APPROVED-10/7/26

MINUTES
OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
SAN JOAQUIN RIVER EXCHANGE CONTRACTORS WATER AUTHORITY
HELD FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 4, 2026

The Board of Directors of the ***San Joaquin River Exchange Contractors Water Authority (SJRECWA)*** met in Regular Session on Friday, September 4, 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): Eric Fontana, Director; Jarrett Martin, General Manager
San Luis Canal Company (SLCC): Michael Palazzo, Alternate Director; John Wiersma, General Manager
Firebaugh Canal Water District (FCWD): Mike Stearns, Vice-Chair (via teleconference 9:05 a.m.); Jeff Bryant, General Manager
Columbia Canal Company (CCC): Chris Cardella, Chair; Mike Gardner, General Manager

STAFF MEMBERS:

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

PRESENT:

Andrew McClure, Minasian Law; Kimberly Brown, CCC Director; and David Cory, Consultant (arrived 9:05 a.m.)

The following participated via Conference Call:

Lauren Layne, Baker, Manock & Jensen; Rick Iger, Provost & Pritchard; and Don Wright, Journalist (9:04 a.m.)

***CALL TO ORDER*:**

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

***REVIEW OF AGENDA*:**

The Executive Director explained that CCID has requested to pull CCID's proposed transfer, therefore, Mr. White asked to remove Agenda item # 12., Water Transfer Program from the

Agenda. He then requested to add Agenda item #2.i, Reschedule October Board Meeting, adding that after the agenda's posting, a notice of a CVP Forecast Summit workshop was scheduled for October 1st and 2nd, resulting in a conflict with the October Board meeting.

A motion was made by Director Fontana and seconded by Alternate Director Bryant to approve adding Agenda item # 2.i. and removing Agenda item #12. as proposed by the Executive Director. The motion was unanimously approved.

At this time, Vice-Chair Mike Stearns called into the meeting and Attorney McClure acknowledging Mr. Stearns was calling in due to an illness asked the Vice-Chair if he intended to exercise one of his two just cause exemptions allowing him to vote via teleconference. Vice-Chair Stearns confirmed that he would use one of his two exemptions in order to vote by telephone. Attorney McClure informed the Board that a roll-call vote would therefore be required.

***RESCHEDULE OCTOBER BOARD MEETING*:**

A motion was made by Director Fontana and seconded by Alternate Director Palazzo to move the October meeting to Wednesday, October 7th. Upon a roll call vote, the motion was passed by a 4-0 vote.

***APPROVAL OF MINUTES*:**

The unapproved minutes from the August 7, 2026 Regular Board meeting were presented. A motion was made by Director Fontana and seconded by Alternate Director Palazzo to approve the minutes as presented. Upon a roll call vote, the motion was passed by a 4-0 vote.

***PUBLIC PARTICIPATION*:**

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

***BOARD TO APPROVE THE AUGUST 2026 EXPENDITURES AND FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT*:**

Marisol Bonilla provided a summary of the August 2026 Expenditure List and Financial Report.

Following her report, a motion was made by Alternate Director Palazzo and seconded by Director Fontana to approve the Expenditure List and Financial Report as presented. Upon a roll call vote, the motion was passed by a 4-0 vote.

***WATER REPORT*:**

The Water Resources Specialist began his report by stating that the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) increased the South of Delta CVP contractors' allocation by 3%, resulting a 28% allocation for 2026. On the San Joaquin River, the current release is 385 cubic feet per second

(cfs). The San Joaquin River Restoration Program (SJRRP) has increased flows to 45 cfs, which is the September target, with 100 cfs projected through the month of October.

Mr. Hoffman also provided an update on current reservoir storage levels with Shasta Reservoir currently at 2,621,233 Acre Feet (AF), San Luis Reservoir at 1,293,156 AF, and Millerton Reservoir at 239,737 AF.

In the Delta, operations increased to five units at Jones Pumping Plant on the last day of July and remained at five units throughout August. He then provided data on the recent precipitation at Shasta.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Executive Director White thanked the Board for allowing the Exchange Contractors to continue sponsoring the annual California Agricultural Leadership Tour which was held August 19 through August 21. In addition to this year's class members, we had Michelle Paul of the Farm Water Coalition and Samantha Barncastle of Family Farm Alliance join the two-day tour, and the dinner guest speakers were Federico Barajas and Kristin White.

Executive Director White informed that on August 19, the State of California released its latest revision of the Bay Delta Plan, which updates the December 2025 report. Comments are due on September 18.

Mr. White reported that the Los Banos Creek Detention Dam project was awarded $16 million for its next phase. Those funds are currently being held by the San Luis & Delta-Mendota Water Authority, and work is being done on a letter of agreement so the funds can be released.

DIRECTOR OF POLICY & PROGRAMS REPORT:

Steve Chedester provided an outline of his report, which included updates on the SJRRP, which continues to move forward. In late August, Reclamation released a Request for Information (RFI) investigating alternate pathways to complete the design and construct of Compass Bypass Facility and CCC's South Canal and Siphon facility, with responses due by September 16.

Mr. Chedester also provided updates regarding the Bay-Delta matters, and the Water Blueprint activities.

***WATER RESOURCES PLAN (WRP) – UPDATE*:**

The Director of Policy & Programs reported that the Orestimba Creek water resources projects are progressing well and are nearing completion. The recovery wells and construction activities are moving forward. Manager Martin added that only the pump installation remains, after which coordination with PG&E will take place.

Mr. Chedester reported that, at the Los Banos Creek Reservoir project, the remaining work includes completing the filtration system relating to the Golden Mussel issue and installing the guardrails.

Mr. Chedester also provided an update on the Golden Mussel testing projects. The team has received strong support from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), which is assisting with testing filtration system samples and that the costs are being covered through grant funds the CDFW have received.

Mr. White informed the Board that the Del Puerto Canyon Reservoir project team continues to respond to comments and also referred to the report included in the Board packet.

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

Consultant David Cory reviewed his report, stating the Valley Water Collaborative is developing its Management Zone Implementation Plan (MZIP), which will establish the regulatory requirements that participants must follow to receive the 35-year extension for addressing groundwater nitrate impacts. The MZIP is particularly important for Priority 2 Management Zones and is expected to be submitted in June.

Mr. Cory also informed the Board that regarding the Nitrate Control Program, the State Water Resources Control Board has yet to make their decision to grant review of the petition filed by environmental justice organizations to make major amendments to the adopted Modesto Management Zone Order.

RESOLUTION NO. 2026-02 – APPROVING ISSUANCE OF 2026 COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM AWARDS:

Executive Director White explained that the Community Infrastructure Committee had met to review all of the applications and made the following recommendations as outlined in the draft Resolution No. 2026-02:

1. Award of $100,000.00 to Cal Poly College of Agriculture for the purchase of a water treatment system needed to operate Sustainable Water Solutions Lab.
2. Award of $200,000.00 to Las-Deltas Unified School District for replacement of school district well that is over 45 years old.
3. Award of $175,000.00 to City of Gustine to acquire six additional new aeration equipment and the modernization of electrical infrastructure to improve performance and reliability of the Wastewater Treatment Facility.
4. Award of $36,000.00 to City of Gustine to replace and modernize the headworks' electrical control panel to provide a more reliable and safer coarse solids removal system, extend the useful life of the equipment and help protect downstream treatment equipment and facilities for damage caused by excessive solids accumulation.

5. Award of $170,000.00 to City of Firebaugh for additional improvement of existing trail system along the San Joaquin River and CCID's Poso Canal.
6. Award of $150,000.00 to City of Los Banos for the completion of an alternative water supply assessment to focus on a long-term water supply and reduction reliance on groundwater.
7. Award of $209,000.00 to Las Deltas Mutual Water Company for locating, obtaining permits and installation of additional Metron Automatically Read Flow Meters.

A motion was made by Director Fontana and seconded by Alternate Director Palazzo to approve Resolution No. 2026-02 as presented. Upon a roll call vote, the motion was passed by a 4-0 vote.

The Executive Director said notifications will be sent out to the recipients.

***LEGISLATIVE REPORT*:**

The Executive Director referred to the Arc Strategies report, which provides an overview of the bills considered during the session, their current status, and the Exchange Contractors' positions on them.

The Invariant report was included in the Board packet for information.

Mr. White informed the Board that representatives from Invariant, Arc Strategies, and the Lighthouse team would be invited to provide the Board with updates on their recent activities at the next Board meeting.

***PUBLIC OUTREACH*:**

Executive Director White referred to the Lighthouse Public Affairs report included in the Board packet.

***ATTORNEY'S REPORT*:**

Attorney Andrew McClure provided an update on the Del Puerto Canyon project environmental coverage process, noting the partially recirculated Draft EIR (PRDEIR) was approved by the Del Puerto Water District on August 18, which initiated a 30-day period for filing challenges.

***FOUR ENTITIES' MANAGER REPORTS*:**

Columbia Canal Company: Manager Gardner reported the water deliveries for August were 5,400 AF. Normal seasonal maintenance activities with two major projects planned for the winter maintenance which includes lining of approximately one mile of the Ridge Canal with plastic and two miles of the Columbia Canal with concrete. Three real-time monitoring stations installed earlier this year are operating accurately and have significantly improved the ability for staff to monitor the system remotely.

Firebaugh Canal Water District: Manager Bryant reported that water deliveries are slightly below average. The district continues to monitor Golden Mussels, using copper treatments and inspections with a GoPro camera. Monitoring will continue, particularly around the pump stations during the winter shutdown.

San Luis Canal Company: Manager Wiersma reported that deliveries are also slightly below average, with approximately 16,000 AF delivered. They are preparing for upcoming winter maintenance and construction projects. Coordination with Reclamation has also begun with the operations plan for the Sack Dam facility.

Central California Irrigation District: Manager Martin reported similar water deliveries. Regarding the Delta-Mendota Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP), they are working with the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) on responses to comments. Also, CCID is working on construction projects, and removing weeds from the canals.

INFORMATIONAL:

Executive Director White recapped the C.A.S.T. event scheduled for September 12th; the CVP Forecast Summit workshop scheduled on October 1st and 2nd; the ACWA Fall conference is scheduled for December 1st through December 3rd in Anaheim; and a tentative hold for the Washington D.C. trip scheduled for December 7th through December 10th.

Chair Cardella adjourned the meeting to a recess at 9:59 a.m.

CLOSED SESSION:

After a brief recess, the meeting was reconvened to Closed Session at 10:06 a.m.

The Chair returned the meeting to Open Session at 10:54 a.m. and announced that direction was given to staff and legal counsel.

No further business came before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 10:54 a.m.

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CHRIS CARDELLA, CHAIR

(Signatures Continue on Following Page)

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

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CHRIS WHITE, SECRETARY

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ERIC FONANA, DIRECTOR

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MICHAEL PALAZZO, ALTERNATE DIRECTOR

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MIKE STEARNS, VICE-CHAIR