



SAWA MEETING MINUTES

January 22nd, 2026
Meeting Location:
5029 La Mart Drive, Suite E
Riverside, CA 92507
9:00 A.M.

BOARD ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Mills called the meeting to order at 9:00 A.M.

II. INTRODUCTIONS

Brian Brady – SAWA; Jennette El Morsy – SAWA; James Law – SAWA; Kerwin Russell – RCRC; Tesa Madsen-Hepp – SAWA; Allyson Beckman – SAWA; Kimberly Kuznicki – SAWA; Sheryl Parsons – OCWD; Brett Mills – SJBRCD; Teri Biancardi – TEAMRCD;

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 December 18, 2025

b. Approve Financial Statement for December 2025

Director Alternate Mora joined the meeting at this time.

Director Parsons moved to approve the consent calendar as presented. Director Russell seconded, and the motion passed unanimously, 5-0

Alternate Mora	Aye	Russell	Aye	Parsons	Aye
Mills	Aye	Biancardi	Aye		

V. DISCUSSION ITEMS

a. ILF Project – Brian Brady

Mr. Brady reported that SAWA received an update from the Army Corps of Engineers on the closure process for ILF. One of the big ones was the Santa Ana River Mitigation Bank RIBITS (Regulatory In-lieu Fee and Bank Information Tracking System) of the Corps of Engineers. The Corps' representative and Dustin have looked into the County Parks mitigation bank that SAWA's money will be going into. That has all been squared away and any inconsistencies have been corrected. The second is a letter of assurance to memorialize restricting the funds when SAWA sends it over to the county, that it will only be for the stated purposes. Along with that, a side agreement will be between SAWA and Riverside County in terms of the excess funds, using that, and hopefully SAWA being the contractor for these funds being utilized. That is being developed by Dustin right now, which must be approved by the Board of Supervisors. Lastly, Mr. Brady reported that the Corps' going to send a letter to SAWA documenting their acceptance of SAWA's proposal. According to the Corps, the draft has begun.

b. Treasurer's Report – Mandy Parkes

Absent. Director Mills reported on Ms. Parkes behalf that there was nothing too outstanding.

GENERAL ITEMS

VI. SAWA PROJECT REPORTS

a. Brian Brady, Executive Director – SAWA

Mr. Brady reported that on 1/14/26, the ACOE provided the following update on SAWA's ILF closure process: SARMB RIBITS entries need to be updated: Nickie Cammisa + Dustin McLain to collaborate on this. Nickie will lead/begin, ask Dustin questions for clarification as needed. Status: Dustin and Nickie have cleared up inconsistencies. The RIBITS and PDF ledgers are now consistent. Letter of assurance (or similar) needed memorializing restriction of funds received from SAWA ILF to SAR Mitigation Bank - related activities. Dustin to draft with legal team. Letter to go to Board of Supervisors for review/approval. Status: awaiting updates from Dustin on estimated timeframes for the above. Corps to send letter to SAWA documenting acceptance of proposal to close out the ILF. Status: draft begun.

b. Kerwin Russell – RCRC

Mr. Russell reported that RCRC staff are working on weeding and reporting.

c. Sheryl Parsons – OCWD

Ms. Parsons reported that OCWD are working on reports and starting to plan for the monitoring season, labeling where their staff are going to monitor at Prado. Director Parsons is working with the Army Corps to get access to the Corps parcels and see if OCWD can do the Arundo removal on that. Director Parsons presented to the Santa Ana River Watermaster about getting water rights for Arundo removal. The SAR Watermaster are on board with that but want to finalize the actual number that OCWD claims to save by removing Arundo. OCWD are hopeful that if that gets finalized and approved, that could get OCWD more funding from their board for Arundo removal projects.

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

Ms. Biancardi reported that TEAMRCD did a big trash pickup in December in Lake Elsinore. TEAM RCD has been asked to submit a full application for the cannabis grant for CDFW. That is basically a pilot cleanup project in one area and planning for another eight sites. Yesterday, Wednesday January 21st, Ms. Biancardi, Mr. Law and contractors were up in the Point of Rocks in Idyllwild. The advisory committee to the RFFC that all the RCDs are on is really starting to take off, so TEAMRCD are launching a pilot project up there in partnership with Cal Fire to do 45 acres of a shaded fuel break. Mr. Law has been contracted to facilitate the bid release. Ms. Biancardi hopes to continue getting more projects like this and build TEAMRCD's relationship with Cal Fire going forward.

e. Mandy Parkes – Inland Empire RCD

Absent. Mr. Mora reported on behalf of Ms. Parkes. IECRD has been working on trying to brainstorm how they can bring Ms. Beckman and her team to work on a few projects. IERCD have a few projects that are well funded, and they want to get some help from SAWA. IERCD are also working on a few other projects and hope to get more funding for garlic mustard, which has been a big project for IERCD. There is going to be funding for the next two years, through 2027, for garlic mustard.

f. Brett Mills – San Jacinto Basin RCD

Mr. Mills reported that SJBRCD are working on reporting, conservation easements and parcels. SJBRCD are trying to close out some projects that have been in the wings for years. Mr. Mills is working with Mr. Law on schedules for spraying and weeding on SJBRCD sites.

g. Jennette El Morsy, Administrative Services Manager – SAWA

Ms. El Morsy reported on A/R December invoice total \$327,809.13. HRS department move to SBVMWD property to include office & yard space - Feb. RCA MSHCP FY Budget. USFWS FFR. City of Murrieta Business License & Vendor Application. Vendor 1099s, Employee W-2s and end of year financials. Recruiting for new MSHCP Biologist. Promoted Masa for new MSHCP Survey Lead. Employee Retirement Rollover Requests. DIR Employee Claim. Workers' Comp Ins investigation for employee injury. Fire Department - Warehouse inspection.

h. James Law, Habitat Restoration Services Manager – SAWA

Mr. Law reported on new job proposals and administrative tasks including ILF placement - received an update that the Corps have started the draft letter agreeing to the transfer of the ILF to Riverside County Parks. Warehouse relocation/vehicle acquisition. City of Murrieta Fire – Cal Fire Grant. IECF – Pile of Rocks shaded fuel break. Riverside Flood Control – Lake Elsinore Clean Up with TEAM RCD. Riverside Flood Control – SAR 9 Project. Mr. Law also updated on other work within individual member agencies' jurisdictions:

- Temecula-Elsinore-Anza-Murrieta RCD: The HRS department conducted treatments at TEAM RCD – Lake Elsinore Clean Up.
- Riverside-Corona RCD: The HRS department conducted treatments at SBVMWD – SAR River Corridor, Waterman Alluvial, Waterman Riparian and Lower Hole Creek.
- Inland Empire RCD: SAWA's HRS department conducted treatments at SBVMWD – SAR River Corridor.
- San Jacinto Basin RCD: The HRS department conducted treatments at Point of Rocks project.
- Orange County Water District: The HRS department conducted treatments at Env Benefit Project Fund – D B M L.A. Lumber Treating Ltd.

i. Allyson Beckman, Wildlife Habitat Management Services Manager – SAWA

Ms. Beckman reported on USFWS Corps Mainstem Project (LBVI/BHCO): Draft 2025 report and shapefiles sent to agencies for comment – final to be submitted by no later than 01/31/26. Proofing/finalization of CNDDDB and 45-day report (CAGN) data. Creating/testing 2026 data collection forms (Field Maps, Surveys123). Prep docs (ROE's, etc.) for agencies for 2026 BHCO trap placement. Lennar Brea 265 (BHCO): Site visit conducted to determine potential BHCO trap location(s). Ms. Beckman also updated on other work within individual member agencies' jurisdictions:

- Orange County Water District: (BHCO) Two dairy traps to be opened on 01/20/2026 – traps visited to assess conditions prior to opening.
- Inland Empire RCD: Richland: Project research conducted.
- Riverside-Corona RCD: No work this month.
- San Jacinto Basin RCD: No work this month.
- Temecula-Elsinore-Anza-Murrieta RCD: No work this month.

j. Tesa Madsen-Hepp, MSHCP Biological Monitoring Program Administrator – SAWA

Ms. Madsen-Hepp reported on monthly WRC MSHCP Management and Monitoring Coordination Meeting presentation: 12/11 Presentation: "*CDFW Introduction to Cannabis Program (Region 6)*" by Senior Environmental Scientist staff, Cannabis Unit CDFW Region 6. Updating protocols for 2025 and 2026. Ms. Madsen-Hepp attended the monthly RCA Managers Meeting and submitted the RCA Quarterly Report. Working on streamlining permits and improving adaptive management with RCA. Hired new DSF Survey Lead, hiring for new Field Biologist soon. Preparing FY 2026-2027 workplan document and Section 8.0 annual report for 2025. Leads meeting on 12/16. Mr. Campanella training on ArcGIS Pro. Starting Vernal Pools, Loggerhead Shrike, White-tailed Kite, QCB and artificial cover surveys.

Researching options for database modernization and migration. Ms. Madsen-Hepp also updated on other MSHCP work including:

- Rare Plants: 2024 Rare Plant Report – finalized. 2025 Rare Plant surveys complete. 2025 Engleman Oak surveys – complete! (430 of 430). 2026 Vegetation Community surveys scheduled.
- Birds: 2024 California Gnatcatcher Report – finalized. 2024 Grasshopper Sparrow Report – finalized. 2025 Lincoln’s Sparrow Report – finalized. 2025 Northern Harrier Report – in progress. 2026 White-tailed Kite surveys – in progress. 2026 Loggerhead Shrike surveys – in progress.
- Mammals: 2025-26 SR 60 Under crossing camera trap – in progress. 2025-26 Anza Knowls Guzzler camera trap – in progress. 2024 Carnivore summary report – finalized. 2025 SBKR Report – in progress. SBKR USFWS regional surveys – trapping complete.
- Clinton Keith Overcrossing: 2024 Final Report – finalized.
- Herps/Fish: 2024 Summary Reports – submitted to RCA for review. 2026 Drift Fence Camera surveys 00 in progress. 2026 Spadefoot surveys – in progress.
- Quino Checkerspot Butterfly: 2024 Report – finalized. 2025 Surveys – report in progress.
- Delhi Sands Flower-loving Fly: 2025 Report – in progress.
- Vernal Pools: 2025 Surveys – completed. 2026 Surveys – initial surveys found fairy shrimp.
- Data/GIS Analysis: 2024 Data QC – distributed to RCA and various stakeholders. 2025 Datasets – 8 certified, 7 being QCed.

VII. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

There were no Board Member comments at this time.

VIII. NEXT MEETING – February 26, 2026 will be held at the SAWA Headquarters, 5029 La Mart Drive, Suite E, Riverside, CA 92507 and remotely via Zoom.

IX. ADJOURN – The meeting was adjourned at 9:24 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.

Please post 72 hours before meeting