

# MINUTES

## MEETING OF THE CENTRAL VALLEY FLOOD PROTECTION BOARD

April 24, 2026

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 Headquarters, 715 P Street, Room 2-201, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Sacramento, California and concurrently online (on Zoom) on April 24, 2026, beginning at 9:05 a.m.

### **Board Members present:**

Brian Johnson, Secretary  
Betty Andrews  
Joe Countryman  
Mary Jane Griego

### **Board Member absent:**

Keely Bosler

### **Board staff present:**

Chris Lief, Executive Officer  
Andrea Buckley, Deputy Executive Officer  
Kanwarjit (Jit) Dua, General Counsel  
Zubair Dosu, Manager, Deferred Encroachment Compliance Section  
Greg Harvey, Manager, Flood System Improvement Branch  
Jonah Knapp, Board Clerk and Executive Assistant  
Kristyne Van Skike, Program Manager, Flood Planning and Program Branch  
Mike Zelazo, Senior Engineer

### **Department of Water Resources staff present:**

David Arrate, Senior Engineer  
Mary Jimenez, Manager, Systemwide Multi-Benefit Initiatives Branch  
Mark List, Supervising Engineering Geologist  
Brian Murphy, Senior Engineer  
Hilary Murphy, Supervising Engineer

**Also present:**

Nathan Bray, Merced County  
Nancy Kniskern, American River Trees  
Ron Ratto, Lake Bottom, LLC  
Jasmine Tijero, United States Army Corps of Engineers  
Rob Tull, Jacobs Engineering  
Pawan Upadhyay, Lake County

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

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

**2. WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Secretary Johnson welcomed the participants.

Chris Lief, Board Executive Officer, remarked that the Governor has announced a formal plan for three new State Parks, one of which will be in the Feather River setback area. The Board is excited to work with State Parks on the planning for that park, which will be in its jurisdiction.

**3. REVIEW AGENDA**

Secretary Johnson briefly reviewed the agenda.

**4. APPROVE MINUTES – March 27, 2026**

*Upon **motion** by Board Member Countryman, seconded by Board Member Griego, the Board unanimously approved, by a 4-0 vote, the Meeting Minutes of March 27, 2026. (Absent-Bosler)*

**5. CONSENT ITEMS**

- A. Approve Permit No. 19839, Bees Lakes Habitat Restoration Project, City of West Sacramento, Yolo County.**  
Celina Ortega, Board Staff, Operations Branch
- B. Approve Permit No. 19999, Utility Relocation for the California Department of Transportation Binney Junction Project, Cogent Communications, Yuba County.**  
Michael Zelazo, Board Staff, Flood System Improvement Branch
- C. Approve Permit No. 20075, Comcast Utilities Relocation for Natomas Basin Civil Works Project, Sacramento County.**  
Hugo Sanchez, Board Staff, Flood System Improvement Branch

*Upon motion by Board Member Griego, seconded by Board Member Countryman, the Board unanimously approved, by a 4-0 vote, Consent Items 5A, 5B and 5C. (Absent-Bosler)*

## **6. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Nancy Kniskern, American River Trees, provided a description of the process and Living River principles that were used to guide the design of recent updates to the US Army Corps of Engineers' Napa River Flood Control Project.

Ron Ratto, Lake Bottom LLC, commented on a letter received from the Board, dated March 30, about Permit No. 20067. They are interested in finding out more about the project and the specific details involved.

## **7. LEGISLATIVE UPDATE**

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

Secretary Johnson noted that the Board had received the written update.

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

### **A. Presentation of the USACE Levee Inspection Results for American River Flood Control District – American River right bank, Natomas East Main Drain Canal levee system, Sacramento County.**

Zubair Dosu, Board Deferred Encroachment Compliance Section Manager, and Jasmine Tijero, USACE Operations Division Civil Engineer, gave the presentation and answered questions.

## **9. BOARD ITEMS**

### **A. Approve Permit No. 19643, Black Rascal Creek Flood Control Project, Merced County.**

Mike Zelazo, Board Flood System Improvement Branch Senior Engineer, led the presentation.

Nathan Bray, Merced County Director of Public Works and Road Commissioner, provided supplemental information and answered questions.

*Upon motion by Board Member Griego, seconded by Board Member Andrews, the Board unanimously approved, by a 4-0 vote, Permit No. 19643. (Absent-Bosler)*

### **B. Yolo Bypass Cache Slough Master Plan Overview, Key Updates, and Recommendations for Implementation.**

Kristyne Van Skike, Board Flood Planning and Program Branch Manager, and Mary Jimenez, DWR Systemwide Multi-Benefit Initiatives Branch Manager, provided the overview and updates and answered questions.

In response to a question from Board Member Andrews, the presenters confirmed that Recommendations 3 and 7 are described in the presentation as "not started" because they are not funded. Recommendation 3 includes landscape scale permitting strategies and is also a priority for the Board. Recommendation 7 is to advance and extend the Yolo Bypass Cache Slough Partnership.

In response to a question from Board Members Countryman and Johnson about whether and how the master plan will lead to actual on the ground projects, Ms. Jimenez agreed that was the point. For example, the updated two-dimensional modeling for the bypass is available and already being used by project teams. Ms. Jimenez stated that the cumulative effect of the projects contemplated by the master plan would absolutely move the needle for addressing climate change systemwide for flood risk and the Conservation Strategy.

Board Member Countryman stated his belief that the federal government needs to be able to take into account the systemwide benefits of projects in the Yolo Bypass.

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

### **A. Department of Water Resources Activity Report**

Secretary Johnson noted that the written report was submitted.

### **B. Approve Department of Water Resources (DWR) Maintenance Area Budget for FY2026-27.**

Mark List, DWR Supervising Engineering Geologist, and Brian Murphy, DWR Senior Engineer, provided background information and detailed maintenance area processes.

Board Members asked questions and discussed specific portions of the proposed budget.

Pawan Upadhyay, Lake County Water Resources Director, expressed concerns regarding the proposed budget and who takes responsibility for Maintenance Area 17.

*Upon motion by Board Member Griego, seconded by Board Member Andrews, the Board unanimously approved, by a 4-0 vote, the FY2026-27 budget. (Absent-Bosler)*

### **C. Watershed Studies Alignment with the 2027 Central Valley Flood Protection Plan Update.**

Hilary Murphy, DWR Supervising Engineer and Central Valley Flood Planning Section Manager; and David Arrate, DWR Senior Engineer, Division of Planning, provided the update

and answered questions about the DWR Watershed Studies and FIRO-Mar Program integration with the Flood Plan.

Board Members Andrews and Countryman both noted how the studies reinforce that the ability to increase releases out of New Don Pedro on the Tuolumne River has what Board Member Andrews called the best promise for the future of the San Joaquin system in terms of flood management.

## **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**

Secretary Johnson noted that the written updates had been received.

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

Board Member Countryman commented that his online attendance at the recent Coordinating Committee meeting was not good – it was very difficult to make out what people were saying and the presentations being made could not be clearly seen online.

## **13. UPCOMING MEETINGS**

- **Advisory Committee, April 28, 2026 (Central Valley Flood Protection Board)**
- **Coordinating Committee, May 19, 2026 (West Sacramento City Hall)**
- **Board Meeting, May 22, 2026 (California Natural Resources Agency Headquarters)**
- **Board Workshop, June 12, 2026 (location TBD)**

Secretary Johnson 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)**

There was no Closed Session.

## **15. CLOSED SESSION REPORT**

As there was no Closed Session, there is no report.

## **16. ADJOURNMENT**

Secretary Johnson adjourned the Board Meeting at 1:21 p.m.

**APPROVED** by the Board on May 22, 2026, by the following vote:

Ayes: Andrews, Countryman, Griego, Johnson

Noes:

Abstain: Bosler

Absent:

Attested by: *Jonah Knapp*  
Jonah Knapp, Board Clerk