

# MINUTES

## MEETING OF THE CENTRAL VALLEY FLOOD PROTECTION BOARD

November 14, 2025

**NOTE:** THE BOARD WILL CONSIDER TIMED ITEMS AS CLOSE AS POSSIBLE TO THE LISTED TIME, BUT NOT BEFORE THE TIME SPECIFIED. UNTIMED ITEMS MAY BE HEARD IN ANY ORDER. THESE MINUTES ARE PRESENTED IN AGENDA ORDER, BUT ITEMS WERE NOT NECESSARILY HEARD IN THAT ORDER.

A regular meeting of the Central Valley Flood Protection Board was held at the California Natural Resources Agency, 715 P Street, Room 2-201, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Sacramento, California and concurrently online (on WebEx) on November 14, 2025, beginning at 9:06 a.m.

### **Board Members present:**

Jane Dolan, President  
Mike Villines, Vice President  
Brian Johnson, Secretary  
Betty Andrews  
Keely Bosler  
Joe Countryman  
Mary Jane Griego

### **Board staff present:**

Chris Lief, Executive Officer  
Andrea Buckley, Deputy Executive Officer  
Kanwarjit (Jit) Dua, General Counsel  
Michael Wright, Chief Engineer  
Jennifer Calles, Senior Environmental Scientist, Environmental and Land Management Branch  
Zubair Dosu, Manager, Deferred Encroachment Compliance Section, Flood System Improvement Branch  
Greg Harvey, Manager, Flood System Improvement Branch  
Bonnie Irving, Senior Environmental Scientist, Environmental and Land Management Branch  
Jonah Knapp, Board Clerk, Executive Assistant  
Angela Nguyen-Tan, Senior Environmental Scientist, Environmental and Land Management Branch  
Jeremiah Peek, Staff Engineer, Deferred Encroachment Compliance Section, Flood System Improvement Branch  
Jordan Robbins, Senior Environmental Scientist, Environmental and Land Management Branch  
Dustin Sanoski, Senior Engineer, Flood System Improvement Branch  
Preston Shopbell, Manager, Inspection Section, Operations Branch  
Jamie Silva, Manager, Environmental and Land Management Branch  
Kristyne Van Skike, Manager, Flood Planning and Programs Branch

**Also present:**

Eric Ambriz, San Joaquin County Public Works  
Tom Engler, MBK Engineers, California Central Valley Flood Control Association  
Stuart Hanson  
Nancy Kniskern  
Daniel Sparks, United States Army Corps of Engineers

**1. ROLL CALL/ESTABLISH A QUORUM (Water Code § 8560)**

Jonah Knapp, Board Clerk and Executive Assistant, called the roll and a quorum was established.

**2. WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Jane Dolan, Board President, welcomed the participants.

Chris Lief, Board Executive Officer, announced that Zach Ramsey, Professional Engineer, Inspection Section, has accepted a promotional opportunity with the DWR State Water Project Right of Way Section. Also, Bonnie Irving, Senior Environmental Scientist, Environmental and Land Management Branch, will be leaving the Board in November of 2025.

**3. REVIEW AGENDA**

President Dolan briefly reviewed the agenda.

**4. APPROVE MINUTES – September 26, 2025**

*Upon motion by Secretary Johnson, seconded by Board Member Griego, the Board unanimously approved the Meeting Minutes of September 26, 2025.*

**5. CONSENT ITEMS**

- A. Approve Board's Strategic Plan for 2025**  
**Chris Lief, Board Staff, Executive Officer**
- B. Approve Permit No. 20007, James Bypass Check Dam, James Irrigation District, Fresno County**  
**Humberto Negrete, Board Staff, Operations Branch**
- C. Approve Permit No. 20021, California Department of Fish & Wildlife Snake Marsh Wetland Restoration Project, Sacramento County**  
**Celina Ortega, Board Staff, Operations Branch**

*Upon motion by Board Member Griego, seconded by Board Member Countryman, the Board unanimously approved Consent Items 5A, 5B and 5C.*

## **6. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Nancy Kniskern presented specific concerns:

1. The USACE stresses the requirement for protecting the community as soon as possible but does not want to talk with the community—3 minutes speaking time does not allow for interaction;

2. USACE is required to review and determine its guidelines for management of vegetation on the levees and whether they are appropriate for all the regions of the United States, per the WRDA law passed in 2014. USACE guidance was to be determined within 18 months of passage yet 11 years later, at the end of 2025, the guidance has still not been issued;

3. Stakeholders are criticized for protesting too late in the process, yet first notice of this project, sent via postcard announcing Notice of Availability, was not received until November 2023;

4. The current design and adherence to more rocks as opposed to considering the specific engineering alternatives is not optimal.

On the plus side, Ms. Kniskern commented that working with Board staff and Board Members has been a welcoming entrance into the public's role in working with agencies and she thanked them for their time and attention to the project.

Stuart Hanson, commenting as one of the landowners in the Horseshoe Levee area, noted that some landowners don't agree that the maintenance area boundaries proposed by Board staff comply with the spirit of the Water Code law.

Also, working cooperatively with the other state agencies involved requires an agreement with the Board that, while the parties work together through alternatives, the deadlines should be suspended. He asked the Board to approve that suspending agreement as soon as possible. The landowners also feel that DWR should be a party to the agreement, because the Code talks about both the Board and the Department.

## **7. LEGISLATIVE UPDATE**

### **A. A written update on pertinent State legislation and federal news will be provided.**

President Dolan noted that the Board had received the written update. Several board members expressed concerns that cuts or even potential closure of the Federal Emergency Management Agency or FEMA could create drastic public safety and fiscal problems for California, and expressed an interest in receiving future briefings on the situation.

## **8. UNITED STATES ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS (USACE)**

### **A. Presentation of the USACE Levee Inspection Results for the Bear Creek Levee systems, San Joaquin County.**

Jeremiah Peek, Board Staff Engineer, Flood System Improvement Branch Deferred Compliance Encroachment Section, introduced the item. He and Daniel Sparks, USACE, gave the presentation and answered questions.

Eric Ambriz, San Joaquin County Public Works Superintendent, and Zubair Dosu, Board Flood System Improvement Branch Deferred Encroachment Compliance Section Manager, provided additional information.

## **9. BOARD ITEMS**

### **A. 2025 Regulatory Fee Updates, Notice Package**

Andrea Buckley, Deputy Executive Officer, introduced the item. She and Preston Shopbell, Operations Branch Inspection Section Manager, gave the presentation and answered questions.

Jit Dua, Board General Counsel, provided additional clarifying information.

Ms. Buckley concluded with the staff recommendation that the Board adopt the CEQA findings, define the project, approve the four rulemaking documents, and direct the Executive Officer to file the CEQA Notice of Exemption and submit the rulemaking package to the Office of Administrative Law.

Tom Engler, representing MBK Engineers and the California Central Valley Flood Control Association, expressed his gratitude to the Board for the process that was held on this and for the constant communication between them and Board staff. He also informed the Board that they would continue to object to the fees on system improvements based on the ongoing disagreement about what fees should be charged and to whom.

*Upon motion by Board Member Griego, seconded by Board Member Andrews, the Board unanimously voted in favor of the Board staff recommendation.*

### **B. Presentation of the Board's Calendar for 2026**

Executive Officer Lief gave the presentation.

### **C. Presentation on the Sutter Bypass East Levee Project**

Dustin Sanoski, Board Senior Engineer, Flood System Improvement Branch, presented the item. Mr. Sanoski noted that the project faces a potential delay because a federal grant that had been awarded has now been canceled.

**D. Presentation of the Board's Natural Resources Management and Planning Division Staff Activities.**

Deputy Executive Officer Buckley introduced the item and noted they would present some progress updates.

Jamie Silva, Environmental and Land Management Branch Manager, provided a brief overview of the Land Management Section of the Sacramento and San Joaquin Drainage District.

Jennifer Calles, Senior Environmental Scientist, discussed section goals and actions.

Angela Nguyen-Tan, Senior Environmental Scientist, discussed Board-sponsored projects.

Bonnie Irving, Senior Environmental Scientist and Board Tribal Liaison, provided an overview of actions taken so far this year with tribal consultations and requests.

Jordan Robbins, Senior Environmental Scientist, presented on special projects.

Kristyne Van Skike, Flood Planning and Programs Branch Manager, discussed their ongoing activities, including prioritizing regional and interagency engagement, and supporting planning and engagement efforts across the Yolo Bypass, Cache Slough and the greater Central Valley.

Board Members asked various clarifying questions throughout and expressed their appreciation for Board staff's excellent work.

**10. DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES (DWR) ITEMS**

**A. Written Report from DWR**

President Dolan noted that the written report was submitted.

**11. STAFF ACTIVITY REPORTS**

**Written updates regarding the activities of the Board's staff:**

- A. Executive Staff and Administrative Division**
- B. Operations Branch**
- C. Flood System Improvement Branch**
- D. Natural Resource Management and Planning Division**
- E. Executive Officer Delegated Permit Report**

President Dolan noted that all the written updates had been submitted.

## **12. BOARD COMMENTS AND UPCOMING COMMITTEE UPDATES**

Board Members Andrews and Johnson have been busy working with the various work groups and plotting the path forward to maximize the benefit of the work that the Advisory Committee members have been doing.

Board Member Bosler continues to think about the issues that the Board wants to highlight in the next Central Valley Flood Protection Plan around financing. They are working with the folks at DWR to really think about using the plan to convey the current state of affairs, especially when it's changing so rapidly.

Vice President Villines continues his Executive Committee work and is keeping busy on some other projects.

Board Member Griego noted that Congressman Thompson has expressed an interest in coming to the Yuba/Sutter area to learn more about flood control. A get-together is being planned to look at some of the projects that have been done, along with some of the projects that need to be done.

## **13. UPCOMING MEETINGS**

- **Coordinating Committee, November 18, 2025 (West Sacramento City Hall)**
- **Board Workshop, December 5, 2025 (California Natural Resources Agency Headquarters)**
- **Advisory Committee, December 9, 2025 (Central Valley Flood Protection Board)**
- **Board Meeting, December 12, 2025 (California Natural Resources Agency Headquarters)**

President Dolan briefly discussed the upcoming meetings.

## **14. CLOSED SESSION**

- A. Pursuant to the authority of Government Code Section 11126 (e)((i). To discuss litigation: American River Trees, et al. vs The Central Valley Flood Protection Board, et al., US District Court, Eastern District of California, Case No. 2:25 – cv - 02384 – DC – CSK. (Kanwarjit (Jit) Dua, Board Counsel)**
- B. Pursuant to the authority of Government Code Section 11126 (e)(i). To discuss litigation: Mandroop Singh Purewal, et al. vs. State of California, Superior Court of the State of California County of Yolo Case No. CV2025-1439. (Kanwarjit (Jit) Dua, Board Counsel)**
- C. Pursuant to the authority of Government Code Section 11126 (e)(i). To discuss litigation: Sierra Northern Railway vs. Central Valley Flood Protection Board, et al, Superior Court of the State of California, County of Yolo Case No. CV-2022-0479. (Kanwarjit (Jit) Dua, Board Counsel)**

- D. Pursuant to the authority of Government Code Section 11126 (e)(i). To discuss litigation: Liam Meyer v. Central Valley Flood Protection Board, et al., Sacramento County Superior Court Case No. 34-2020-00276397. (Kanwarjit (Jit) Dua, Board Counsel)**
- E. Pursuant to the authority of Government Code Section 11126 (e)(i). To discuss litigation: The People of The State vs. Yeung Farms Enterprises, Superior Court of the State of California, County of Yolo CV-2020-330. (Kanwarjit (Jit) Dua, Board Counsel)**
- F. Pursuant to the authority of Government Code Section 11126, subdivisions (e)(1), (e)(2)(B)(i), and (e)(2)(C)(i), to consider potential litigation involving the Board. (Kanwarjit (Jit) Dua, Board Counsel)**
- G. Pursuant to the authority of Government Code section 11126, subdivisions (a)(1), to consider personnel matters. (Kanwarjit (Jit) Dua, Board Counsel)**

A Closed Session was held.

## **15. CLOSED SESSION REPORT**

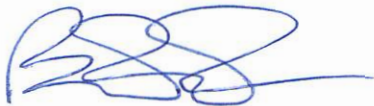
President Dolan reported that the Board had a discussion but took no action.

## **16. ADJOURNMENT**

President Dolan adjourned the Board Meeting at 1:28 p.m.


Dated: December 5, 2025

The foregoing Minutes were approved:



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Brian J. Johnson  
Board Secretary



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Jane Dolan  
Board President