

**MINUTES
OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
SAN JOAQUIN RIVER EXCHANGE CONTRACTORS WATER AUTHORITY
HELD FRIDAY, JANUARY 9, 2026**

The Board of Directors of the *San Joaquin River Exchange Contractors Water Authority (SJRECWA)* met in Regular Session on Friday, January 9, 2026 in the Board Room of the *San Joaquin River Exchange Contractors Water Authority*, 541 “H” Street, City of Los Banos, County of Merced, State of California.

The following persons were present:

REPRESENTATIVES:

Central California Irrigation District (CCID): Kirk Jensen, Alternate Director; Jarrett Martin, General Manager
San Luis Canal Company (SLCC): Cannon Michael, Director; John Wiersma, General Manager
Firebaugh Canal Water District (FCWD): Mike Stearns, Vice-Chair
Columbia Canal Company (CCC): Chris Cardella, Chair; Mike Gardner, General Manager

STAFF MEMBERS:

Chris White, Executive Director; Steve Chedester, Director of Policy & Programs; Joann White, Director of Finance and Administration; Marisol Bonilla, Administrative Assistant; and Adam Hoffman, Water Resources Specialist

PRESENT:

Raegan Huff, Lower San Joaquin Valley Levee District

The following participated via Conference Call:

Rick Iger, Provost & Pritchard; Lauren Layne, Baker, Manock & Jensen; Don Wright, Journalist; Kimberly Brown, CCC Director; and David Cory, Consultant

CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Cardella called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and asked Manager Martin to lead the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

REVIEW OF AGENDA:

There were no proposed changes to the agenda.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

The unapproved minutes from the December 5, 2025 Regular Board meeting were presented. A motion was made by Vice-Chair Stearns and seconded by Director Michael to approve the minutes as presented. The motion was unanimously approved.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

Introductions were provided by those participating in person and via teleconference.

BOARD TO APPROVE THE DECEMBER 2025 EXPENDITURES AND FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT:

Marisol Bonilla provided a summary of the December 2025 Expenditure List and Financial Report.

Following her report, a motion was made by Director Michael and seconded by Vice-Chair Stearns to approve the Expenditure List and Financial Report as presented. The motion was unanimously approved.

ANNUAL CONTRIBUTIONS:

Upon presenting the list of 2026 proposed Annual Contributions, a motion was made by Vice-Chair Stearns and seconded by Director Jensen to approve the 2026 Annual Contributions. The motion was unanimously approved.

RESOLUTION NO. 2026-01 – RESOLUTION TO ADOPT ANNUAL STATEMENT OF INVESTMENT POLICY AND GUIDELINES:

The Executive Director presented Resolution No. 2026-01 to Adopt Annual Statement of Investment Policy and Guidelines and explained the purpose and requirement, confirming there were no changes from the previous year's statement.

A motion was made by Director Michael and seconded by Alternate Director Jensen to approve Resolution 2026-01 as proposed. The motion was unanimously approved.

Chair Cardella referred to the Finance Committee minutes of December 1, 2025 included in the meeting packet for informational purposes.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE UPDATE & RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Executive Director requested to table the agenda item after Closed Session. With no objection, the matter was tabled following Closed Session.

WATER REPORT:

The Water Resources Specialist reported that the San Joaquin River Restoration Program (SJRRP) is currently targeting a reduced flow of 160 cubic feet per second (cfs). Shasta Dam currently holds 3,680,532 acre-feet (AF) of water. Releases are steady at approximately 15,000 cfs, with inflow expected to settle at around 16,000 cfs.

San Luis Reservoir storage is at 1,442,998 AF, reflecting a gain of about 150,000 AF over the past month, and Federal storage is 473,660 AF slightly below average. Millerton Reservoir storage stands at 394,575 AF. A 10% Class 2 allocation was announced last week to Friant Class 2 contractors, followed by an additional 5% cold-season allocation.

Mr. Hoffman noted that the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) Water Year forecast is scheduled for release on January 9. The River Forecast Center (RFC) estimates runoff at 4.8 million AF at the 90% exceedance level. Peak inflows occurred last Sunday, averaging 60,000 cfs.

Pumping at the Jones Pumping Plant increased over the course of December resulting a total pumping of 127,000 AF.

Regarding Delta operations under Action 5, the First Flush started on December 25th and ended on January 7th.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

The Executive Director reported that California Senate Bill 707 (SB 707) was adopted updating the Ralph M. Brown Act (the Brown Act). One of the provisions of SB 707 requires local agencies to provide a copy of the Brown Act to elected or appointed members of the board. A copy of The Ralph M. Brown Act and related statutes were distributed to all Board members on January 8, 2026.

Mr. White reported on the Mendota Pool control structure design, noting that the project is expected to reach 100% design completion by March. Construction continues to advance at the Sack Dam project with the installation of the sheet piling along the east side of the river being completed.

Exchange Contractors traveled to Washington, D.C., from December 9 through December 12. Discussions were held with Congressman Harder's office regarding proposed legislation for eradication and control of the Golden Mussel. Coordination is ongoing with the San Luis & Delta-Mendota Water Authority, on revisions and recommendations for this bill, as well as another bill being developed by Senator Padilla addressing water supply South of the Delta.

Regarding water transfers, two transfer agreements will be presented to the Board in Closed Session, and the Community Infrastructure Fund projects are progressing, with advancement on several projects.

DIRECTOR OF POLICY & PROGRAMS REPORT:

The Director of Policy & Programs reported on the Mendota Pool Fish Screen and Control Structure project stating that Jacobs Engineering has completed the revised Technical Services Center (TSC) design addressing the secondary fish screen, flume, pipe and discharge to the Compact Bypass.

Regarding the Compact Bypass Project, TSC plans to complete the 90% design by the end of February. In addition, Jacobs Engineering has completed 100% design of the Operations and Maintenance (O&M) building under the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation's (Reclamation) Financial Assistance Agreement.

WATER RESOURCES PLAN (WRP) – UPDATE:

Steve Chedester reported on the Orestimba Creek Recharge and Recovery Project that the pumping plant and control systems were tested in late December. Portable power was provided by CCID, and all systems operated successfully. Pacific Gas & Electric are still scheduled to install permanent power by the end of February. Coordination continues with the State Water Contractors and State Water Resources Control Board regarding permanent water rights.

Construction on the Los Banos Creek Reservoir Project has begun, with significant progress made on the 450 cfs box culvert. Construction was temporarily delayed due to rainfall, but installation of the 54-inch piping has been completed. The 30-inch HDPE pipe has been fused and is expected to be installed within the next few weeks.

The Executive Director provided an update on the Del Puerto Canyon Reservoir Project focusing on design development and the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). The public response period for the DEIS is open through Monday the 12th. Comments are being received and will be addressed to move the DEIS into final form.

BAY-DELTA WATER QUALITY AND REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD (RWOCB) REPORT:

Consultant David Cory reported that the Expert Panel are meeting weekly this month and are currently drafting language for their draft expert panel report. The draft report is expected to be released in February for public review, with adoption of the final report to be completed in early April. Once finalized, the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) will review the report and determine what changes should be made to regional or statewide irrigated lands orders related to nitrates and groundwater.

In addition to the Expert Panel process, SWRCB staff are commencing a peer review process to evaluate the Groundwater Protection Targets developed by the Central Valley Irrigation Lands Regulatory Program (ILRP). A preliminary list of potential reviewers has been released, and discussions are ongoing regarding final selection. This process is expected to begin early this year, with a peer review report likely to be completed sometime this summer.

The nitrate control program and management zone implementation plans developed by Priority 1 dischargers. This process is being handled on a region-by-region basis, beginning with the

Modesto Management Zone. The Modesto order will serve as the first example, and its outcome is likely to influence how similar requirements are applied in other Priority 1 management zones.

LEGISLATIVE REPORTS:

The Executive Director referred to the Arc Report, noting that they will be scheduling meetings in Sacramento to meet with legislatures and their staff. Mr. White also referred to the Invariant Report which reported about the Washington D.C. trip and project funding.

PUBLIC OUTREACH:

The Executive Director referred to the report provided in the Board packets and communicated the full team will join the March Board meeting.

ATTORNEY'S REPORT:

Attorney Andrew McClure covered four items in litigation.

City of Fresno et. al. v. United States of America: The Supreme Court denied City of Fresno's Petition for Certiorari. A separate claim filed for 2015 with the same causes of action and involving the same parties remains pending and must still be formally dismissed.

Johnson v. PG&E et. al: With this being the second time filing for a Demurrer, all cases are subject to leave to Amend, while pending lawsuit still needs to be resolved. At a recent hearing, the Judge declared Ms. Johnson as a vexatious litigant.

McMullin Area GSA Aquaterra Groundwater Bank Draft EIR: The proposal involves recovering up to 200,000 acre-feet per year from the groundwater bank and wheeling that water through Mendota Pool. Comments were submitted in December.

December 2025 Water Quality Control Plan for Bay-Delta Watershed; and (2) Partially Recirculated CEQA Analysis for Plan Update: The draft Water Quality Control Plan was re-released, along with a partially recirculated CEA analysis. Prepared previous comments and need to determine to submit additional comments.

FOUR ENTITIES' MANAGER REPORTS:

Columbia Canal Company: Manager Gardner reported that CCC had no water deliveries in December, as they focused on maintenance projects. Currently, there are two miles of canal scheduled for concrete lining and one mile for plastic lining.

Firebaugh Canal Water District: There was nothing new to report.

San Luis Canal Company: Manager Wiersma reported that December deliveries were slightly above average due to dry conditions. The Anderson project remains on track, with one canal already lined and dirt work expected to begin next week to prepare building grades for the next

canal. SLCC is also preparing its 2026 transfer program, with most of the work occurring in January and February and preparing for their upcoming annual meeting and election.

Central California Irrigation District: Manager Martin reported that winter maintenance activities are ongoing. Testing is scheduled for January 4 to evaluate potential future canal lining locations. The district plans to refill the canal in the coming weeks and begin water deliveries on February 1.

INFORMATIONAL:

The Executive Director referred to the thank you note from Steve Chedester included in the Board packet and reminded the Board of the upcoming Water Users Conference in Reno.

CLOSED SESSION:

Chair Cardella adjourned the meeting to Closed Session and called for a short recess at 9:49 a.m. The meeting was reconvened to Closed Session at 9:54 a.m.

Chair Cardella returned the meeting to Open Session at 10:28 a.m.

Attorney McClure stated that discussions were held in Closed Session under Agenda item 18 G. He then referred to the Agreement for the Acquisition of Water by the United States, and San Luis & Delta-Mendota Water Authority from the San Joaquin River Exchange Contractors Water Authority 2026-2038 and said that staff is recommending approval of the proposed Agreement.

A motion was made by Vice-Chair Stearns and seconded by Director Michael to approve the recommendation as presented. The motion was unanimously approved.

The Executive Director next recommended approval of the Water Transfer Agreement between the San Joaquin River Exchange Contractors Water Authority and Westside Water Authority Transfer Agreement 2026-2030 as presented.

A motion was made by Director Michael and seconded by Vice-Chair Stearns to approve the Agreement as recommended. The motion was unanimously approved.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE UPDATE & RECOMMENDATIONS:

Personnel Committee Member John Wiersma said the Committee met and recommended a 3.3% Cost of Living increase to all employees, and a one-time bonus of \$20,000 net to Executive Director White.

A motion was made by Vice-Chair Stearns and seconded by Director Michael to approve the Personnel Committee's recommendations as presented. The motion was unanimously approved.

No further business came before the Board; the meeting was adjourned at 10:30 a.m.

CHRIS CARDELLA, CHAIR

Attest a true record of proceedings had
And taken at the foregoing meeting, our
Presence thereat and our consent thereto.

CHRIS WHITE, SECRETARY

KIRK JENSEN, ALTERNATE DIRECTOR

CANNON MICHAEL, DIRECTOR

MIKE STEARNS, VICE-CHAIR