



## SAWA MEETING MINUTES

July 24<sup>th</sup>, 2025  
Meeting Location:  
1835 Chicago Avenue, Suite C  
Riverside, CA 92507  
9:00 A.M.

### **BOARD ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS**

#### **I. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairperson Mills called the meeting to order at 9:01 A.M.

#### **II. INTRODUCTIONS**

Andrea Campanella – SAWA; Melody Aimar – SAWA; Brian Brady – SAWA; James Law – SAWA; Kimberly Kuznicki – SAWA; Jennette El Morsy – SAWA; Mandy Parkes – IERCD; Cheryl Parsons – OCWD; Brett Mills – SJBRCD; Kerwin Russell – RCRCD; Jose Mora – IERCD;

#### **III. PUBLIC INPUT** – Oral communication from the public audience on any subject matter within SAWA's subject matter jurisdiction. There was no public input at this time.

#### **IV. CONSENT CALENDAR**

- a. Approve Minutes for May 22, 2025
- b. Approve Financial Statement for May 2025
- c. Approve Financial Statement for June 2025

Director Russell moved to approve the consent calendar as presented. Director Parsons seconded, and the motion passed unanimously, 4-0

Parkes	Aye	Russell	Aye	Parsons	Aye
Mills	Aye	Biancardi	<i>Absent</i>		

#### **V. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

##### **a. ILF Project – Brian Brady**

Mr. Brady reported that he and Mr. Law had a Zoom meeting with Dudek and the Corps and there were two items specifically they wanted to go over. One was for the \$2.8 million that SAWA is holding as restricted funds and how that will get transferred over. Half of that, about \$1.4 or \$1.5 million will be used to purchase the credits in satisfaction with SAWA's ILF obligation. Mr. Law added that the second is that they want language there on the remaining balance of the funds after the purchase of the credits will only be used for mitigation efforts on the mitigation bank. Riverside County Parks has a code for that account for that specific use. The other one was if there was temporal loss, how SAWA accounted for it. SAWA was good on temporal loss until the last two years. Mr. Law asked Dudek if SAWA could buy some of the other credits that were done sooner so there is no temporal loss and they are looking into that. If not, the temporal loss difference in dollar amounts is about \$100 thousand, so then it would be \$1.5 million

instead of \$1.4 from the purchase of the credits. The remaining balance will sit with Riverside County Parks who will then hire SAWA to do work in the mitigation bank for maintenance.

b. Treasurer's Report – Mandy Parkes

Director Parkes reported that there was only one invoice past 60 days, but otherwise everything looked great.

**VI. ACTION ITEMS**

a. Discussion and Possible Approval of Proposed Mid-Year Budget Revisions for 2025  
Mr. Brady reported and presented on the Mid-Year Budget revisions for 2025. For a copy of Mr. Brady's presentation, "*SAWA Mid-Year Budget Review*" please contact the Administrative Services Manager, Jennette El Morsy, at (951) 780-1012 Ext. 101 or [jennette@sawatershed.org](mailto:jennette@sawatershed.org).

Director Parkes moved to approve the proposed Mid-Year Budget Revisions for 2025. Director Parsons seconded, and the motion passed unanimously, 4-0

Parkes	Aye	Russell	Aye	Parsons	Aye
Mills	Aye	Biancardi	<i>Absent</i>		

**GENERAL ITEMS**

**VII. SAWA PROJECT REPORTS**

a. Brian Brady, Executive Director – SAWA

Mr. Brady reported that SAWA staff were issued the final paperwork mid-June to sign from the ACOE staff to release the 2025 funding for on-going SAWA projects. However, staff have been informed last week that a final DOGE review will take another 60 days to release the funds. Staff are developing long-term office and warehouse space requirements and alternatives as several leases come up for renewal. Lee & Associates has provided additional site options for SAWA's review. Staff have started working with SAWA's auditors to develop data for the 2024 calendar year financial statements. The audit results are scheduled for Board review in September or October. Staff are developing the mid-year budget revision data and recommendations. The environmental law firm of Lozeau | Drury LLP in Oakland, California has contacted SAWA, whereby, SAWA will be awarded additional court-directed mitigation funds (\$50,000) to be applied to water quality improvement projects in the Santa Ana Watershed.

Director Parkes left the meeting at this time.

b. Kerwin Russell – RCRCD

Mr. Russell reported that there has been a lot of homeless camp work. It has been a financial burden and going forward it will be something to financially account for. Summer is a heightened issue with them. During the wintertime it is cold and the creeks flood and RCRCD are not down there as much.

c. Sheryl Parsons – OCWD

Ms. Parsons reported that the Euclid fire hit a little bit of Prado, and it burned a total of 120 acres. That is a very small part of Prado. It affected 11 vireo territories, but nesting was pretty much wrapped up for the year. OCWD let Fish and Wildlife know, but they were more concerned for the gnatcatcher habitat on the other side of the freeway. Nesting is wrapped up and they are sitting at 677 territories and 126 nests. On the

arundo side, they got the funds officially approved by the board and that should be added to the agreement for next year.

d. Teri Biancardi – Temecula-Elsinore-Anza-Murrieta RCD  
*Absent*

e. Mandy Parkes – Inland Empire RCD  
*Absent*; Director Alternate Mora reported that things have been good. IERCD have been doing some field work, taking it easy since it has been pretty warm. IERCD have been helping the city of Big Bear with some invasive treatments of perennial pepper weed to try to help conserve a habitat with rare plant species.

f. Brett Mills – San Jacinto Basin RCD  
Mr. Mills reported that that SJBRCD had a large homeless encampment that they had to work with the city of Perris to get removed. Mr. Law and his crew helped with fence repairs and a few other things and is going to get his crew back out to help with some additional work. SJBRCD have been working on their projects and continuing with conservation easements.

g. Jennette El Morsy, Administrative Services Manager – SAWA  
Ms. El Morsy reported on A/R June Invoice totaling \$391,255.88. Coordinating SAWA Team Building Event - August 12th. 2024 Financial Audit; field time July 14-18. State Fund Workers' Comp Audit - July 7th. WCIRB review - June 30th. Need to purchase two new trucks for RCA MSHCP project. USFWS final financial reports. Ongoing IT updates. Warehouse search with realtor, Andrew Peake. Updating policies/procedures. Hired 3 Restoration Technicians; started July 7th. Restocking field/first aid supplies as needed.

h. James Law, Habitat Restoration Services Manager – SAWA  
Mr. Law reported on new job proposals and administrative tasks including ILF placement; the meeting was on 7/8/2025, Mr. Law update the board. City of Chino Hills fire suppression project. Fire Suppression projects with IECF. TEAM RCD – Cannabis grant assistance. SBVMWD new budget for 7/1/2025 to 6/30/2026. Warehouse relocation/vehicle acquisition. Mr. Law also updated on other work within individual member agencies' jurisdiction:

- Temecula-Elsinore-Anza-Murrieta RCD: The HRS department conducted treatments to: TEAM RCD – Riv Flood Projects and homeless monitoring.
- Riverside-Corona RCD: The HRS department conducted treatments at the following: Riv Flood – Line C, Riv Flood – SAR, SBVMWD – Hidden Valley Creek, Waterman Riparian, Waterman Alluvial, Old Ranch, Anza Creek and Anza Extension.
- Inland Empire RCD: SAWA's HRS department conducted treatments at: Riv Flood – SAR and SBVMWD – Mentone ½ project.
- San Jacinto Basin RCD: The HRS department conducted treatments at: May Ranch and Canyon Hills HOA.
- Orange County Water District: The HRS department conducted treatments at: IECF – Prado.

i. Melody Aimar, Biological Programs Managers – SAWA  
Ms. Aimar reported on MSHCP Dept. Monthly WRC MSHCP Management and Monitoring Coordination Meeting Presentation: 7/10 Presentation: *"Flora of the San*

*Jacinto and Santa Rosa Mountains.*" by Scott White (Aspen). Mr. Campanella managing workflow. Section 8.0 of RCA Draft Annual Report and Appendices submitted to RCA. Monthly and 4th quarterly reports submitted. Monthly Leads meeting via Zoom for project updates. Ms. Aimar attended monthly RCA Managers Meeting. Ms. Aimar updated the MSHCP Operations Manual. Ms. Aimar and Mr. Campanella are working on 2024 reports (some submitted to RCA for review). Staff worked at Nature Fest at MSR on 6/7/2025. Avian Lead attended several BUOW coordination meeting with CDFW. Mammal Lead, coordinating with the USFWS/USGS/SBVMWD on SBKR habitat monitoring (in progress) and SBKR trapping 2025-2026. All hands meeting held on 7/2. Leads meeting on 7/2. GIS Analyst attended Esri conference the week of 7/14. Ms. Aimar also updated on other MSHCP work including:

- Rare Plants: 2024 Report – submitted to RCA for review. 2025 Rare Plant surveys in progress. 2025 Engleman Oak survey prep – in progress.
- California Gnatcatcher (nesting): 2024 Report – in progress.
- Grasshopper Sparrow: 2024 Report – submitted to RCA for review.
- Northern Harrier: 2025 Surveys – completed – no nesting found.
- Lincoln Sparrow: 2025 Surveys – in progress – none found yet.
- BUOW: 2024 Summary Report – done. 2025 Camera trap monitoring – in progress.
- Mammals: SR 60 Undercrossing camera trap – in progress. Anza Knowles Guzzler camera trap – in progress. 2024 Carnivore summary report – submitted to RCA for review. SBKR USFWS regional surveys – Habitat monitoring in progress.
- Clinton Keith: Final report – submitted to RCA for review.
- Herps/Fish: 2024 Summary reports – submitted to RCA for review. 2025 Artificial Cover Surveys – in progress. 2025 Drift Fence Camera surveys – in progress.
- Quino Checkerspot Butterfly: 2024 Report – submitted to RCA for review. 2025 Surveys – flight season over.
- Delhi Sands Flower-loving Fly: 2025 Surveys – in progress; 1st DSF found on 6/20.
- Vernal Pools: 2025 Surveys – Most pools dried up (no Covered Fairy Shrimp).
- Data/GIS Analysis: 2024 Data QC – done. GIS analyst coordinating with IT about server and email retrieval.

Ms. Aimar reported on WHMS Dept. LBVI: Arrivals were very late, and the numbers are extremely low so far. 2025: 6/30/2025 – 1,135 (36% less than this time last year) 2024: 6/30/2024 – 1,541. Biologist Assistant – Vireo training in progress. Nesting is winding down, but some nests are still active. BHCO: staff will begin closing habitat traps in July, dairy traps will remain open. SBVMWD agreed to use 2024 contract surplus for SAR trapping in 2025. Upper SAR (new route) funded through SBV Water Conservation District, shared funds with IERCD and SBVMWD – IERCD closed 6/16 due to bees. OCWD – BHCO contract for 3 years in Prado. March-Meridian (RLC). Cielo Vista. Ms. Aimar attended SAWA Managers Meeting. Ms. Aimar attended LBVI Recovery Team meeting on 7/22. Biologists completed bioassessments of mitigation sites (n=37). Biologists are conducting SAWA HRS monitoring as needed. Friends of Harbors, Beaches and Parks (FHPB) – Santiago Creek, contract executed, monitoring in progress. BHCO trapping conducted in every (RCD) district in the watershed. Ms. Aimar also updated on other work within individual member agencies' jurisdictions including:

- Inland Empire RCD: Ms. Aimar in collaboration with IERCD on future projects – funds for 2nd half of 2025. Biologists monitoring restoration crew at Goose Creek Mitigation.
- Orange County Water District: Prado BHCO trapping.
- Riverside-Corona RCD: No work this month.

- San Jacinto Basin RCD: No work this month.
  - Temecula-Elsinore-Anza-Murrieta RCD: Bioassessments of mitigation areas.
- Ms. Aimar announced her retirement before the end of the year.

**VIII. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS**

There were no Board Member comments at this time.

**IX. NEXT MEETING** – August 28, 2025 will be held at the SAWA Headquarters, 1835 Chicago Avenue, Suite C, Riverside, CA 92507 and remotely via Zoom.

**X. ADJOURN** – The meeting was adjourned at 9:52 A.M.

**Notice: All open session agenda materials will be available for inspection by members of the public at the SAWA office located at 1835 Chicago Avenue, Suite C, Riverside, CA 92507. Please contact Maria Arellano at (951) 780-1012 x106 for this information (Government Code Section 54957.5). In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Government Code Section 54954.2, if special assistance is needed to participate in a Board meeting, please contact the Administrative Services Manager at (951) 780-1012 x101. Notification of at least 48 hours prior to meeting time will assist staff in assuring that reasonable arrangements can be made to provide accessibility at the meeting.**

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