

**CALIFORNIA REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD  
SAN DIEGO REGION  
BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
April 10, 2024**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Celeste Cantú called the meeting to order on April 10, 2024 at 9:06 a.m. in the Rancho California Water District Board Meeting Room, 42135 Winchester Road, Temecula, California 92690.

**ATTENDANCE**

**Board Members present:**

Celeste Cantú, Board Chair; Gary Strawn, Yen Tu, and Stefanie Warren. Megan Blair arrived at approximately 9:15 a.m. Ms. Warren left the meeting at 12:06 p.m.

**Board Members absent:**

Betty H. Olson, Ph.D., Vice Chair

**Staff present:**

David Gibson, Laurie Walsh, Roger Mitchell, Chris Blank, Jeremy Haas, Ben Neill, Cynthia Gorham, Abigail Pashina, Cailynn Smith, Melissa Liotta, Hiram Sarabia, Erica Ryan.

**Staff remote attendance:**

Kelly Dorsey, Chiara Clemente, Vicente Rodriguez, Tanya Clark, Heidi Fletcher, Mahsa Izadmehr, Cleo Muñoz, Kate Buckley, Brandi Outwin-Beals, Wayne Chiu, James Chhor, Mireille Lecourtois, Chad Loflen, Brandon Bushnell, Joann Lim.

**Others present on behalf of the San Diego Water Board**

Nichole Morgan, State Water Resources Control Board (remote); Vincent Vu, Alex Sauerwein, Office of Chief Counsel

**Public Attendance:**

Present:

Rebekah Guill, Mai Son, Bethany Prociado, Matt Yeager <i>Riverside County Flood Control &amp; Water Conservation District (RCFD WCD)</i>	Michael R. Welch <i>Michael Welch Consultants</i>
Tasia Ardanan, Bryn Home, Andy Lyall, Ed Embly, Mary Mafour, Burnet Wohlford, Valerie Mellano, Enrico Ferro <i>San Diego Regional Irrigated Lands Group (SDRILG)</i>	Jim Hessler <i>Altamond Plants</i>
Steve Corona <i>Upper Santa Margarita Irrigated Lands Group</i>	Victor Araiza <i>McMillan Farm</i>
Gregg Opgenorth <i>Grubb &amp; Nadler</i>	Mark Worthington <i>Avo Farm</i>
Kara Sorenson <i>U.S. Navy</i>	Ignacio Rivera <i>U.S. Navy (Retired)</i>
Tony Godfrey <i>Olive Hill Greenhouses</i>	Jeff Wiens <i>Wiens Cellars</i>
Paula Jewel <i>U.S. Marine Corps, Camp Pendleton</i>	Patrick McDonough <i>San Diego Coastkeeper</i>
Harjeet Vassi <i>Stage Ranch Farm Management</i>	Janet Kister <i>Sunlet Nursery</i>
Kevin Gallego <i>Riverside County Agricultural Commissioner</i>	Michael A. Mellano <i>Mellano &amp; Company</i>
David Drucker, Dana Groot <i>San Diego County Farm Bureau</i>	Gerry Spinelli <i>U.C. Cooperative Extension</i>
Fred Ceballos, Minerva Ramirez <i>First Step Greenhouses</i>	Jordan Key <i>San Diego County Authority</i>
Stewart Cameron <i>Blue Pit Vineyards</i>	Jameson Meyst <i>Mission Resource Control District</i>
Edward Embly <i>Hungry Hawk Vineyards and Winery</i>	

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Remote attendance:

Jason Dumond <i>Mikhail Ogawa Engineering</i>	James Gonzalez <i>Devil Mountain Wholesale Nursery</i>
Kari Fisher, Ray Ewing <i>California San Diego Farm Bureau</i>	Roxanna Sanchez, Jamie Milani, Y DiDonna, Cathryn Henning <i>County of San Diego</i>
Michael Lister <i>Avocado Grower, SDRILG</i>	Silva Salehi <i>Look Up San Diego</i>
Dennis Erickson <i>Erickson's Vines</i>	Susanne Sapier <i>Vineyard Grant James</i>
Andy Williamson <i>Resource Conservation District of Greater San Diego</i>	John Tichenor <i>Wiens Cellars</i>
Tom James <i>Baxendale Nursery</i>	Renato Sais <i>Avensole Winery</i>
Lewis Parks	Ronald Bas <i>Bastian's Vineyards</i>
Ani Vartanians, Jameson Meyst <i>Mission Resource Control District</i>	Taylor Reese <i>San Diego Farm Bureau</i>
Bob & Anne Atkins <i>Rancho la Paz de mi Corazon</i>	Raphael Mazor <i>SCCWRP and Stormwater Monitoring Coalition</i>
Taylor Pizzuto, Claire Orion, Rocio Lara <i>County of San Diego Agriculture, Weights &amp; Measures</i>	Jay Word, Michelle Knowlen <i>EcoAnalysts</i>
Rosa Peraro <i>Grove De La Rosa</i>	Andrew Klotz <i>ZXQ Vineyards</i>
Rachael Johnson <i>RivCo FB</i>	Stephen Reich <i>Stetson Engineers Inc.</i>
Rene De La Fuente <i>Provost &amp; Pritchard</i>	Hillary DeCarl <i>Del Rey Avocado</i>
Ken Zignorski <i>Monte De Oro Winery</i>	Mia Gil <i>Viejas Band of Kumeyaay Indians</i>
Richard Reed <i>Avocado Grower</i>	Oliver Smith <i>Valley Center Municipal Water District</i>
Kurt Bantle <i>Bantle Avocado</i>	Robert Jackson <i>Trial Lawyers</i>
Brittany Perkins, Isabella Ossiander <i>City of Oceanside</i>	Mason Flood <i>WSP Engineering</i>
Alicia Appel <i>Encina Wastewater Authority</i>	Jorge Garcia
Orven Zaragoza <i>West Coast Tomato Growers, Inc.</i>	Tom Chino <i>Chino Nojo, Inc.</i>
Ignacio Rivera <i>NIWC Pacific (Retired)</i>	Ellen Maisen <i>Rancho Los Serranos</i>
Wendy Elder	Kim Silva

<i>Durling Nursery, Inc.</i>	<i>City of Escondido</i>
Nicole Stone <i>Poway Equestrian Center</i>	

**BOARD MEETING**

***Public comments on agenda items were limited to 3 minutes or otherwise at the discretion of the Board Chair***

**PUBLIC FORUM**

There were no comments during the Public Forum.

**BOARD BUSINESS**

**Item 1** – Minutes of Board Meeting: March 13, 2024

**Motion to adopt the March 13, 2024 minutes:**

- Ms. Warren

**Second:**

- Mr. Strawn

**Aye:**

- Mr. Strawn
- Ms. Tu
- Ms. Warren
- Chair Cantú

**Nay:**

- None

**Absent:**

- Ms. Blair
- Dr. Olson

**Abstain:**

- None

**Item 2** – Chair’s, Board Members’, State Water Board Liaison’s, and Executive Officer’s Reports. *These items were for Board discussion only. No public testimony was allowed, and the Board took no formal action.*

Nichole Morgan provided updates on recent State Board actions and priorities and responded to Board Member questions and comments.

Mr. Gibson responded to Board Member questions and provided updates that were not in the written Executive Officer’s Report.

**INFORMATIONAL ITEM:**

**Item 3** – Santa Margarita River Estuary and Watershed monitoring and assessment results for the estuary nutrient Water Quality Restoration Plan, presented by the Santa Margarita River Nutrient Initiative Group (SMRNIG) stakeholder group (*Melissa Liotta*)

Melissa Liotta introduced the item and provided an introduction and overview of the water quality improvement plan and Investigative Order No. R9-2019-0007.

Matt Yeager from Riverside County presented an overview of the implementation and work of the Santa Margarita River Nutrient Initiative Group.

Kara Sorenson and Molly Palmer from the Naval Information War Center Pacific (NIWC) presented the monitoring and assessment results.

Hiram Sarabia presented monitoring and assessment results from the tributaries of the Santa Margarita River.

Melissa Liotta provided closing remarks.

Chair Cantú requested public comments on the item; no public comments were offered.

**PUBLIC WORKSHOP**

**Item 4** – Public Workshop: Tentative General Waste Discharge Requirements for Discharges from Commercial Agricultural Operations in the San Diego Region (Tentative Order No. R9-2024-0029). (*Cailynn Smith and Abigail Pashina*)

Cailynn Smith and Abigail Pashina gave the staff presentation and responded to Board Member questions.

*Chair Cantú recessed for closed session to discuss item 5j – Ongoing Litigation, at 12:15 p.m. and reconvened the meeting at 12:45 p.m.*

Valerie Mellano and Bryn Home from the San Diego Regional Irrigated Lands Group (SDRILG) presented their comments on the Tentative Order

The following stakeholders commented on the item:

- Connor McClelland, Agronomist and Certified Crop Advisor
- Fred Ceballos, Sales Representative for First Step Greenhouses
- Andy Lyall, Member of the Board of Directors for the SDRILG
- Burnet Wohlford read a letter from Derek Davis of the SDRILG
- Janet Kister from Janet Kister Sunlet Nursery
- David Drucker, Certified Crop Advisor for Nutrien Ag Solutions
- Enrico Ferro, SDRILG
- Dana Groot, President of the San Diego Farm Bureau
- Patrick McDonough, Attorney, San Diego Coastkeeper
- Gregg Opgenorth, Head Grower and Manager for Grubb & Nadler Nurseries
- Jim Hessler, Director of West Coast Operations, Altamond Plants
- Kari Fisher, Senior Counsel, San Diego Farm Bureau

There being no further business, Chair Cantú adjourned the meeting at 2:07 p.m.

These Minutes were prepared by:

Signed by:

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Christina A. Blank  
Executive Assistant

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David W. Gibson  
Executive Officer