

MEETING NOTES

Basin Monitoring Program Task Force July 14, 2026

STAKEHOLDERS PRESENT:

City of Beaumont, Kevin Lee
City of Redlands, Joseph Hamburger
City of Redlands, Karla Siordia
City of Rialto, Nicole Hemmans
City of Riverside, Nicole Greenwood
City of Riverside (RPU), Drew Faherty
Eastern Municipal WD, Anthony Budicin
Inland Empire Utilities Agency, Arijanto (Arie) Istandar
Inland Empire Utilities Agency, Daisy Puga
Jurupa Community Services District, Bryan Smith

Orange County Water District, Kevin O'Toole
SBMWD/RIX JPA, Marissa Flores-Acosta
San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District, Greg Woodside
Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board, Eric Lindberg
Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board, Lauren Hubbell
WMWD/WRCRWA, Ashley Spradlin
WMWD/WRCRWA, Lyndy Lewis
WMWD/WRCRWA, Nilofar (Nilo) Hamidzada
YVWD, Ashley Gibson

OTHERS PRESENT:

Kahn, Soares, & Conway (KSC), Theresa (Tess) Dunham
Larry Walker Associates, Darcy McCargar
Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority, Erika Beyer
Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority, Gil Botello
Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority, Natalia Gonzalez

Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority, Rick Whetsel
Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority, T. Milford Harrison
Santiago Water Strategies, Hannah Olson
Santiago Water Strategies, Michael Cruikshank
West Yost, Veva Weamer

STAKEHOLDERS ABSENT:

Beaumont-Cherry Valley Water District
Chino Basin Watermaster
City of Banning
City of Corona

Elsinore Valley Municipal WD
Irvine Ranch Water District
San Geronio Pass Water Agency
Temescal Valley Water District

Call to Order/Introductions

The Basin Monitoring Program Task Force meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Erika Beyer at SAWPA with participants participating remotely and in person. Brief introductions were made.

Approval of May 2026 Meeting Notes

The May 4, 2026 meeting notes were approved as posted.

Draft 2025 Santa Ana River Annual Report – Darcy McCargar, LWA

Darcy McCargar reported that comments had been received from Orange County Water District, Western Municipal Water District, and the Regional Water Quality Control Board, and revisions to the draft report were underway. The report indicated no exceedances of total dissolved solids (TDS) or total inorganic nitrogen objectives in Reaches 2–5 for 2025. The Task Force discussed the Reach 2 TDS assessment methodology, including differences between the five-year moving average and 60-month volume-weighted approaches and the regression analyses used for each. Members noted the importance of maintaining consistency with Basin Plan requirements and the State's Integrated Report process. Rick Whetsel explained that the regression has been recalculated annually since 2005 using the most recent five years of data, resulting in slight year-to-year changes in the regression line, primarily at the intercept. He noted that the correlations are typically very strong (approximately 95–98%), the slope remains relatively stable, and approximately 20 years of regression data are available for comparison. He also clarified that missing data are simply excluded from the analysis. LWA will follow up on the historical methodology before determining whether any revisions are warranted.

The group agreed additional review of the historical methodology would be beneficial. Members reviewed Regional Board comments requesting additional clarification on groundwater contributions to Reach 3 and the interpretation of base flow conditions. The report will be updated to clarify that the current methodology uses a four-day precipitation screening to represent base flow conditions, although this is not explicitly defined in the Basin Plan.

The Task Force discussed comments regarding references to historical individual salt ion trends. Members generally supported removing discussion of individual ion trends while retaining historical background that provides context for the ongoing Reach 3 Special Study. The group agreed to solicit additional comments through the end of the week before finalizing the conclusion section. Members supported retaining discussion of the Line Fire as background information because wildfire impacts may affect future water quality and could support future funding requests. They discussed establishing objective criteria, such as a Governor-declared emergency and a limited reporting duration, for including future wildfire events.

The Task Force also discussed replacing total discharge with base flow discharge in Reach 3 appendix figures. Due to additional analysis that would be required, the change will be considered as a recommendation for next year's annual report rather than implemented this year. LWA will distribute a revised draft and redline version for final Task Force review before the report is submitted to the Regional Water Quality Control Board by August 1, 2026.

Update on Additional Data Analysis (To Mirror Integrated Report Process) – Darcy McCargar, LWA

Darcy McCargar provided an update on the additional data analysis effort being conducted to better align the Basin Monitoring Program with the anticipated 2030 Integrated Report process. LWA has inventoried the data currently used in the annual report and identified datasets expected to support the 2030 Integrated Report based on the Regional Board's existing assessment procedures. Interviews with monitoring entities responsible for generating the monitoring data have been completed. A draft summary table documenting current and anticipated future data sources will be distributed to the Task Force for review, with comments requested by July 29 to allow finalization by July 31, ahead of the August 12 data solicitation deadline. Members were encouraged to review the summary table and provide timely feedback.

Update on Storage Model Technical Assistance – Veva Weamer, West Yost

Veva Weamer discussed the Storage Model Technical Assistance Project, which focuses on coordinating with member agencies to compile and review updated aquifer storage model information. Over the coming weeks, the project team will meet with agencies to identify new hydrogeologic data developed since the Phase VIII aquifer storage models were completed in 2000. The information gathered will be used to develop a screening framework and recommendations on whether individual aquifer storage models should be updated.

West Yost also outlined the project's phased approach. Task 1 will coordinate with member agencies to compile updated hydrogeologic and aquifer storage model information and determine, through a screening process, whether storage model updates are warranted. Task 2, which involves updating the aquifer storage models, will not begin until the Task Force has reviewed and approved the Task 1 findings. Tasks 3 and 4 will use the updated models to evaluate impacts on the 1973 and 2021 ambient water quality calculations, including completing 2021 ambient water quality evaluations for groundwater management zones that have not yet been assessed. Tasks 5 and 6 include preparation of technical memoranda, ongoing project management, agency coordination, and regular Task Force updates throughout the project.

The project team presented its proposed agency coordination approach, including groundwater management zones, lead contacts, and anticipated agency representatives, and requested feedback to ensure the appropriate technical staff are included. During agency meetings, the team will review updated groundwater flow models, hydrogeologic conceptual models, aquifer geometry, layering, storage properties, and available GIS datasets to determine whether sufficient new information exists to justify updating the storage models. The screening process will evaluate the significance of new data, data availability, and the level of effort required to incorporate updates. Recommendations will be documented and presented to the Task Force throughout the project. Task Force members supported the phased approach, noting that evaluating available information first is an effective way to determine whether aquifer storage model updates are warranted before proceeding with more detailed technical work.

Update on Reach 3 Special Study Proposal and AWQ Database Consolidation Proposal – Erika Beyer, SAWPA

Erika Beyer reviewed the two consultant agreements that will be presented to the SAWPA Commission for approval. Agreement A is the Santa Ana River Reach 3 TDS Special Study (\$197,494), which includes a quick-start field sampling effort beginning in summer/fall 2026 to characterize TDS conditions in Reach 3, strengthen the monitoring dataset, and support development of a three-year monitoring work plan for implementation beginning in 2027. The agreement includes four tasks: an initial field sampling campaign, evaluation of the WLAM and recommended improvements, development of the Reach 3 work plan, and project management.

Agreement B is the Ambient Water Quality (AWQ) Database Consolidation Project (\$147,543), which will consolidate historical groundwater quality datasets into a single SQL database through 2026 to support future ambient water quality computations. The project includes database development, optional data analysis and visualization tools, updating the database with 2022–2026 data for all 35 groundwater management zones, and project management. The database will also include tools and coding to streamline future data uploads and improve long-term data management.

The combined project is scheduled to begin in August 2026, pending SAWPA Commission approval, with Reach 3 field sampling identified as the highest priority. Monthly Task Force updates will be provided throughout the project, and draft deliverables will be distributed for review prior to meetings. Preliminary 2027 deliverables include the draft Reach 3 monitoring work plan and the consolidated ambient water quality database.

Task Force Long-Term Schedule and Upcoming Deliverables – Erika Beyer, SAWPA

Erika Beyer recommended establishing a recurring monthly Task Force meeting to improve planning and reduce the need for scheduling polls. Tess Dunham noted that, prior to COVID, the Task Force met on a regular monthly schedule, with meetings typically canceled only when there were no agenda items. Dunham and Beyer emphasized that the volume of ongoing work such as including the annual report, Reach 3 Special Study, storage model technical assistance, ambient water quality database consolidation, future waste load allocation model updates, and Basin Plan amendments would need monthly meetings to improve coordination and facilitate planning for upcoming deliverables. SAWPA will circulate a recurring meeting invitation, tentatively scheduled during the third week of each month, with adjustments made as needed based on member availability.

Select Next Task Force Meeting Date/Time – Erika Beyer, SAWPA

Ms. Beyer discussed the upcoming Task Force meeting schedule. The Task Force agreed to hold the next meeting on September 22, 2026, and to establish a recurring meeting schedule on the last Tuesday of each month until further notice.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:21 a.m.

Approval of Internal Meeting Notes – Erika Beyer (SAWPA)

A closed session was held for Task Force members to review the internal meeting notes dated June 15, 2026, and June 23, 2026.

Following discussion, the June 15, 2026, and June 23, 2026 internal meeting notes were approved as presented.