



...A United Voice for the Santa Ana River Watershed

OWOW STEERING COMMITTEE

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

February 26, 2026

Committee Members	
<u>Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority Representatives</u>	
Gil Botello, Convener, San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District	Present
David Slawson, Eastern Municipal Water District	Absent
<u>County Supervisor Representatives</u>	
Vicente Sarmiento, Orange County Board of Supervisors	Absent
Amanda Carr, Orange County Public Works (OC Alternate)	Absent
Karen Spiegel, Riverside County Board of Supervisors	Present
Edward Coronado, Riverside County Board of Supervisors (Riverside Alternate)	Present
Jesse Armendarez, San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors	Absent
Jesse Streeter, San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors (SB Alternate)	Present
<u>County Municipal Representatives</u>	
Fred Jung, Orange County Municipal Representative	Present
Wes Speake, Councilmember, City of Corona	Present
Judy Woolsey, San Bernardino County Municipal Representative	Present
Helen Tran, San Bernardino County Municipal (SB Alternate)	Absent
<u>Business Community Representative</u>	
James Hessler, Director of West Coast Operations, Altman Plants	Absent
<u>Environmental Community Representative</u>	
Garry W. Brown, President, Orange County Coastkeeper	Absent
<u>Regional Water Quality Control Board Representative</u>	
William Ruh, Regional Water Quality Control Board	Absent
John Scandura, Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB Alternate)	Present
Others Present	
<u>SAWPA COMMISSIONERS:</u>	Jasmin Hall, T. Milford Harrison
<u>SAWPA STAFF:</u>	Karen Williams, Ian Achimore, Emily Fuentes, Erika Beyers, John Leete, Marie Jauregui, Pete Vitt, Zyanya Ramirez
<u>OTHERS PRESENT:</u>	Thomas S. Bunn, Lagerlof LLP; Eric Lindberg, State Water Resources Control Board; Nilo Hamidzada, Western Municipal Water District.

The OWOW Steering Committee meeting was called to order at 11:00 a.m. by Gil Botello, Convener, at the Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority, 11615 Sterling Avenue, Riverside, CA 92503.



1. CALL TO ORDER | PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

2. ROLL CALL

An oral roll call was duly noted and recorded by the serving clerk.

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments; there were no public comments received via email.

4. ITEMS TO BE ADDED OR DELETED

5. CONSENT CALENDAR

A. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES: NOVEMBER 20, 2025

MOVED, approve the Consent Calendar.

Result:	Adopted by Roll Call Vote
Motion/Second:	Spiegel/Streeter
Ayes:	Botello, Spiegel, Coronado, Streeter, Jung, Speake, Woolsey, Scandura
Nays:	None
Abstentions:	None
Absent:	Slawson, Sarmiento, Carr, Armendarez, Tran, Hessler, Brown, Ruh

6. INFORMATIONAL REPORTS

A. GRANT FUNDED PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS – CITY OF LAKE ELSINORE PROPOSITION 1 ROUND 1 AND ROUND 2 PROJECTS

Adam Gufarotti, City of Lake Elsinore, provided a presentation on the City's Proposition 1 Round 1 and Round 2 lake improvement projects. He discussed the City's efforts to address harmful algal blooms and poor water quality conditions at Lake Elsinore following severe bloom events that resulted in the temporary closure of the lake in 2022.

Mr. Gufarotti highlighted implementation of the City's lake management plan, including nanobubble technology, environmentally safe algaecide treatments, phosphorus reduction efforts, and shoreline maintenance improvements. He explained that the City installed three nanobubble barges injecting oxygen into the lake to improve dissolved oxygen levels, reduce nutrient loading, and enhance overall lake conditions. Monitoring data showed measurable improvements in dissolved oxygen, nitrogen reduction, water clarity, and sediment conditions throughout the lake.

The Committee discussed the importance of scientific data collection and regional grant funding support through OWOW and Proposition 1 programs. Members commended the City's progress, noting the environmental and economic benefits associated with restoring recreational use and improving public perception of Lake Elsinore.

This item was for discussion purposes; no action was taken on Agenda Item No. 6.A.

B. PROPOSITION 4 OVERVIEW (SC#2026.1)

Ian Achimore provided a presentation titled Proposition 4 Overview contained in the agenda packet on pages 29-40. He provided an update regarding implementation of



Proposition 4, the \$10 billion statewide climate and water resilience bond approved by voters in November 2024.

Mr. Achimore explained that recent legislative actions, including budget trailer bill provisions and Assembly Bill 35, are intended to accelerate development of grant guidelines and streamline the state regulatory process. He noted that agencies such as the Wildlife Conservation Board and State Water Resources Control Board have already begun advancing emergency regulations and funding solicitations.

Mr. Achimore further discussed the \$100 million allocated for Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) and Watershed Climate Resiliency funding, emphasizing that future grant opportunities will prioritize projects benefiting disadvantaged communities and vulnerable populations. He noted that future funding will likely be awarded through statewide competitive solicitations rather than regional funding allocations used in prior bond cycles.

The Committee discussed the importance of continued regional coordination, participation in watershed resilience planning efforts, and preparation of conceptual and shovel-ready projects to position the watershed competitively for future Proposition 4 funding opportunities.

This item was for discussion purposes; no action was taken on Agenda Item No. 6.B.

7. SAWPA GENERAL MANAGER REPORT

The SAWPA General Manager reminded the Committee about the upcoming SAWPA Strategic Plan kickoff meeting and noted that all OWOW Steering Committee members had been invited. Members were also reminded about the upcoming Orange County Water District Groundwater Replenishment System and PFAS Treatment Facility tour scheduled for March 4, 2026.

8. CONVENER COMMENT/REPORT

The Convener invited Committee members to participate in the upcoming State Water Project Tour hosted by Valley District and emphasized the educational value of the program.

9. COMMITTEE MEMBERS' COMMENTS

There were no Committee member comments.

10. REQUEST FOR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

There were no requests for future agenda items.

11. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting ended at 11:50 a.m.

APPROVED: May 28, 2026

Signed by:

Gil Botello

Gil Botello, Convener

Attest:

Signed by:

Zyanya Ramirez

Zyanya Ramirez, Senior Administrative Specialist