
**SAN DIEGUITO RIVER PARK
JOINT POWERS AUTHORITY
Minutes of May 15, 2026**

MEMBERS PRESENT

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

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

MEMBERS ABSENT

Terra Lawson-Remer
Marni von Wilpert

REPRESENTING

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

VISITORS/STAFF PRESENT

Shawna Anderson
Dewanda Vandermost
Nathan Lacy
Leana Bulay
Wayne Brechtel
Brian Elliott (Alt)
Crystal Trull
Lizzy Bendrick
Jeff Carmel
Polly Wheatley
Israel Marquez
Sharon Fogg
Alyssa Muto

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, General Counsel
City of San Diego District 1
San Dieguito Planning Board
County Parks & Recreation Department
Friends of San Dieguito River Valley
Friends of San Dieguito River Valley
Solana Beach Resident
San Dieguito Planning Group
City of Solana Beach

Introduction and Announcements:

Chair MacDonald called the meeting to order at 11:03 a.m. in the City of Solana Beach City Council Chambers, with a quorum of six Board members present. Board Member Martinez joined shortly thereafter, bringing the total to seven.

Pledge of Allegiance

Approval of the Minutes of April 3, 2026

No corrections or additions were noted for the April 3, 2026 minutes. Board Member Gaasterland moved to approve the minutes and Board Vice Chair Khoury seconded the motion.

All in favor.

Yes votes: MacDonald, LaCava, Maeda, Martinez, Khoury, Gaasterland, Hayes(Alt)

No votes: None

Absent: Lawson-Remer, Von Wilpert

Abstain: None

Executive Director's Report –

Executive Director Anderson reported that the annual Volunteer Appreciation Party will be held on May 31, 2026 at the La Valle Coastal Club (formerly Morgan Run), in partnership with the San Diego River Valley Conservancy. Board Chair MacDonald will present JPA awards recognizing outstanding volunteers. Board members were encouraged to attend, and invitations will be distributed.

Anderson announced receipt of a \$50,000 donation from the Michael and Paula Rantz Foundation, in honor of Diane Coombs, to support the Watershed Explorers Program. The funding will support youth outdoor education, including day trips and overnight camping opportunities for underserved communities.

Recent River Park activities included interpretive programs such as botany and tea-making events, as well as participation in Earth Day events. The Belgian Waffle Ride was hosted on River Park trails, requiring temporary trail closures for public safety; the event generated a \$15,000 donation.

Lastly, Anderson noted the upcoming Southern California Edison Lagoon Mitigation Project workshop on May 21 at 1:30 p.m. at Del Mar City Hall (with virtual attendance available), where annual findings will be presented.

CAC Chair's Report –

Vice Chair Khoury reported on the CAC meeting held May 1. The CAC heard a summary of the April 3, 2026 JPA meeting that included the Lake Hodges water level and related correspondence sent to Mayor Gloria and San Diego City Council. CAC Chair Khoury updated the CAC on the JPA's Executive Director recruitment process. The CAC also received a presentation from Ron Hutzel, CEO of the San Diego River Park Foundation, highlighting the recent acquisition of 58 acres surrounding Mildred Falls, and expressed support for the long-term vision of a connected San Diego River Park and San Dieguito River Park trail system.

Public Comment – None

DISCUSSION/ACTION

1. Presentation – Crystal Trull, Interim Executive Director, San Dieguito River Valley Conservancy

Crystal Trull provided an overview of the Conservancy's mission, structure, and current initiatives. She noted the organization's 40th anniversary and highlighted its role in preserving, protecting, and promoting stewardship of the watershed through education, conservation, and recreation programs.

Ms. Trull described ongoing efforts to strengthen the organization through strategic planning, improved operational systems, and organizational growth, emphasizing enhanced collaboration with partner agencies, including the JPA. She also discussed land stewardship responsibilities and community engagement programs.

Ms. Trull emphasized the importance of continued collaboration between the Conservancy and the San Dieguito River Park JPA, including financial contributions and joint project support. She announced upcoming events, including the Conservancy's participation in the Volunteer Appreciation Party on May 31.

Ms. Trull further reported that the Conservancy will host its 40th Anniversary Celebration in conjunction with its annual River Valley Fest on October 11 at La Valle Coastal Club.

Board members expressed appreciation for the presentation and support for strengthening collaboration between the Conservancy and the JPA.

Public Comment – None

2. FY25-26 Q3 Budget Report

Executive Director Anderson presented the third quarter budget report for FY 2025–26 (July 2025 through March 2026), noting that the budget is performing well overall. Revenues are exceeding targets, and expenditures remain within projected levels, reflecting careful fiscal management by staff.

Anderson explained the report format, including comparisons among the adopted budget, projected third-quarter benchmarks, and actual revenues and expenditures to date. She noted that while some variances exist due to the nature of projections, overall spending remains consistent with expectations.

The Coast Budget, funded by Southern California Edison, was also reported to be on track for the first quarter of its annual cycle. Anderson highlighted ongoing contributions to the vehicle and equipment reserve, which supports the replacement of trucks and other equipment.

She further reported that endowment funds are performing well despite market volatility. These funds support long-term habitat management, operations reserves, and future lagoon management. Anderson noted that the Conservancy contributes an annual amount of \$25,000 to the JPA's operations per the JPA/Conservancy MOU and Conservancy-held endowment. Endowment distributions will be provided to the JPA from the endowment fund in future years according to the terms of the MOU.

Public Comment – None

INFORMATION

3. Project Status Updates

- a) **Osuna Segment of Coast to Crest Trail** – Executive Director Anderson reported continued progress on the Osuna segment of the Coast to Crest Trail, including submission of a pre-application to the Wildlife Conservation Board for construction grant funding. Coordination is ongoing with adjacent projects, including the CTC Rio Run Trail on the Surf Cup property, to ensure phased and integrated implementation.

Anderson also noted that an amendment to the Joint Use Agreement with the Olivenhain Municipal Water District is in progress and is anticipated to be presented to the Board for review and approval at the next meeting.

- b) **Reach the Beach Fairgrounds Trail** – No report
- 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)** – No Report

5. Coordination Reports (oral)

- a. **San Dieguito River Valley Conservancy** – No report
- b. **Friends of the San Dieguito River Valley** – Jeff Carmel of the Friends of the San Dieguito River Valley provided an update on activities and concerns related to the Surf Cup Fields property. He reported that an express building permit has been submitted for the placement of 34 storage containers, in addition to the 18 existing containers along the Coast to Crest Trail. Mr. Carmel noted positive progress on the Rio Run Trail, including site improvements and restoration efforts, and acknowledged compliance with prior lease obligations. He also raised concerns regarding a lack of response from the City of San Diego and the 22nd District Agricultural Association on several issues, including the operation of an unpermitted school on the property and restricted public access due to a gate at the El Camino Real entrance that remains locked despite signage indicating daytime public access. Board Member LaCava acknowledged the concerns raised and stated he would look into the issues, including the building permit and the reported school on the property, and follow up with additional information.
- c. **Volcan Mountain Foundation** – No report
- d. **San Dieguito Lagoon Committee** - No report

6. Jurisdictional Status Reports –

Ex Officio Board Member Dustin Fuller (22nd District Agricultural Association) reported the appointment interim CEO Becky Bartling, noting her prior experience as Deputy Director with the Del Mar Fairgrounds and long-standing familiarity with the organization. Board members expressed support and noted positive past collaboration with Ms. Bartling.

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 to interview candidates and consider the employment of an Executive Director pursuant to Government Code Section 54957(b)(1).

Legal Counsel Brechtel reported the Board met in closed session on previously disclosed items, provided direction to legal counsel, and reported that no additional reportable actions were taken.

Chair MacDonald adjourned the meeting at 1:24p.m. and reminded the board that the next regular JPA meeting is scheduled for June 26, 2026, at the County Administration Building, Room 302/303.

These minutes were approved by Board action on June 26, 2026



Leana Bulay, Executive Director