



San Dieguito River Park
 Joint Powers Authority
 18372 Sycamore Creek Road
 Escondido, CA 92025
 (858) 674-2270 Fax (858) 674-2280
 www.sdrp.org

**JOINT POWERS AUTHORITY
 BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Chair Jill MacDonald
 Solana Beach City Council

Vice-Chair Chris Khoury
 Citizens Advisory Committee

Joe LaCava
 San Diego City Council

Marni von Wilpert
 San Diego City Council

Joel Anderson
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 Del Mar City Council

Consuelo Martinez
 Escondido City Council

Jenny Maeda
 Poway City Council

Dustin Fuller, Ex Officio
 22nd District Agricultural
 Association

Shawna Anderson
 Executive Director

**SAN DIEGUITO RIVER PARK
 JOINT POWERS AUTHORITY**

11:00 a.m.

Friday, May 15, 2026

Solana Beach City

Council Chambers

635 S. Highway 101, Solana Beach

Speaker slips will be available. Please fill out a slip and give it to the Chair prior to the meeting if you wish to speak about an item on the agenda. The Board may act on any item listed on the Consent or Action Agenda.

Introductions and Announcements

Pledge of Allegiance

Approval of the Minutes of April 3, 2026 (Page 3-8)

Executive Director's Report

CAC Report

Public Comment

This portion of the agenda provides an opportunity for members of the public to address the Board on items of interest within the jurisdiction of the Board and not appearing on today's agenda. Comments relating to items on today's agenda are to be taken at the time the item is heard. Pursuant to the Brown Act, no action shall be taken by the Board on public comment items.

DISCUSSION/ACTION

1. Presentation – Crystal Trull, Interim Executive Director, San Dieguito River Valley Conservancy
2. FY25-26 Q3 Budget Report

INFORMATION

3. Project Status Updates
 - a. Osuna Segment of Coast to Crest Trail
 - b. Reach the Beach Fairgrounds Trail and Gateway
 - c. San Dieguito Lagoon Phase II Restoration (aka W-19)
 - d. CTC Trail - East San Pasqual and Sutherland Gaps Project

4. Coordination Reports (oral)
 - a. San Dieguito River Valley Conservancy
 - b. Friends of the San Dieguito River Valley
 - c. Volcan Mountain Foundation
 - d. San Dieguito Lagoon Committee

5. Jurisdictional Status Reports (oral)

An opportunity for the Board members to report on actions taken within their jurisdiction to further the park planning process.

6. Correspondence – JPA letter to City of San Diego regarding Hodges Reservoir Water Level, 4/27/2026.

7. Closed session with Legal Counsel:
 - Closed session with legal counsel pursuant to California Government Code Sec. 54956.9(d)(2) to discuss exposure to litigation.
 - Closed session to interview candidates and consider the employment of an Executive Director pursuant to Government Code section 54957(b)(1).

THE NEXT REGULAR JPA MEETING will be held on June 26, 2026 at the County Administration Center, Room 302/303. If you have any questions, please contact Dewanda Vandermost at dewanda@sdrp.org or (858)674-2270

**SAN DIEGUITO RIVER PARK
JOINT POWERS AUTHORITY
Minutes of April 3, 2026**

MEMBERS PRESENT

Jill MacDonald – Chair
Chris Khoury – Vice Chair
Brian Elliott (Alt)
Consuelo Martinez
Jenny Maeda
Terry Gaasterland
Andrew Hayes (Alt)
Dustin Fuller

MEMBERS ABSENT

Terra Lawson-Remer
Marni von Wilpert

VISITORS/STAFF PRESENT

Shawna Anderson
Dewanda Vandermost
Nathan Lacy
Jason Lopez
Dave Hekel
Wayne Brechtel
Lizzy Bendrick
Udo Wahn
Jeff Carmel
Candy Bowman
Paul Bernstein
PJ Lynch
Kevin Kidd
Orelia DeBaal

REPRESENTING

City of Solana Beach
Citizens Advisory Committee
City of San Diego District 1
City of Escondido
City of Poway
City of Del Mar
County of San Diego Dist. 2
22nd Agricultural District, Ex Officio

REPRESENTING

County of San Diego Dist. 3
City of San Diego Dist. 5

REPRESENTING

San Dieguito River Park JPA
San Dieguito River Park JPA
San Dieguito River Park JPA
San Dieguito River Park JPA
San Dieguito River Park JPA
San Dieguito River Park JPA, General Counsel
County Parks & Recreation Department
City of Del Mar Lagoon Committee
Friends of San Dieguito River Valley
Friends of San Dieguito River Valley
San Pasqual Property Owner
Lake Hodges Resident
Del Dios Town Council
City of Solana Beach

Introduction and Announcements:

Chair MacDonald called the meeting to order at 11:01 a.m. at the City of Solana Beach City Council Chambers. A quorum of seven Board members was present. Executive Director Anderson introduced staff in attendance: Jason Lopez, Trails and Resource Manager, and David Hekel, Senior Supervising Ranger.

Pledge of Allegiance

Approval of the Minutes of January 16, 2026

No corrections or additions were noted for the January 16, 2026 minutes. Board Member Gaasterland moved to approve the minutes and Board Member Alternate Hayes seconded the motion.

All in favor.

Yes votes: MacDonald, Elliott, Maeda, Martinez, Khoury, Gaasterland, Hayes

No votes: None

Absent: Lawson-Remer, Von Wilpert

Abstain: None

Executive Director's Report –

Executive Director Anderson provided an update on recent activities and upcoming events. Rangers attended the Park Rangers Association Conference in San Diego and later shared key takeaways with staff during an all-hands meeting.

She reported increased programming and utilization at Sikes Adobe, including events hosted by the San Diego Master Gardeners and the Poway Garden Club. Upcoming activities include multiple Earth Day events (notably Escondido Earth Day), a BioBlitz, volunteer training, numerous field trips, and staff and interpretive ranger programs.

In May, volunteer enrichment activities will include an educational visit to the Tijuana Estuary, followed by reciprocal park tours. The Volunteer Appreciation Event is scheduled for May 31, with awards presented to outstanding volunteers; Board member attendance was encouraged.

Executive Director Anderson announced receipt of a Del Mar Foundation grant to install a new Kumeyaay Heritage educational panel at the Grand Avenue Overlook, initiated by Del Mar resident Carol Carridge. The panel content has been developed in collaboration with the Kumeyaay Heritage Commission and is currently in final design. A commemorative event will be scheduled following installation. In addition, the existing lagoon restoration interpretive panel will be updated to reflect more recent restoration efforts, including the W-19 Lagoon, South Overflow Lot, and agricultural district restoration projects.

Executive Director Anderson reported that a new-to-the-fleet 2024 Ford F-150 Lightning has been added to the SDRP vehicle fleet, marking the park's first electric ranger truck. Appreciation was expressed to Vice Chair Khoury for his generous \$20,000 contribution toward the purchase.

Finally, Executive Director Anderson reported on recent updates from SANDAG regarding the W-19 endowment. The endowment is anticipated to be included in SANDAG's environmental mitigation planning package after July 2026, pending Board approval, with funds projected for transfer in FY 2028–29. Related property transfers and long-range management planning efforts will continue to be reported as they progress.

CAC Chair's Report – Vice Chair Khoury reported that the CAC met on February 6. Primary discussion focused on Lake Hodges water levels.

He reported that the CAC received a presentation from the Ramona Trails Association, including discussion of a potential trail connection between the Ramona Grasslands and Coast to Crest Trail.

He also informed the CAC about the JPA's appointed Executive Director Recruitment Committee.

Alternate Board Member Hayes acknowledged the contributions of longtime Ramona trail advocate John Degenfelder.

Public Comment – None

DISCUSSION/ACTION

1. Proposed FY26-27 JPA Operating Budget

Recommendation: Approve proposed FY26-27 Operating Budget based on recommendation for approval by Ad-hoc Budget Committee.

Chair MacDonald introduced the proposed FY26-27 operating budget and noted that the Budget Subcommittee had reviewed the proposal.

Executive Director Anderson presented the budget and reported that the Budget Subcommittee comprised of Chair MacDonald and Board Members Martinez and Gaasterland, met in February and unanimously recommended the budget for Board approval.

The proposed FY26-27 operating budget totals \$1.964 million in revenues, with approximately 72.5% from member agency contributions and 27.5% from non-member revenues. Expenditures primarily support staffing, wages and benefits, park operations, open space management, trail programs, and administrative functions.

Key highlights included:

- Capital project budgets are managed separately and leverage grants, donations, and limited labor reimbursement.
- Operating reserves total approximately \$498,000 (about 25% of annual revenues), with capital and equipment reserves totaling approximately \$96,000.
- Non-member revenues are projected to decline slightly due to completion or reduction of certain reimbursable grants, including the W-19 project.
- Endowments and SCE Coast Trail funding continue to offset ranger labor.
- The proposed budget includes staff wage increases, prioritizing junior positions.
- A 5% increase in member agency contributions is proposed to support staffing retention and operational needs.

Executive Director Anderson reviewed the member agency contribution table, noting contributions are calculated pursuant to the JEPa formula based on population and planning area. Board discussion included clarification regarding the presentation of operating versus Coast Trail revenues and expenses. Chair MacDonald stated that the proposed increase is modest and reasonable given inflation and operational demands.

On motion by Board Member Gaasterland, seconded by Board Member Martinez, the Board approved the FY26-27 JPA Operating Budget as presented, unanimously.

Public Comment – None

Yes votes: MacDonald, Elliott, Maeda, Martinez, Khoury, Gaasterland, Hayes

No votes: None

Absent: Lawson-Remer, Von Wilpert

Abstain: None

2. CAC Recommendation Regarding Lake Hodges Water Level

Recommendation: Consider CAC's recommendation regarding the level of Hodges Reservoir and provide staff direction.

Chair MacDonald introduced the item and noted that speaker slips had been received.

Alternate Board Member Elliott recused himself from this item due to the proposed action involving correspondence to the City of San Diego and temporarily stepped out of the meeting. A quorum remained present.

Executive Director Anderson reported that at its February 6, 2026 meeting, the JPA's Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) adopted a motion recommending that the JPA Board urge the City of San Diego Public Utilities Department to take action regarding the low water level at Hodges Reservoir.

Executive Director Anderson summarized the CAC's recommendation, which requests that the City:

1. Pursue an interim operating level of approximately 295 feet at Lake Hodges (approximately 40 percent capacity), subject to review, monitoring, and any appropriate mitigation measures by the State Division of Safety of Dams (DSOD).
2. Engage DSOD using a holistic, risk-balanced approach that evaluates seismic safety, wildfire risk, environmental impacts, water security, and community protection.
3. Recognize that maintaining the reservoir at extremely low levels introduces escalating and foreseeable risks, including increased wildfire risk and ecological degradation.
4. Proceed transparently and collaboratively with regional agencies, environmental organizations, fire authorities, and affected communities in evaluating this interim operating approach.

Executive Director Anderson provided background on the City of San Diego's ownership and operation of Hodges Reservoir and the current operating restriction of approximately 280 feet due to dam safety requirements. She noted the significant increase in estimated dam replacement costs and that the City is preparing an alternatives analysis, anticipated to be completed in spring 2027.

She further reported that CAC members and community stakeholders have expressed ongoing concerns related to wildfire risk, environmental impacts, and public safety associated with prolonged low reservoir levels. Related correspondence from regional and state entities was included in the Board packet.

Executive Director Anderson outlined the Board's options, including supporting the CAC recommendation and directing staff to prepare correspondence to the City of San Diego, modifying the recommendation, or providing alternative direction. She stated that, in her professional judgment, the CAC's concerns and request are reasonable.

Public Comment-

Paul Bernstein, representing Raise Lake Hodges and a CAC alternate, spoke in support of the CAC recommendation. He described community and organizational efforts to raise awareness of wildfire and ecological risks resulting from low water levels and emphasized the need for a broader risk assessment that considers upstream impacts, including wildfire exposure, habitat loss, and public safety.

Kevin Kidd, President of the Del Dios Town Council, addressed the Board regarding wildfire risks associated with increased fuel loads around the reservoir. He described the potential long-term impacts of high-intensity wildfires on habitat, water quality, and park resources, and emphasized the importance of fire buffer zones and reservoir water levels as risk-reduction tools.

PJ Lynch, representing Raise Lake Hodges, spoke in support of the CAC recommendation and described outreach efforts with local, state, and regional agencies. He emphasized the need for interim action to reduce wildfire risk while longer-term dam safety solutions are evaluated and requested Board support in urging further analysis and engagement by DSOD and the City of San Diego.

The Board considered the CAC's recommendation regarding the low water level at Hodges Reservoir. On motion by Board Member Martinez, seconded by Alternate Board Member Hayes, the Board directed staff to prepare a letter to the City of San Diego Public Utilities Department incorporating the CAC recommendations, as amended, to (1) request evaluation of the feasibility of an interim reservoir level of approximately 295 feet, (2) emphasize wildfire risk and other upstream impacts, and (3) request justification and supporting data if such an interim level cannot be achieved. Chair MacDonald, Gaasterland, and Maeda were appointed to review and approve the final letter prior to transmittal.

Yes votes: MacDonald, Maeda, Martinez, Khoury, Gaasterland, Hayes

No votes: None

Absent: Lawson-Remer, Von Wilpert

Abstain: None

Recused: Elliott (Alt)

INFORMATION

3. Project Status Updates

- a) **Osuna Segment of Coast to Crest Trail** – Director Anderson reported that design work is ongoing. She is pursuing grant timeline extensions and has scheduled a pre-proposal meeting with the Wildlife Conservation Board to discuss potential grant funding for the construction funding shortfall.
- b) **Reach the Beach Fairgrounds Trail** – Staff continues to coordinate with the City of Del Mar on budget development for the Reach the Beach project, including integration of the trail segment with Living Levee project, while retaining the SDRP Western Gateway design and construction components at a new location. JPA staff plans to submit a comment letter on the City of Del Mar’s Living Levee Draft Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration later this month.
- c) **San Dieguito Lagoon Phase II Restoration (aka W-19)** – No report
- d) **CTC Trail – East San Pasqual and Sutherland Gaps Project** – No report
- e) **CTC Trail at Rio Run (Surf Cup)** – Construction activities were substantially completed in January prior to the nesting bird season, including drainage improvements, culvert replacement, trail grading, and fencing installation. Remaining work is currently paused and is expected to resume in mid-September, with activities including native planting, invasive species control, biological monitoring, drainage adjustments, and installation of fencing, gates, and signage. Long-term habitat restoration and plant establishment will continue over subsequent years.

5. Coordination Reports (oral)

- a. **San Dieguito River Valley Conservancy** – No report
- b. **Friends of the San Dieguito River Valley** – Jeff Carmel reported ongoing concerns regarding restricted public access near Surf Sports fields off El Camino Real, with clarification pending from the 22nd District Agricultural Association. He noted that the Sierra Club has filed litigation challenging the City of San Diego’s termination of use restrictions on Fairbanks Ranch mitigation lands, with allegations of increased activity and public exclusion; proceedings are pending completion of the administrative record. He also reported a lack of response from the City regarding permitting and safety for a school operating in trailers on Surf-leased property. As a positive update, recent enforcement activity near the Grand Avenue Bridge resulted in deterrence of illegal fishing.
- c. **Volcan Mountain Foundation** – No report
- d. **San Dieguito Lagoon Committee** - No report

6. Jurisdictional Status Reports –

Board Member Martinez invited the Board and public to attend Escondido Earth Day, April 4th at Washington Park. She highlighted the event's focus on community engagement, particularly in underserved areas, and noted participation by approximately 30 exhibitors as well as related Arts and Culture Month activities.

7. Correspondence – None

8. Closed session with Legal Counsel:

- a) Closed session with legal counsel pursuant to California Government Code Sec. 54956.9(d)(2) to discuss exposure to litigation.
- b) Closed session pursuant to Government Code Section 54957(b)(1) - Executive Director Recruitment.

Legal Counsel Brechtel reported that the Board convened in closed session on the items previously disclosed. No reportable action was taken.

The Board confirmed that the April 17 meeting is cancelled. The next regular meeting is scheduled for May 15, to be held at the Solana Beach City Council Chambers, unless a special meeting is deemed necessary prior to that date.

Chair MacDonald adjourned the meeting at 1:01p.m.

SDRP JPA Operations Budget Summary FY 25/26 - 3rd Quarter (July 2025 - March 2026)

	Thru 3rd Qtr received	3rd Qtr projected	3rd Qtr Actual% (target 75%)	Total Annual Budget
Revenues				
Member Agencies	1,356,997	1,356,996	100%	1,356,996
SCE Coast Transfer (*see Coast Budget below*)	224,696	222,644	76%	296,859
Habitat Mgmt. Endowments	92,694	87,956	79%	117,275
Donations/Events/Other	53,044	59,549	67%	79,398
OPS Endowment Distribution (SDF)	32,269	24,146	100%	32,195
SDRVC OPS Endowment Contribution	25,000	25,000	100%	25,000
Total Revenue	1,784,699	1,776,291	94%	1,907,723

	Thru 3rd Qtr expended	3rd Qtr projected	3rd Qtr Actual% (target 75%)	Total Annual Budget
Expenditures				
Salaries & Benefits	1,117,558	1,169,846	72%	1,559,794
Trails Supplies & Services	56,836	52,837	81%	70,449
Liability Insurance/Volunteer Insurance	67,836	63,300	107%	63,300
Lagoon Ranger Station (Construction Loan)	22,152	33,272	50%	44,362
Office/Admin	30,300	29,133	78%	38,844
Professional Services	25,156	28,481	66%	37,974
Vehicle Maintenance & Fuel	27,035	22,575	90%	30,100
Habitat & Mitigation Management	21,434	16,500	97%	22,000
Sikes Adobe	13,538	15,750	64%	21,000
Education & Volunteer Support	3,100	6,750	34%	9,000
Other Expenses	6,946	7,050	74%	9,400
Vehicle Reserve Transfer	2,500	2,500	100%	2,500
Total Expenses	1,394,391	1,445,492	73%	1,908,723

Coast Budget Summary (Operated on Calendar Year) - Status through 1st Quarter (Jan -Mar. 2026)

	Thru 1st Qtr received	1st Qtr projected	1st Qtr Actual (target 25%)	Total Annual Budget
Coast Fund Revenue				
Southern Calif. Edison	94,566	378,265	25%	378,265
Total Coast Revenue	94,566	378,265	25%	378,265

	Thru 1st Qtr expended	1st Qtr projected	1st Qtr Actual (target 25%)	Total Annual Budget
Expenditures				
Salaries & Benefits/Admin. (*see below*)	76,266	76,266	25%	305,065
Operations	5,382	10,175	13%	40,700
Materials	3,584	4,000	22%	16,000
Vehicle Fuel & Maint	1,920	2,875	17%	11,500
Vehicle Reserve Transfer	5,000	1,250	100%	5,000
Total Expenses	92,153	94,566	24%	378,265

(*2.5 Ranger Salary/Benefits/Admin per Trail Mgmt Agreement)

SAN DIEGUITO RIVER PARK JPA

CASH BALANCE REPORT & ENDOWMENT/RESERVE ACCOUNTS

Cash Balance Report	Balance as of 03/31/2026	
Fund (held at County Treasury)	Balance	Description
44625	\$ 962,802	Operating
44634	\$ 68,816	SDRP JPA - Coast
44655	\$ 400,459	Capital Projects
44656	\$ 50,218	Reserve Fund for vehicles and large equipment purchases
Total	\$ 1,482,295	

Endowments / Reserves		Notes
Rancho Santa Fe Foundation <u>Habitat Management Areas</u>	Balance as of 03/31/2026	
Bernardo Mnt 2 (Caltrans) #0116	\$239,063	5% Annual Draw for HMP services
SDRP General HMPs #0383	\$784,857	5% Annual Draw for HMP services
Coast/I5 #0384	\$484,371	HMP services to begin 2026
Sycamore Creek Inholding #0462	\$99,345	5% Annual Draw for HMP services
Sycamore Westridge Navy #0559	\$67,630	HMP services begin 2027
<u>Other</u>		
SDRP Operations Reserve #0382	\$479,433	Unrestricted; BOD authorized reserve purposes only
SFV Trail Repairs #0095	\$54,099	Reserved for SFV trail repairs per agreement with Crosby Estates
Del Mar Foundation San Dieguito Lagoon SCE restoration endowment	\$1,527,696	Hold until SCE's lagoon mitigation obligations complete and JPA assumes long-term management responsibility (30+yrs)
San Diego Foundation #1161/#9516 JPA Operations Endowment	\$805,321	Semi-annual disbursement to JPA operating fund (\$16,261 FY25-26)
SDRVC JPA OPS Support #0552 Operations Endowment	\$548,497	Annual disbursement to JPA Operating Fund (\$25,000 FY25-26); RSFF - SDRVC Fund



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22nd District Agricultural
Association

Shawna Anderson
Executive Director

April 27, 2026

The Honorable Todd Gloria
City of San Diego
202 C Street
San Diego, CA 92101

Subject: Hodges Reservoir Water Level

Dear Mayor Gloria,

At the San Dieguito River Park Joint Powers Authority's (JPA) April 3, 2026 meeting, the JPA Board of Directors considered the ongoing condition of the low water level at Lake Hodges and its potential impacts to wildlife and the surrounding communities from increased wildlife risk. The low lake level currently mandated at a maximum of 280 feet by the State Division of Safety of Dams (DSOD) raises serious concerns regarding impacts to the surrounding area upstream of Hodges Dam.

The JPA acknowledges the City's efforts to ensure dam integrity and protect public safety. However, the prolonged low lake level justifies a more integrated and balanced approach to reduce impacts particularly from the resulting increased fuel load from hundreds of acres of exposed vegetation that exacerbates wildfire risk. The reservoir and surrounding open space also serve as a wildlife corridor and bird sanctuary that are harmed by the persistently low lake levels.

Therefore, the JPA urges the City to:

1. Evaluate the feasibility of an interim reservoir level of approximately 295 feet at Lake Hodges (approximately 40 percent capacity), subject to review, monitoring, and any appropriate mitigation measures by DSOD. Provide justification and supporting data if a 295-foot interim level cannot be achieved.
2. Engage DSOD using a holistic, risk balanced approach that evaluates seismic safety, wildfire risk, environmental impacts, water security, and community protection.
3. Recognize that maintaining the reservoir at extremely low levels introduces escalating and foreseeable risks, including increased wildfire risk and ecological degradation.
4. Proceed transparently and collaboratively with regional agencies, environmental organizations, fire authorities, and affected communities in evaluating this interim operating approach.

The Honorable Todd Gloria
April 27, 2026
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An interim solution to maintain the water level at Lake Hodges to 295 feet is reasonable and would have multiple benefits to the surrounding wildland-urban interface including reducing the fuel load in an area that has suffered severe wildfires in the recent past, improving access for aerial firefighting operations, supporting broader public safety protections, increasing access to water for breeding and other wildlife support, and improving public access to a recreational resource.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. If you have any questions concerning this letter, please feel free to contact the JPA's Executive Director Shawna Anderson at shawna@sdrp.org.

Sincerely,

Jill MacDonald

Jill MacDonald (Apr 28, 2026 11:08:56 PDT)

Jill MacDonald, Deputy Mayor, Solana Beach
JPA Chair

Cc: JPA Board of Directors
City of San Diego Council Members - Joe LaCava, Jennifer Campbell,
Stephen Whitburn, Henry L. Foster III, Marni von Wilpert, Kent Lee, Raul
Campillo, Vivian Moreno, Sean Elo-Rivera
City Public Utilities Dept - Juan Guerreiro, Megan Hickey, Ally Berenter

Passed April 3, 2026 JPA Board Meeting:

AYES: 6 (MACDONALD, KHOURY, HAYES (ALT), GAASTERLAND, MARTINEZ,
MAEDA)
NOES: 0
RECUSED: 1 (ELLIOTT (ALT))
ABSENT: 2 (VON WILPERT, LAWSON-REMER)