



San Dieguito River Park
Joint Powers Authority
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**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
Supervisor, County of San Diego

Terra Lawson-Remer
Supervisor, County of San Diego

Terry Gaasterland
Del Mar City Council

Consuelo Martinez
Escondido City Council

Jenny Maeda
Poway City Council

Dustin Fuller, Ex Officio
22nd District Agricultural
Association

Leana Bulay
Executive Director

**SAN DIEGUITO RIVER PARK
JOINT POWERS AUTHORITY**

11:00 a.m.

**Friday, October 16, 2026
County Administration Center
1600 Pacific Hwy, San Diego
Room 302/303**

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 August 21, 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. Al Tarkington Memorial Osprey Project Donation Agreement - (Page 9-14)
2. Resolution for Grant Application to the Wildlife Conservation Board for the Osuna Segment of the Coast to Crest Trail - (Page 15-17)

INFORMATION

3. Project Status Updates
 - a. Horsepark Segment of the Coast to Crest Trail
 - b. Osuna Segment of Coast to Crest Trail
 - c. Reach the Beach Fairgrounds Trail and Gateway
 - d. San Dieguito Lagoon Phase II Restoration (aka W-19)
 - e. CTC Trail - East San Pasqual and Sutherland Gaps Project
 - f. CTC Trail at Rio Run (Surf Cup)
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 – Raise the Lake follow-up email (DSOD No. 8-3) 10-06-26 (Page 18-19)
7. Closed session with Legal Counsel: Closed session with legal counsel pursuant to California Government Code section 54956.9(d)(2) to discuss exposure to litigation.

THE NEXT REGULAR JPA MEETING will be held on November 20, 2026 at the County Administration Center, 1600 Pacific Highway, San Diego, 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 August 21, 2026**

MEMBERS PRESENT

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

MEMBERS ABSENT

Terra Lawson-Remer
Marni von Wilpert
Terry Gaasterland

VISITORS/STAFF PRESENT

Leana Bulay
Dewanda Vandermost
Nathan Lacy
Wayne Brechtel
Nico De Paolo
Felipe Franco
Calei Heaslet
Gabriella Busalacchi
Alex Bedoya Jr.
Gerry Hardes
Jorge Valdivieso
Steve Scarano
Victor Uyeji
Ed Baer
Tom Walker
Brian Elliott
Lizzy Bendrick
Udo Wahn, M.D.
Crystal Trull
Dwight Worden
Camilla Rang
Mary Yang
Garima Pathak
Jeff Carmel

REPRESENTING

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

REPRESENTING

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

REPRESENTING

San Dieguito River Park JPA
San Dieguito River Park JPA
San Dieguito River Park JPA
San Dieguito River Park JPA, General Counsel
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
SDRP Dust Devils Volunteer
SDRP Dust Devils Volunteer
SDRP Dust Devils Volunteer
SDRP Dust Devils Volunteer
SDRP Dust Devils Volunteer
SDRP Dust Devils Volunteer
City of San Diego District 1(Alternate)
County Parks & Recreation Department
City of Del Mar Lagoon Committee
San Dieguito River Valley Conservancy
Al Tarkington Memorial Osprey Project
Al Tarkington Memorial Osprey Project
Al Tarkington Memorial Osprey Project
Harshwal & Company LLP
Friends of the San Dieguito River Valley

Introduction and Announcements:

Chair MacDonald called the meeting to order at 11:05 a.m. with a quorum of six Board members present.

Pledge of Allegiance**Approval of the Minutes of June 26, 2026**

No corrections or additions were noted for the June 26, 2026 minutes. Board Member C. Martinez moved to approve the minutes and Board Member Alternate Hayes seconded the motion.

All in favor.

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

No votes: None

Absent: Lawson-Remer, Von Wilpert, Gaasterland

Abstain: None

Executive Director's Report –

Executive Director Bulay introduced Andrew Hayes, Board Member Alternate for County Supervisor Joel Anderson, who presented certificates of appreciation on behalf of Supervisor Anderson recognizing SDRP JPA staff and volunteers for their dedication and service during July's Parks and Recreation Month. Hayes also presented a County of San Diego Proclamation honoring former Executive Director Shawna Anderson and proclaiming August 21, 2026, as "Shawna Anderson Day."

Director Bulay further reported on World Ranger Day activities, a successful least tern nesting season, educational programs and internships, updates to the Watershed Explorer van and park kiosks, installation of new interpretive panels, ongoing improvements at Sikes Adobe, and continued progress on the Sikes Adobe Pavilion Project, including receipt of an additional \$30,000 grant.

CAC Chair's Report –

Vice Chair Chris Khoury reported that the Citizens Advisory Committee met on August 7, 2026.

Items discussed included:

- Enthusiastic support for the Al Tarkington Memorial Osprey Project.
- Discussion regarding an easement dispute.
- Continued public interest concerning Lake Hodges water levels and the lack of response from the City of San Diego Public Utilities Department regarding correspondence previously submitted by the JPA.
- Recent media coverage and public discussion related to Lake Hodges operations.

Public Comment – None

DISCUSSION/ACTION**1. FY24-25 Audit Report -****Recommendation:**

Receive and distribute the Third Party Audit Report for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025.

Garima Pathak of Harshwal & Company LLP presented the Fiscal Year 2024-25 audit report. Ms. Pathak reviewed the audit process, auditor responsibilities, internal controls, financial statements, GASB pronouncements, and audit findings.

Audit Highlights

- An unmodified (clean) audit opinion was issued.
- No material weaknesses were identified.
- No significant deficiencies were reported.
- No compliance findings were reported.
- Management provided all requested information without limitation and in a timely manner.
- The JPA's net position totaled approximately \$58.3 million.
- Current assets totaled approximately \$5.44 million compared to current liabilities of approximately \$156,224.
- Total revenues were approximately \$3.32 million and expenses approximately \$3.42 million.
- The decrease in revenue from the prior fiscal year was largely attributable to the one-time Cooper Property land donation recognized during FY 2023-24.
- Grants and contributions increased by approximately 29 percent.
- GASB 101 was implemented and GASB 103 will become applicable in FY 2026.

Board discussion included questions regarding valuation of donated property, cumulative grant funding acquired during the life of the JPA, and the agency's overall financial condition.

Public Comment – None

Board Member LaCava moved to receive and approve the audit report. Board Member Alternate Hayes seconded the motion.

All in favor.

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

No votes: None

Absent: Lawson-Remer, Von Wilpert, Gaasterland

Abstain: None

2. FY25-26 Q4 Budget Report and Coast Q2 Report -

Executive Director Bulay presented the reports.

FY 2025-26 Fourth Quarter Budget Report

- Revenue totaled \$1,963,442 and slightly exceeded projections.
- Expenditures totaled approximately \$1,954,075 and remained below budget.
- Revenues exceeded expenditures by approximately \$9,367.

Coast Fund Second Quarter Report

- Revenues totaled \$189,133, representing approximately 50 percent of annual projections.
- Expenditures represented approximately 49 percent of budgeted expenses.
- The operational endowment balance totaled approximately \$1.45 million.
- Unrestricted operating reserves totaled approximately \$509,147.

Discussion included fundraising activities and current policies related to donor support and project fundraising.

Public Comment – None

Action:

Board Member C. Martinez moved to receive and file the reports. Board Member Maeda seconded the motion.

All in favor.

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

No votes: None

Absent: Lawson-Remer, Von Wilpert, Gaasterland

Abstain: None

3. Al Tarkington Memorial Osprey Project -

Dwight Worden presented the Al Tarkington Memorial Osprey Project, a community-led effort honoring former Del Mar Mayor Al Tarkington and seeking to establish permanent osprey nesting habitat within the San Dieguito Lagoon area.

The proposed project would:

- Establish a permanent nesting structure near the W-19 restoration area east of Interstate 5.
- Provide a safe alternative to nesting on SDG&E utility poles.
- Enhance public education and wildlife viewing opportunities.
- Potentially include educational signage, a viewing bench, and a live nest camera.
- Be fully funded by project proponents, including design, permitting, installation, and any future removal costs.

Board members expressed strong support for the project and discussed future opportunities for additional osprey nesting locations and educational outreach.

Public Comment – None

Action:

Board Member Martinez moved to approve the request and authorize staff to proceed with project evaluation and implementation. Chair MacDonald seconded the motion.

All in favor.

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

No votes: None

Absent: Lawson-Remer, Von Wilpert, Gaasterland

Abstain: None

4. Interpretive Programing -

Senior Interpretive Ranger Calei Heaslet presented an overview of current and future interpretive programming.

Highlights included:

- Addition of Interpretive Ranger Gaby Busalacchi to the education team.
- Launch of the monthly “Roaming with Rangers” public hike series.
- Reestablishment of the Interpretive Committee focused on updating park interpretive panels.
- Expansion of social media outreach and public engagement efforts.
- Continued support of Dust Devils, Trail Patrol, and Sikes Adobe volunteer programs.

- Partnerships with Ecologik, California Tracking Team, environmental educators, and community science organizations.
- Planning for future educational opportunities including a Junior Ranger Program and Park After Dark series.
- Progress on Sikes Adobe improvements, pavilion construction, and upcoming events.

Board members discussed opportunities to promote JPA programs through municipal newsletters, websites, and community outreach efforts.

Public Comment – None

INFORMATION

5. Project Status Updates

- a) **Osuna Segment of Coast to Crest Trail** – JPA Staff Nathan Lacy reported progress on habitat restoration and mitigation planning associated with the relocation of the bridge project. Coordination continues with environmental agencies and La Valle Coastal Club regarding off-site mitigation, and staff is preparing a Wildlife Conservation Board grant application to address project funding needs.
- b) **Reach the Beach Fairgrounds Trail** – Coordination continues with the City of Del Mar regarding environmental review, project implementation, grant funding, and the Hubbell Gateway component of the project.
- c) **San Dieguito Lagoon Phase II Restoration (aka W-19)** – No Report
- d) **CTC Trail – East San Pasqual and Sutherland Gaps Project** – Consultants continue evaluating trail alternatives and campground concepts. Staff is monitoring planning efforts associated with the San Pasqual Academy property to ensure trail planning considerations are addressed.
- e) **CTC Trail at Rio Run (Surf Cup)** – JPA Staff Nathan Lacy reported that work on the Rio Run Trail project will resume following the conclusion of nesting bird season in September. Restoration efforts will follow completion of trail construction activities.

5. Coordination Reports (oral)

- a. **San Dieguito River Valley Conservancy** – Executive Director Crystal Trull reported that the Conservancy has added two new interns, including an education outreach intern and a conservation intern. Planning efforts are underway for future habitat restoration projects, and the Conservancy is in the final stages of acquiring approximately 58 acres adjacent to its existing Del Dios conservation property. Trull announced that River Valley Fest, celebrating the Conservancy's 40th anniversary, will be held on October 11. She also reported that the Exploring Our Sense of Place (ESP) program has sold out once again and highlighted numerous upcoming volunteer events, educational programs, outdoor activities, and Coast to Crest Challenge hikes scheduled throughout the fall.
- b. **Friends of the San Dieguito River Valley** – No report

- c. **Volcan Mountain Foundation** – Vice Chair Khoury reported on the upcoming Volcan Mountain Nature Symposium, "Restoring Resilient Eco-Landscapes," scheduled for September 19-20, 2026, in Julian.
- d. **San Dieguito Lagoon Committee** – Udo Wahn, M.D. reported that recent monitoring indicates the lagoon remains healthy. Water quality testing included pH, turbidity, dissolved oxygen, temperature, and conductivity measurements at both the Grand Avenue Bridge and Jimmy Durante Boulevard monitoring locations.

6. **Jurisdictional Status Reports** –

Board Member Martinez reported installation of a new Escondido landmark sign along State Route 78.

Dustin Fuller reported that all real estate documents for the Double Track Bridge Project have been completed and construction is anticipated to begin in early 2027.

7. **Correspondence** – None

8. **Closed session with Legal Counsel:** No closed session was held and there were no reportable actions.

Chair MacDonald adjourned the meeting at 12:29 PM and announced that the next regular meeting will be held on September 18, 2026 at the County Administration Building, Room 302/303.

These minutes were approved by Board action on _____.

Leana Bulay, Executive Director

Agenda Item 1
October 16, 2026

TO: JPA Board

FROM: Staff

SUBJECT: Acceptance of Restricted Donations for the Al Tarkington Memorial Osprey Project

RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt Resolution No. R26-1 accepting restricted donations for the Al Tarkington Memorial Osprey Project and authorizing the Executive Director to execute a Donation Fund Agreement with the Al Tarkington Memorial Osprey Project (ATMOP).

The Al Tarkington Memorial Osprey Project (ATMOP) is a community-led effort to support osprey habitat within the San Dieguito Lagoon. ATMOP has proposed a future project that may include installation of an osprey nesting pole and related improvements on JPA property. The JPA Board previously discussed the concept and directed staff to continue evaluating the project and associated requirements.

Following Board discussion, members of the public expressed interest in making donations to support the proposed project through the JPA. Staff has prepared a Donation Fund Agreement that would allow the JPA to receive, hold, account for, and expend donations designated specifically for the Al Tarkington Memorial Osprey Project. Donations would be maintained in a separate project fund and used solely for project-related purposes.

The proposed agreement is intended only to establish a mechanism for managing restricted donations. Acceptance of donations does not constitute approval of the proposed project, and all future decisions regarding project design, permitting, construction, ownership, maintenance, or removal would remain subject to separate Board consideration and approval.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no direct fiscal impact associated with the recommended action. Donations received pursuant to the Donation Fund Agreement would be restricted for use on the Al Tarkington Memorial Osprey Project and accounted for separately from the JPA's general operating funds.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Resolution No. R26-1 Accepting Restricted Donations for the Al Tarkington Memorial Osprey Project and Authorizing Execution of a Donation Fund Agreement.
2. Donation Fund Agreement between the San Dieguito River Park JPA and the Al Tarkington Memorial Osprey Project.

RESOLUTION NO. R26-1

RESOLUTION OF THE SAN DIEGUITO RIVER VALLEY REGIONAL OPEN SPACE PARK JOINT POWERS AUTHORITY ACCEPTING RESTRICTED DONATIONS FOR THE AL TARKINGTON MEMORIAL OSPREY PROJECT AND AUTHORIZING EXECUTION OF A DONATION FUND AGREEMENT

WHEREAS, the San Dieguito River Valley Regional Open Space Park Joint Powers Authority ("JPA") has received inquiries regarding donations to support the proposed Al Tarkington Memorial Osprey Project ("Project"); and

WHEREAS, the JPA Board has discussed the proposed Project and directed staff to continue evaluating the feasibility, permitting requirements, costs, and other considerations associated with the Project; and

WHEREAS, private donors and supporters of the Al Tarkington Memorial Osprey Project desire to contribute funds for expenses associated with evaluation and potential implementation of the Project; and

WHEREAS, the JPA desires to establish an appropriate mechanism for receiving, holding, accounting for, and expending donations designated for the Project.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Directors of the San Dieguito River Valley Regional Open Space Park Joint Powers Authority as follows:

1. The JPA is authorized to accept donations designated for the Al Tarkington Memorial Osprey Project.
2. Donations received for the Project shall be maintained in a separate project fund or account established and administered by the JPA in accordance with applicable financial policies and procedures.
3. Funds accepted for the Project shall be used solely for expenses related to evaluation, planning, permitting, environmental review, design, construction, monitoring, maintenance, or removal of Project improvements, as authorized by the JPA.
4. The Executive Director is authorized to execute a Donation Fund Agreement substantially in the form presented to the Board and to take such administrative actions as may be necessary to implement this Resolution.
5. Acceptance of donations and execution of the Donation Fund Agreement shall not constitute approval of the Project, approval of any project improvements, or a commitment by the JPA to proceed with construction or long-term ownership of any improvements.

6. Any future approval of the Project, including any improvements, permits, construction activities, ownership responsibilities, or maintenance obligations, shall require separate consideration and action by the JPA Board.

PASSED, APPROVED, AND ADOPTED this 16th day of October 2026.

I, the undersigned, hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution Number R26-01 was duly adopted by the Board of Directors for the San Dieguito River Valley Regional Open Space Park Joint Powers Authority at a meeting held on the 16th day of October, 2026 by the following vote:

A YES:

NOES:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT:

_____ Date:_____

Jill MacDonald, JPA Board Chair

_____ Date:_____

ATTEST: Leana Bulay, Executive Director

RESTRICTED DONATION FUND AGREEMENT

Al Tarkington Memorial Osprey Project

This Restricted Donation Fund Agreement ("Agreement") is entered into between the **San Dieguito River Park Joint Powers Authority ("JPA")** and the **Al Tarkington Memorial Osprey Project ("ATMOP")**, an unincorporated community group represented for purposes of this Agreement by Dwight Worden ("ATMOP Representative")

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Agreement is to establish a mechanism by which the JPA may receive, hold, account for, and expend donations designated for the Al Tarkington Memorial Osprey Project ("ATMOP"). This Agreement is intended solely to address the administration of donated funds and does not constitute approval of the ATMOP or any ATMOP improvement.

2. DEPOSIT OF FUNDS

Donations received by the JPA and designated for the ATMOP shall be deposited into a separate project fund or account maintained by the JPA and used solely for ATMOP -related purposes. The JPA shall administer such funds in accordance with applicable law, JPA policies, and sound public accounting practices.

3. USE OF FUNDS

ATMOP funds may be used for expenses related to the evaluation, planning, permitting, environmental review, design, construction, monitoring, maintenance, or removal of ATMOP improvements, subject to approval by the JPA and the availability of donated funds. Expenditure of ATMOP funds shall be at the sole discretion of the JPA and in accordance with applicable law and JPA policies.

4. JPA AUTHORITY

Nothing in this Agreement shall be construed as approval of the ATMOP or any ATMOP improvement. Acceptance of donations shall not obligate the JPA to approve, construct, maintain, operate, or remove the ATMOP or any related improvement. All decisions regarding ATMOP approval, design, location, permitting, construction, operation, maintenance, and removal shall remain within the sole discretion of the JPA.

5. ACCOUNTING

The JPA shall maintain records of ATMOP fund deposits and expenditures as part of its regular accounting system and shall provide an accounting of ATMOP funds to the ATMOP Representative upon reasonable request.

6. UNUSED FUNDS

If the JPA determines that the ATMOP will not proceed, or if ATMOP funds remain after completion of the ATMOP, the JPA shall determine the disposition of any remaining funds in a manner consistent with donor restrictions, donor intent, and applicable law after consultation with the ATMOP Representative.

7. NO PARTNERSHIP OR AGENCY

Nothing in this Agreement shall be construed to create a partnership, joint venture, agency relationship, or other legal association between the JPA and ATMOP. ATMOP is not authorized to act on behalf of, bind, or make commitments for the JPA.

8. TERM

This Agreement shall remain in effect until terminated by mutual written agreement of the parties or until all Project funds have been expended or otherwise disposed of pursuant to this Agreement.

9. AMENDMENT

This Agreement may be amended only by a written agreement signed by the JPA Executive Director and the ATMOP Representative, provided that any material amendment shall be subject to any Board approval required by JPA policy or direction.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have executed this Agreement as of the dates set forth below.

SAN DIEGUITO RIVER PARK JOINT POWERS AUTHORITY

By: _____

Leana Bulay
Executive Director

Date: _____

AL TARKINGTON MEMORIAL OSPREY PROJECT

By: _____

Dwight Worden
ATMOP Representative

Date: _____

TO: JPA Board

FROM: Staff

SUBJECT: Wildlife Conservation Board Grant - Osuna Segment of the Coast to Crest Trail

RECOMMENDATION:

Approve JPA Resolution No. R26-2, authorizing the Executive Director to submit a grant application to the Wildlife Conservation Board in the amount of \$1,425,374 to address the construction funding shortfall for the Osuna Segment of the Coast to Crest Trail, and authorize the Executive Director to execute necessary grant-related documents, subject to legal counsel review and applicable JPA requirements.

The Osuna Segment of the Coast to Crest Trail (CTC Trail) is a critical one-mile trail connection that will close a long-standing gap in the regional trail system. The project will connect the existing Rio Run segment of the CTC Trail to San Dieguito Road, providing a connection to an existing regional bikeway and the future Coast to Crest San Dieguito Pathway.

The project will improve regional trail connectivity, expand public recreational access, and incorporate habitat restoration within the project area. Completion of this segment represents an important step toward the JPA's long-term goal of establishing a continuous Coast to Crest Trail through the San Dieguito River Valley.

The JPA has made significant progress toward completing the project's design and permitting requirements. Design plans are currently approximately 90% complete, and staff anticipates submitting a grading permit application to the City of San Diego within the next few months. Habitat restoration plans are being finalized, and the necessary resource agency permits are in process. All required land tenure has been secured through a long-term license agreement and trail easement.

The design and permitting phases are fully funded, and the project is approaching shovel-ready status. Once the remaining permits are obtained and construction funding is secured, the JPA will be positioned to proceed with construction.

The project has secured a total of **\$3,417,350** through a combination of grants and contributions from the Trails and Greenways Grant, California State Parks Grant, San Dieguito River Valley Conservancy and donations to the JPA.

Although the design and permitting phases are fully funded, construction cost escalation and unforeseen design modifications have increased overall project costs. As a result, a portion of the funds originally allocated for construction was needed to cover additional design-related expenses.

Based on the updated 2026 engineer's cost estimate, the project currently has a construction funding shortfall of \$1,425,374.

To address this shortfall, the JPA is pursuing a grant from the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB). If awarded, the requested funding would supplement existing project funds and provide the remaining resources necessary to complete construction.

The requested \$1,425,374 in WCB funding would be used to support construction activities, including:

- Fabrication and installation of the trail bridge crossing the San Dieguito River.
- Construction of engineered bridge approaches.
- Trail grading and installation of decomposed granite (DG) surfacing.
- Installation of trail fencing and signage.
- Habitat restoration and associated environmental improvements.
- Other necessary construction components and site improvements.

These improvements will establish approximately one mile of new trail, connect existing trail segments, and support habitat restoration within the project area.

FISCAL IMPACT: No additional JPA funding commitment is proposed as part of this informational update. The project currently has a construction funding shortfall of \$1,425,374, which staff is seeking to address through a Wildlife Conservation Board grant. The JPA cannot enter into contracts with a bridge manufacturer or construction contractor until the full construction budget has been secured.

If awarded, these funds, in combination with the existing secured project funding, would provide the financial resources necessary to proceed with construction.

The JPA has already made a substantial investment in the planning, design, environmental review, and permitting of this project. Securing the additional construction funding would allow the JPA to build upon that investment and advance the project toward completion.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Resolution No. R26-2 Wildlife Conservation Board Grant Resolution

RESOLUTION NO. R26-2

**RESOLUTION OF THE SAN DIEGUITO RIVER VALLEY REGIONAL OPEN SPACE
PARK JOINT POWERS AUTHORITY APPROVING THE APPLICATION FOR FUNDS
FROM THE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD FOR COMPLETING THE OSUNA
SEGMENT OF THE COAST TO CREST TRAIL**

WHEREAS, the Board previously authorized the San Dieguito River Park JPA (JPA) to submit an application for a grant from the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) to fund the remaining amount needed to complete the Osuna segment of the Coast to Crest Trail.

WHEREAS, JPA intends to carry out the Project which will be for the purpose of completing the Osuna segment of the Coast to Crest Trail.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board hereby:

1. Affirms that all representations made by JPA to WCB regarding this Project are true and correct;
2. Authorizes the execution of WCB's grant agreement and related documents, and accepts WCB's grant funds for the Project;
3. Agrees to the terms and conditions contained in that grant agreement and related documents and to perform all of the applicable obligations specified therein.
4. Authorizes JPA Executive Director Leana Bulay to take any and all actions and execute all documents that are necessary to carry out this Resolution
5. Finds that the JPA, as the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Lead Agency, has complied with CEQA.

PASSED AND ADOPTED at the regular meeting of the JPA Board of Directors on the 16th day of October, 2026 by the following vote:

A YES:

NOES:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT:

_____ Date:_____

Jill MacDonald, JPA Board Chair

_____ Date:_____

ATTEST: Leana Bulay, Executive Director

Hodges Dam (No. 8-3): 10 days left, one 36-inch valve, and an Unsatisfactory dam heading for full pool

Paul Bernstein <paulbernsteinmd@gmail.com>

Tue, Oct 6, 2026 at 2:57 PM

To: erik.malvick@water.ca.gov, damsafety@water.ca.gov, wade.crowfoot@resources.ca.gov, thomas.gibson@water.ca.gov, laura.hollender@water.ca.gov

Cc: assemblymember.patel@assembly.ca.gov, anne.chou@asm.ca.gov, raquel.mason@asm.ca.gov, ross.pike@asm.ca.gov, mayortoddgloria@sandiego.gov, akleis@sandiego.gov, JAMcBride@sandiego.gov, "DDenham@sdewa.org" <DDenham@sdewa.org>, "TBerge@sdewa.org" <TBerge@sdewa.org>, shawna@sdrp.org, jmacdonald@cosb.org, tgaasterland@delmar.ca.us, joel.anderson@sdcounty.ca.gov, terra.lawson-remer@sdcounty.ca.gov, joelacava@sandiego.gov, marnivonwilpert@sandiego.gov, jmaeda@poway.org, cmartinez@escondido.org

Dear Secretary Crowfoot, Director Gibson, Deputy Director Hollender and Dr. Malvick,

This is a follow-up to our letters of September 19 and September 26 on Hodges Dam (DSOD No. 8-3). We have not had a reply, and the window for acting has narrowed to ten days. We are writing once more because the decision is now in your hands, and the clock is the Governor's.

What has changed since September 26

- The Santa Fe Irrigation District, which holds rights to Hodges water, confirmed to our group on October 1 that the dam has a single working outlet: one 36-inch valve, releasing roughly 300 to 500 acre-feet a day.
- We have asked the City of San Diego, as dam owner, and the San Diego County Water Authority, as owner of the pump station, to request State emergency funding for the pump station before October 16. We understand the City has no funds of its own for this work.
- Assemblymember Patel's office has been asked to carry the same request to the Secretary.

What has not changed

The lake is in the 260s, about 50 feet below the 315-foot spillway. NOAA puts the odds of a very strong El Nino above 90 percent. In the two comparable El Ninos on record, 1983 and 1998, Hodges filled and spilled. A single large atmospheric river can deliver 20,000 acre-feet in two or three days, and once Sutherland Dam fills, its entire watershed passes downstream to Hodges. Against that, the City has one 36 inch valve. Once the rain starts, nothing the City can do will keep the lake below any level DSOD chooses. On the historical record the chance of this dam reaching its spillway this winter is greater than 50%.

We want to be precise about the risk, because precision is what your Division deals in. We are not predicting the dam will fail. We are saying that a dam DSOD rates Unsatisfactory and restricts to 280 feet for seismic reasons will, under current operations, likely spend part of this winter at or near full pool with no means of drawdown, and that this is the condition the restriction exists to prevent. The restriction controls the lake in dry weather. In a storm it controls nothing.

The only measure that changes this is already on the shore of the lake. The Water Authority's pumped-storage facility can move 1,500 acre-feet a day from Hodges to Olivenhain Reservoir and the aqueduct, roughly five times what the valve can do, and into storage rather than the ocean. It cannot run with the lake below its intake. It needs an interim operating level, set by DSOD with whatever monitoring conditions you specify, and it needs the funding the Governor's proclamation has already authorized.

The proclamation of September 21 directs the Natural Resources Agency to fast-track local flood infrastructure repairs (Paragraph 3), directs DWR to procure and pre-position pumps (Paragraph 5), suspends procurement rules for emergency work (Paragraph 2), directs DSOD to contact dam owners about their winter obligations (Paragraph 6), and requires the Secretary and CalEPA to recommend further emergency action to the Governor by October 16. Every one of those paragraphs describes Hodges.

We ask three things by October 16:

1. Secretary Crowfoot: include Hodges Dam in the October 16 joint recommendation as a priority flood-risk site, with restoration of the Hodges pump station funded under Paragraphs 2 and 5.

2. Dr. Malvick: state in writing the monitoring and operating conditions under which DSOD would approve an interim level of 295 feet for this wet season, still 20 feet below the top of the dam, so the City and the Water Authority can begin work now. The 295-foot level was requested by the San Dieguito River Park JPA in a 6-0 vote and endorsed by the San Dieguito River Valley Conservancy, Rancho Santa Fe Association, Rancho Bernardo Town Council, Tierrasanta Community Council, Del Dios Town Council, San Dieguito Planning Group, and 80,000 San Diegans.
3. Under Paragraph 6, put the question to the City in writing: what is its plan for holding Hodges below 315 feet in a historic El Nino with one 36-inch valve? Share the answer with the JPA and Assemblymember Patel's office.

If DSOD believes the pump station is not needed, or that 295 feet is unsafe even with pumps running, we ask for that in writing too, with the engineering behind it, so the record shows the decision was made on the evidence. Silence is also a decision, and it is the one with no record.

Respectfully,

Paul Bernstein, MD
RaiseLakeHodges.org
On behalf of 80,000 San Diegans
Escondido, California

cc:

Office of Governor Gavin Newsom (via gov.ca.gov/contact)
Assemblymember Darshana Patel, AD-76 (attn: Raquel Mason, Ross Pike)
Mayor Todd Gloria and Andrew Kleis, Director, Public Utilities, City of San Diego
Dan Denham and Tish Berge, San Diego County Water Authority
San Dieguito River Park JPA Board and Shawna Anderson, Executive Director
San Dieguito River Valley Conservancy Board
Santa Fe Irrigation District
Councilmember Marni von Wilpert, City of San Diego



Paul Bernstein, MD

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River Valley Conservancy · The Citizens Advisory Committee
for the River Park

and 80,000 San Diegans!