

MINUTES (Approved)

Chairperson: Thomas Burhenn
Vice Chairperson: Christine Mulholland
Secretary: Brendan Clark

The following action minutes are listed as they were acted upon by the Water Resources Advisory Committee (WRAC) as listed on the Regular Meeting agenda for **June 3, 2026** together with staff reports and related documents attached thereto and incorporated therein by reference.

The video recording of the meeting and materials submitted to the WRAC are available online: [https://www.slocounty.ca.gov/Departments/Public-Works/Committees-Programs/Water-Resources-Advisory-Committee-\(WRAC\).aspx](https://www.slocounty.ca.gov/Departments/Public-Works/Committees-Programs/Water-Resources-Advisory-Committee-(WRAC).aspx)

Call to order at 1:30 PM

1) **Determination of a Quorum and Introductions**

T. Burhenn called the meeting to order. 17 voting Members were present, constituting a quorum.

2) **Approval of May 6, 2026, WRAC Meeting Minutes**

Item start time ~ 00:03:33

T. Burhenn introduced the item and opened the floor for questions or comments from the Committee.

C. Mulholland noted a typo on page 4 and suggested replacing “delusion” with “dilution” in reference to brine dilution.

E. Greening clarified his comment on page 5 and suggested replacing “treatment” with “chlorination.”

M. van Ryn clarified her question on page 4 and suggested revising the language to better reflect her question about State Parks’ involvement in the South County project buildout.

MOTION: Approve the May 6, 2026 WRAC Meeting Minutes as amended

MOTION BY: E. Greening

SECOND BY: C. Mulholland

MOTION CARRIES	AYES: 17	NOES: 0	ABSTAIN: 0	ABSENT: 0
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3) Review and Discuss Proposed San Luis Obispo County Flood Control and Water Conservation District Budget for FY 2026/27 and Consider Actions

Item start time ~ 00:06:45

T. Burhenn introduced the item and Nick Teague presented on the proposed San Luis Obispo County Flood Control and Water Conservation District (District) Budget for FY 2026/27.

C. Mulholland commented on labor and operating costs and asked whether the operating costs include expenses associated with data monitoring equipment. N. Teague responded.

J. Marx asked where the new stream gauge will be installed along SLO Creek. B. Clark responded.

M. van Ryn asked whether Zone 1/1A is the area in Oceano that has experienced flooding issues related to Arroyo Grande Creek. N. Teague responded.

C. Mulholland asked how confident County staff are in receiving the remaining FEMA reimbursement for storm-related damages. N. Teague and C. Howard responded.

An unidentified speaker asked whether tables showing the breakdown of budget costs by program will be made available. N. Teague responded.

D. Chipping commented on flood resiliency and asked whether current planning relies on the traditional 100-year floodplain concept or more modern modeling approaches. N. Teague responded.

E. Greening asked if staff could provide examples of what regional infrastructure partnerships might look like. N. Teague responded.

E. Greening asked whether Countywide Water Action Team conversations are held informally or through a more formal process subject to the Brown Act. N. Teague responded.

D. Roques noted that several projects in the 5-Year Projection are grant funded and asked whether grant funding supports County staff time or is primarily used for consultant and contracted work. N. Teague and C. Howard responded.

D. Crater asked whether the \$5 million FEMA reimbursement, once received, will be credited to the District's budget or the County's General Fund. C. Howard responded.

J. Marx asked how drought preparation and conservation efforts are reflected in the District's budget. N. Teague and C. Howard responded.

J. Marx asked whether the County conducts public outreach to encourage water conservation. N. Teague responded.

D. Chipping asked whether the Los Osos to Morro Bay pipeline is being considered as part of the budget, noting that the project appears to cross over County-owned land. N. Teague responded.

D. Roques asked to what extent the County is considering stormwater capture as a potential water resource. N. Teague responded.

E. Greening commented on a Paso Basin study that evaluated areas suitable for infiltration and asked whether that work is being built upon. N. Teague responded.

T. Burhenn asked the Committee to consider endorsing the proposed FY 2026–27 District Budget and to submit a letter to the District Board of Supervisors recommending its adoption.

M. van Ryn asked what other information would be included in the letter to the District Board of Supervisors. T. Burhenn responded.

C. Mulholland asked about the inclusion of the Board resolution in the agenda packet and its intended purpose. C. Howard responded.

M. van Ryn asked how the District will account for FEMA reimbursement funds once received, noting that they are not clearly reflected in the budget spreadsheet. N. Teague responded.

E. Greening asked whether FEMA reimbursement funds could potentially be used to update the Salinas Dam failure inundation maps. B. Clark responded.

MOTION: Endorse the proposed FY 2026–27 District Budget and to submit a letter to the District Board of Supervisors recommending its adoption

MOTION BY: C. Mulholland

SECOND BY: E. Greening

MOTION CARRIES

AYES: 16

NOES: 0

ABSTAIN: 0

ABSENT: 1

4) Discuss Committee's Approach to Review of DESAL Plan and Board Communication

Item start time ~ 00:46:50

T. Burhenn introduced the item and opened the floor for Committee discussion on providing feedback on the DESAL Plan to the Project Team and advisement to the Board of Supervisors, noting that a special WRAC meeting will be held in August following publication of the draft DESAL Plan for review.

E. Greening asked about the anticipated review period for the WRAC to evaluate the draft DESAL Plan before providing feedback to the Project Team at the special meeting. T. Burhenn responded.

C. Mulholland commented on the Board's direction to pursue this planning effort and emphasized the importance of participation by the County's coastal communities in the project and review process. C. Howard responded.

E. Greening asked whether implementation of a future project would require a Proposition 218 vote and who would be voting on it. T. Burhenn responded.

M. van Ryn asked if there are other committees or organizations who are involved in the DESAL Plan. E. Greening.

M. van Ryn commented on the regional and environmental aspects of the DESAL Plan and asked what other committees are involved in the planning process. C. Howard responded.

E. Eby commented that the WRAC is likely to provide numerous comments on the DESAL Plan and asked how the Committee's feedback will be presented to the Board of Supervisors. T. Burhenn responded.

P. Willmore noted the distinction between providing feedback to the DESAL Project Team and providing recommendations to the Board of Supervisors on behalf of the WRAC.

E. Greening suggested, as one possible approach, bringing a draft letter to the next meeting for Committee review and revision, with individual WRAC Member comments included as an attachment. T. Burhenn responded.

J. Marx commented that it may be more effective for individual entities to provide their own feedback on the Draft DESAL Plan rather than developing multiple sets of comments through the WRAC.

E. Eby commented that the current timeline will likely make it difficult for individual entities to formally review and provide official comments on the DESAL Plan.

D. Crater noted that part of the WRAC's role is for members to represent their respective entities in good faith and in a nonbinding capacity, and commented that not providing feedback would be a missed opportunity.

D. Chipping commented that a technical review cannot be completed during a single meeting and noted that members would need at least two weeks to review the document prior to the special meeting in order to provide meaningful feedback. T. Burhenn responded.

C. Mulholland commented that while individual members can provide their own feedback to the Board of Supervisors, the WRAC could focus on developing a general letter reflecting broader topics, interests, and concerns reviewed by the Committee.

E. Greening noted that individual and jurisdictional comments may be submitted to the Board of Supervisors through August 31, providing an opportunity to submit feedback

outside of the WRAC process, and that additional public comment may be provided at the September 1 Board meeting.

T. Burhenn supported C. Mulholland's suggestion of developing a general letter that could incorporate additional feedback and be brought back for discussion and a vote by the Committee.

A. Ford confirmed that the draft DESAL Plan is scheduled for release on July 22, with a presentation to the WRAC on August 5.

5) Ongoing Updates

Item start time ~ 01:13:06

a) Rain & Reservoir Report

No comments.

b) California Drought Monitor Summary

No comments.

c) Groundwater Basin Management Efforts

No comments.

d) Flood Control Zones

No comments.

e) Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM)

No comments.

f) Master Water Report (MWR) Update

No comments.

g) State Water Project (SWP)

No comments.

h) Desalination Executable Solution and Logistics Plan (DESAL Plan)

A. Ford highlighted that a public survey will be distributed to those subscribed to the DESAL Plan email list and encouraged interested parties to sign up at slocounty.gov/desal.

i) Various County Water Programs, Policies, and Ordinances

No comments.

j) Open Reporting on Water Conservation Opportunities & Information

No comments.

6) Future Agenda Items

D. Chipping commented on a recent study completed for the Los Osos Groundwater Basin and suggested a future presentation on the study results.

An unidentified attendee suggested a focused discussion on water conservation efforts and opportunities.

7) Public Comment for Items not on the Agenda

C. Mulholland commented on the potential benefits of emerging desalination technologies, such as the deep-sea desalination pods.

T. Burhenn commented on an LA Times article highlighting OceanWell's testing of new desalination technology, including the successful deployment of a reservoir demonstration unit and plans to move forward with an ocean-based unit. Link to Article:

<https://www.latimes.com/environment/story/2026-06-02/california-desalination-tech-oceanwell-testing>