matters, including the annual performance reviews of the General Manager, General Counsel, Chief Financial Officer, and Ethics Officer, focusing on Camp4Water; the naming of facilities; Colorado River issues; and the selection of the next MWD Board Chair.

Vice President Fellow noted that the annual review process is a standard practice and is conducted thoroughly by the Directors. As part of the process, staff questionnaires are reviewed, and compensation adjustments for executive staff are considered. The approved salaries are as follows: General Manager, \$495,040; General Counsel, \$426,627.20; Chief Financial Officer, \$346,569.00; and Ethics Officer, \$335,961.68.

Regarding the Colorado River update, Vice President Fellow reported that the matter appears to be heading toward litigation.

WATER QUALITY AUTHORITY REPORT

Treasurer Chavez discussed the ongoing concerns about interest rates and their potential impact on local agencies. Additionally, the appointment of the new Chair of the Federal Reserve may influence future economic conditions and could affect decision making.

WATERMASTER REPORT

Ms. Gardner reported that the key well elevation as of June 5th was 262.2 feet, approximately 17 feet higher than during the same period last year, but 2.2 feet lower than last month. This fluctuation is typical for this time of year, and water levels are expected to continue declining throughout the summer months.

Local deliveries continue at very low flows. This water consists of native flow stored behind Morris Dam and is being delivered under the direction of the SGV Protective Association. The deliveries are being shared equally between the upper and lower areas.

Regarding water quality, 77 wells were sampled under Title 22 requirements in May 2026, compared to 43 wells sampled in April 2026.

AB 1234 COMPLIANCE REPORT

A summary report was provided in the board packet.

DIRECTORS' COMMENTS

Director Chavez congratulated staff on securing unanimous approval of Upper Water's sponsored bill, AB 1894.

Vice President Fellow announced that an all-day artificial intelligence conference will be held on June 26th at Brookside Country Club in Pasadena and will include two or three panel discussions.

President Garcia thanked everyone who attended the meeting and expressed her appreciation for the time they took out of their schedules to participate.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

None.

ADJORN TO CLOSED SESSION

None.

ADJOURNMENT

President Garcia inquired whether there was any further business to come before the Board. There being none, the meeting was adjourned in memory of Jerry Ruiz and Mr. Ramos, husband of MWD Director Gloria Ramos, to the next regular meeting of the Board of Directors, to be held on June 24, 2026, at 4:30 p.m.

PRESIDENT

ATTEST

SECRETARY

SEAL

MEMORANDUM

Item 9.(a) ACTION

DATE: June 24, 2026
TO: Board of Directors
FROM: General Manager
SUBJECT: 2026 Integrated Resources Plan

Recommendation

Staff recommend the Board of Directors adopt the 2026 Integrated Resources Plan and direct staff to implement the plan recommendations.

Background

Upper San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District (Upper Water) initially prepared and distributed an Integrated Resources Plan (IRP) in 2013. As a result of changes to projected population, water supply and hydrology (drought) conditions, the IRP was updated in 2016. Since the 2016 IRP update, there have been substantive changes regarding planning for water supplies including efforts on the Delta Conveyance Project; further development of the Regional Recycled Water Project, now called Pure Water Southern California; an update of a Main San Gabriel Groundwater Basin (Basin) management planning tool; and the Resource Development Assessment (RDA). Upper Water has prepared this 2026 IRP update to address both demand-side and supply-side options, address multiple goals, and consider risk and uncertainty.

Upper Water's 2026 IRP update explores various water supply options in terms of potential supply yield, costs, technology, water quality, and reliability. These options were evaluated and presented in this IRP. As noted in prior IRPs, the key to the success of an IRP is an adaptive management approach, whereby water supply projects can be phased in over time when needed and adapting to future conditions. The IRP is not a capital improvement plan, nor does it make definitive recommendations on specific projects. Rather it is a long-term road map that provides Upper Water with a framework for making sound decisions. The IRP is not intended to be a static report, but a "living" document that will be updated as future conditions unfold and become clearer.

This IRP used the historically dry period from 2012 to 2022 when local rainfall was more than 30% below long-term historical average, the driest period in over 100 years. During this period the Baldwin Park Key Well reached historically low levels in 2017 and again in 2022. The future impacts of climate change on imported water supplies were also considered utilizing the findings from MWD's 2025 IRP update (which does not include supplies from the Delta Conveyance Project or Pure Water Southern California). The 2026 IRP is intended to prepare and plan ahead to sustain basin levels and provide reliable water supplies during the next, inevitable, prolonged drought.

MEMORANDUM

The following are the 2026 IRP recommendations:

- Utilize the Main San Gabriel Groundwater Basin storage capacity to maximize the delivery and storage of imported water utilizing the MWD Cyclic Storage Agreement and Watermaster's RDA and Operating Safe Yield groundwater management tools.
- Continue to support regional water supply programs including the Delta Conveyance Project and MWD's Pure Water Southern California.
- Continue to evaluate and pursue other local and regional water supply initiatives including stormwater capture, recycled water, conservation, ocean desalination and water transfers.

Conclusion

Utilizing and adapting the water resource management tools to maximize delivery and water storage such that available groundwater levels can be maintained within desired operating ranges during prolonged dry periods even if future imported water supply reliability is diminished.

Attachments

<https://upperwater.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/06/2026-IRP-F.pdf>

MEMORANDUM

Item 9.(b) ACTION

DATE: June 24, 2026
TO: Board of Directors
FROM: General Manager
SUBJECT: Association of California Water Agencies' *Vision for Our Water Future*

Recommendation

The General Manager recommends the Board of Directors adopt Resolution No. 06-24-682 expressing support for the Association of California Water Agencies' *Vision for Our Water Future*.

Background

The Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA), representing approximately 470 statewide public water agencies, has developed *Vision for Our Water Future*, a comprehensive framework intended to guide California toward a more reliable, affordable, and climate-resilient water future. The framework outlines statewide priorities that emphasize coordinated leadership, sustainable funding, long-term infrastructure investment, and regulatory modernization. Collectively, these actions are designed to strengthen water supply reliability for communities, agriculture, and the environment while supporting California's economic and climate resilience goals.

Vision for Our Water Future identifies four key statewide priorities: (1) establishing unified executive leadership and a coordinated statewide water agenda; (2) protecting affordability through sustained state investment and improved funding delivery; (3) strengthening California's critical water infrastructure; and (4) improving the state's regulatory and operational systems. These priorities reflect the growing need for integrated, multi-benefit approaches to address climate change, aging infrastructure, and increasing regulatory and operational challenges.

ACWA is currently engaging member agencies statewide to build support for the framework and encourage alignment with its recommended statewide priorities. Agencies that adopt a resolution of support will be recognized as Vision Partners, signifying their commitment to statewide collaboration and their leadership in advancing California's shared water future.

Attachments

RESOLUTION NO. 06-24-682

**A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE
UPPER SAN GABRIEL VALLEY MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT
SUPPORTING VISION FOR OUR WATER FUTURE**

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE UPPER SAN GABRIEL VALLEY MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT as follows:

WHEREAS, in April 2026, the Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA) launched Vision for Our Water Future, a member-driven initiative to identify statewide water priorities to inform engagement with California's next Administration; and

WHEREAS, the Vision for Our Water Future priorities are a set of recommendations for the next governor, emphasizing the importance of strong leadership, sustainable investment and coordinated action across all levels of government to secure California's water future; and

WHEREAS, the first priority is to lead on water and elevate water as foundational to California's economy, agriculture, communities, environment and climate resilience through sustained leadership and coordinated state action; and

WHEREAS, the second priority is to ensure safe and reliable water remains affordable through sustained and predictable funding partnerships and streamlined investment delivery; and

WHEREAS, the third priority is to strengthen and modernize California's water infrastructure, including both built and natural systems, to improve reliability and resilience; and

WHEREAS, the fourth priority is to improve regulatory, operational and scientific frameworks to enable efficient project delivery and adaptive water management; and

WHEREAS, local water agencies play a critical role in delivering safe and reliable water supplies and are essential partners in implementing statewide solutions; and

WHEREAS, supporting the Vision recommendations demonstrates a unified commitment to collaborative, science-based and practical policies that advance a secure and resilient water future for California's communities, farms, economy and environment; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED that THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE UPPER SAN GABRIEL VALLEY MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT hereby expresses support for ACWA's Vision for Our Water Future recommendations and affirms its commitment to working collaboratively to advance reliable, affordable and resilient water supplies.

PASSED, APPROVED, AND ADOPTED this 24th day of June, 2026.

AYES:

NOES:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT:

Katarina Garcia, President

ATTEST:

Jennifer Santana, Secretary

(SEAL)

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Martin Koczanowicz, District Counsel

VISION

FOR OUR WATER FUTURE



Setting the Vision

The Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA) represents approximately 470 public water agencies that collectively deliver approximately 90 percent of the water used by Californians — in their homes, on their farms, and for their businesses.

Water agencies are being proactive and are on the front lines of the state's most pressing challenges — from droughts, floods, and wildfires to aging infrastructure and the need for more housing. Meaningful progress requires state partnership with local water suppliers to achieve common goals. Bold leadership from the governor is critical to setting a unified direction, accelerating action, and delivering results to prepare California for the future. Action is needed now.

Why Water Matters

Water is the foundation upon which California is built. This State is the world's fourth-largest economy, the nation's breadbasket, a global technology leader, and home to extraordinary ecosystems. None of it functions without water.

Water is not a single-sector issue. It is the backbone every other sector depends on. It determines where homes can be built, whether farms can produce, how businesses operate and grow, and whether species can survive a changing climate. A safe, reliable, and affordable water supply is one of the most important investments California can make.

ACTION IS NEEDED NOW



**Lead
on Water**



**Protect
Affordability**



**Deliver Critical
Infrastructure**



**Modernize Water
Management**

California Thrives With Water

- › **Housing:** California must plan for 2.5 million new homes in the next decade. Every unit requires a reliable water supply.
- › **Agriculture:** California agriculture is 12% of the state's economy, contributing \$60 billion; employing over 400,000 people; and producing more than half of the nation's fruits, nuts, and vegetables. Both surface and groundwater are fundamental to California's agriculture sector.
- › **Economy:** California's \$4 trillion economy spans technology, innovation, manufacturing, trade, and tourism. Every dollar of it depends on a reliable water supply.
- › **Environment:** California's extraordinary ecosystems — its rivers, wetlands, and floodplains — depend on the same water system managed by local water suppliers. A thriving California requires managing water to sustain both communities and ecosystems.
- › **Public Health:** Water suppliers are California's first line of public health defense, delivering safe, clean drinking water to every community in the state.
- › **Climate Resilience:** Climate whiplash — the swing between extreme droughts and extreme floods — is increasing, snowpack is diminishing, and wildfires are growing more severe. Water suppliers are modernizing, but they cannot do it alone.

Building A Modern System

Securing California's water future requires more than incremental fixes. It demands a fundamental shift in how the State leads, invests, and operates. The Vision for Our Water Future provides an essential framework for ensuring a resilient and reliable water system.

Funded, built, and managed for extreme conditions, our modern water system is resilient, coordinated, and flexible — meeting the needs of California's communities, economy, and environment.

- › **Anchored by Backbone Infrastructure:** The State Water Project and Central Valley Project form the foundation of the statewide water system. These assets capture and manage California's highly variable hydrology and move water where and when it is needed.
- › **Strengthened by Regional Resiliency:** Regional and watershed-based partnerships strengthen local water reliability under changing hydrologic conditions and during emergencies through coordinated planning, interconnected infrastructure, diversified supplies, and shared responsibility.
- › **Delivered Locally:** Water is delivered by local suppliers, even when conveyed through or interconnected with statewide or regional systems. Local agencies set rates and policies — ratepayers fund approximately 85% of California's water system costs — while navigating structural constraints from Proposition 218, regulatory mandates, and permitting complexity.

Key Elements of A Modern Water System

- › Designed and upgraded for the future
- › Flexible and responsive to changing climate conditions
- › Supported by aligned state permitting, regulatory, and investment frameworks
- › Informed by technology, data, and science
- › Grounded in long-term affordability

A modern water system must be resilient, coordinated, and flexible to meet California's evolving needs.





LEAD ON WATER

Recognize water as an essential resource and the infrastructure that underpins California's economy, housing growth, food production, environmental health, and community resilience. Sustained executive leadership is needed to improve water supply reliability, accelerate climate resilience, and ensure coordinated action across state government.

- › **Set a Bold Water Agenda (First 100 Days):** Establish a focused statewide water agenda aligned with this Vision for Our Water Future.

- › **Appoint Leaders to Deliver Results:** Appoint and empower leaders to deliver measurable outcomes.
- › **Unify State Agencies:** Direct state agencies to align under unified statewide water priorities and jointly advance implementation in partnership with local, regional, and federal water managers. Designate a cabinet-level water policy executive, reporting directly to the Governor, to align agencies and organize state resources to implement California's water priorities.



PROTECT AFFORDABILITY

Ensure safe and reliable water remains affordable by strengthening sustained state investment and funding partnerships with local, regional, and federal agencies to address rising infrastructure, climate, and regulatory costs. California's ratepayers fund more than 85% of the system. Without predictable investment, these costs will increasingly fall on households, businesses, and farmers.

- › **Secure Sustainable Water Funding:** Create a reliable sustainable state funding source for water infrastructure that provides predictable, long-term investment. This funding should support critical water infrastructure projects, environmental needs, and California's Human Right to Water while leveraging federal, regional, and local investment.

- › **Accelerate Funding:** Improve funding programs and coordination so investments reach projects faster — reducing administrative delays, lowering project costs, and accelerating infrastructure delivery.
- › **Integrate Investments Across Sectors:** Align state investments and integrate water infrastructure funding across energy, housing, and climate and hazard mitigation to advance multi-benefit projects and maximize federal, state, and regional investment.





DELIVER CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Future-proof California's critical water infrastructure to ensure reliable supplies in the face of climate change, growing economic and community demands, and escalating emergency risks. This requires strengthening the statewide water system, including both built and natural infrastructure, while advancing regional resilience to maximize systemwide reliability.

- › **Strengthen the State's Water Backbone:** Upgrade, repair, and optimize California's essential backbone infrastructure — the California State Water Project and Central Valley Project.
 - ◆ **Modernize and Protect Infrastructure:** Advance a durable Delta conveyance solution, strengthen Delta levees, safeguard critical infrastructure from subsidence and seismic risk, and upgrade system technologies — including Forecast Informed Reservoir Operations, snowpack measurement, and remote monitoring control.

- ◆ **Improve Coordinated Operations:** Integrate operations of the California State Water Project and Central Valley Project to increase system flexibility, expand the storage and movement of water, and enhance water supply reliability.
- › **Safeguard Colorado River Water Supplies:** Protect California's Colorado River allocation, consistent with the State's legal entitlements and the efforts of the Colorado River Board of California.
- › **Empower Regional Water Solutions:** Champion regional and watershed-based solutions. State policy should empower regions with the tools, flexibility, and investment needed to advance regional planning, partnerships, and projects that diversify water supplies, strengthen system connectivity and operational efficiency, and restore ecosystem functions to ensure reliable water supplies.



MODERNIZE WATER MANAGEMENT

Improve California's regulatory and operational systems so water projects can move forward reliably and efficiently, infrastructure can be operated more flexibly, and agencies can respond more rapidly to changing conditions. California's regulatory framework should deliver clear, coordinated decisions grounded in the best available science, while maintaining environmental protections, public transparency, and California's existing water rights priority system.

- › **Improve Permitting Performance:** Enhance the clarity, coordination, and efficiency of state permitting processes to accelerate infrastructure and operational improvements; eliminate avoidable costs; and ensure state and local agencies deliver timely, accountable results.
 - ◆ **Integrate Permit Requirements:** Integrate requirements and processes across regulatory agencies to eliminate redundancy and inconsistency.
 - ◆ **Enhance Regulatory Certainty:** Establish transparent procedures, clear criteria for permit approval, and accountable timelines for agency decisions — developed in direct partnership with water suppliers.

- ◆ **Streamline Pathways:** Create efficient pathways to advance multi-benefit, climate-resilient water supply projects.
- › **Modernize Water Operations:** Advance operational approaches that reflect changing climate realities to improve water supply reliability across environmental, agricultural, and urban sectors. This may include coordinated reservoir management, flexible diversion rules tied to real-time hydrology, accelerated groundwater recharge and conjunctive use, expanded water transfers, and other adaptive strategies.
- › **Strengthen Water Data and Science:** Invest in integrated, science-based statewide data systems and technology that improve transparency, inform real-time decisions, and strengthen regulatory and operational performance to increase efficiency and better manage water resources.

VISION
FOR OUR WATER FUTURE



Vision for Our Water Future is an initiative of the Association of California Water Agencies, representing approximately 470 public water agencies in California.

MEMORANDUM

Item 9.(c) ACTION

DATE: June 24, 2026
TO: Board of Directors
FROM: General Manager
SUBJECT: CSDA Board Election for the Southern Network, Seat C

Recommendation

Staff requests the Board of Directors provide direction to the General Manager on the Board's desired candidate for election to the California Special Districts Association Board Directors for the Southern Network, Seat C, and cast the agency's vote via the online ballot.

Background

The California Special District Association (CSDA) is a 501c(6), not-for-profit association that promotes good governance and improved local services through professional development, advocacy, and other services for all types of independent special districts. CSDA provides education and training, insurance programs, legal advice, public relations support, legislative advocacy, and information that supports the management and operational effectiveness of special districts.

The CSDA Board of Directors is the governing body responsible for policy decisions related to CSDA's member services, legislative advocacy, education, and resources. The CSDA Board is comprised of members elected from its six geographical networks. Each of the six networks have three seats on the board serving staggered three-year terms. CSDA Board candidates must be affiliated with an independent special district that is a CSDA member in good standing, located within the geographic network they seek to represent.

The Southern Network is currently represented by the following: Seat A – Director Jo MacKenzie of Vista Irrigation District; Seat B – Don Bartz, General Manager of Phelan Piñon Hills Community Services District; Seat C – Nikki Winslow of Altadena Library District

Staff compiled the applications and statements for all nominees for the board's review and consideration. Electronic voting opened on June 9 and will remain open until July 24.

Attachments



**California Special
Districts Association**
Districts Stronger Together

2027-2029 TERM - CSDA BOARD CANDIDATE INFORMATION SHEET

The following information **MUST** accompany your nomination form and Resolution/minute order:

Name: Nikki Winslow

District/Company: Altadena Library District

Title: District Director

Elected/Appointed/Staff: Staff

Length of Service with District: 6 years

1. Do you have current involvement with CSDA (such as committees, events, workshops, conferences, Governance Academy, etc.):

General Managers Summit 2020-2025; San Gabriel Chapter Formation Committee 2024; San Gabriel Chapter Board Vice-Chair 2025;

Legislative Day 2025; Annual Conference 2025; CSDA Board Southern Network Seat C Nov 2025-present

2. What other state-wide associations have you been involved with? (such as CSAC, ACWA, League, etc.):

California Library Association; CALPELRA; American Library Association;

Public Library Association

3. List your local government involvement (such as LAFCo, Association of Governments, etc.):

Altadena Town Council, LAFCo

4. List your involvement in civic and/or non-profit organization:

Rotary Club of Altadena; Altadena Chamber of Commerce;

Altadena Heritage; Eaton Fire Collaborative

****Candidate Statement – Although it is not required, each candidate is requested to submit a candidate statement of no more than 300 words in length. Any statements received in the CSDA office after the nomination deadlines will not be included with the ballot.**

2027-2029 CSDA Board Appointment – Seat C Southern Network

Candidate Statement – Nikki Winslow

I am honored to put myself forward as a candidate for the CSDA Board for the 2027-2029 term. Since my appointment to the seat in January 2026, I've familiarized myself further with CSDA Board operations and the incredible individuals who volunteer their time to advocate for the work that special districts accomplish. Being part of this team is inspiring, and I look forward to serving and representing my region on the Board for the 2027-2029 term. I believe deeply in the mission of special districts and the staff and leadership upholding this work. They provide libraries, parks, water, fire protection, vector control – and so many other vital services. Special districts are essential in strengthening California's communities, often serving as a critical connection and filling in gaps for services that would otherwise be unavailable. It is my goal to continue to advocate for policies that support sustainability, innovation, and equity for all districts across our state, and represent the interests of the Southern Seat C region on the Board.

For 6 years I have served as District Director of the Altadena Library District. In this role, I have been proud to guide our community through a period of both tremendous growth and significant challenges. Among my achievements, I successfully led the passage of a ballot measure that secured long-term, sustainable funding for our libraries, a feat accomplished in the first year of the 2020 pandemic. I oversaw the planning of our two major renovations and the reopening of our branch on the westside of Altadena in August 2025. In February of this year, our Main library closed and long-awaited renovation work will finally begin on this property. These projects ensure that our library spaces are welcoming, modern, and adaptable to community needs. And throughout 2025 I helped guide the District and our residents through the devastation of the Eaton Fire, leading recovery and rebuilding efforts while ensuring our library remained a place of connection and resilience during a time of crisis and uncertainty.

Prior to my work in Altadena, I served as Assistant Director of Glendale Library, Arts & Culture and, before that, spent nearly 15 years with the Las Vegas-Clark County Library District, where I gained deep experience in operations, branch management, and community partnership building. My educational background includes a Bachelor's in Political Science from UNLV, a Master's in Library and Information Science from the University of North Texas, and a Master's in Public Administration from Claremont Lincoln University. This academic foundation, paired with over

two decades of professional leadership, has shaped my approach to governance—one grounded in strategic leadership, ethical decision-making, and a commitment to inclusive community engagement.

Throughout my career, I have worked with diverse populations and developed programming that directly meets the needs of my community. I have helped launch ESL and citizenship training programs for new Americans, championed the expansion of digital resources, and created equitable access to services for patrons of all ages and backgrounds. In Altadena, I have also been intentional about mentoring and empowering the next generation of library leaders. I am very passionate about professional development, and look forward to advocating for uplifting aspiring leaders in our special districts.

I want to continue to serve on the CSDA Board and spotlight how special districts meet challenges where larger government agencies sometimes cannot— with adaptability and innovation built-in to their structure. Advocating for these institutions is critical in meeting the needs of our California communities and solving problems that sometimes seem impossible. I believe my experiences navigating ballot measures, leading through emergencies, and building strong community partnerships add value to the Board’s work. I especially believe my perspective as a library district leader—representing a sector that touches education, workforce development, equity, and civic engagement— is critical to the future of California’s social infrastructure.

My involvement with CSDA is not just within my District or on the Board, but also as leadership in my local CSDA Chapter. I currently serve as Vice-Chair of the Special District Association of San Gabriel Valley Chapter Board, and was one of its founding members. In January 2024, I was invited to participate in a meeting to explore the formation of a new CSDA chapter in the San Gabriel Valley. At the group’s follow-up meeting in May 2024, I volunteered to serve on the formation committee, which successfully launched the chapter in October 2024... I was honored to host one of our chapter meetings at the Altadena Main Library, featuring Supervisor Kathryn Barger as our invited speaker in September 2025. We recently hosted a chapter mixer to encourage our special district staff and elected officials to meet, network and learn about the vital work our districts provide to fulfill the diverse needs and priorities of residents across our region.

It would be a privilege to serve a full term alongside other committed leaders on the CSDA Board for the 2027-2029 term, advocating for the sustainability of our districts, supporting collaboration across sectors, and ensuring that all voices—large, small, urban, and rural—are represented in statewide conversations. I am ready to bring my passion, experience, and vision to this role, and I would be honored to earn your support.

Sincerely,

Nikki Winslow

District Director, Altadena Library District



**California Special
Districts Association**
Districts Stronger Together

2027-2029 TERM - CSDA BOARD CANDIDATE INFORMATION SHEET

The following information **MUST** accompany your nomination form and Resolution/minute order:

Name: Jason Dafforn

District/Company: Valley Sanitary District

Title: General Manager

Elected/Appointed/Staff: Staff

Length of Service with District: 2.75 years

1. Do you have current involvement with CSDA (such as committees, events, workshops, conferences, Governance Academy, etc.):

Attend CSDA Conferences, Leadership Academy, GM Summit, CSDA Legislative Days

2. What other state-wide associations have you been involved with? (such as CSAC, ACWA, League, etc.):

ACWA, CASA, NACWA

3. List your local government involvement (such as LAFCo, Association of Governments, etc.):

Collaborate with Riverside LAFCO, Coachella Valley Association of Governments (CVAG)

4. List your involvement in civic and/or non-profit organization:

Desert Recreation Foundation Board of Directors

****Candidate Statement – Although it is not required, each candidate is requested to submit a candidate statement of no more than 300 words in length. Any statements received in the CSDA office after the nomination deadlines will not be included with the ballot.**

Candidate Statement

My name is Jason Dafforn, and I am honored to be a candidate for the CSDA Board of Directors representing the Southern Network, including Los Angeles, Orange, San Diego, San Bernardino, Riverside, and Imperial counties.

I am a Licensed Civil Engineer with more than 30 years of experience in the water and wastewater industry, including 17 years as a utility manager for California local governments and more than 10 years serving special districts. I currently serve as General Manager of Valley Sanitary District in Indio, California.

Throughout my career, I have focused on strengthening essential public infrastructure, improving organizational performance, and leading teams to deliver practical, long-term solutions. I have a deep appreciation for the diversity of special districts and the critical services they provide, including water, wastewater, parks and recreation, fire protection, libraries, healthcare, and community services.

Additionally, I have actively represented special district interests through legislative advocacy, participating in multiple policy and legislative trips to Sacramento and Washington, D.C. over the past several years. These efforts have focused on engaging directly with state and federal policymakers to advance the needs and priorities of special districts across California.

I also serve on the Board of Directors of the Desert Recreation Foundation, a nonprofit organization supporting the Desert Recreation District, where we help expand access to quality recreational programs and facilities throughout the Coachella Valley. The Foundation was recently awarded the 2026 California Nonprofit of the Year for Senate District 18.

If elected, I will bring a strategic, pragmatic perspective to the CSDA Board of Directors and work collaboratively to ensure CSDA remains a strong, effective advocate and resource for its members. Together, we can continue to strengthen special districts and the communities they serve.

Thank you for your support.

Jason Dafforn, PE
General Manager, Valley Sanitary District



California Special Districts Association
Districts Stronger Together

2027-2029 TERM - CSDA BOARD CANDIDATE INFORMATION SHEET

The following information MUST accompany your nomination form and Resolution/minute order:

Name: John Horst

District/Company: TCWD

Title: Director

Elected/Appointed/Staff: _____

Length of Service with District: 1 1/2 yrs

1. Do you have current involvement with CSDA (such as committees, events, workshops, conferences, Governance Academy, etc.):

Not at this time. I am assigned as a board representative but have not been given permission to attend yet.

2. What other state-wide associations have you been involved with? (such as CSAC, ACWA, League, etc.):

ACWA

3. List your local government involvement (such as LAFCo, Association of Governments, etc.):

None at this time

4. List your involvement in civic and/or non-profit organization:

SCRA, TCWD

****Candidate Statement – Although it is not required, each candidate is requested to submit a candidate statement of no more than 300 words in length. Any statements received in the CSDA office after the nomination deadlines will not be included with the ballot.**

John Horst

for CSDA Board of Directors - Southern Network



Dear Fellow Special District Board Members and Community Leaders,

I am writing to respectfully ask for your support and vote for my candidacy to the California Special Districts Association Board of Directors.

Special districts are the backbone of local service in California that serve our communities through libraries, cemeteries, water systems, parks, fire protection, healthcare, or other essential public services.

Special districts—large and small—play a critical role in maintaining the quality of life for our residents. Yet too often, the voices of smaller districts can be overshadowed by larger agencies with greater staffing and resources. In my career, I have continuously stood up to the “big guy” and have found ways to make the small voice roar. I believe smaller districts deserve strong, effective representation that ensures they are heard and respected in statewide discussions and decision-making.

As a representative on the CSDA Board, I will advocate for:

- Strong representation for small and rural districts
- Fair access to funding, training, and legislative support
- Practical solutions that recognize the operational realities of smaller agencies
- Increased collaboration among districts serving diverse local needs
- Protection of local control and accountability

I want to work toward expanding access to State project funding for small districts based on the merit and community value of their projects — not simply on their size, staffing, or ability to navigate complex grant requirements.

I understand the challenges that small districts face — limited budgets, increasing regulatory demands, infrastructure needs, and the responsibility to do more with fewer resources. These challenges require leadership that listens, communicates, and works collaboratively on behalf of all districts, regardless of size.

Together, we can strengthen the future of special districts and continue delivering vital services to the communities that depend on us every day.

Thank you for your consideration and for your continued service to the public.

John Horst
Director, Trabuco Canyon Water District



jhorst@tcwd.ca.gov



Candidate Statement – John Horst

My name is John Horst, and I'm running as a candidate for the California Special Districts Association in the Southern Network.

I am proud to stand as a candidate committed to strengthening the vital role special districts play in serving our communities. Special districts are the backbone of local government—providing essential services like water, fire protection, sanitation, and infrastructure that directly impact our daily lives. Across California, these districts are trusted, community-driven, and accountable to the people they serve.

As a current Director of the Trabuco Canyon Water District, I have focused on protecting taxpayer dollars, improving transparency, and ensuring reliable, high-quality water services. I serve on the Finance and Audit Committee, helping maintain fiscal discipline, and I chair the Outreach Committee to improve communication, so residents stay informed and engaged.

My background in business and operations shapes how I approach public service. I've built my career solving problems, improving efficiency, reducing costs, and strengthening organizations from within. I understand how to manage budgets, support teams, and make decisions that lead to long-term stability and success.

I'm not a career politician—I bring entrepreneurial experience, a strong work ethic, and a commitment to results. I ask tough questions, seek practical solutions, and stay focused on what matters most: serving our community responsibly.

I respectfully ask for your vote.



2027-2029 TERM - CSDA BOARD CANDIDATE INFORMATION SHEET

The following information **MUST** accompany your nomination form and Resolution/minute order:

Name: Melinda Sedmak
District/Company: 29 Palms Public Cemetery District
Title: Trustee
Elected/Appointed/Staff: Appointed
Length of Service with District: 1 year

1. Do you have current involvement with CSDA (such as committees, events, workshops, conferences, Governance Academy, etc.):

I am actively engaged with CSDA through participation in member discussions, governance resources, and ongoing professional development focused on special district operations and best practices. My current and planned involvement includes:

- Participation in CSDA member forums addressing small and rural district challenges, including records management and operational efficiency
- Continued use of CSDA governance resources and training materials to support board effectiveness
- Planned attendance at the Special District Leadership Academy, San Diego, May 11–14, 2026
- Commitment to complete all four modules, and 10 continuing education hours to earn the Certificate in Special District Governance

2. What other state-wide associations have you been involved with? (such as CSAC, ACWA, League, etc.):

- California Notary Public
- California Teachers Association (CTA)
- National Association of Legal Assistants (NALA)
- Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) - Southwest Regional Vice President of Nevada/California Region of Phi

3. List your local government involvement (such as LAFCo, Association of Governments, etc.):

I currently serve as a Trustee for the Twentynine Palms Public Cemetery District, where I participate in governance, policy oversight, and the responsible stewardship of public resources. My role includes supporting compliance with applicable laws, contributing to long-term planning, and ensuring operational sustainability within a small, rural district. I also actively engage in local government and community leadership efforts within San Bernardino County, with a focus on transparency, collaboration, and effective service delivery.

4. List your involvement in civic and/or non-profit organization:

My civic and community involvement reflects a commitment to public service, election integrity, and community outreach:

- Poll Worker Supervisor, Twentynine Palms, (3 years)
- Deputy Registrar, State of Arizona (6 years)
- Notary Public, California (3 years)
- Notary Public, Arizona (6 years)
- Precinct Captain for Political Committeemen, Arizona Legislative District 23 (4 years)
- “Hope Responder,” Hope Response, Inc. (Non-Profit-501c3) supporting outreach to immigrant communities & disaster response efforts across California/Arizona (10 years)
- Member, Business Network International (BNI), Hi-Desert, focused on professional collaboration & local business development (3 years)
- Volunteer, Inspiration’s Edge and Theatre 29, Twentynine Palms, supporting community events & engagement (2026)

Candidate Statement for Melinda Sedmak

Special districts serve as the foundation of local governance, providing essential services that directly impact the daily lives of the communities they serve. As a Trustee for the Twentynine Palms Public Cemetery District, I have developed a strong commitment to responsible governance, transparency, and the stewardship of public resources, particularly within a small, rural district that faces unique operational and financial challenges.

Cemetery districts represent a distinct and often underrepresented sector within special districts. These districts carry a profound public trust, preserving history, honoring families, and maintaining spaces of lasting community significance. At the same time, rural districts in the High Desert and Inland Empire regions frequently operate with limited resources and minimal representation at the statewide level. I am committed to ensuring that these voices are included in broader discussions affecting special districts across California.

My professional background as a managing paralegal in estate planning, trusts, and probate has provided me with a strong foundation in legal compliance, fiduciary responsibility, and long-term planning. Combined with my experience in civic leadership and election oversight, I bring a perspective grounded in accountability, structure, and public service.

I am actively engaged with CSDA resources and intend to attend the Special District Leadership Academy in San Diego in May 2026 to complete all four governance modules and work toward earning the Certificate in Special District Governance. I am prepared to commit the time and effort required to fulfill the responsibilities of serving on the CSDA Board of Directors, including participation in meetings, committees, and statewide initiatives.

I respectfully seek the opportunity to represent the Southern Network and to contribute a thoughtful, balanced perspective that supports all special districts, particularly those in rural and underserved regions.

Arizona, California, Nevada reach historic agreement to protect Colorado River

6/3/26

Leaders from the Greater Phoenix business and economic development community are applauding a landmark three-state agreement between Arizona, California, and Nevada to proactively reduce water consumption from the Colorado River. This collaborative proposal, aimed at conserving an additional 3.2 million-plus acre-feet of water through 2028, demonstrates that the Lower Basin remains solution-driven in the face of unprecedented Western drought.

The agreement serves as a vital “bridge,” providing immediate stability to the river system and protecting the long-term viability of Lake Mead and Lake Powell. By taking these proactive steps now, the Lower Basin states are ensuring that the 40 million people who rely on this water and the economies they support can count on a secure future.

“This agreement is a testament to the power of regional collaboration and Arizona’s commitment to being a leader in water stewardship,” said Todd Sanders, President and CEO of the Greater Phoenix Chamber. “By negotiating this three-state plan, Arizona, California, and Nevada have shown that we are proactively building the bridge to a sustainable future together. This kind of decisive action is exactly what our business community needs to ensure long-term economic certainty.”

The proposal includes significant conservation commitments across the board, with California agreeing to reduce usage by approximately 13% and Arizona and Nevada continuing their history of substantial, measurable contributions to the system’s health. This unified front from the Lower Basin provides a clear alternative to the drastic and inequitable reductions to Arizona’s water supply previously proposed by the federal government. It also serves as a roadmap for the type of conservation that should take place in all seven basin states while federal and interstate negotiations continue for post-2026 operating rules.

“Water security is at the foundation of economic development in the Southwest, and the Lower Basin states have shown commitment to driving practical, real-world solutions for the benefit of the region and country as a whole,” said Christine Mackay, President & CEO of the Greater Phoenix Economic Council. “Arizona is a catalyst for the United States’ reshoring priorities, and in ensuring fair water access across the basin, state and regional leaders are taking necessary, proactive steps to continue supporting growth while protecting our most precious resource.”

While the Lower Basin has moved forward with this critical short-term fix, the agreement highlights the importance of continued cooperation across the entire river system. By prioritizing stability over conflict, Arizona, California, and Nevada have set a standard for proactive governance that ensures the Colorado River remains a lifeblood for the American West.

POLITICO

Power Switch

BY SHELBY WEBB

06/08/2026



New York Gov. Kathy Hochul (D) has legislation on her desk that would place a one-year moratorium on new data centers. | Julia Demaree Nihkinson/AP

Democratic governors are stuck between a rock and a data center.

The energy-hungry facilities face a growing backlash as electricity bills rise, prompting a wave of moratorium proposals. But blue-state governors are hesitant to ban multi-billion projects that could translate into tax revenue windfalls for stretched state budgets, write Kelsey Tamborrino, Christa Marshall, Timothy Cama and Zack Colman.

Those tensions are coming to a head in states like New York, where Democratic Gov. Kathy Hochul must soon decide if she'll sign a one-year moratorium on large data centers that the state Legislature approved last week. Maine's Democratic Gov. Janet Mills vetoed a similar bill earlier this year, despite strong Democratic support, because she wanted carve-outs for projects that met certain job and economic thresholds.

Other Democratic governors have navigated the political tightrope with new restrictions.

Illinois Gov. JB Pritzker paused tax exemptions for new data center proposals as the state legislature works on broader policies to address energy and water concerns. New Jersey Gov. Mikie Sherrill rolled out plans to require data centers to supply their own power. And Pennsylvania Gov. Josh Shapiro laid out a plan in May to shield ratepayers from shouldering the costs of upgrading the grid's infrastructure to accommodate data centers.

Shapiro, a 2028 presidential prospect, once courted tech companies to his state and says data centers could bring badly needed jobs and investment. But his plan highlights a pivot in his messaging.

“His evolving policies, and many of the updated policies that require more of data centers, are a clear recognition that unbridled support for data centers was not politically a great position to be in,” said Chris Borick, director of the Institute of Public Opinion and professor of political science at Muhlenberg College in Pennsylvania.

The Data Center Coalition, which represents major tech companies and other project developers and end users, is talking to governors and legislators. Dan Diorio, vice president of state policy, said the group was pushing back against state policies that target data centers over other large industrial developments “or impair the competitiveness of responsible data center developers who choose to invest in these states.”

But concerns about data centers’ impact on electricity prices, water usage and pollution have ignited a firestorm of opposition, with a May Gallup poll finding that 71 percent of Americans are against AI data centers being built in their local area.

“Democrats are shooting themselves in the foot politically on this issue,” said Will Lawrence, who’s running in a competitive three-way Democratic primary in central Michigan to unseat Republican Rep. Tom Barrett. “People are desperate for somebody to stand up to Big Tech, to stand alongside communities.”

Kern agencies discuss golden mussel treatment, prevention even as state nixes boat inspections at key reservoir

By Lois Henry
June 12, 2026

A host of Kern water districts gathered recently to share information about the golden mussel as part of the county's emergency declaration over the rapidly spreading invasive species.

At the top of the needs list was funding, yes, but also a coordinated battle plan from the state level on down.

Water managers have been frustrated by what they feel is a lack of urgency and consistency toward the mussels on the part of the state.

So far, the Governor hasn't declared a statewide emergency. And the Department of Water Resources recently stopped mandatory boat inspections at Lake Oroville, which feeds into California's largest water delivery system.

DWR cut the inspections back in April based on a 2017 study that showed the water is too cold for mussels to get established in the lake, according to an email from a DWR spokesman.

Fewer inspections means more boaters may unwittingly move the mussels to other lakes, including the much warmer Lake Isabella, which has no boat inspections, attendees at Kern's June 8 meeting noted.

Once in Lake Isabella, the mussels could spread throughout the Kern River system, which supplies multiple ag districts and is a major source of drinking water for California Water Service Company.

"What's concerning to us is seeing how many opportunities there are for boat launching into Lake Isabella and there's really no control," said Rafael Molina, district manager of CalWater's Bakersfield office. "We would like the county's help to develop something more permanent for boat inspections."

He added that CalWater's microfiltration and treatment protocols will keep mussels out of the public's water, but if they get into the plants, it will require expensive eradication efforts to keep them from clogging equipment.

Kern Delta Water District General Manager Steve Teglia agreed with Molina that keeping the mussels out of Isabella is key. He said ag districts with rights to Kern River water would welcome collaborating with the county – even possibly kicking in money – to establish boat inspections at the lake.

Such an effort could be paired with \$5 million in federal funding for boat inspection and cleaning facilities secured by Rep. Vince Fong (R-Bakersfield) in the 2027 Energy and Water Development bill. That money, though, would be stretched between Isabella, Lake Kaweah, Success Lake, Pine Flat Reservoir and Millerton Lake.

Kern is also preparing a request for state disaster aid based on what districts have already spent combatting the mussels. Once the tally hits \$5 million, the County Administrative Office will send the letter, according to Deputy CAO Stacy Kuwahara.

At the June 8 meeting, she said the total spent so far was \$4.6 million.

North Kern Water Storage District will likely spend \$5 million on its own over the next month, said General Manager Dave Hampton.

The district missed the beginning stages of an infestation, likely because of silt covering the mussels.

North Kern has 120 miles of canals that are running water at nearly 500 cubic feet per second. It is trying to maintain copper treatment levels at .3 part per million, but that's a ton of water to treat, Hampton said.

"We're in full infestation mode. And it's at the worst possible time," he said.

California's waterways could get clogged by a problem that didn't exist two years ago

By Kurtis Alexander

June 14, 2026



California Department of Water Resources Utilities Craftworker Supervisor Nick Barletta works to replace a wing gate covered with mussels during annual maintenance at the John E. Skinner Delta Fish Protective Facility in Contra Costa County, as seen in May. (Nick Shockey/California Department of Water Resources)

When golden mussels were found in an international shipping channel in Stockton nearly two years ago, marking the first detection of the invasive shellfish in North America, state officials knew it was going to be bad.

Now those fears are being borne out.

The roughly 1-inch-long, golden-brown mollusks, native to Asia, have spread from the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta, where they were initially spotted, through canals and aqueducts to the Bay Area and Southern California. Along the way, they've blanketed boats and docks with their crusty colonies and gummed up pumps and pipelines at major water facilities.

"The mussels have the ability to clog an entire pipe," said Jennifer Allen, spokesperson for the Contra Costa Water District, which is dealing with the pest in its water intake fixtures. "Getting in to clean all the infrastructure is a massive amount of work and potentially requires shutting down parts of the system."

She added, "We're really only seeing the beginning of what the impacts are."

Across California, tens of millions of dollars are being spent to stop the mussels. But with no retreat in sight and increasing potential for disruptions to water delivery as well as flood control systems and hydroelectric operations, efforts to get a handle on the infestation are ramping up.

Congress has introduced legislation to bring more funding. The state is looking to add staff. New control methods are being tested. Boating restrictions at many lakes are tightening up to keep mussels from hitching rides to new spots, such as Lake Tahoe, where communities worry about the mollusks turning their famously blue water green.

"This is certainly a challenge for the state of California," said Martha Volkoff, environmental program manager for the invasive species program at the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. "We anticipate most water bodies throughout the state are susceptible to golden mussel survival. Time will tell."

The toll of the mussels on water quality and native ecosystems is yet to be fully determined.

Invasive species are not new to California's waterways, which are home to aquatic weeds, nonnative frogs and nutria and at least two other menacing mussels, but the golden mussel ranks among the worst.

These mussels withstand a wider range of conditions than similar quagga and zebra mussels: They tolerate both fresh and brackish water and spread just as easily. They can reside on almost any watery surface, from the walls of a canal to the inside of a pipe, and they reproduce swiftly, their larvae carried far and wide by currents.

California's sprawling water-delivery network, with its hub in the delta, has been optimal for the mollusk's advance.

"Any diversion out of the delta, most likely, is spreading this mussel," said Tanya Veldhuizen, environmental program manager at the California Department of Water Resources and the agency's lead in combating the invader.

The department, which coordinates statewide water deliveries alongside the federal government, has seen its infrastructure in and near the delta hit hard by the mussels. Perhaps the most infested site is the Skinner Delta Fish Protective Facility, a complex designed to keep salmon, smelt and other fish from being swept into the water exports.

The facility's screens and pipes are regularly covered in mats of mussels, despite weekly cleaning crews that remove the mollusks only slightly quicker than new ones emerge.

"On some of the walls out there, we're seeing layers of mussels 3 to 5 inches thick," Veldhuizen said. "We're now hand-scraping and using high-pressure water cleaners."

There are no easy ways to expel the mollusks. More aggressive chemical treatments are usually unsuitable not only because golden mussels are highly resilient, but also because the compounds can harm wildlife and taint water supplies where the mussels congregate.

"We don't have a lot of products right now that are fish-friendly and effective on the golden mussel," Veldhuizen said.

Some water agencies have reported limited success with targeted application of chlorine- and copper-based products. The state has begun experimenting with ultraviolet light and hot water at some facilities.

Without a sure treatment, the mussels are proceeding hundreds of miles to terminal points of the state and federal water projects, showing up at such spots as the San Joaquin Valley's giant San Luis Reservoir, the pipeline to Lake Perris in Riverside County and the South Bay Aqueduct in Alameda and Santa Clara counties.

From the water projects, the mussels have jumped to local water systems that receive the imported supplies. The Santa Clara Valley Water District reported detections this spring at two treatment plants. The Contra Costa Water District has been dealing with the mussels for longer, having spotted them coming from the delta into canals and reservoirs shortly after their discovery in the state in October of 2024.

Neither agency is expecting immediate problems with water quality or water deliveries, but they say the monitoring and disinfection has been time-consuming and expensive.

To date, the infestation has been largely limited to water systems that are linked to the state and federal water projects, particularly south of the delta. The mussels have not colonized project facilities to the north, including Lake Oroville and Lake Shasta. Most areas unconnected to the water projects also have been spared.

Since state officials don't expect to be able to eradicate the mussels, a top priority is keeping them from going elsewhere. This is the strategy used successfully with other invasive mussels, with the quagga mussels confined to Southern California and the zebra mussels confined to San Benito County. The more stalwart golden mussels, though, have already spread more broadly than their peers.

In many places, including Lake Tahoe, officials have enacted strict policies to prevent the mussel's overland introduction, including mandatory boat inspections and decontaminations. Last month, inspectors in the Tahoe basin detected golden mussels for the second time on a boat being towed in from outside the region, according to the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency. The vessel was quarantined.

Tahoe officials warn that establishment of golden mussels could hobble the lake's water clarity by ushering in more algae and plants. Such aquatic life often flourishes as the filter-feeding mussels facilitate more sunlight in the water and excrete nutrients. Mussel infestation would likely be limited to Lake Tahoe's shallow waters since the mollusks appear unable to mature and reproduce at colder temperatures.

At Lake Oroville, state officials recently dropped requirements for boat inspections and decontaminations, determining that the cumbersome regulation was unnecessary since the lake is too cold most of the year to sustain a significant mussel population.

The state is focusing its pest-control efforts on the delta and points south. Officials at the Department of Water Resources said recently they're thinking about declaring an emergency for the State Water Project, to marshal

more assistance for problem areas. San Joaquin and Kern counties have already declared local emergencies to get help confronting infested water systems that serve farms.

California Democratic Sens. Adam Schiff and Alex Padilla introduced federal legislation last month called the Golden Mussel Eradication and Control Act of 2026, with a companion bill by Rep. Josh Harder, D-Stockton. The measure would establish a grant program with \$15 million in each of the next four years, to help contain the mussels and research new ways to control them. Additionally, it would help track the infestation and coordinate the response.

The mussels are not believed to be established beyond California, though wildlife officials in Oregon recently intercepted a boat carrying golden mussels from the delta, and the state remains on high alert.

At least two bills currently in the state Legislature also address the issue. One by Assembly Member Diane Papan, D-San Mateo, seeks to tighten the rules on boat transport and inspections to prevent mussel spread while the other by Assembly Member Rhodesia Ransom, D-Stockton, makes it easier for water managers to do control work.

Additionally, the proposed state budget, which is scheduled to take effect July 1, includes new staffing for the Department of Fish and Wildlife to confront the mollusk.

"The time is now to deal with golden mussels," said Papan at a recent Assembly meeting in Sacramento. "We are on the precipice of an infestation the likes of which we may not be able to overcome."

CALIFORNIA

California ends Lake Oroville boat inspections meant to block destructive mussels



A sampling plate covered with golden mussels that was removed from the Stockton Channel at the Port of Stockton on Oct. 23, 2025. Detection plates are used to monitor the spread and density of golden mussels. (Fred Greaves / CalMatters)

By Rachel Becker
CalMatters

June 14, 2026 3 AM PT

The state of California is walking back protections meant to keep destructive golden mussels out of Lake Oroville, one of the [largest and most important](#) reservoirs in the state.

The move follows a new state-funded risk assessment that the invasive species poses a lower risk to the lake, which water managers say changes the state's calculus on costly and difficult measures aimed at keeping the invaders at bay.

No state agencies or scientists have found mussels in Oroville yet. But invasive species experts say the revised policy by the Department of Water Resources increases the likelihood that golden mussels will invade Lake Oroville and hitch a ride on boats to other lakes. They disagree, though, about whether preventing such an incursion is even possible.

“California is under an epidemic of golden mussels,” said [Anthony Ricciardi](#), a professor of biology and the director of the Bieler School of Environment at McGill University in Montreal. “Like in any epidemic, you got to control the key hubs — or else the war is lost.”

Reopening Lake Oroville

California water managers [first discovered](#) golden mussels invading California's Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta in October 2024 — marking their first detection in North America.

The voracious and rapidly spreading mussels can encrust surfaces so thoroughly that they choke off water supplies and damage dams and power plants.

They are now invading critical infrastructure in the Delta. And the very pumps, canals and aqueducts that keep water flowing to much of the state are [funneling the larvae](#) to irrigation districts and water suppliers downstream.

[San Joaquin](#) and [Kern Counties](#) have declared states of emergency, and officials are updating key facilities along the state's nature-defying water delivery system to reduce mussel damage.

With summer weather heating up, state water managers said that they [are ending](#) a program to prevent mussels and their larvae from stowing away on boats and invading Lake Oroville, one of California's largest reservoirs.

The department now no longer requires [inspections and decontamination](#) for boats launching at Lake Oroville and nearby reservoirs — the Thermalito Forebay and the Thermalito Afterbay.

The Department of Water Resources says lakes and launches upstream in the Feather River watershed didn't take similar precautions, raising the risk that golden mussel larvae would wash into the reservoir on river flows regardless of the boat inspections.

The cost of the inspection program for the lake was also around \$7.5 million to start it up, and \$6.5 million per year to continue it. Installing UV treatment to prevent mussels from settling in the pipes at powerplants downstream from Oroville, by contrast, would cost an estimated \$1 million.

“We severely impacted recreation at that lake,” said Tanya Veldhuizen, special projects section manager in the California Department of Water Resources' environmental assessment branch. “We also evaluated the risk to our infrastructure and what it would take to mitigate mussels — and that was much lower than expected.”

Cold water, fewer mussels?

The decision reflects the findings from a new risk analysis the department commissioned for these reservoirs and related hydropower and fishery hatchery facilities, as well as for the [Upper Feather River Lakes](#).

Conducted by a [Canada-based consulting firm](#) specializing in aquatic invasive species, the assessment reports that, while surface temperatures are warm enough for the

mussels to survive in shallower water at Lake Oroville, they're too cold farther down for the mussels to reproduce at depths greater than 60 feet below the surface.

Unlike the Delta, the waters at Lake Oroville are also low in nutrients, Veldhuizen said. Between the scarce food, cold temperatures and water levels that drop enough to dry out mussels on the shoreline, Veldhuizen said she doesn't expect the mussels to reach nuisance levels.

The department also expects that cold water released from the reservoir will slow the growth of any larvae that reach the Feather River Fish Hatchery and the Oroville-Thermalito Complex power plants downstream.

But Oroville's shoreline, boats and docks remain at risk — and those are what worries Ricciardi.

“That's where the action is. The boats will be moving them,” Ricciardi said — because boats and aquatic weeds clinging to vessels and their trailers can ferry mussels from one lake to another.



Fish and Game Warden Mark Rose and Allee, a Belgian Malinois trained to sniff golden mussels at Thermalito Forebay, in Oroville on June 20, 2025. The dog sniffs watercrafts in an attempt at detecting the golden mussel and preventing its spread into California lakes. (Miguel Gutierrez Jr. / CalMatters)

And adult mussels can actually survive even in extremely cold water, says Demetrio Boltovskoy, a retired researcher formerly at Argentina’s National Scientific and Technical Research Council. One study in China found that [they can live for weeks](#) at near-freezing temperatures.

Still, Boltovskoy said that while he isn’t specifically familiar with Lake Oroville, reducing precautions may be reasonable.

“No matter what precautionary measures you take, sooner or later it will spread,” he said. “I don’t think that stopping their range expansion is actually feasible at all.”

But invasive species experts are sharply divided on the subject. That’s true especially in California.

Last year, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife [told CalMatters](#) that invasions delayed translated to money saved. This year, the wildlife department directed inquiries about the new Oroville strategy to the Department of Water Resources.

“There’s so much to protect yet,” Martha Volkoff, environmental program manager for the California Department of Fish and Wildlife’s invasive species program, said [last summer](#). “Yes, it’s a lot of work, but the long-term savings — to the environment and to all the other ways that it costs us — is investment well spent, even if we just delay new introductions.”

Relying on boaters: Clean, drain, dry

The responsibility now rests more heavily with boaters to ensure their boats are clean, drained and dry — especially when leaving an infested body of water such as the Delta.

If state water managers detect mussels at Lake Oroville, Volkoff said, the department will begin inspecting boats as they leave the lake.

It’s a strategy already in use at other infested lakes, including [Castaic](#) and [Pyramid](#). Managers of other Northern California lakes told CalMatters they will continue their inspection programs, including at lakes [Folsom](#), [Tahoe](#) and [Berryessa](#).

Drew Gantner, manager of water resources at Solano County Water Agency, which oversees the mussel program at Lake Berryessa, called the Oroville decision concerning.

“If Lake Oroville does surrender its program and becomes infested with golden mussels it creates an increased risk for all waterbodies,” Gantner said. “At that point, any watercraft traveling to Berryessa (or anywhere else) from Lake Oroville would essentially be no different than watercraft coming from the Delta.”

Ricciardi agreed that the stakes extend well past Oroville’s dam and downstream facilities.

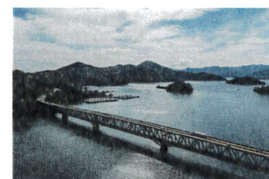
“There is another thing about invasions. They often surprise you,” Ricciardi said. “Sometimes invaders don’t act the way they’re supposed to act.”

[Becker](#) writes for CalMatters.

More to Read

Salmon are at risk with federal plans to give farmers more water from Shasta Lake, critics warn

May 21, 2026



Three years of heartbreak, finally some hope: California’s fishermen can go for salmon again

April 13, 2026



Endangered salmon returned to Northern California, then the money dried up

April 4, 2026



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Santa Clara County begins boat inspections to combat spread of invasive golden mussels

Local News Matters – Bay Area Publication

by Ruth Dusseault, Bay City News

June 15, 2026

Clean, drain, dry and tag: State and county officials are relying on boaters to prevent the spread of an invasive golden mussel that has infested much of the San Francisco estuary. On Monday, new rules that aim to curb the spread of the species go into effect for all reservoirs open to recreational boating within Santa Clara County.

The first North American detection of golden mussel was in California in 2024, according to the state Department of Fish and Wildlife. The inch-long golden mussels live in both fresh and brackish waters, and county officials say they can hitch rides on boats and trailers, allowing them to spread rapidly between waterways.

Water agencies have reported infestations at facilities connected to California's vast water delivery system, clustering onto pumps, pipes and fish screens, potentially threatening drinking water supplies, agriculture and hydropower operations.

Battle of the bands

The new rules in Santa Clara include placing color-coded zip-ties after a vessel has passed inspection. The bands are specific to water bodies. If a boat passes inspection for Coyote Lake, it will only be good for Coyote Lake, the county said in an announcement. Only vessels registered in Santa Clara County will be allowed to launch after inspections. Vessels registered to other counties or ones that have visited other counties, need to undergo a 30-day quarantine period before launching in Santa Clara County.

Nonpowered vessels remain exempt from quarantine requirements but must still undergo inspections.

Vessels registered in these central and Southern California counties or outside California will not be allowed to launch at any Santa Clara County boating reservoir: Imperial, Kern, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara and Ventura.

Lawmakers and water managers have responded with a variety of measures. Several reservoirs, including Lake Tahoe and Lake Berryessa, maintain strict boat inspection programs aimed at preventing new infestations. Federal lawmakers are also seeking a broader response. U.S. Sens. Alex Padilla and Adam Schiff recently introduced the Golden Mussel Eradication and Control Act of 2026, legislation that would establish research, monitoring and rapid-response programs while providing grants to state and local agencies working to contain the species.

**Summary Report for
The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California
Board Meeting
June 9, 2026**

CONSENT CALENDAR OTHER ITEMS - ACTION

Approved Committee Assignments:

Appointed Board Vice Chair Pressman and Director Gold to the Ad Hoc Committee on Delta Islands on June 4, 2026.

Appointed Director Shepherd Romey as Vice Chair of the Legal and Claims Committee.

Appointed Director Paule as Alternate on the Delta Conveyance Design and Construction Authority and the Delta Conveyance Finance Authority. **(Agenda Item 6B)**

CONSENT CALENDAR ITEMS – ACTION

Awarded a \$698,352.64 contract to Tintometer Inc. to furnish 128 turbidity meters for the Robert A. Skinner and Robert B. Diemer Water Treatment Plants. **(Agenda Item 7-1)**

a. Awarded a \$4,542,000 construction contract to J.F. Shea Construction Inc. for upgrades to the Hollywood Tunnel North Portal Pressure Control Structure; b. Amended Metropolitan's Project Labor Agreement to include the subject project; and c. Authorized the General Manager to acquire a temporary construction easement for an amount not to exceed \$60,000. **(Agenda Item 7-2)**

Approved the resolution adopting the Hazard Mitigation Plan. **(Agenda Item 7-4)**

Approved up to \$2.65 million to purchase insurance coverage for Metropolitan's Property and Casualty Insurance Program to renew or replace all the expiring excess liability and specialty insurance policies and maintain the \$25 million self-insured retention for general liability coverage. **(Agenda Item 7-5)**

Approved Metropolitan's Statement of Investment Policy for fiscal year 2026/27; and delegated authority to the Treasurer to invest Metropolitan's funds for fiscal year 2026/27. **(Agenda Item 7-6)**

Approved amendments to the Metropolitan Water District Administrative Code Section 6451 regarding the Audit Department Charter. **(Agenda Item 7-7)**

Approved the General Auditor's Internal Audit Plan for Fiscal Year 2026/27. **(Agenda Item 7-8)**

Awarded a \$789,356 construction contract to Ortiz & Son Inc. to rehabilitate the toe of the slope supporting Basin No. 8 at the Robert B. Diemer Water Treatment Plant. **(Agenda Item 7-9)**

Approved the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California's salary schedules pursuant to CalPERS regulations. **(Agenda Item 7-10)**

OTHER BOARD ITEMS - ACTION

Authorized an increase under contract with Van Ness Feldman, LLP in the amount of \$500,000 for a total amount not to exceed \$1,000,000 and with Milbank, LLP in the amount of \$1,000,000 for a total amount not to exceed \$1,250,000 for legal advice on Colorado River matters. **(Agenda Item 8-2)**

OTHER MATTERS - ACTION

Approved a cost of wage increase of 3.4% for each of the department heads - the General Manager (annual base pay is \$495,040), General Counsel (annual base pay is \$427,627.20), General Auditor (annual base pay is \$346,569.60), and Ethics Officer (annual base pay is \$335,691.60), with an effective date of June 21, 2026, for competent or better review. The final increased pay rate for these positions would be reflected on the salary schedules, which would be submitted for Board approval at the August 2026 meeting. **(Agenda Item 10-2)**

THIS INFORMATION SHOULD NOT BE CONSIDERED THE OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE MEETING.

All current month materials, and materials after July 1, 2021 are available on the public website here: <https://mwdh2o.legistar.com/Calendar.aspx>

This database contains archives from the year 1928 to June 30, 2021:
<https://bda.mwdh2o.com/Pages/Default.aspx>

Summary Report for the San Gabriel Basin Water Quality Authority June 17, 2026

The Board of Directors discussed the following items:

- Approve Salary Range Increases for COLA
- Approve Salary Increases for COLA.
- Approve Continued Participation in the Coalition for Environmental Protection and Development (CEPRD).
- Approve Administrative Demands No. E93036.

A closed session was held pursuant to Government Code 54956.9 Section(d)(4) – Conference with Legal Counsel re: Initiation of Litigation (settlement opportunities with potential defendants) – two (2) matters.