

# County of Monterey

*Saffron Room  
1441 Schilling Place  
Salinas, CA 93901*



## Meeting Agenda

**Wednesday, February 4, 2026**

**10:00 AM**

**Saffron Room - 1441 Schilling Pl, Salinas CA 93901 or Via Zoom**

### **Water Resources Agency Planning Committee**

*Ken Ekelund, Chair  
Deidre Sullivan, Vice Chair  
Mark Gonzalez  
Matt Simis*

To participate in this Planning Committee meeting through the following methods:

1. You may attend in person,

2. For ZOOM participation please join by computer audio

at: <https://montereycty.zoom.us/j/92329693521>

OR to participate by phone call any of these numbers below:

+1 669 219 2599 US (San Jose)

+1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose)

+1 929 205 6099 US (New York)

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Enter this Meeting ID number: 923 2969 3521, PASSWORD:901221 when prompted. Please note there is no Participant Code, you will just hit # again after the recording prompts you. You will be placed in the meeting as an attendee; when you are ready to make a public comment, if joined by computer audio, please Raise your Hand; and by phone, please push \*9 on your keypad.

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4. If you wish to comment on a particular agenda item, please submit your comments in writing via email to Monterey County Water Resources Agency at [WRAPubliccomment@countyofmonterey.gov](mailto:WRAPubliccomment@countyofmonterey.gov) by 5:00 p.m. on the Tuesday prior to the Committee meeting. To assist Agency staff in identifying the agenda item to which the comment relates please indicate the Committee meeting date and agenda number in the subject line. Comments received by the 5:00 p.m. Tuesday deadline will be distributed to the Committee and will be placed in the record.

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(i.e. Planning Committee) and item number (i.e. Item No. 10). Every effort will be made to read your comment into the record, but some comments may not be read due to time limitations. Comments received after an agenda item will be made part of the record if received prior to the end of the meeting.

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9.The Chair and/or Secretary may set reasonable rules as needed to conduct the meeting in an orderly manner.

Participar en esta reunión del Comité de Planificación a través de los siguientes métodos:

1.Puede asistir en persona,

2.El público puede observar la reunión ZOOM a través de computadora haciendo clic en el siguiente enlace: <https://montereycty.zoom.us/j/92329693521>

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4. Si un miembro del público desea comentar sobre un artículo de la agenda en particular, se le es sumamente recomendable que envíe sus comentarios por escrito por correo electrónico a la Agencia de Administración de Recursos del Agua (Agencia) a [WRAPublicComment@countyofmonterey.gov](mailto:WRAPublicComment@countyofmonterey.gov) antes de las 5:00 P. M. el Martes antes de la reunión del Comité. Para ayudar al personal de la Agencia a identificar el número del artículo de la agenda con el cual se relaciona el comentario, se solicita al público que indique la fecha de la reunión del Comité y el número del artículo de la agenda en la línea de asunto. Comentarios recibidos en la fecha límite del Martes a las 5 P.M, serán distribuidos al Comité y serán colocados en el registro.

5. Los miembros del público que deseen hacer un comentario público general para temas que no están en la agenda del día o que deseen comentar en un artículo específico mientras se escucha la presentación, lo pueden hacer enviando un comentario por correo electrónico, preferiblemente limitado a 250 palabras o menos, a [WRAPublicComment@countyofmonterey.gov](mailto:WRAPublicComment@countyofmonterey.gov). Para ayudar al personal de la Agencia a identificar el artículo de la agenda con el cual se relaciona el comentario, se solicita al público que indique el nombre del Comité (por ejemplo: Comité de Planificación) y el número del artículo de la agenda (por ejemplo: Artículo # 10). Se hará todo lo posible para leer el comentario en el registro, pero algunos comentarios pueden no leerse en voz alta debido a limitaciones de tiempo. Los comentarios recibidos después del cierre del período de comentarios públicos sobre un artículo de la agenda serán parte del registro si se reciben antes que termine la reunión del Comité.

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9.El Presidente y / o Secretario pueden establecer reglas razonables según sea necesario para llevar a cabo la reunión de manera ordenada.

### Call to Order

### Roll Call

### Public Comment

### Committee Member Comments

### Consent Calendar

1. Approve the Action Minutes of the Planning Meeting held on November 5,2025.

**Attachments:** [draft Planning Nov 5th Minutes](#)

### Scheduled Items

2. Receive an update on staff's participation in the Salinas Valley Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency's Advisory Committee.(Staff Presenting: Shaunna Murray.)

**Attachments:** [Board Report](#)

### Staff Reports

3. Update on the development of the scope for an Economic Benefits Study by One Water Econ.(Staff Presenting: Ara Azhderian.)

4. Update on the development of a CSIP Program Manager position.(Staff Presenting: Shaunna Murray.)
5. Update on the Request for Proposals process for the Strategic Plan Update Consultant.(Staff Presenting: Shaunna Murray.)

**Calendar**

6. Set next meeting date and discuss further agenda items.

**Adjournment**



# County of Monterey

## Item No.1

### Board Report

Board of Supervisors  
Chambers  
168 W. Alisal St., 1st Floor  
Salinas, CA 93901

Legistar File Number: WRAPL 26-002

February 04, 2026

**Introduced:** 1/28/2026

**Current Status:** Agenda Ready

**Version:** 1

**Matter Type:** WRA Planning Item

Approve the Action Minutes of the Planning Meeting held on November 5,2025.

# County of Monterey

*Saffron Room  
1441 Schilling Place  
Salinas, CA 93901*



## Meeting Minutes

**Wednesday, November 5, 2025**

**10:00 AM**

**Saffron Room 1441 Schilling Place Salinas, Ca. 93901**

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*Deidre Sullivan, Chair  
Ken Ekelund  
Mark Gonzalez  
Matthew Simis*

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+1 301 715 8592 US

Enter this Meeting ID number: 955 1198 2423, PASSWORD: 884853 when prompted. Please note there is no Participant Code, you will just hit # again after the recording prompts you.You will be placed in the meeting as an attendee; when you are ready to make a public comment, if joined by computer audio, please Raise your Hand; and by phone, please push \*9 on your keypad.

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9. El Presidente y / o Secretario pueden establecer reglas razonables según sea necesario para llevar a cabo la reunión de manera ordenada.

#### Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m.

#### Roll Call

Present: Ken Ekelund, Mark Gonzalez, Matthew Simis  
Absent: Deidre Sullivan

#### Public Comment

None.

**Committee Member Comments**

None.

**Consent Calendar**

Upon the motion by Matthew Simis, Second by Mark Gonzalez the committee has approved the Consent Calendar of the Planning Committee.

**Ayes:** Mark Gonzalez, Matthew Simis, Ken Ekelund

**Noes:** None

**Absent:** Deidre Sullivan

**Abstained:** None

**Committee Member Comments:** None.

**Staff Comments:** None.

**Public Comments:** None.

1. Approve the Action Minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting held on October 1,2025.

**Attachments:** [draft Planning October 1,2025 Minutes](#)

**Scheduled Items**

2. Consider recommending the Agency’s Board of Directors recommend the Agency’s Board of Supervisors adopt a Memorandum of Understanding to memorialize coordination among agencies towards implementation of the Monitoring Plan for the Deep Aquifers.(Staff Presenting: Ara Azhderian)

**Attachments:** [Board Report](#)

[Deep Aquifers Monitoring MOU rev 2025-10-30 CLEAN DRAFT](#)

Upon the motion by Mark Gonzalez, Second by Matthew Simis the committee has considered recommending the Agency’s Board of Directors recommend the Agency’s Board of Supervisors adopt a Memorandum of Understanding to memorialize coordination among agencies towards implementation of the Monitoring Plan for the Deep Aquifers.

**Ayes:** Mark Gonzalez, Matthew Simis, Ken Ekelund

**Noes:** None

**Absent:** Deidre Sullivan

**Abstained:** None

**Committee Member Comments:** Mark Gonzalez, Ken Ekelund, Matthew Simis

**Staff Comments:** None.

**Public Comments:** Christopher Bunn

3. Review proposed changes to the Agency's Bylaws and consider recommendations to the Agency's Board of Director's.(Staff Presenting: Ara Azhderian)

**Attachments:**     [Board Report](#)  
[10-25-2025 BOD Board Report](#)  
[WRA Committees Comparison 10-20-2025](#)  
[Proposed Amendments to WRA Bylaws - October 2025 BOD redline](#)

Upon the motion by Mark Gonzalez, Second by Matthew Simis the committee has reviewed proposed changes to the Agency's Bylaws and considered recommendations to the Agency's Board of Director's.

**Ayes:** Mark Gonzalez, Matthew Simis, Ken Ekelund  
**Noes:** None  
**Absent:** Deidre Sullivan  
**Abstained:** None

**Committee Member Comments:** Mark Gonzalez, Ken Ekekund, Matthew Simis  
**Staff Comments:** None.  
**Public Comments:** Deidre Sullivan, Thomas Virsik

**Staff Reports**

4. Update on the status of the Salinas River Operations HCP and future financial needs.(Staff Presenting: Jason Demers)

**Committee Member Comments:** Mark Gonzalez, Ken Ekekund, Matthew Simis  
**Staff Comments:** Ara Azhderian  
**Public Comments:** Christopher Bunn

5. Update on Strategic Planning Workshop for December 2025.(Staff Presenting: Shaunna Murray)

**Attachments:**     [Strategic Planning Update Workshop Planning Nov 5th](#)

**Committee Member Comments:** Mark Gonzalez, Ken Ekekund, Matthew Simis  
**Staff Comments:** None  
**Public Comments:** Deidre Sullivan

6. Receive an update on the Request for Proposals for a Strategic Planning consultant.(Staff Presenting: Shaunna Murray)

**Attachments:**     [Strategic Planning Consultant RFP October 2025 DRAFT](#)

**Committee Member Comments:**Ken Ekekund, Matthew Simis  
**Staff Comments:** None  
**Public Comments:** Deidre Sullivan

**Calendar**

7. Set the next meeting and discuss future agenda items.

**Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 11:43 a.m.



# County of Monterey

## Item No.2

### Board Report

Board of Supervisors  
Chambers  
168 W. Alisal St., 1st Floor  
Salinas, CA 93901

Legistar File Number: WRAPL 26-004

February 04, 2026

**Introduced:** 1/28/2026

**Current Status:** Agenda Ready

**Version:** 1

**Matter Type:** WRA Planning Item

Receive an update on staff's participation in the Salinas Valley Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency's Advisory Committee.(Staff Presenting: Shaunna Murray.)



# County of Monterey

Item No.

## Board Report

Board of Supervisors  
Chambers  
168 W. Alisal St., 1st Floor  
Salinas, CA 93901

Legistar File Number: WRAPL 26-003

February 04, 2026

**Introduced:** 1/28/2026

**Current Status:** Draft

**Version:** 1

**Matter Type:** WRA Planning Item

Receive an update on staff's participation in the Salinas Valley Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency's Advisory Committee.

### RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Monterey County Water Resources Agency Planning Committee:

Receive an update on staff's participation in the Salinas Valley Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency's Advisory Committee.

### SUMMARY/DISCUSSION:

#### ***Background***

The Salinas Valley Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency (SVBGSA) has an Advisory Committee which plays a key role in shaping groundwater management in the Salinas Valley by providing input and consensus-based recommendations to the SVBGSA Board of Directors. The Advisory Committee reflects a broad range of perspectives, representing agencies and groundwater users across the region. Members collaborate to support the implementation of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act through the integrated execution of six Groundwater Sustainability Plans. The Advisory Committee roster is made up of six Subbasin Committee seats, the four Partner Agency seats, and up to three of the Board-Designated seats. Members collectively represent the diverse interests of groundwater users, partner agencies, and subbasin implementation areas. The Committee's charge emphasizes:

- Reviewing groundwater issues relevant to SGMA implementation in the Salinas Valley
- Developing consensus-based recommendations that incorporate community and stakeholder perspectives
- Supporting the Board by identifying areas of agreement and disagreement and presenting clear, well-considered options.

This work is based on a commitment to good faith deliberation, productive discussion, and respect for differing viewpoints. Committee members are expected to serve as effective advocates, collaborate with one another, and commit the time needed to understand complex and evolving issues. SGMA implementation in the Salinas Valley remains one of the most consequential long-term efforts in the region. The Advisory Committee plays a critical role in ensuring that decisions are informed by:

- A broad range of groundwater users and perspectives
- Subbasin-level knowledge and experience
- Community concerns, opportunities, and priorities
- Practical understanding of the regulatory and technical landscape

By design, the Advisory Committee is where difficult questions can be worked through in a collaborative environment that is accessible, open to the public, and protects the integrity of the process. The Advisory Committee's work helps the Board navigate the complex challenges of groundwater sustainability - balancing scientific information, legal requirements, diverse stakeholder needs, and real-world constraints. The Charter and Bylaws set expectations for how members are expected to approach discussions and decision making. The Advisory Committee works as a team, in an environment that values honesty, respect, open communication, and constructive problem-solving. This is echoed in the Agency's Code of Conduct, which calls for civility, integrity, and commitment to the common good.

The Advisory Committee is scheduled to meet the third Thursday of even months at 2 p.m., with additional special meetings throughout the year as needed.

The Advisory Committee members are as follows:

Horacio Amezquita, Board Designated  
John Huerta Jr., Board Designated  
Kevin Piearcy, Board Designated  
Adam Secondo, 180/400 Committee  
Christopher Bunn, Eastside Committee  
Allan Panziera , Forebay Aquifer Committee  
Ryan Kelly, Langley Committee  
Robbie Long, Monterey Committee  
Roger Moitoso, Upper Valley Committee  
Curtis Weeks, Arroyo Seco Groundwater Sustainability Agency  
Remleh Scherzinger, Marina Coast Water District  
Shaunna Murray, Monterey County Water Resources Agency  
Paul Sciuto, Monterey One Water

### **Summary**

The Monterey County Water Resources Agency (Agency) Board of Supervisors nominated Shaunna Murray to be on the SVBGSA's Advisory Committee at their August 5, 2025 meeting. The SVBGSA made the Advisory Committee appointments on October 9, 2025. The Advisory Committee had been on hold for much of 2025 and picked back up at the end of 2025. There is an ambitious and aggressive schedule to make Project and Management Action (PMAs) recommendations to the SVBGSA Board of Directors in 2026, many of which may impact Agency existing and proposed projects and programs. Therefore, Agency staff will be providing regular updates to the Agency's Planning Committee and Board of Directors to keep the members and the public apprised of the progress the Advisory Committee is making.

The first meeting after the new Advisory Committee appointments was held on December 18, 2025. The meeting started with more administrative items such as committee member and staff introductions, adoption of the 2026 Committee Meeting Schedule and a review of the Advisory Committee Role and Responsibilities. The Charter and Bylaws, and Code of Conduct and additional information related to the Advisory Committee can be found on the SVBGSA's website here:

<https://svbgsa.org/about-us/board-and-committees/advisory-committee/>

Staff and consultants then presented items to help provide a common understanding of the scientific information related to the Salinas Valley Basin. First there was the Hydrologic Conceptual Model Update. This update included topics such as: What is HCM, Importance of HCM for SGMA and Groundwater Management, HCM in Salinas Valley, HCM Update Process, How does HCM inform Sustainable Groundwater Management. In general, the HCM is a simplified, generally qualitative understanding of the basin based on existing data and studies. The HCM identifies important hydrologic processes such as irrigation return flow and is foundational for quantitative work.

Next staff presented the Projects and Management Actions Major Efforts Update. The briefly described the various projects that are being studied that meet the SGMA goals, including to design projects and management actions to meet the measurable objectives. Those PMAs include: Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR) Feasibility Study, Brackish Groundwater Restoration (BGR) Feasibility Study /Seawater Intrusion Extraction Barrier, Demand Management Strategy, Deep Aquifers Management Strategy, Castroville Seawater Intrusion Project (CSIP) Optimization Studies, New Seawater Intrusion Project (NSIP) Feasibility Study, Castroville & Eastside (C&E) Canals and Alternatives Feasibility Study /Permit 11043. The road map to making a decision on moving any of the PMAs forward was also presented and is summarized below:

- Sustainable Groundwater Management (SGM) Grant Projects Update Reports in Spring 2026
- Funding Strategies TM for Board review in Spring 2026
- FY 2027 Work Plan for Board approval in March 2026
- FY 2027 Budget for Board approval in April 2026
- FY 2027 Fee for Board approval in May 2026
- Integrated Implementation Strategy for Board review in Summer 2026
- Selection of PMAs for Further Consideration: project level design, CEQA/NEPA, lead agency evaluations, funding explorations for Board approval in Fall 2026
- GSP 5-yr Periodic Evaluations for Board approval in November 2026

The consensus of the Advisory Committee was that there was significantly more information and time needed for the members to make progress, and therefore, an additional meeting was held on January 22, 2026 to continue to develop a common understanding of the Salinas Valley Basin. Staff and consultants presented an Overview of the Salinas Valley Hydrogeology which included a summary of the physical characteristics of the entire basin and dived into additional details for each subbasin. The key takeaways were:

- Salinas River is important for groundwater recharge

- Reservoirs owned and operated by MCWRA
- The groundwater basin is hydraulically connected but to varying degrees
- Aquitards inhibit surficial recharge where they are in basin
  - Makes certain projects and management actions more challenging
- The conceptual view is scaled for the Valley, not individual projects
- We have good understanding of basin to move forward
  - Site specific projects will have more detailed understandings

SVBGSA staff and consultants then reviewed Sustainable Management Criteria and Current Conditions. They reviewed the six sustainability indicators: Lowering GW Levels, Reduction of Storage, Seawater Intrusion, Degraded Quality, Land Subsidence, and Surface Water Depletion. And provided context for the how those are measured, what the goal is (Measurable Objective), and what to avoid (Minimum Threshold). They then reviewed the 2024 data for each subbasin to give context on what the recent data is showing in relation to the Sustainable Management Criteria (SMC).

The next regular meeting of the Advisory Committee is scheduled for February 19, 2026.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

Salinas Valley Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency

FINANCING:

Staff participation on the SVBGSA’s Advisory Committee can be covered with the existing staffing appropriations included in the FY2025-26 Adopted Budget and will not require any additional funding needs.

Prepared by: Shaunna Murray, Deputy General Manager, (831) 755-4860

Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Ara Azhderian, General Manager, (831) 755-4860



# County of Monterey

## Item No.3

### Board Report

Board of Supervisors  
Chambers  
168 W. Alisal St., 1st Floor  
Salinas, CA 93901

Legistar File Number: WRAPL 26-005

February 04, 2026

**Introduced:** 1/28/2026

**Current Status:** Agenda Ready

**Version:** 1

**Matter Type:** WRA Planning Item

Update on the development of the scope for an Economic Benefits Study by One Water Econ.(Staff Presenting: Ara Azhderian.)



# County of Monterey

## Item No.4

### Board Report

Board of Supervisors  
Chambers  
168 W. Alisal St., 1st Floor  
Salinas, CA 93901

Legistar File Number: WRAPL 26-006

February 04, 2026

**Introduced:** 1/28/2026

**Current Status:** Agenda Ready

**Version:** 1

**Matter Type:** WRA Planning Item

Update on the development of a CSIP Program Manager position.(Staff Presenting: Shaunna Murray.)



# County of Monterey

## Item No.5

### Board Report

Board of Supervisors  
Chambers  
168 W. Alisal St., 1st Floor  
Salinas, CA 93901

Legistar File Number: WRAPL 26-007

February 04, 2026

**Introduced:** 1/28/2026

**Current Status:** Agenda Ready

**Version:** 1

**Matter Type:** WRA Planning Item

Update on the Request for Proposals process for the Strategic Plan Update Consultant.(Staff Presenting: Shaunna Murray.)



# County of Monterey

## Item No.6

### Board Report

Board of Supervisors  
Chambers  
168 W. Alisal St., 1st Floor  
Salinas, CA 93901

Legistar File Number: WRAPL 26-001

February 04, 2026

**Introduced:** 1/26/2026

**Current Status:** Agenda Ready

**Version:** 1

**Matter Type:** WRA Planning Item

Set next meeting date and discuss further agenda items.