ACWA NEWS
VOL. 53 | 08 Aug. 22, 2025



(l-r) ACWA Board of Directors members Deanna Jackson, with Tri-County Water Authority, and Stacy Taylor, with Mesa Water District, take part in a celebratory launch of Membership Appreciation Month during the Aug. 1 ACWA Board meeting.

Membership Appreciation Month Recognizes Agencies' Contributions

August marks ACWA's 13th annual Membership Appreciation Month, giving ACWA staff and leadership an opportunity to express gratitude to our members for all the work that they do on behalf of the association.

This celebration also honors ACWA member agencies' commitment to providing safe and reliable water in an environmentally sustainable and fiscally responsible manner throughout California.

As part of Membership Appreciation Month, ACWA has produced a short video that highlights the work and dedication of our members. You can view the video by scanning the below QR code.

ACWA WELCOMES THE FOLLOWING NEW MEMBERS FOR 2025!

- City of Lincoln, Region 3
- June Lake Public Utility District, Region 3

ACWA Urges Members to Support HRL Program

The State Water Resources Control Board has scheduled a public hearing Sept. 25-26 on the revised draft of updates for the Sacramento/Delta portions of the Water Quality Control Plan for the San Francisco Bay/Sacramento–San Joaquin Delta Watershed (Bay-Delta Plan).

ACWA will be distributing an Outreach Alert in September closer to the public hearing. It will include updated information members can use in communicating their support for the Healthy Rivers and Landscapes (HRL) Program.

Released on July 24, the revised draft includes proposed changes to the draft Sacramento/Delta updates from October 2024, which was based on public input and comments received throughout the planning process. The revised draft updates include two regulatory pathways: the HRL Program and the unimpaired flow approach for non-HRL Program parties.

ACWA is a long-standing supporter of the HRL Program as the best approach to protecting, restoring, and enhancing the Bay-Delta. ACWA is reviewing the revised draft updates and plans to provide oral and written comments to the State Water Board. ACWA staff will continue to engage with its Bay-Delta Working Group to guide ACWA's advocacy on the Sacramento/Delta update to the Bay-Delta Plan.

ACWA issued a news release on July 24 praising Gov. Gavin Newsom's

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AUGUST 2025 | MEMBERSHIP APPRECIATION MONTH





CATHY GREEN
ACWA President



ERNIE AVILA, P.E.
ACWA Vice President

August 5, 2025

Dear ACWA Members:

It is with great pleasure that we announce our 13th annual Membership Appreciation Month. Your continued support and active participation are the foundation of ACWA and help us maintain our status as California's leading voice on water issues. We express our gratitude for your sustained commitment and invaluable contributions to our community.

With your support and hard work, ACWA is a powerful force for real change at the Capitol. Your dedication of time and effort has been instrumental in shaping impactful state and federal legislation and regulatory initiatives. We deeply appreciate your valuable contributions through ACWA committees, regional boards, and other leadership roles within the organization. Thank you for your continued passion and engagement.

As an ACWA member, you have exclusive access to a suite of benefits, including timely resources such as legislative and regulatory alerts and advisories, customizable toolkits that help you communicate to the communities you serve, and discounts on events.

Membership also offers opportunities for professional development and networking platforms, including our biannual statewide conferences, the annual Washington, D.C. conference, the Legislative Symposium, regional events, webinars and more. Leadership roles through volunteer service on regional boards, ACWA committees, task forces and workgroups enable you to influence association direction and enhance your professional expertise.

Throughout the month of August, we invite you to participate in virtual activities and initiatives in recognition of your contributions. Stay connected via our social media channels for opportunities to win prizes and to stay updated on how to maximize your membership.

Thank you! We deeply value your partnership and continued membership!

Cathy Green
ACWA President

Ernie Avila
ACWA Vice President

Board Briefed on Advocacy, Engagement, Strategic Plan

ACWA's Board of Directors met on Aug. 1 and received updates on state and federal advocacy, progress toward meeting goals in the association's five-year Strategic Plan and staff engagement with member agencies.

Board members also met the previous day for an afternoon workshop, which focused on how ACWA's three pillars of advocacy — government relations, communications and member engagement — work in concert to influence public opinion, shape policy and build support on top-priority issues.

Advocacy

ACWA staff provided updates on a number of bills, including how ACWA's advocacy has helped secure a number of successful outcomes on behalf of member agencies. ACWA's State Legislative Committee has taken positions on nearly 60 bills, along with co-sponsoring two bills.

On the federal side, Board members received an overview of ongoing advocacy in Washington D.C. spanning issues such as federal budgetary impacts, wildfires, regulatory reform, and water supply and quality as well as collaborative work with partner organizations.

Strategic Plan

ACWA staff reported progress toward achieving goals outlined in 50 key performance indicators (KPIs), including advocacy, education, events and connecting members. The KPIs measure progress over five years toward goals identified in ACWA's 2025-'29 Strategic Plan, and ACWA staff have completed 40% of the KPIs since the beginning of this year.

The Strategic Plan update by staff also included results from a survey of conference attendees, which indicated that ACWA conferences overwhelmingly meet expectations and continue to deliver high value through networking and educational opportunities.

Member Engagement

ACWA Interim Executive Director Marwan Khalifa discussed his recent meeting with member agency leaders from ACWA Region 6 and Region 7, reporting on their emphasis on the need for greater connectivity and collaboration between urban and agricultural association members. ACWA continuously works to schedule in-person and virtual meetings between staff and member agencies throughout the year, with nearly 40 meetings taking place between May 20 and July 30.

Other Board business included the addition of the June Lake Public Utility District in Region 3 as the newest ACWA member agency, an update on the ACWA Foundation's work on workforce development and the launch of August as ACWA Membership Appreciation Month.

The next ACWA Board of Directors meeting is scheduled for Sept. 19.



ACWA Member Legislative Proposals Due Sept. 19

ACWA is currently accepting legislative proposals from member agencies for the 2026 state legislative session. ACWA's State Legislative Committee will evaluate the proposals, provide feedback to the proposing agency and determine whether to take a position.

Member agencies must submit proposals for consideration by Sept. 19 and take the following steps:

- Complete the Legislative Proposal Form available on the State Legislative Committee webpage at **acwa.com**.
- Obtain a resolution passed by the agency's governing body in support of the proposal (or at a minimum have noticed by Sept. 19 for consideration of the resolution).

Agencies may be asked to present their legislative proposals to the State Legislative Committee at its Nov. 7 in-person planning meeting in Sacramento.

ACWA staff will contact agencies directly about the status of legislative proposals following their submission.

You can also access the materials to submit proposals by scanning the accompanying QR code. Member login is required for access.

Please contact ACWA State Relations Assistant Karla Cardenas at karlac@acwa.com or (916) 669-2386 with any questions.

Check out ACWA's New YouTube Channel

ACWA has launched an official YouTube channel, creating a new platform designed to highlight the work of the association and the innovation and best practices of ACWA member agencies.

The new channel will feature:

- Educational content on pressing water issues and policy developments;
- Teasers and recaps of ACWA conferences and other events;
- Playlists featuring ACWA member agency videos; and
- Spotlight videos highlighting the innovations of ACWA award finalists and winners.

The channel is intended to serve as an accessible and informative resource for ACWA members, policymakers, and the broader public interested in California water policy and management.

Check out the new channel and subscribe by visiting **youtube.com/@ACWAWater**.



ACWA IN ACTION

California Air Resources Board (CARB) staff and Region 9 member agencies participate in a tour arranged by ACWA to help educate CARB about challenges faced by water districts in implementing the Advanced Clean Fleets regulation. The August tour included Rancho Water, Elsinore Valley Municipal Water District, Eastern Municipal Water District, Western Municipal Water District and Coachella Valley Water District. This was the second tour organized by ACWA that focused on Advanced Clean Fleets regulatory impacts on member agencies.



Legislators Yet to Approve Prop. 4 Spending Plan

ACWA is urging member agencies to sign a coalition letter and contact their legislators in support of a spending plan for Proposition 4, the $10 billion climate resilience bond approved by voters last year.

The Legislature has delayed implementation of this critical funding despite shovel-ready projects waiting on funding to move forward. If a spending plan isn't approved by Sept. 12, it will be delayed until the 2026 Legislative Session.

Proposition 4 includes $2.91 billion in funding for nine water-related categories. By law, the Legislature must approve a spending plan in order for state agencies to begin the grant solicitation process. Timely approval of a spending plan would recognize how this bond funding is a critical tool for public agencies to implement crucial projects in their communities. In some cases, delaying implementation of the funding could cause vital infrastructure projects to also be delayed.

An Aug. 14 ACWA Legislative Alert contains more information and a link for agencies to add their logo to an ACWA letter. Member login is required.

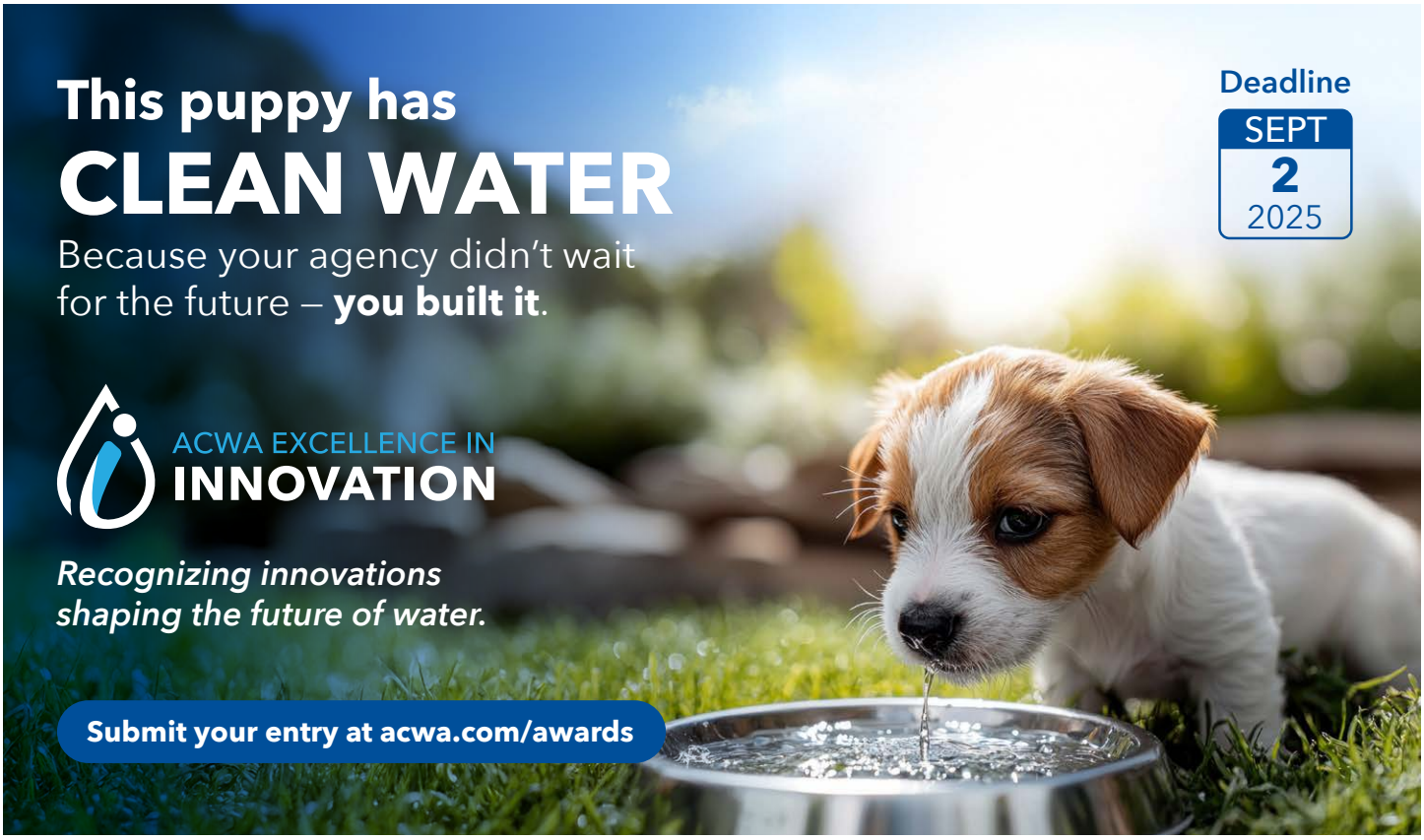
HRL continued from page 1

development of and support for the HRL Program.

"ACWA applauds Gov. Gavin Newsom's leadership in moving the Bay-Delta Plan Update forward and developing the Healthy Rivers and Landscapes Program, which is vital to the success of the plan," stated Interim ACWA Executive Director Marwan Khalifa in the news release. "We deeply appreciate Gov. Newsom's commitment to seeing the Bay-Delta Plan Update completed in a way that sets aside old binaries and opens a new, collaborative pathway toward strengthening the health of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Bay-Delta ecosystem while preserving water supply reliability for Californians."

The HRL Program represents a collaborative, modern, and holistic approach to improving the Bay-Delta ecosystem and water supply reliability. Developed by the Newsom Administration, the HRL Program is supported by federal, state, and local water leaders to create a comprehensive program of habitat enhancement projects coupled with more water for fish and wildlife, managed in a collaborative, science-based manner.

Learn more about the HRL program's approach to protecting, restoring, and enhancing California's Bay-Delta by scanning the accompanying QR code with your mobile phone.



AUGUST
2025

MEMBERSHIP APPRECIATION MONTH
































ACWD
ALAMEDA COUNTY WATER DISTRICT




Groundbreaking
Palmdale Ditch Conversion:
Upgrading the Flow
#Out of the Ditch, Into the Pipes
Hazen


ACWA

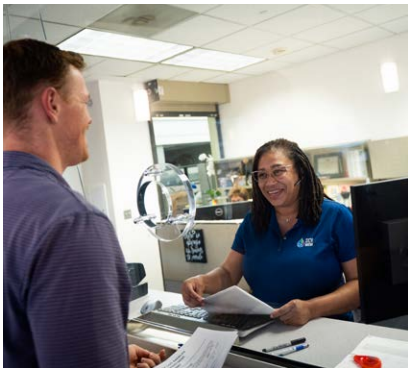

WATER AGENCIES
ACWA
WATER AGENCIES
ASSOCIATION








BACKGROUND









Districts Partner on Historic Investment in Water Reliability

With hard hats, shovels, and a bold vision for the next century, South San Joaquin Irrigation District (SSJID) and Oakdale Irrigation District (OID) officially kicked off the Canyon Tunnel Project in early August.

The 12,000-foot water tunnel promises to revolutionize how water moves through the Sierra foothills. Built beneath steep canyon walls and through an ancient, buried riverbed, the tunnel will bypass a fragile section of the Joint Supply Canal, protecting critical water deliveries to cities, farms and families across SSJID and OID's districts for generations to come.

Construction is now underway and expected to wrap up in 2028. Operating with minimal maintenance, the tunnel offers modern reliability from a century-old canal system originally built in the early 1900s. It will also reduce costly maintenance and minimize potential risks during the irrigation season.

"This tunnel is a lifeline for our communities," stated Glenn Spyksma, SSJID Board President, in a news release. "We're building a future where water keeps flowing no matter what nature throws our way."

The Canyon Tunnel is designed to eliminate risks from landslides that have threatened the century-old canal, including a 2013 rockfall that nearly crippled early-season water deliveries. The new tunnel will ensure a safe, uninterrupted water supply to SSJID's constituents representing 50,000 acres of farmland and the cities of Escalon, Manteca, Lathrop and Tracy. Likewise, the tunnel will also protect OID's ability to serve approximately 26,000 acres of irrigated farmland and raw water for domestic purposes to the community of Knights Ferry.

"OID and SSJID have always worked together to solve big challenges," stated Tom Orvis, OID Board President, in the news release. "This project will take us into the next 100 years with confidence, safety, and strength."

The project is jointly funded by both districts, with cost shares based on historic water use from the Joint Supply Canal, a shared facility delivering water from the diversion at Goodwin Dam facilities and customers in both districts. SSJID is contributing 72% of the total project cost, while OID is funding the remaining 28%.

This collaborative investment reflects the shared commitment of both districts to securing a safe, reliable water future for their communities.

Hi-Desert Water District Breaks Ground on Sewer Expansion

Hi-Desert Water District in August celebrated the official groundbreaking and start of construction on the long-anticipated $103 million expansion of the Yucca Valley sewer collection system, marking a significant investment in public health, environmental protection and infrastructure modernization for the community.

The project was made possible with a grant from the State Water Resources Control Board's Clean Water State Revolving Fund.

The expansion is part of Phase 2 of the district's ongoing wastewater project, extending vital sewer service to several neighborhoods currently relying on septic systems. Construction is underway and is expected to continue through November 2025, concluding with final paving and restoration.



Photo courtesy of Hi-Desert Water District

"This groundbreaking marks a major milestone in our commitment to build a modern, sustainable sewer system for Yucca Valley," stated Hi-Desert Water District General Manager Tony Culver in a news release. "By expanding our infrastructure now, we're ensuring environmental compliance."

This effort builds upon the success of Phase 1, reinforcing Hi-Desert Water District's mission to deliver safe, reliable and environmentally sound water and wastewater services to the community.

THIS MONTH IN ACWA HISTORY

10 years ago

ACWA News reported that association-sponsored SB 385 was headed from the Assembly back to the Senate. The bill, later signed into a law, established a carefully monitored process for public water systems to work toward compliance with a new chromium-6 standard. It passed both houses without a single "no" vote.

20 years ago

Former U.S. Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt minced few words about the CALFED Program and the California Bay-Delta Authority during a Little Hoover Commission meeting. Sounding themes similar to those raised by ACWA in the "No Time to Waste: A Blueprint for California Water," Babbitt warned that pumping facilities in the Bay-Delta "will need to be reconstituted and reconfigured or we will be pumping salt water into the California Aqueduct sometime this century."

30 years ago

ACWA's Board of Directors approved forming a new regulatory relations department to address matters ranging from water quality to endangered species and energy issues. The expansion was in alignment with ACWA's Vision 2000 plan adopted in 1993.

40 years ago

ACWA unveiled a new logo (right) in recognition of its Diamond Jubilee celebration of the association's 75th anniversary. The anniversary would culminate at the ACWA 1985 Fall Conference in December at San Diego's Hotel del Coronado.

50 years ago

Along with job openings, the back page of *ACWA News* advertised overseas opportunities in Iran, inviting those interested to apply for positions as water engineering planners, irrigation construction engineers, and senior operation and maintenance advisers for irrigation projects.

PV Water Celebrates College Lake Project

The Pajaro Valley Water Management Agency (PV Water) hosted an early August celebration of its College Lake Water Supply Project, a major milestone in regional efforts to achieve sustainable groundwater resources.

A ribbon cutting ceremony highlighted the event, where speakers included State Senator John Laird, State Water Resources Control Board Vice Chair Dorene D'Adamo, PV Water Board Chair Stephen Rider, Board Member and former General Manager Mary Bannister and current General Manager Brian Lockwood, along with representatives from the Department of Water Resources (DWR) and Department of Conservation (DOC).

The project establishes College Lake as a new water supply source to reduce groundwater overdraft and seawater intrusion, while supporting habitat for the endangered South-Central California coast steelhead. The project includes three major components: a water intake facility with fish passage, a water treatment plant and a 6-mile, 30-inch treated water pipeline that conveys treated water to approximately 6,300 acres of farmland through PV Water's 23-mile Coastal Distribution System.

The new facilities feature two pumps to draw water from the lake, an adjustable weir with fish passage, a ballasted flocculation/sedimentation treatment process, sediment drying beds, chemical storage, a treated water pump station and a treatment support building.

Groundwater provides more than 90% of the Pajaro Valley's water supply. Long-term over pumping has caused water levels to drop below sea level, resulting in seawater intrusion, degraded water quality and reduced groundwater storage.



DWR and the DOC collectively provided approximately $11.8 million in grant funds to support the $80 million project.

The College Lake Water Supply Project represents the largest new source of supplemental water developed in the region since the 2009 completion of the Watsonville Area Water Recycling Facility, which is a joint project between PV Water and the City of Watsonville.

ACWA Executive Director Recruitment Progresses

ACWA's nationwide search for its next Executive Director has advanced to the interview phase, with an announcement expected by fall.

A total of 84 people applied for the position, with the first round of interviews having taken place the week of Aug. 18. A second round of interviews is scheduled for mid-September.

The recruitment firm WBCP is leading the search, which is being overseen by a 10-member committee appointed by ACWA President Cathy Green.

LIKE, SHARE & FOLLOW

EXPLORING THE WATER WORLD ACROSS SOCIAL MEDIA

For many social media channels, video content is key to driving views and engagement. If your agency is creating video content, you need to be on YouTube.

ACWA launched its official YouTube channel at the end of July. With more than 2.7 billion monthly active users, YouTube is the second most popular social media platform after Facebook. Because videos on YouTube are indexed by Google's search engine, users can also discover content directly through Google search results. It's easy to see how a YouTube channel can help increase your visibility.

YouTube also serves as the second-largest search engine, behind only Google, which makes it a great place for your agency to share videos that answer common customer questions. Content that explains "how to" do something – such as fixing a leaky faucet or setting an automatic sprinkler system – can help customers solve everyday problems while also promoting your agency's water conservation efforts.

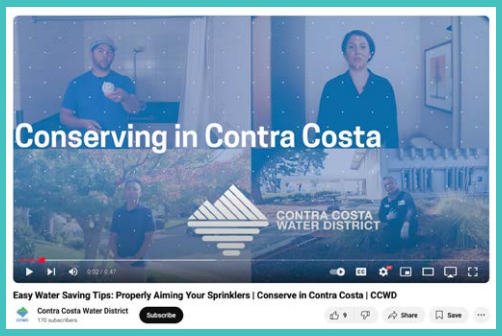
A great example of that is **Contra Costa Water District**, which shared a short video that highlights how to properly aim your sprinklers.

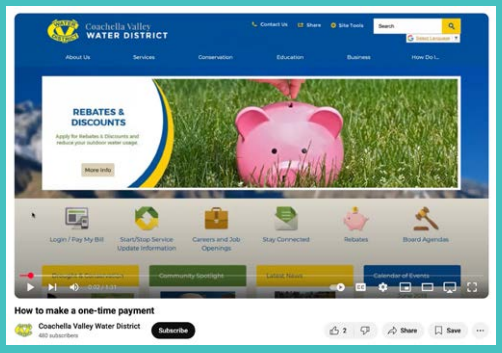
Another example is a **Coachella Valley Water District** video that shows how to make one-time payments on the website.

While both are older videos, the content has a long shelf life and remains relevant for customers.

If you need ideas for what video content might perform well, consider the questions your customer service team receives most often and look for ways to answer them through short, informative videos.

Be sure to follow us on Facebook, X, LinkedIn and Instagram @ACWAWater and now YouTube, to see more of what other ACWA member agencies are doing on social media.







Vincent Dino

OBITUARY

Palmdale Water Mourns Dino

The Palmdale Water District (PWD) has announced the unexpected passing of Board Director **Vincent Dino**, who died July 20 at his home in Palmdale.

Dino was first elected to the PWD Board of Directors in 2013 and was serving his third term. He served as Board President from 2018 to 2021 followed by two years as Vice President.

Dino's community leadership included serving as President of the Special Districts Association of North Los Angeles County, and he was a liaison with Antelope Valley-East Kern Water Agency in addition representing PWD with ACWA JPIA.

"We are in shock and very sad about the loss of our colleague and friend, Vince Dino," said PWD Board President **Kathy Mac Laren-Gomez**. "He contributed so much to our community, especially the water industry. He was our Board's steady anchor. We will miss him dearly."



David Lindberg

OBITUARY

Humboldt Bay MWD Mourns Lindberg

The Humboldt Bay Municipal Water District (HBMWD) is mourning the loss of Board of Directors Vice President **David Lindberg** who lost his life July 31 in a motorcycle accident. He was 71.

Lindberg was known for his unwavering commitment to protecting and preserving the Mad River as a water resource for current and future generations. He originally came to Eureka to attend Humboldt State University, where he earned a Bachelor of Science degree in geology in 1981 before pursuing a lifelong career in the field.

"The Board remembers Director Lindberg not only as a dedicated public servant and professional, but also as a loving husband, father, and family member whose personal joys included tending a beautiful garden of flowers, skiing at Whistler, and training his border collies for agility competitions," stated a HBMWD Board resolution in his honor.



Adam Larsen

San Juan Water District Appoints Larsen as New GM

The San Juan Water District (SJWD) Board of Directors has named **Adam Larsen** as the district's new General Manager.

Larsen brings over 22 years of experience in the water utility industry, and has been a dedicated employee of San Juan since 2006. His previous roles within the district include distribution operator, distribution lead worker, and most recently, field services manager since 2020. He also served on the Board of Directors of the Foresthill Public Utility District.

Larsen succeeds General Manager **Paul Helliker**, who is retiring after a distinguished 43-year career in public service at the federal, state and local levels.



Apply to Serve on an ACWA Committee!

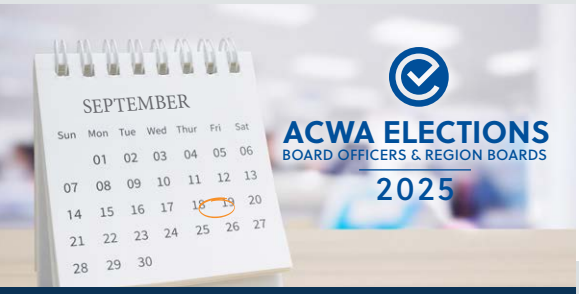
Deadline Sept. 19

Association of California Water Agencies
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Sacramento, CA 95814-3577

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Need to update your contact information?
Email updates@acwa.com



ACWA Election Deadline: Sept. 19

Ballots are out! Authorized voting representatives can now vote for ACWA's President, Vice President, and Region Board members for the 2026–'27 term.

Watch the Town Hall video to hear from the candidates and learn more at **acwa.com/elections**.

MOST CLICKED

Subscribe to ACWA's eNews at **acwa.com/newsletters/ACWA-eNews** for weekly email updates on the latest association news. Check out some of the top stories from the past month on ACWA's website.

- Experimental Hatchery Strays Find Suitable Habitat and Cold Water on the Tuolumne – July 29
- State Water Board Adopts Revised Water Measurement and Reporting Regulations – Aug. 6
- Agency recognized for Enduring Impact on Inland Empire Youth – July 21
- Rancho Water Awarded Grant to Boost Conservation and Emergency Readiness – Aug. 5

UPCOMING EVENTS

Visit **acwa.com/events** for complete listing and registration

SEP 2025
5

Orange County Water Summit
OCWD / MWDOC | Costa Mesa

The OC Water Summit fosters discussion of new and ongoing water supply challenges, water policy issues, and other critical topics impacting the water industry. Registration required.

SEP 2025
12

ACWA Region 1 Tour and Program
ACWA | Windsor

Mark your calendar! Don't miss ACWA Region 1's Regional Water Infrastructure Program and Tour, highlighting innovative water solutions in the Town of Windsor.

SEP 2025
25–26

ACWA Region 5 Event
ACWA | San Francisco

Join ACWA Region 5 and SFPUC for a two-day event exploring San Francisco's water infrastructure and fire resilience. Enjoy a networking reception (Sept. 25) and a full program (Sept. 26) on climate resilience, water innovation, and SFPUC's auxiliary fire system.

OCT 2025
1

WEF's Water Summit 2025
WEF | Sacramento

Join the Water Education Foundation's 2025 Water Summit to explore critical Western water issues with experts and policymakers, enjoy lunch and networking, and discuss this year's theme: *Embracing Uncertainty in the West*.

OCT 2025
9–10

ACWA Regions 6 & 7 Event
ACWA | Bakersfield

Join colleagues for a networking reception at Wool Growers Restaurant on Oct. 9, followed by a day of sustainability tours and water-focused discussions across Kern County on Oct. 10, including visits to Grimmway Farms and Setton Pistachios.

OCT 2025
23

ACWA Region 2 Tour & Program
ACWA | Oroville

Save the date for a Region 2 event featuring tours of key State Water Project sites, including Oroville Dam, the repaired spillway, and the Feather River Fish Hatchery.