

San Gorgonio Pass Water Agency

DATE: July 13, 2026
TO: Board of Directors
FROM: Lance Eckhart, General Manager
BY: Lance Eckhart, General Manager
SUBJECT: **Consideration and Possible Approval of the San Gorgonio Pass Water Agency Board Handbook**

RECOMMENDATION

Approve the final San Gorgonio Pass Water Agency Board Handbook and authorize the General Manager, Clerk of the Board, and legal counsel to make non-substantive updates, formatting corrections, and future administrative updates as needed to keep the handbook current with Board-approved policies, applicable law, and Agency contact information.

PREVIOUS CONSIDERATION

- Board Handbook Committee - December 10, 2024: Initial review and direction on handbook framework and content needs.
- Board Handbook Committee - January 29, 2025: Continued review of draft handbook sections and Board governance content.
- Board Handbook Committee - April 22, 2025: Review of handbook structure, policy references, and onboarding content.
- Board Handbook Committee - February 24, 2026: Review of updated draft and remaining committee comments.
- Board Handbook Committee - April 8, 2026: Continued refinement of final draft language and design.
- Board Handbook Committee - May 12, 2026: Final committee review prior to bringing the handbook forward for Board consideration.

BACKGROUND

The San Gorgonio Pass Water Agency Board Handbook was developed to provide a practical reference guide for current Board members and a structured onboarding tool for newly elected or appointed Directors. The handbook consolidates key information about the Agency, the Board's role, Board-approved procedures, and resources needed to support effective governance.

The current Board Handbook Committee is composed of Directors Jim Tickemyer (chair), Sarah Wargo, and Dr. Blair Ball. The Committee worked through multiple iterations of the document with staff, legal counsel as needed, and CV Strategies to develop a final draft that is clear, accessible, and consistent with the Agency's public-facing communication style. The process was collaborative and focused on creating a useful working document rather than a duplicative policy manual.

The final draft includes major elements intended to help Directors understand and navigate Agency governance and operations, including:

- Agency overview, mission, vision, values, organization chart, contact directory, history, key facilities, water supply sources, and current projects.
- A new Board member checklist covering orientation, required training, Form 700, budget review, Board committee assignments, agenda notifications, and follow-up resources.
- Strategic Plan alignment and a summary of how Board actions should connect to Agency goals and public value.
- Board governance, officer elections, President and Vice President duties, Board committees, meeting structure, agenda preparation, minutes, Brown Act expectations, and meeting conduct.
- Communications guidance, including public-facing communication protocols and social media expectations for Board members.
- Code of ethics, conflict-of-interest concepts, enforcement tools, censure information, emergency protocols, Board compensation, benefits, policies, procedures, resources, and glossary.

ANALYSIS

A Board handbook is a common governance tool that helps align elected officials, staff, and the public around how the Board conducts business. For existing Board members, it serves as a quick reference guide for recurring governance questions, meeting protocols, committee roles, ethics expectations, communications practices, and basic Agency information. For new Board members, it provides a structured onboarding resource that explains the Agency's purpose, water supply role, key projects, and Board operating expectations in one location.

The handbook does not replace the San Geronio Pass Water Agency Law, Board-adopted policies, the Brown Act, conflict-of-interest laws, or legal advice. Rather, it organizes and summarizes key information in a user-friendly format so Directors can more easily access the underlying rules, policies, and resources that guide Board service.

The final draft is recommended for Board approval because it:

- Improves onboarding and continuity as Board membership changes over time.
- Supports consistent Board operations by placing major governance expectations and reference materials in one document.
- Provides existing Directors with an easy reference for meetings, committees, communications, ethics, benefits, emergency protocols, and Agency resources.
- Improves transparency by clearly describing the Board's role, the Agency's purpose, and how the Board conducts public business.
- Supports efficient staff and legal counsel coordination by reducing repeated orientation questions and directing Directors to the appropriate resource or policy.
- Provides a flexible document that can be administratively updated for non-substantive changes such as staff contact information, formatting, hyperlinks, and policy cross-references.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT

Approval of the Board Handbook directly supports the following Strategic Plan goals and objectives:

Strategic Goal 4: Governance: Serve the public with dedication, determination, transparency, collaboration, and a commitment to expanding knowledge.

This action aligns with:

Objective 2: Conduct ongoing Board and leadership spokesperson training.

The Handbook provides a reference for Board roles, communications, meeting conduct, and public representation.

Objective 3: Institute a formal Board orientation program.

The Handbook serves as the Agency's onboarding tool for newly elected or appointed Board members.

Objective 6: Provide ongoing education to the Board of Directors on issues affecting the Agency and the regional water landscape.

The Handbook summarizes Agency history, water supply functions, key facilities, Board responsibilities, and regional partnerships.

Objective 8: Periodically consider Board structures, such as committees, to best serve public needs.

The Handbook documents Board committees, committee roles, and meeting expectations.

Strategic Goal 3: Finance & Administration: Sustain long-term financial stability by engaging in prudent planning to guide informed decision making.

This action aligns with:

Objective 8: Assess and update policies and ordinances to align with the Agency's mission, vision, and values.

The Handbook organizes Board policies, procedures, ethics expectations, and governance practices into a single reference document.

FISCAL IMPACT

No direct fiscal impact is associated with approval of the Board Handbook. Any future costs related to printing, design updates, or administrative maintenance of the handbook will be absorbed within existing administrative and public outreach budgets unless otherwise directed by the Board.

ACTION

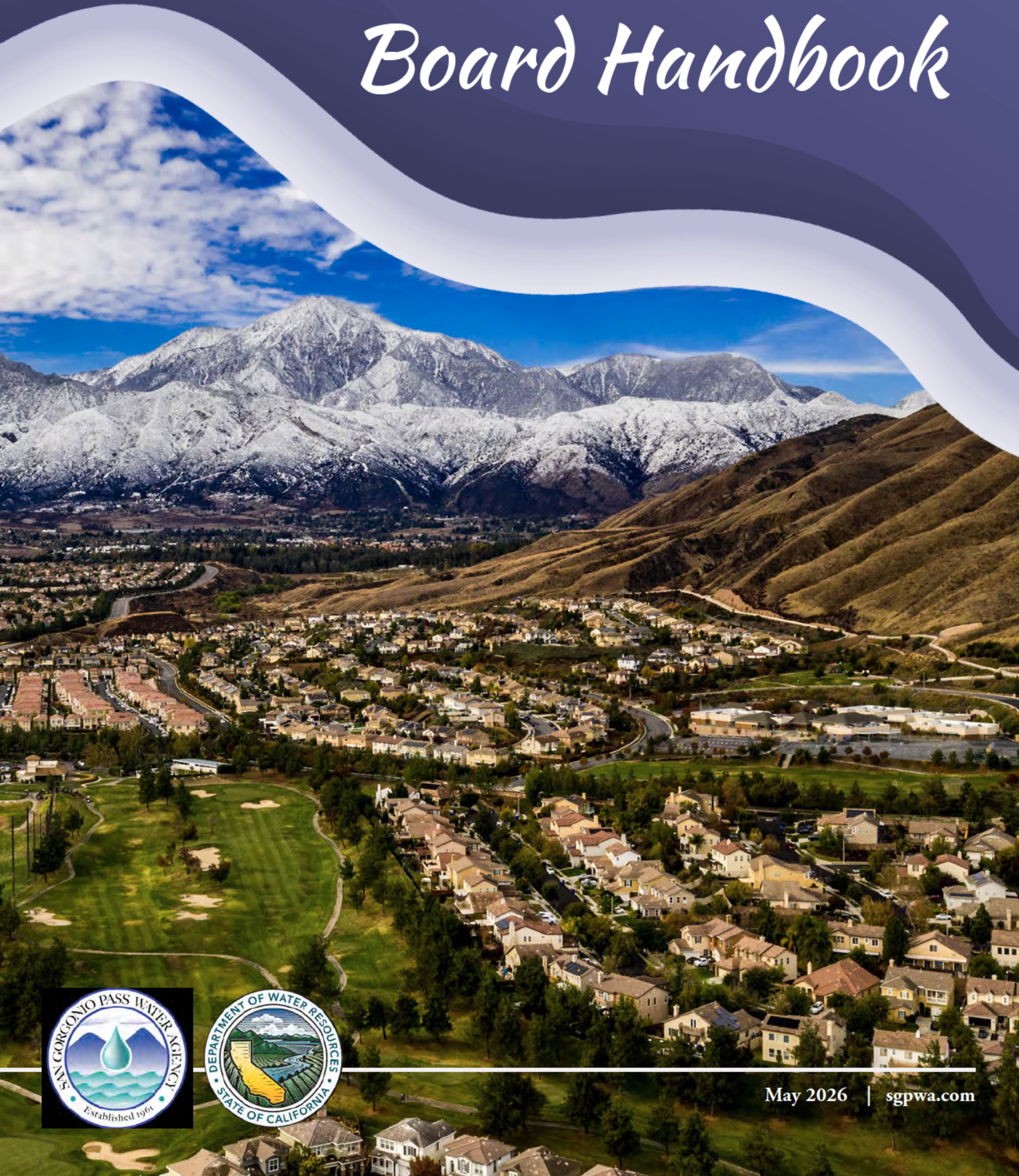
Approve the final San Geronio Pass Water Agency Board Handbook and authorize the General Manager, Clerk of the Board, and legal counsel to make non-substantive administrative updates as needed.

ATTACHMENTS

- San Geronio Pass Water Agency Board Handbook, Final Draft, July 2026

SAN GORGONIO PASS WATER AGENCY

Board Handbook



May 2026 | sgpwa.com

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Welcome to the San Geronio Pass Water Agency

The San Geronio Pass Water Agency (SGPWA) Board of Directors is the publicly elected governing body of our Agency. Five of the Directors represent Divisions within the Agency, while two are elected at-large. They represent their constituencies and set vital water policies to support the Pass area's water systems and resilience.

The Agency operates under the authority of Chapter 101 of the California Water Code Appendix also known as the San Geronio Pass Water Agency Law. As single individuals, Board members may not commit the Agency to any policy, act or expenditure.

This handbook provides an overview of SGPWA's critical role in the region, along with the Board policies and resources that set Board members up for success.



How to Use This Handbook

This handbook introduces new Board members to SGPWA's history, mission, water resources, projects and partnerships. It also outlines the policies and procedures approved by the SGPWA Board of Directors for conducting Board business. These allow the Board to:

-  Consider Board decisions fairly and efficiently
-  Protect Board member's rights and privileges
-  Ensure that the public is informed of matters coming before the Board
-  Allow the public to watch and comment on Board deliberations
-  Encourage public involvement in the Board's decision-making

Each Director will be given a copy of this handbook upon assuming office. This document includes links for a detailed overview of every Board policy, as well as resources to support your time on the SGPWA Board.

Key Contact Directory & Organization Chart

Lance Eckhart	General Manager / Chief Hydrogeologist	██████████	leckhart@sgpwa.com
Maricela Cabral	Executive Assistant / Clerk of the Board	██████████	mcabral@sgpwa.com
Jennifer Ustation	Chief Financial Officer	██████████	justation@sgpwa.com
Matt Howard	Operation Manager	██████████	mhoward@sgpwa.com
Emmett Campbell	Director of Water Resources	██████████	ecampbell@sgpwa.com
Holland Stewart	Legal Counsel	██████████	holland.stewart@bbklaw.com

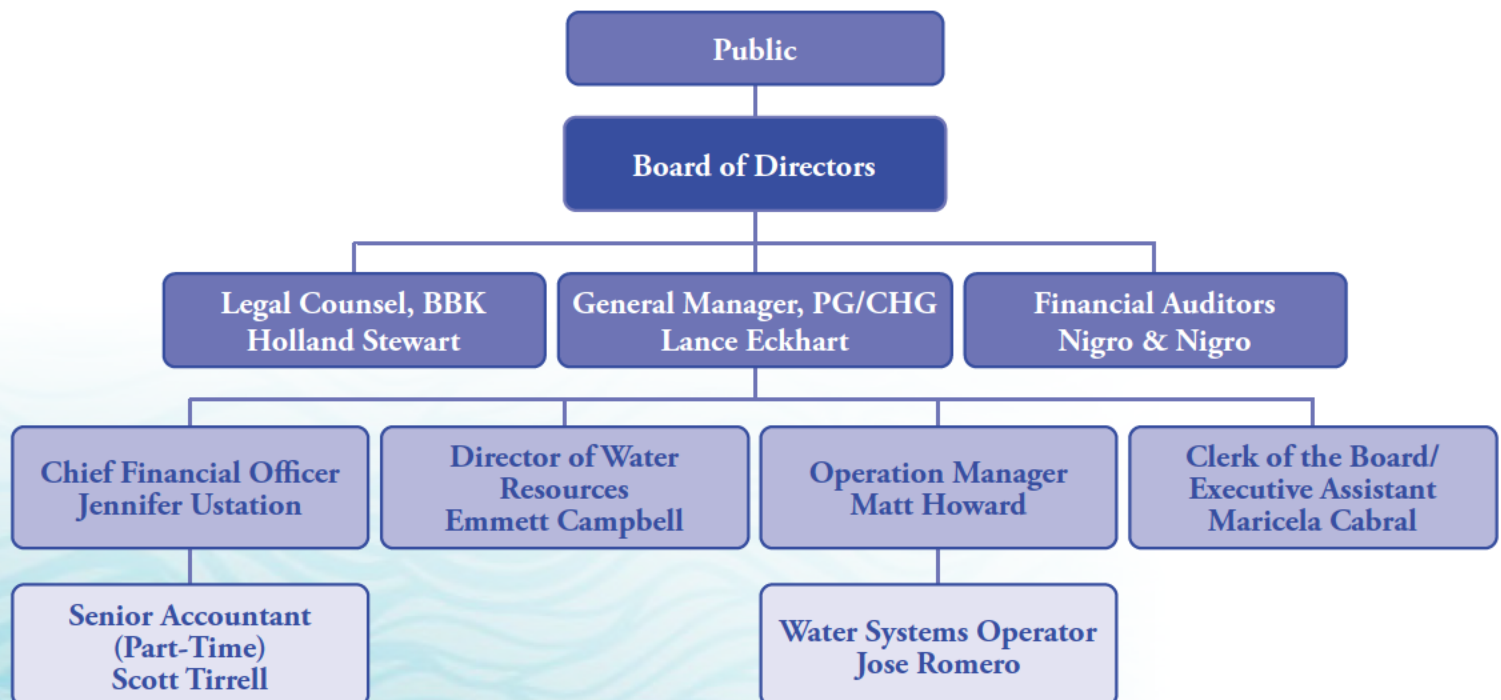
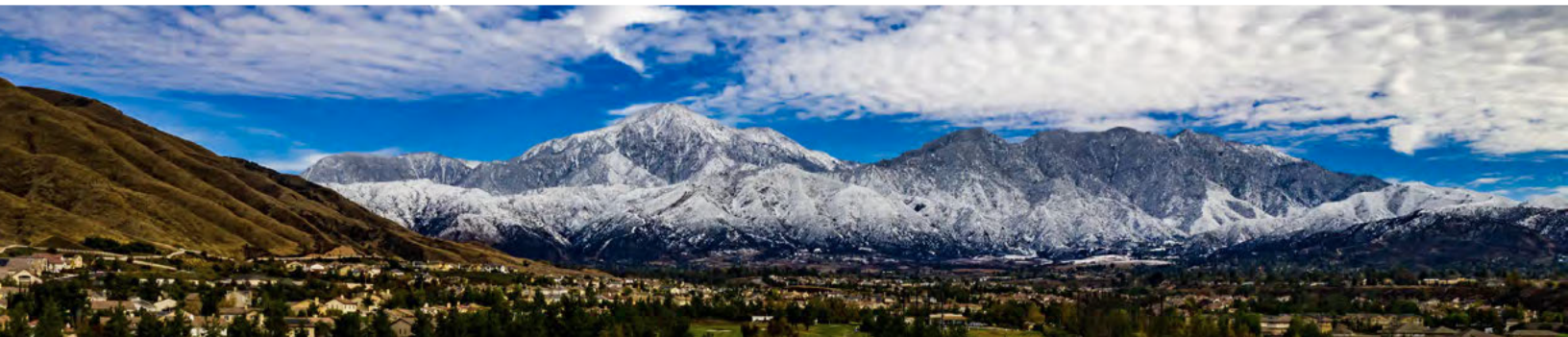
For general inquiries or if you cannot reach a specific staff member, please contact the main office.

Phone: 951-845-2577

Address: 1210 Beaumont Avenue, Beaumont, CA 92223

Email: info@sgpwa.com

Office Hours: Monday – Thursday: 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Every other Friday: 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.



SGPWA New Board Member Checklist

Orientation & Compliance

- ☐ Review Board Member Handbook / Policies < You are here.
 - ☐ Complete Required Trainings (e.g., Brown Act, Financial, Sexual Harassment)
 - ☐ Submit Form 700 – Statement of Economic Interests
-

Governance & Operations

- ☐ Understand SGPWA mission, vision, and core services
 - ☐ Review current budget and financial statements
 - ☐ Read recent Board meeting minutes and key decisions
 - ☐ Understand Board committees and your assignments
-

Communication & Relationships

- ☐ Meet with Board President / GM for one-on-one orientation
 - ☐ Introduce yourself to fellow Board Members and key staff
 - ☐ Review communication protocols and reporting channels
-

Ongoing Learning

- ☐ Subscribe to Board agenda notifications
 - ☐ Review Strategic Plan
 - ☐ Review Urban Water Management Plan
 - ☐ Identify additional resources or training needed, including industry organizations or suggested courses
 - ☐ Schedule follow-up questions or clarifications with staff or legal counsel
-



About SGPWA

Established in 1961, SGPWA is one of 29 State Water Contractors and a wholesale agency. SGPWA imports water from the State Water Project (SWP) to replenish local groundwater basins. Local water retailers pump water from these basins to supply homes and businesses in the Pass area. We are committed to managing the region's water supply responsibly and sustainably.

SGPWA plays a critical role in the region's water landscape, investing in key facilities, pipes and reservoirs, strategic partnerships, water projects and smart water management practices. SGPWA's efforts ensure our community has the water it needs to thrive.



Strategic Plan Focus

At SGPWA, strategic plan alignment serves as the cornerstone of effective decision-making. Each policy, project, and initiative is evaluated through the lens of the Strategic Plan to ensure it advances the Agency's mission, supports long-term objectives, and delivers value to the community. By consistently referencing the plan, Board members and staff maintain a clear framework for prioritizing actions, allocating resources, and measuring outcomes. This approach fosters transparency, accountability, and coherence, ensuring that every decision ultimately reinforces the Agency's vision and strategic goals.

KEY THEMES & STRATEGIC GOALS



Water Supply & Stewardship

Align with the current and future water landscape, supporting the region's long-term needs by diversifying the local supply portfolio and advancing water sustainability.



Infrastructure & System Reliability

Ensure a reliable delivery system that advances efficiency and resiliency.



Finance & Administration

Sustain long-term financial stability by engaging in prudent planning to guide informed decision-making.



Governance

Serve the public with dedication, determination, transparency, collaboration and a commitment to expanding knowledge.



Personnel

Position the agency for long-term success by continuing to grow a welcoming and collaborative environment that attracts and retains devoted employees.



Public Engagement

Engage and educate the public in a meaningful way that generates a greater understanding of the agency's role in water supply reliability and the importance of sustainability.



Regional Leadership, Industry Relationships & Collaboration

Maintain, foster and expand collaboration with local, regional, state and federal partners to develop strategic solutions to water supply challenges and opportunities.

[View the Complete Strategic Plan](#)

Mission, Vision & Values

SGPWA's Mission, Vision and Values guide its efforts to build a strong water future for the Pass area.



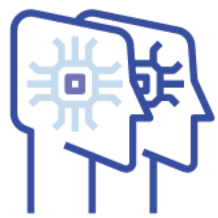
Mission

San Geronio Pass Water Agency supports the region's quality of life through sustainable water management.



Vision

San Geronio Pass Water Agency aims to provide water security that meets the regional needs of an evolving landscape, transcending boundaries to work toward common goals, create synergy through collaboration and ensure an adequate water supply today and in the future.



Values

Collaborative	Responsive	Accountable	Sustainable
Reliable	Innovative	Trustworthy	Forward-focused

Board Culture: Regional Leadership & Collaboration

The SGPWA Board of Directors embodies a culture centered on regional leadership, collaboration, and proactive water stewardship.

The Board operates with a unified commitment to the Agency's mission: supporting the region's quality of life through sustainable water management.

Directors actively engage with local water retailers, municipalities, and neighboring agencies, fostering partnerships that transcend jurisdictional boundaries. This collaborative approach ensures a cohesive strategy for addressing the evolving water needs of the Pass area.

By prioritizing transparency, accountability, and community engagement, the Board cultivates a culture that not only governs effectively but also leads with foresight, ensuring water security for current and future generations.



History

1961	1962	1964	1971	1987	1988	1991	1996	20
Legislature forms Agency	Agency signs contract for 15,000 acre-feet of SWP water with DWR	Agency starts repayment of the original SWP bonds, with payments continuing through 2035.	USGS completes report on underground storage in Pass area. It defines basins within Agency's service area	Agency starts specific planning for delivery facilities to the area	Agency produces report on Dependable Yield of Beaumont Basin. This is the first report on "safe yield"	Desert Agencies pull out of SWP extension. Agency starts a "standalone" project to bring SWP water to the Pass	Agency signs agreement with DWR to construct East Branch Extension (EBX) of SWP	Startup begins i

2021	2022	2023
November 8 Backbone Pipeline Study Authorized Launches exploration of a transformative regional conveyance project to improve long-term water reliability	January 12 San Geronio Pass GSP Adopted Establishes SGPWA's central role in groundwater sustainability management February 14 Gap Funding Program Considered Introduces financial tools to support small system resilience projects April 25 Ventura Deal Approved Secures a long-term imported water supply September 26 Water Sales to Central Coast Water Authority During Drought Strategic transfers demonstrate operational flexibility and regional value November 14 Brookside West Property Acquired Investment in future infrastructure and groundwater recharge capacity	March 13 Blue Bucket Funding Deployed Redirects Central Coast Water Authority's sale revenue to purchase water and aggressively enter the water market March 27 Small Water Systems Program launch Begins direct support for disadvantaged and smaller systems May 22 County Line Road Recharge MOU Formalizes collaboration with San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District (SBVMWD) on a major recharge project October 2 New Strategic Plan and Leadership Marks a pivotal organizational shift with a new board and General Manager

2002	2005	2006	2007	2014	2017	2018	2019	2020
of EBX in March	Agency begins selling water to Yucaipa Valley Water District for use in the City of Calimesa	Agency starts selling water in large quantities to Beaumont Cherry Valley Water District to replenish the Beaumont Basin	Agency completes a water conservation and education master plan; Agency completes recharge study of Beaumont Basin to identify best places for recharge facilities	Agency constructs Phase 1 of its conjunctive use storage program	EBX 2 is completed. The region can now import its full allocation and more; Agency, along with local entities, forms GSAs for San Geronimo Pass Subbasin and Yucaipa Subbasin as part of SGMA implementation	Agency secures position and begins investing in the planning phase of the Sites Reservoir project. Working through the Agency, Beaumont Cherry Valley Water District invests too	Agency begins recharging imported water to the newly constructed recharge facility	Agency participates in the Delta Conveyance Project (DCP)

2024	2025	2026
February 13 Joint Board Delta Conveyance Project Meeting Deepens coordination between SGPWA and SBVMWD on drought strategy March 4 South Mesa Water Company Gap Funding + Leadership Recognition Advances funding while honoring George Jorritsma's foundational leadership April 1 High Valleys Water District Gap Funding Expands financial support for critical local projects May 13 Pass Water Agency Foundation Formed Establishes a new vehicle for broader community and water initiatives September 30 Backbone Pipeline Workshop Major step toward consensus on a transformative regional project October 7 Approved Funding for the Delta Conveyance Project Accepted ARPA funds for 6 regional heli-hydrants. Made strides in regional wildfire response and statewide water resilience October 24 ARPA Funding Secured for County Line Road Project Brings critical federal funding into regional infrastructure development	June 2 New Strategic Plan Reinforces long-term priorities and partnerships June 16 MOU With Metropolitan Water District (MWD) SGPWA enters MOU with MWD to explore water partnership opportunities. MWD Chair Adán Ortega addresses SGPWA Board July 21 Received Funding for 7th Heli-hydrant from Riverside County Flood Control Secured wildfire response resources for the fire-prone Banning Heights area September 8 SGPWA and Beaumont Cherry Valley Water District (BCVWD) join forces for Urban Water Management Plan Both agencies work together to manage local resources September 15 Board Approves \$4.6M for County Line Road Project Joint SGPWA, SBVMWD, and SMWC project advances October 6 Beacon Economics Report Received Integrates economic insight into planning decisions November 3 SGPWA Purchases 5 Thousand Acre-Feet (TAF) from SBVMWD as Seed Water For Long-Term Exchanges Purchases and banks significant water supplies December 15 DWR Returns Control of East Branch Extension to SGPWA and SBVMWD Sister agencies maintain regional control	March 11 SGPWA Purchase 3 TAF from Napa County Flood Control Expands supply portfolio

The State Water Project:

Moving Water 500 Miles to Supply the Pass Area

The State Water Project is the foundation of water reliability for SGPWA and the communities it serves. The State Water Project captures, stores, and conveys water from Northern California through the Sacramento San Joaquin Delta and down the California Aqueduct into Southern California. Water travels more than 500 miles downstream to reach SGPWA's service area. As one of 29 State Water Contractors, SGPWA depends on this system to import water, which it then delivers to local retail agencies that serve homes, businesses, and agriculture across the Pass area.

At the core of this system are allocations, which determine how much water contractors receive each year based on hydrologic conditions, storage levels, and operational constraints. SGPWA holds an annual entitlement of 17,300-acre feet, made possible by the completion of the East Branch Extension.

In wet years, allocations can approach full delivery, while in dry years they can drop significantly, requiring careful planning, storage, and supplemental supplies. This variability underscores the importance of the State Water Project as a system that requires active management, regional coordination, and long-term investment to ensure resilience amid changing conditions.

The East Branch Extension, completed in 2003 with expanded capacity finalized in 2017, represents decades of persistence to secure a direct connection to the State Water Project for the Pass area. It stands as a hard-won achievement that now delivers enough water to support tens of thousands of families each year. Today, SGPWA is building on that legacy by investing in the future through the Delta Conveyance Project, which aims to modernize and protect the system's most vulnerable link.

How SGPWA Sources Its Water Supply

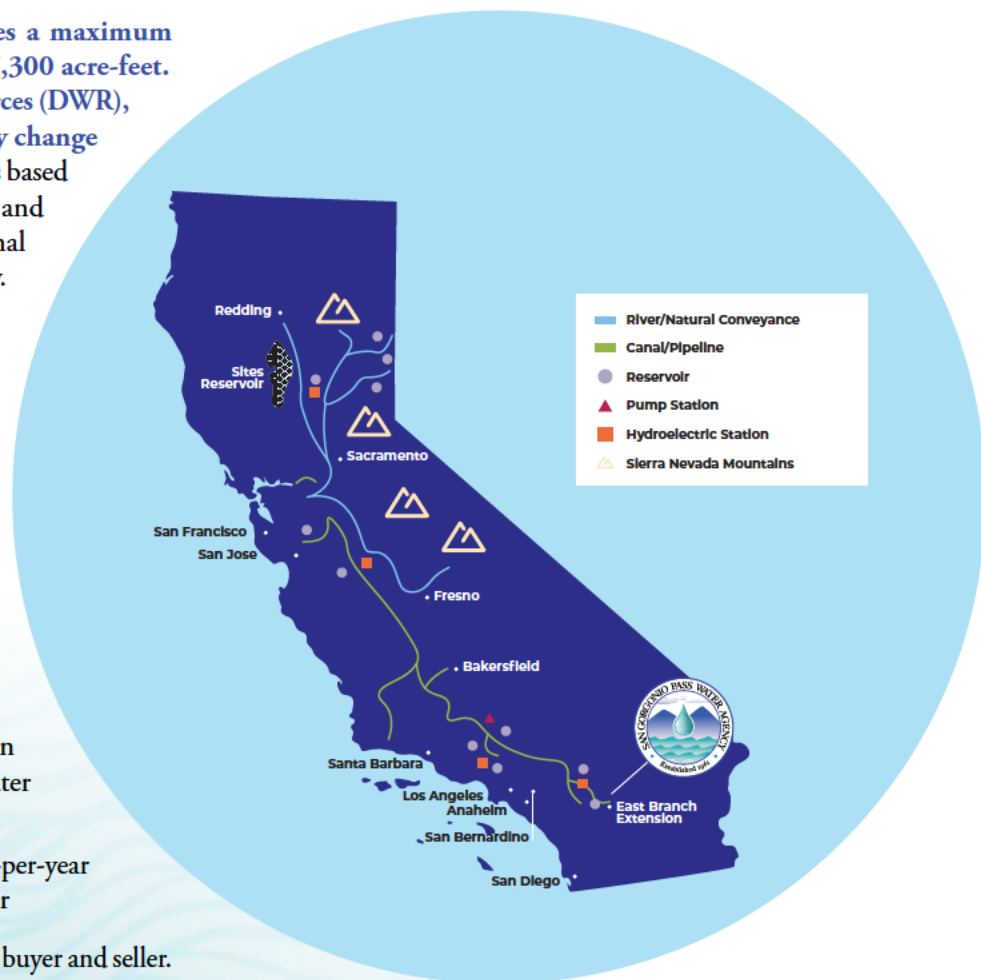
As a State Water Contractor, SGPWA receives a maximum annual allocation of Table A water totaling 17,300 acre-feet. Administered by the Department of Water Resources (DWR), the Table A allocation differs annually and may change over the course of the year. An initial allocation is based on conservative dry hydrology, current storage and releases to be made through the year, while the final allocation reflects the actual and forecast water supply.

As the SWP ends in the Pass area, water must travel more than 500 miles to reach SGPWA. The Agency is deeply invested in what happens upstream and its local impacts.

SGPWA also supports the region's water needs through water transfer and banking partnerships, including:

- An agreement with the City of Ventura to increase the Agency's SWP water to up to 27,300 acre-feet per year for the next 20 years
- Partnership with Antelope Valley-East Kern Water Agency (AVEK) to preserve excess water for later use
- Agreement with AVEK to lease 1,700 acre-feet-per-year of 100% reliable, non-project "Nickel" water

SGPWA is active in the California water market as a buyer and seller.



Key Facilities

SGPWA relies on two critical facilities to the Pass area's water supply.

East Branch Extension

As part of the SWP, the East Branch Extension (EBX) conveys water to the Pass area. Phase 2 of the project enabled SGPWA to import its full annual allocation of 17,300 acre-feet. EBX spans six miles of 66-inch pipe under the Santa Ana River and through Mentone to Yucaipa. It includes the new Citrus Pump Station and Reservoir in Mentone, and additional pumps for the Crafton Hills and Cherry Valley Pump Stations.

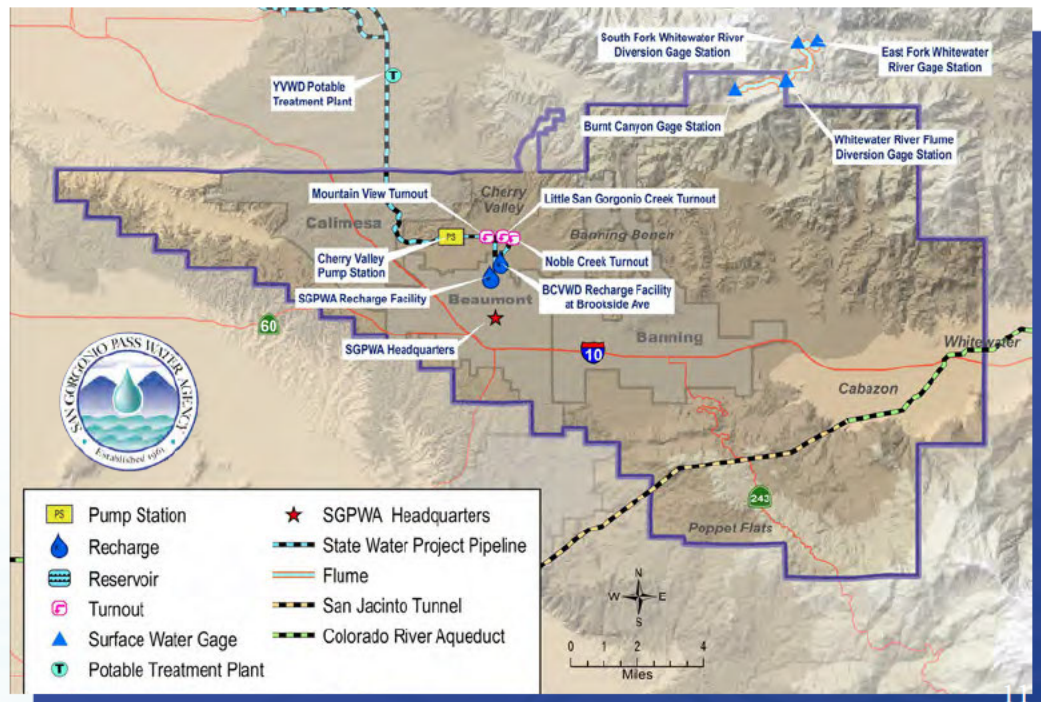


Brookside East Recharge Facility

This groundwater recharge facility includes recharge ponds and a pipeline. It allows the Agency to import and store more water in wet years to use during future dry periods and drought.



Facilities in the San Geronio Pass Water Agency Area



By the Numbers

We serve a **225-square-mile area**, from Calimesa to Cabazon. Our water sales to local retailers to reduce groundwater depletion benefit **106,000 people** regionally

Our East Branch Extension of the SWP includes:

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
|  5 pump stations |  2 active recharge facilities |  7 metering stations |
|  2 reservoirs |  Approximately 50 miles of pipeline | |



Key Investments

Sites Reservoir Project

SGPWA is the third largest investor in the Sites Reservoir Project, a water storage facility that aims to advance California's goal for an affordable and sustainable water supply. As an offstream reservoir, the project will capture 1.5 million acre-feet of excess water from major storms and flows from the Sacramento River. SGPWA has 87,000 acre-feet of storage in the Sites Reservoir.

Delta Conveyance Project

SGPWA is a partner in the Delta Conveyance Project (DCP). This critical modernization of the SWP has been in concept for more than 60 years. The project would update the SWP's aging water delivery system, protecting the reliability of SWP deliveries here and across California.



Resource Diversification

By increasing and diversifying our area's water supply, SGPWA secures water for the Pass area's future. Current projects and agreements include:

- Delta Conveyance upgrades and the Sites Reservoir Project
- Strategic participation in California's water transfer and banking programs to strengthen supply reliability in the Pass area
- The Yuba Accord, allowing us to obtain enough water for up to 900 local families from Yuba County
- An agreement with the San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District for up to 5,000 acre-feet of additional supplies in surplus years
- The Agency's Nickel Water contract provides a 20-year supply of 100 percent reliable water from AVEK
- A water exchange with AVEK to preserve excess water for later use
- An agreement with the City of Ventura that will increase the Agency's SWP water to up to 27,300 acre-feet per year for the next 20 years



Groundwater Protection

SGPWA is an advocate for the groundwater basins within our service area, including the Beaumont and Cabazon basins, and the lesser groundwater basins. We import water to recharge these groundwater basins and prevent overdraft or depletion. We carefully manage groundwater resources to ensure a robust supply for our community.

SGPWA participates in the development of Groundwater Sustainability Plans to ensure groundwater is managed responsibly. Our region's groundwater basins are healthy, stable and well managed because of the Agency's impact.

The San Geronio Pass Water Agency Act states the following: It is the intent of the Legislature that, in allocating water received from the State Water Project pursuant to this Act, the highest priority shall be given to eliminating groundwater overdraft conditions within any agency or district receiving the water. (Act 101-15.5)

Regional Collaboration

As a system of systems, collaborations and key partnerships define the work we do at San Geronio Pass Water Agency (SGPWA), includes the following member agencies:

- Banning Heights Mutual Water Company
- Beaumont Cherry Valley Water District
- Cabazon Water District
- Cherry Valley Water Company
- City of Banning
- City of Beaumont
- City of Calimesa
- High Valleys Water District
- South Mesa Water Company
- Yucaipa Valley Water District

We also partner with the following entities:

- San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District
- The Morongo Band of Mission Indians (Pass Area stakeholder and regular collaborator)

SGPWA is proud to deliver local retailer support through its Small Systems Assistance Program. This is a partnership with the California Rural Water Association to aid small water retailers through Distribution and Treatment Workshops, Needs Assessments, Compliance Assessments, and Grant Application Support.

SGPWA also regularly provides gap funding to small water systems. Gap funding ensures small water purveyors can utilize grants to advance projects with region-wide benefits, even if they lack financial reserves to handle the up-front costs.





Governance

SGPWA operates under a Board/General Manager model of governance, a common structure for special districts. Think of this model as four pillars: the Board of Directors, the General Manager, Legal Counsel and Auditors each represent a leg, and all four must work together in balance to support the Agency's success.

The Board and the General Manager: A Collaborative Team

At the heart of this model is a strong partnership between the Board and the General Manager. The Board sets the policy direction, and the General Manager brings professional expertise to carry it out through daily operations. Together, they work toward a common mission, with trust and transparency as key foundations.

The General Manager is responsible for:

- Overseeing all departments and ensuring effective service delivery
- Hiring and managing department heads
- Managing day-to-day operations in line with Board-approved policies

To keep communication smooth and effective, the following guidelines apply:

- Board members are encouraged to contact the General Manager with questions or concerns about Agency operations. Likewise, the General Manager may reach out to any Board member to discuss important matters.
- Information from the General Manager may be shared verbally, in writing, or electronically, depending on the situation.
- Interdepartmental issues are managed directly by the General Manager.
- If the General Manager plans to be out of the office for an extended time, the Board will be informed in advance.
- Other than logistical requests that should go through the Board Clerk, Board members are encouraged to speak directly with the General Manager when making requests.



The Role of Legal Counsel: Supporting the Whole Team

The Board appoints a General Counsel to provide legal guidance to the Board, the General Manager, and all Agency departments. This third leg of the governance stool helps ensure decisions are legally sound and in the best interest of the District.

When it comes to legal and confidential matters, Board members follow these important practices:

- All privileged or confidential information, especially from closed session discussions, must be kept strictly confidential. It should only be discussed with fellow Board members, the General Manager, or Legal Counsel.
- All communications with SGPWA's General Counsel concerning Agency business are confidential.
- Confidential documents from closed sessions should be returned or deleted immediately after the session ends.
- Confidential materials received outside of closed session should be deleted, destroyed, or returned to staff within 30 days.
- Board members should not request confidential written materials from staff that haven't been provided to the full Board.

Just like a sturdy table needs all four legs to stand, SGPWA's governance depends on the balanced and respectful collaboration between the Board, the General Manager, Legal Counsel and Auditors. Each plays a vital role in ensuring the Agency runs smoothly, transparently, and in line with its mission.

How to Request Staff and Legal Resources

Board members are encouraged to direct any requests for staff research or legal counsel to the General Manager or the Agency's General Counsel. If a request is expected to require significant time or resources, it may be placed on a future agenda for full Board consideration. Responses from staff will be shared with the General Manager and distributed to all Board members to ensure transparency. For brief legal questions, Board members may also reach out directly to the General Counsel for guidance.

Board Officer Elections

Resolution No. 2017-01, adopted by the San Geronimo Pass Water Agency, establishes a policy for the annual election of Board officers to promote leadership rotation and opportunity among Directors. Effective immediately upon adoption, the policy requires the Board to elect a President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer at its first meeting each January, with no Director allowed to serve in the same officer position for more than two consecutive years (Act 101-11). A one-year gap is required before a Director may be re-elected to a previously held officer role. The Board retains discretion to suspend to a later date or modify the election process as needed by majority vote.

[View the Complete Board Officer Election Resolution](#)

Succession Planning: Board Continuity

The Board proactively prepares for leadership transitions to ensure continuity in key roles. Succession planning for the Board of Directors focuses on supporting newly elected members as they transition into their roles, including Board officers and committee leadership positions. Through a collaborative approach that emphasizes mentorship, knowledge sharing, and structured onboarding, the Board fosters a culture of continuity and collective leadership.

By prioritizing clear transition processes and peer support, the Board preserves institutional knowledge, maintains organizational stability, and ensures that critical decision-making capabilities remain strong. This intentional focus on collaboration and mentorship strengthens the Board's ability to navigate change effectively while remaining aligned with the Agency's strategic objectives.



Board President & Vice President Duties

President's Responsibilities

The Board President leads all Board meetings as the Presiding Officer. If the President is unavailable, the Vice President takes over. If both are absent, the Board members present will choose one among themselves to lead the meeting. If the President steps back from an agenda item due to a conflict, the Vice President steps in temporarily.

The Presiding Officer has the same rights as any other Board member. They can make motions, join discussions, and vote on items.

The President runs Board meetings, helps ensure Board decisions are carried out, and follows the Board's adopted rules of order. When a motion is on the table, the President helps keep discussion focused on that specific issue.

The President's key responsibilities include:

- Signing official documents and carrying out the Board's direction
- Calling meetings as needed, with proper notice
- Working with the General Manager to prepare meeting agendas
- Coordinating with the General Manager and Vice President on administrative and time-sensitive matters between meetings, consistent with applicable open meeting laws
- Leading meetings in an orderly and respectful manner
- Acting as the official spokesperson for the Board
- Communicating with the General Counsel at any time and providing direction to legal counsel as needed
- Carrying out any other duties as authorized by the Board



Board Committees

The SGPWA Board of Directors appoints members to two standing committees:

Finance & Budget Committee

This is a standing committee of the SGPWA Board that meets monthly on the fourth Thursday. The committee's responsibilities include reviewing and ratifying monthly paid invoices and payroll, examining bank reconciliations, monitoring budget implementation, reviewing and approving legal invoices, accepting investment and fund balance reports, and handling mid-year budget reviews.

Water Conservation and Education

The Water Conservation and Education Committee convenes bimonthly on the second Tuesday of each month and handles agenda items like program status reports—for instance, updates on IERCD (Inland Empire Resource Conservation District) activities.

Committee assignments are at the discretion of the Board president. Because standing committees may qualify as “legislative bodies,” they follow the rules and regulations of the Brown Act. Committee motions and recommendations are advisory to the Board of Directors and do not commit SGPWA to any policy, act or expenditure.



Ad-Hoc Advisory Committees

Ad-hoc advisory committees are temporary, and their purpose and duration are defined at the outset. These committees dissolve when their purpose is accomplished or when the timeframe is up, whichever comes first. Here are the guidelines for ad-hoc committees:

- An ad-hoc committee consists of fewer than a majority of Board Members.
- An ad-hoc committee may make recommendations to the Board. The Board may not delegate any decision-making power to a temporary advisory committee.
- An ad-hoc committee can meet on an as-needed basis and will not have a meeting schedule fixed by charter, ordinance, resolution or formal action of the Board.



Breaking Down Board Meetings

What is a Quorum?

A quorum is the foundation of a Board meeting; it is the minimum number of Directors needed to conduct the meeting. With a quorum, Board members can act by ordinance, resolution or motion. Without a quorum, the Board of Directors cannot meet. At least four Board members must be present to form a quorum and act through a four-vote majority.

On all ordinances, the roll is called, and the ayes and noes are recorded in the proceedings. Resolutions and orders may be adopted by voice vote, but roll can be called at the request of any member. Ordinances, motions, and resolutions can only pass with the affirmative vote of a majority of Board members. Agency Law requires at least four votes for any Board action.

Types of Board Meetings

Regular Board Meetings: SGPWA's regular Board meetings are held on the first Monday of the month at 1:30 p.m. and on the third Monday at 6 p.m. Per SGPWA policy, agendas are made available by the Thursday prior to the meeting. If a scheduled Board meeting falls on a legal holiday, SGPWA will reschedule for the following Monday. Agendas will always be posted at least 72 hours before a regularly scheduled Board meeting.

Special Board Meetings: Special Board meetings may be called outside of the regular meeting cycle to focus on specific issues, including Board workshops. Special Board meetings must be called with 24-hour notice.

Emergency Meetings: During urgent situations, such as water supply, quality or infrastructure crises, the SGPWA Board of Directors may call an emergency meeting. These meetings are not subject to 24-hour notice or posting requirements, and may be called with as little as one hour's notice to local media.



Standing Committee Meetings: The Board of Directors can create committees comprised of no more than three Board members to help establish SGPWA policies. These include the Finance & Budget Committee and Water Conservation and Education Committee. Committee chair assignments will be made at the discretion of the Board President.

Organizational Meeting: The Board of Directors holds a bi-annual organizational meeting in January of each even-numbered year. At this meeting, the Board will elect a President and Vice President from among its members to serve during the upcoming term. Standing committee and subcommittee assignments will be reviewed for possible changes.

Ad-Hoc Committee Meetings: Ad-hoc committees gather less than a quorum of Board members to advise the Board on in-depth issues. They are formed for a specific purpose, for a limited time, and disband once their task is complete. Their meetings are not subject to the Brown Act's normal requirements, meaning there is no published agenda or public meetings.

Outside Meetings: Periodically, the Board President or the Board of Directors may ask a Director to represent the Agency at an outside meeting. Board members may attend outside meetings to speak on SGPWA's efforts and other water industry activities. This includes any meeting, activity, conference, seminar, workshop, facility tour, webinar or conference call.

Agendas: Agendas will be available at least 72 hours prior to the meeting. In most cases, agendas will be posted by the Thursday before the meeting.



Understanding the Brown Act & Open Meeting Requirements

“The Legislature finds and declares that the public commissions, boards and councils and the other public agencies in this state exist to aid in the conduct of the people’s business. It is the intent of the law that their actions be taken openly and that their deliberations be conducted openly. The people of this state do not yield their sovereignty to the agencies which serve them. The people insist on remaining informed so that they may retain control over the instruments they have created.”

Ralph M. Brown Act

In 1964, the California Legislature adopted the Ralph M. Brown Act, often called the state’s “Open Meetings Law.” It is located in the Government Code, starting at Section 54950.5. The Brown Act is interpreted broadly, and following it is a constitutional requirement.

The Brown Act outlines three types of meetings: Regular, Special, and Emergency. The Agency will make sure the right type of notice is provided for each kind of meeting, and the meeting type will always be clearly stated in the notice.

- Even individuals who have been newly elected or appointed are considered Board members under the Brown Act, starting before they officially take office.
- All Board meetings are open to everyone and must be fully accessible, including to those with disabilities.
- Board business cannot be conducted through intermediaries, email chains, or serial conversations outside of a public meeting.
- The Board may only take official action during a properly noticed meeting.

Note: Standing committees created by formal action of the Board must comply with the Brown Act. Ad-hoc committees do not need to conform to Brown Act noticing rules.

[View Rosenberg Rules of Order](#)

[View the Brown Act](#)



Board Meeting Conduct & Expectations

These Board meeting norms set Directors up for success for their tenure on the SGPWA Board of Directors.



Meeting Attendance

Good governance requires Directors to be present and engaged. They are expected to attend all regular and special Board meetings unless there is good cause for absence. Some of these causes include temporary illness, family illnesses, being outside the County or State, or other unavoidable circumstances. Good causes for absence may also include Board-approved activities, such as conferences.

Notify the General Manager or Clerk of the Board of an absence before the meeting. They will then notify the Board President. Board members should make every effort to relay absences as far in advance as possible.

Per state law, “a Director who ceases to discharge the duties of his or her office for the period of three consecutive months,” will have abandoned their seat, and their seat will be considered vacant. Except when prevented by sickness, or when absent from the state with the permission required by law.

Agenda Adoption

All meetings will begin at the time on the agenda. An item’s placement is not necessarily a requirement to proceed in any order. The Board President, with agreement from most of the Board, may alter the order in which agenda items are discussed.

Rules of Order

The SGPWA Board of Directors has adopted Rosenberg’s Rules of Order to guide Board conduct. Each Director has a copy of Rosenberg’s Rules of Order provided to them on the dais during meetings. Failure of the Board to follow Rosenberg’s Rules of Order will not serve as a basis to invalidate any Board action. Rosenberg’s is meant to guide and support orderly meetings and discussion.

Closed Sessions

While Board meetings are generally open to the public, they are not during closed session. The Board may conduct a closed session during a meeting for private matters, as identified on the agenda. Major reasons for closed sessions, as authorized by the Brown Act, include:

- Real property transactions
- Labor negotiations
- Pending/anticipated litigation

Except as required by law, all proceedings in closed sessions will remain confidential.

Decorum

The Board President (or other Presiding Officer) is responsible for keeping meetings respectful and orderly, including public hearings. They may take appropriate action, including asking someone to leave, if anyone disrupts the meeting, refuses to follow instructions, or makes personal or inappropriate remarks. The Board President should work with the General Manager and Legal Counsel to maintain decorum, should it prove necessary to do so.



Rules of Conduct

Presiding Officer's Role: The Presiding Officer manages the meeting and may issue warnings or take lawful action to stop disruptions, with help from security if needed.

Director Conduct:

- Treat fellow Directors, staff, and the public with respect at all times.
- Let the Presiding Officer lead the meeting, but feel free to ask questions and share brief, relevant comments.
- Directors may request their brief comments or voting positions be noted in the minutes.
- Do not yell, interrupt, threaten, or make personal attacks toward anyone—public, staff, or other Board members.

Public Participation:

- Speak only from the designated podium or table.
- Address comments to the full Board or Presiding Officer, not to individual members, staff, or audience members.
- Disruptive behavior, such as yelling, clapping, stamping, or waving, is not allowed.

General Expectations:

- Everyone must follow reasonable directions from the Presiding Officer.
- Interrupting speakers, Board members, or the Secretary is not allowed.
- Board members must not talk over each other during discussion.

Keeping Order During Meetings

To ensure meetings run smoothly, the following rules apply:

- Recess: The President may call a short break at any time during the meeting to help restore order.
- Warnings: If someone, whether a member of the public or a Board Director, is breaking the rules, the Presiding Officer will first give a warning and ask them to stop the behavior.
- If Disruption Continues:
 - The Presiding Officer may adjourn the meeting or officially document the disruption, which could lead to further action (like censure for Board members).
- Removal of Disruptive Individuals:
 - Security personnel or law enforcement will follow the Presiding Officer's instructions to maintain order.
 - If needed, they may be directed to remove any member of the public who continues to disrupt the meeting.
 - The Presiding Officer cannot remove an offensive resident for something offensive except when disrupting the orderly conduct of the meeting.

Invocation Policy

The San Geronio Pass Water Agency's Invocation Policy, adopted on March 18, 2024, allows for a brief invocation of up to three minutes to be offered at the start of each Board meeting, prior to the flag salute. The invocation may be given by clergy, religious leaders, Directors, staff, or others, provided it remains respectful, neutral, and non-disparaging toward any faith or belief. The policy prohibits using the invocation to promote or oppose specific religions or Board-related issues and emphasizes reflection on shared values. Participation in the invocation is voluntary.

Addressing Public Comment

Public comment is a critical part of conducting Board business. Public comment during Board meetings enables the community to discuss real-life impacts of proposed actions and helps the Board make informed decisions. Follow these guidelines during public comment periods to comply with regulations and build trust with the families and businesses that call the Pass area home.

- Items noticed on the agenda for public hearing will follow procedures as outlined by the Agency's legal counsel.
- The Board President, or Presiding Officer, may elect to defer action on an item brought forward by the public until staff can prepare an appropriate response.
- The Board President, or Presiding Officer, is responsible for maintaining an orderly progression of Board business, regulating the amount and type of public input and from Board members and staff.
- Generally, Directors will not respond to public comments except for the Board President, or Presiding Officer, referring matters to the General Manager for follow-up. Directors may, through the Presiding Officer, ask clarifying questions to ensure that staff provide an appropriate response. Occasionally, a prompt response may be offered by the Presiding Officer or the General Manager when an answer or resolution is available. The Board will not debate or make decisions in response to public comments that are not on the agenda for consideration.

Adjournment

Board meetings may be adjourned at any point in the agenda by a majority vote of the Board's quorum. If no quorum is present or no Directors are present at any regular or adjourned regular meeting, the Board President or General Manager may declare the meeting adjourned to a stated time and place.

Notice of the adjourned meeting will be posted on or near the door of the meeting within 24 hours of the adjournment.

How to Prepare an Agenda

For every regular and special Board meeting, SGPWA will prepare an agenda to inform the public of that meeting's focus in compliance with the Brown Act. Any Director may contact the General Manager, Board President, or Clerk of the Board to request an item to be placed on the agenda.

Agenda Posting

To meet the requirements of the Brown Act, agendas for regular meetings will be posted 72 hours in advance of the meeting, while agendas for special meetings are posted 24 hours in advance. This posting must be freely accessible to the public and on the Agency's website. The agenda must also be accessible in an open location by that date.

Agenda Packet

For every regular meeting, a copy of the agenda will be provided to all Board members 72 hours prior to the Board meeting date. All Board members will receive the agenda packet and related materials at the same time. The Board should review agenda materials before each meeting, and individual members may ask the General Manager for additional information on the agenda items before or at the meeting.



Keeping Minutes

The Clerk of the Board takes notes, or minutes, at all regular, special, and standing committee meetings. These minutes are shared with Board Directors in the information packet for the next regular meeting, where the Board reviews and approves them, either as is or with changes. Once approved, the minutes become official and are scanned and made available to the public.

The minutes will show whether motions, resolutions, or ordinances passed or failed. They'll also include who made the motion and how each Director voted. If everyone votes in favor, it will simply be recorded as unanimous.

All resolutions and ordinances are numbered in order, starting fresh at the beginning of each calendar year.



Communications

Norms and Agreements

Board members are expected to engage in respectful, transparent, and professional communication at all times. This includes both during public meetings and in all other forms of official Agency communication. Discussions should be focused, free of personal attacks, and reflective of the Agency’s mission to serve the public. Board members agree not to engage in side conversations or serial communications that may violate the Brown Act, and commit to fostering a culture of open, honest dialogue, both internally and with the public.

Interacting with the Public

When it comes to engaging with members of the public, the Board should follow certain guidelines, including:

- Refer all customer concerns and inquiries to the General Manager.
- The Board will be informed of significant, politically sensitive, and urgent telephone or electronic communication inquiries. Staff will research the request as soon as possible and provide the General Manager with the appropriate follow-up and response. The General Manager will review the communication and disseminate it to the Board.
- If one Director receives copies of any written or electronic response to customer concerns, the rest of the Board will receive copies too.
- Information that may expose SGPWA to liability will be shared with the Board at a noticed, closed session meeting of the Board of Directors.
- The Board should share communications regarding potential Agency liabilities with the General Counsel as soon as possible.

Public Representation as an Elected Official

Each Director represents either a geographic division or the Agency at large and is expected to communicate with constituents in a way that is accurate, nonpartisan, and consistent with adopted Board positions. While individual viewpoints are respected, Board members should avoid speaking on behalf of the entire Board unless authorized. Clear, coordinated messaging helps preserve the Agency’s credibility and public trust.

When interacting with the public in any official Board capacity, keep the following best practices in mind.

- Directors may use their title only when conducting official Agency business, for information purposes, or as an indication of background and expertise.
- Once the Board of Directors has taken a position on an issue, all official Agency correspondence on the issue will reflect the Board’s adopted position.
- Typically, the Board will authorize the General Manager to send letters stating the Agency’s official position to appropriate legislators.
- Directors may express personal opinions and comments that oppose adopted policy only if they clarify that these statements do not reflect the official position of the Board or SGPWA.
- Board members should exercise caution when using the news media, social media or other forms of communication to express views contrary to adopted Board policy.



Resources

Board members are equipped with a variety of tools to support effective communication and public engagement. These include a District presentation, brochure, and message deck that provide clear, consistent information about the Agency's mission, services, and priorities. Directors may also request tailored talking points or communications support from the Communications team to help prepare for public appearances, meetings, or media inquiries. These resources ensure Board members are well-prepared to represent the District with confidence and accuracy.

Protocols

All official Board communications must follow the Agency's established protocols. This includes proper use of agendas, following rules of order during meetings, and ensuring all public communications, verbal or written, are consistent with Board decisions. When speaking during meetings, Board members should address their comments to the full body or through the Presiding Officer, not to staff or the public directly. Any media statements or public outreach should be coordinated through the General Manager or Board President.

Training

The District provides media and customer engagement training to Board members through its Communications team. This training helps Directors communicate clearly and confidently with the public, handle media inquiries appropriately, and engage with customers in a way that reflects the Agency's values and mission. Additional training opportunities on public communication, ethics, and transparency are also encouraged.

How Board Vacancies are Filled

When a Board seat becomes vacant, the Agency communicates the opening to the public through its website and local outreach channels. Interested residents are invited to submit letters of interest and may be interviewed during a public Board meeting. The process is open and transparent, ensuring community members have access to information and an opportunity to participate in Board representation.

Social Media Protocol for Board Members

Board Members are encouraged to use social media as a bridge to the community, whether to answer questions, share information, or solicit feedback on water-related matters. However, to stay within the bounds of California's open meeting laws, here are some simple guidelines to follow:

Engage with the Public, Not Each Other

A Board Member may interact with the public on social media (for example, responding to questions or clarifying agency details) without violating the Brown Act. However, they must avoid engaging with other Board Members on matters related to agency business; even a "like," emoji reaction, comment, or share could inadvertently become a prohibited "serial meeting."

No Direct Messaging on Agency Topics

The revised Brown Act (via AB 992) also bars Board Members from responding directly to another Member's posts about agency issues, even privately, due to transparency concerns.

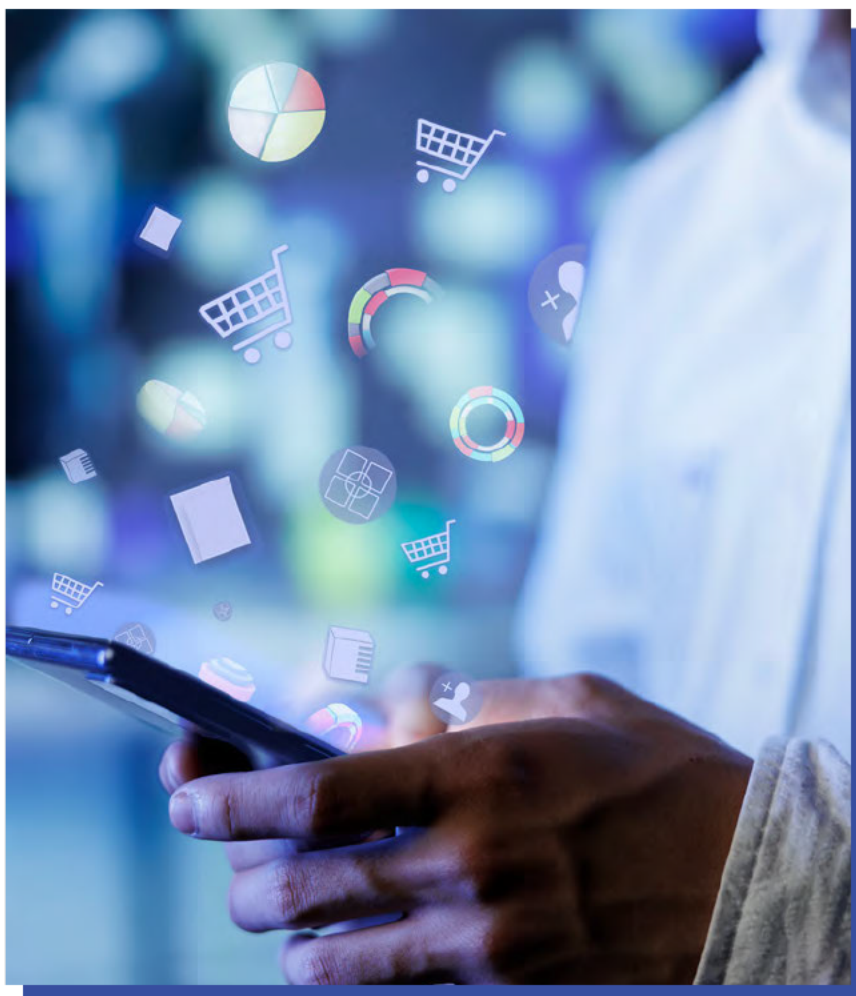
Public Forums Are OK

Posting updates or participating in public forums is allowed, as long as the Board Member is speaking directly with the public (not other Board Members) and not coordinating or deliberating behind the scenes.

When in Doubt, Ask or Step Back

If unsure whether a post or interaction could cross a line, it's always safer to hold off. Board Members can consult with the Communications team or legal counsel for clarity before posting.

Sample Do's and Don'ts



DO	DON'T
Respond to a constituent's question	"Like" another Board Member's post on agency business
Post general updates on water issues	Comment or reply to a Board Member about a pending issue
Ask the public for input on a public topic	Direct message another Member to discuss a policy decision

By following these commonsense guidelines, Board Members can remain transparent, legally compliant, and consistent, while still staying connected with the community.

Code of Ethics

Ethics Training

To promote ethical service and good governance, each Director must complete two hours of ethics training every two years, in line with California Government Code §53234. This training must be approved by the California Attorney General or the Fair Political Practices Commission and is provided at the Agency's expense.

Newly elected Directors must complete their first ethics training within 30 days of taking office.

Written proof of completion must be submitted to the Agency and will be kept on file for at least five years.

Ethics Policy & Brown Act Training

In addition, all Directors are required to complete training on the Brown Act within 30 days of taking office and every two years thereafter.

Proof of Brown Act training must also be filed with the Agency and retained for five years.

Financial Training

To ensure a strong understanding of public agency budgets, financial reports, audits and long-term fiscal planning, in accordance with SB 827, all Board members must complete financial training for a minimum of two hours every two years. Effective January 1, 2026, SB 827 mandates that new directors must complete training within six months of starting. This training supports informed decision-making and reinforces the Board's responsibility to provide sound financial oversight on behalf of the public.

Sexual Harassment Prevention Training

To foster a respectful and safe workplace, all Directors must complete sexual harassment prevention training within six months of taking office and then every two years.

Training covers state and federal laws, prevention strategies, reporting procedures, and available remedies.

This training meets the requirements of AB 1825, AB 2053, and AB 1661.



Workplace Violence Prevention

In compliance with SB 553, the Agency has adopted a Workplace Violence Prevention Program that includes:

- Hazard assessments
- Prevention procedures
- Required employee training
- Reporting, investigation, and recordkeeping protocols

The San Geronio Pass Water Agency's Workplace Violence Prevention Program (WVPP) outlines a comprehensive approach to identifying, preventing, responding to, and documenting workplace violence.

The plan defines the four types of workplace violence, sets clear responsibilities for management and employees, and emphasizes hazard identification, emergency response, reporting procedures, and incident investigation. Employees are actively involved through training, communication, and participation in plan development and reviews. The WVPP mandates recordkeeping, compliance measures, and regular review to ensure its continued effectiveness and alignment with California Labor Code section 6401.9.

All Directors and employees will receive appropriate training as part of this initiative.

[View the Complete Workplace Violence Prevention Program](#)



Non-Discrimination

The Agency is committed to equal opportunity in all employment practices. Discrimination based on sex, race, color, religion, national origin, marital status, disability, age, sexual orientation, or veteran status is strictly prohibited.

Reasonable accommodations will be made for individuals with disabilities who can perform essential job duties.

All employees and Directors are expected to foster a respectful and inclusive environment.

Whistleblower Protection

The Agency encourages transparency and accountability. Directors and staff are protected when reporting concerns in good faith, such as:

- Violations of law or regulation
- Waste of Agency funds
- Abuse of authority
- Conflicts of interest
- Misuse of Agency resources
- Threats to public health or safety

Directors may not use their position to intimidate or retaliate against anyone who reports such concerns.

If a Director or employee believes they've experienced retaliation or misconduct:

- They should file a confidential report with the General Manager or, if the complaint involves the General Manager, with any Board member.
- Complaints will be reviewed by the full Board, and appropriate action will follow based on the findings and applicable law.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Compliance

The Agency complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and will provide reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals with disabilities.

Accommodations are determined based on individual needs and job requirements.

Requests for accommodation should be directed to Human Resources.

Human Resources issues should be discussed with the General Manager and the General Counsel.

Conflicts of Interest: Political, Economic & Perceived Conflicts

To ensure independence and serve the public good, Board Directors must avoid conflicts of interest. State law prohibits using their position to influence decisions where they have a financial interest, personal relationship, or organizational tie.

Key Guidelines:

- Board members may not have a financial interest in District contracts or transactions unless allowed by law (Gov. Code §§ 1091 or 1091.5).
- If a Director has a conflict as defined by the Political Reform Act (Gov. Code § 81000+), they must not discuss, vote, or influence the decision.
- What to Do if a Conflict Is Suspected:
 1. **Before the Meeting:** Notify the General Manager and legal counsel.
 2. **During the Meeting:** Disclose the conflict right away.
 3. **If a Conflict Exists:** The Director must not participate, and must leave the room unless it's a consent calendar item. In that case, they must state the conflict and abstain from voting.
- Directors may not recommend hiring relatives, especially if the person is bidding on or negotiating a District contract.

Questions about potential conflicts should be discussed with District legal counsel promptly.

Political Contributions

Board Directors may not solicit political contributions at District facilities or from District employees.

Additionally, Directors must not:

- Ask for or accept political donations from vendors or consultants who have a financial interest in a contract or matter currently before the District.
- Use the District's name, logo, seal, letterhead, or other official identifiers for political fundraising in violation of state or federal law (Gov. Code §§ 3204, 3205).

Handling Conflicts of Interest in Meetings

When a Board Director has a financial conflict under California law (Gov. Code § 87100+), they must:

- **Disclose the Conflict:** Clearly state the specific financial interest causing the conflict.
- **Step Back:** Recuse themselves from discussion or voting and leave the room until the item is fully resolved.

Additional Guidelines:

- **When to Disclose:** After the agenda item is announced, but before discussion or voting begins.
- **Closed Sessions:** Just state that there's a conflict during the public portion of the meeting. No need to give details.
- **Consent Calendar Items:** Directors don't need to leave the room but must still disclose the conflict and abstain from voting.
- **Personal Interests:** Directors may speak as a member of the public (from the public seating area) during public comment, but must still disclose the conflict, recuse themselves from voting, and leave the Board table.

Note: Directors with a conflict are not counted toward a quorum for that agenda item.

Statements of Economic Interests (Form 700)

All members of the Board of Directors are required to file Statements of Economic Interests (Form 700) in accordance with the California Political Reform Act.

This form discloses financial interests that may pose potential conflicts with their official duties. Initial filings are required within 30 days of assuming office, and annual filings are due each year by April 1.

These forms help promote transparency and public confidence by ensuring that decisions are made in the public's best interest. Filed Form 700s are public documents and can be accessed through the Fair Political Practices Commission (FPPC) or the Agency's office.

[Download Form 700](#)

Enforcement

If a Board member is believed to have violated any Agency policy, including the Code of Conduct, the concern should be brought to the Board President, the full Board, and General Counsel for review and appropriate action. If the concern involves the President, it should be referred directly to the full Board. Depending on the situation, the Board may take action using any legal remedies available, which may include reassignment of committee roles, a formal resolution of disapproval (censure), seeking injunctive relief, or referring the matter to the District Attorney.



Understanding Board Censureship

To help maintain high ethical standards, the Board may take formal action, called censure, against one of its members for violating laws or District policies.

What Is Censure?

Censure is a formal public reprimand by the Board. It does not involve a fine but may include consequences such as losing committee assignments. It is considered a serious disciplinary action meant to address misconduct.



How the Process Works

1. Requesting Censure:

- Any Board member may submit a written request for censure to the Board Secretary, outlining specific charges.
- An Executive Committee (excluding the requesting member and the member under review) will review the request.

2. Initial Review:

- The Executive Committee must receive and review the request at least 72 hours before its meeting.
- Both parties (the accuser and the accused) may present their perspectives.
- The Committee may:
 - Recommend further investigation,
 - Recommend a censure hearing, or
 - Recommend no further action.

3. Follow-up:

- The Committee must report its recommendation to the full Board within 30 days. If it doesn't, the matter automatically goes to the Board for review.

4. Scheduling a Hearing:

- If the Board agrees a hearing is needed, it will be scheduled at least two weeks later, avoiding any excused absences of the accused member.
- Written notice must be delivered at least 10 days in advance.

5. The Censure Hearing:

- The accused member may:
 - Make opening and closing statements,
 - Call witnesses,
 - Cross-examine accusers (within reasonable limits).
- Only witnesses with direct knowledge of the issue may testify.
- The hearing is informal; court rules do not apply.

6. Board Decision:

- The Board may adopt a Resolution of Censure if it finds the member violated a law or policy.
- At least three Board members must vote in favor.
- The accused member may not participate in the final Board discussion or vote.

Emergency Protocols

Declaration of Emergency

- The General Manager or Board President may declare a local emergency affecting Agency operations.
- If unavailable, any two Board Officers (Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary) may jointly declare an emergency.
- The declaration must be communicated immediately to all Board Members and staff.

Emergency Meeting Protocols

Emergency meetings may be called under Government Code Section 54956.5 (Brown Act).

Conditions:

- A majority of the Board must agree an emergency exists.
- 1-hour notice must be given to all media outlets and posted publicly (unless impossible due to the emergency).
- Only matters directly related to the emergency can be discussed.
- Follow building evacuation or shelter instructions during emergencies. Brown Act compliance requirements apply to any reconvened meeting or subsequent action taken.

Conducting Meetings:

- Remote meetings (teleconference/video) are allowed when in-person gatherings are unsafe or impractical.
- The Clerk of the Board must document the emergency nature and the actions taken during the meeting.

Roles and Responsibilities

Board of Directors:

- Provide policy-level direction
- Approve emergency expenditures exceeding staff authority
- Ensure compliance with emergency regulations

General Manager:

- Leads operational response
- Executes emergency plans
- Coordinates with local, state, and federal emergency agencies

Clerk of the Board:

- Maintains communication between Board and staff
- Keeps emergency meeting records
- Ensures compliance with the Brown Act

If key personnel are unavailable:

Position	Successor(s)
Board President	Vice President > Treasurer > Senior Director
General Manager	Chief Financial Officer

Emergency Spending Authority

- The General Manager may authorize emergency purchases and contracts.
- All emergency expenditures must be reported to the Board at the next regular meeting.

Emergency Communications Protocols

- Use email, phone, and text alerts to notify Directors and key staff.
- The Board President or GM will act as the main spokesperson for public/media communication.
- The Agency website and social media may be used for public updates.

Operational Continuity

- Essential operations (water delivery, emergency repairs, customer service) will be maintained at all times, if possible.
- Alternate work locations or remote work protocols will be activated as needed.
- Critical documents and records should be backed up and accessible off-site.

Post-Emergency

- The Board will conduct a debriefing session to review the response.
- The General Manager will prepare an after-action report with lessons learned and recommendations.
- Emergency protocols will be updated as needed based on the findings.

Board Compensation & Other Privileges

Meeting Compensation

Each Director will receive compensation for attending the following meetings:

- Regular or special Board meetings
- Standing committee meetings
- Organizational or emergency meetings
- Adjourned meetings (regular, special, or emergency)
- Regular, special or committee meetings of any organization in which SGPWA is a member
- Beaumont Basin Watermaster meetings
- Special events, programs, or symposiums (not to exceed one day) or conferences (not to exceed three days) for the following agencies:
 - Association of California Water Agencies
 - Special Districts Association of Riverside County
 - State Water Contractors
 - Water Education Foundation
 - Riverside County Water Symposium
 - American Water Works Association
- Any meeting informing Board members on matters within the jurisdiction of the statutory powers of SGPWA
- Ad hoc meetings
- Any meeting submitted for consideration and approved as a day of service by the Agency Board of Directors

In accordance with Section 20202 of Division 10 of the California Water Code and SGPWA's Ordinance 17, Director compensation is subject to an annual adjustment of up to 5%, effective January 1 of each year. The adjustment will be applied automatically unless the Board takes action before January 1 to modify or suspend the increase.

Per Section 20202 of Division 10 of the California Water Code:

- Directors may not be compensated for more than 10 meetings per calendar month.
- Directors will only be compensated for one meeting or Agency duty per day.
- Pay request forms may only contain meetings attended during one calendar month.

[View Ordinance 17](#)

[View the Pay Request Form](#)

Travel and Expense Reimbursement Policy

The Agency will reimburse Directors for reasonable, itemized expenses incurred while conducting Agency business.

Reimbursable expenses include mileage, airfare, lodging, business meals, registration fees, and other necessary travel costs, provided they are reasonable, directly related to Agency business, and properly documented with itemized receipts.

Travel must be approved in advance if it exceeds the allocated budget or involves out-of-state trips (excluding Water Education Foundation tours).

[View the Complete Travel and Expense Reimbursement Policy](#)

[View the Credit Card Reporting Form](#)

[View the Expense Reimbursement Form](#)

Credit Card Policy

The San Geronio Pass Water Agency Credit Card Policy (August 2024) governs the appropriate use of Agency-issued credit cards by Board members, the General Manager, and authorized Staff. It emphasizes that credit cards are strictly for official Agency business and prohibits personal use, except for incidental charges that must be reimbursed promptly.

Receipts and expense forms must accompany all charges, and the Finance Office oversees timely payment of bills to avoid late fees.

All charges are reviewed monthly by the Finance and Budget Committee, which may require reimbursement for unapproved or undocumented expenses.

The policy also outlines procedures for lost or fraudulent card activity, card cancellation upon separation or abuse, and record retention. In case of disputes, the Board of Directors has final authority. This policy works in conjunction with the Agency's Travel and Expense Reimbursement Policies, which take precedence in case of conflict.

[View the Complete Credit Card Policy](#)

Misuse of Public Funds

Under Government Code Section 53232.4, falsifying or misusing public resources may result in:

- Loss of reimbursement privileges
- Repayment to the Agency
- Civil penalties under Civil Code Section 8314

Director Rights and Privileges

The Board of Directors is made up of five members elected by division and two elected at-large. While each Director may represent a different area, every Director has an equal voice at the table. To ensure fairness and transparency, the following rights and privileges apply equally to all Directors:

Consent Calendar Items

Any Director may pull an item from the consent calendar for discussion without needing a second or vote.

Participation in Discussion

Every Director has the right to participate in discussion and debate. The Board President will ensure all voices are heard to promote open and transparent deliberation.

Staff Reports

Directors have the right to hear the staff report on any business item before motions or discussion begin.

Technical Questions

Directors may ask technical questions about an item before discussion or motions are made.

Substitute Motions

Any Director may make a substitute motion. If properly seconded, it must be taken up immediately.

Public Records Requests

Directors have the right to be informed of any public records requests made of the Agency upon request.

Director Compensation

Directors may review any pay request or reimbursement request of any Director of the Agency upon request.

Executive Direction

Directors will be briefed of any significant direction or decisions made by the President, Vice President, or Executive Committee between full Board meetings.

Law Enforcement Inquiries

Directors will be informed of any law enforcement or judicial agency requests made to the Agency.

Regulatory Inquiries

Directors will be made aware of investigations or information requests from oversight or regulatory agencies.

Professional Services Contracts

Directors have the right to know about professional service contracts exercised under the General Manager's authority.

Additional Information Requests

Directors may request additional information on agenda items. Any such information will be shared with the full Board.

Serious Stakeholder Complaints

Directors will be informed of serious complaints related to water quality or customer service received by the Agency.

Financial Policies

The San Geronio Pass Water Agency is committed to managing public funds responsibly and transparently. Financial policies are in place to guide the Agency's budgeting, spending, and investment practices, ensuring all decisions support long-term sustainability and public trust. Board members are expected to uphold these policies and make fiscally responsible decisions that align with the Agency's mission and adopted budget.

The Agency follows state-mandated financial procedures and operates within a publicly approved budget framework that is reviewed and updated annually.

Auditing

To ensure accountability and transparency and to comply with California law, the Agency undergoes an independent financial audit each year. These audits are conducted by certified public accountants who assess the accuracy of the Agency's financial statements, assess the adequacy of the Agency's internal controls, and review compliance with applicable laws and regulations. The results are presented to the Board of Directors and made available to the public by being posted on the Agency website and upon request. The audit process helps maintain the integrity of the Agency's financial reports and supports transparency in financial practices.

Other Policies & Procedures

Technology Use Policy

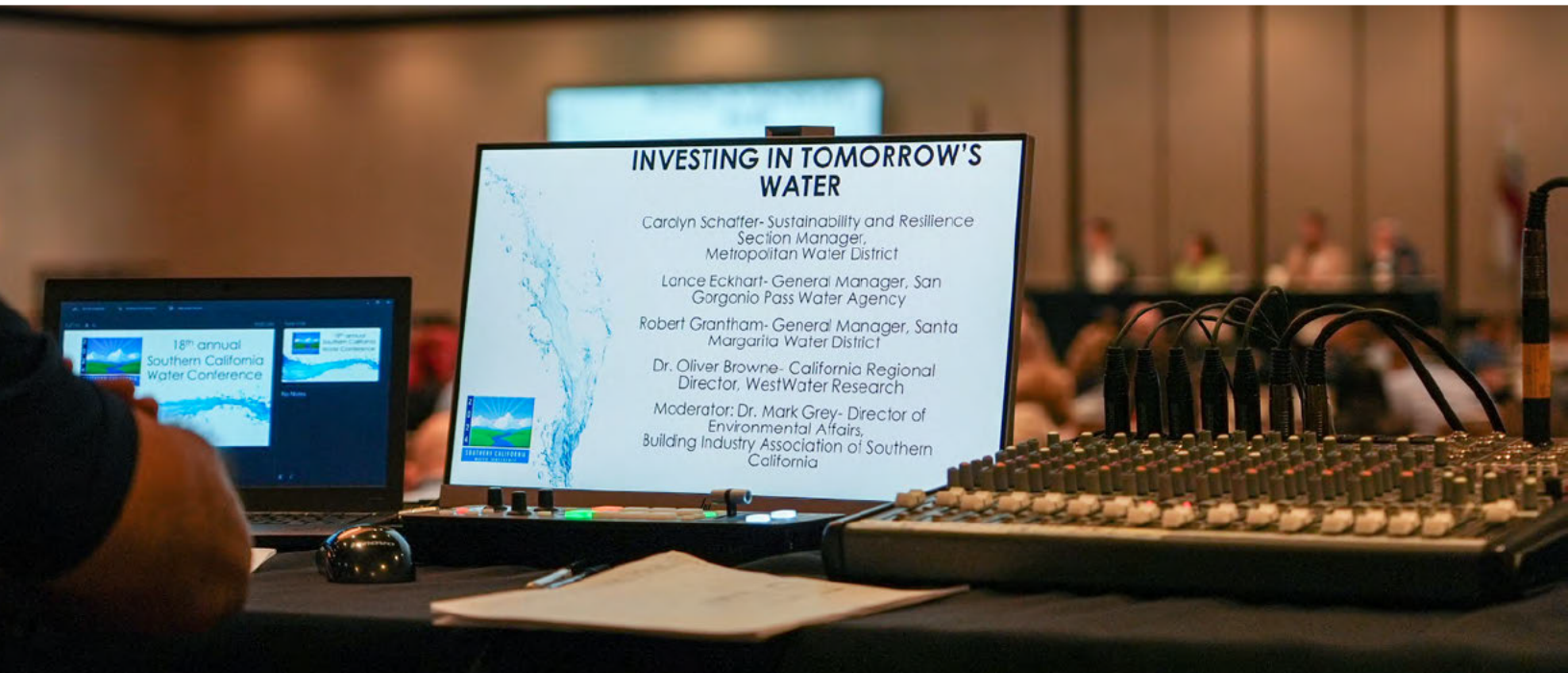
The San Geronio Pass Water Agency's Technology Use Policy, adopted on October 11, 2021, outlines the appropriate use of Agency-owned electronic devices issued to members of the Board of Directors. Each Director receives one device for official Agency business, and they are responsible for any loss or damage. The policy includes provisions for a limited cellular data plan, strict guidelines on app and data use, and compliance with public records laws. Devices must be secured, updated regularly, and may be accessed or modified by the Agency as needed. Directors must protect device security and report any breaches. Upon completion of a Director's term, the device must be returned, backed up, and wiped clean.

[View the Complete Technology Use Policy](#)

Computer Use Policy

The San Geronio Pass Water Agency's Computer Use Policy requires users to install and maintain antivirus and antispyware software, keep all system updates current, and secure devices with passwords that should only be shared with authorized staff. Users must avoid saving passwords in browsers, lock or turn off computers when unattended, and refrain from accessing Agency systems from public computers. Agency computer resources are strictly for official business, and users acknowledge their responsibility to protect these resources while using them.

[View the Complete Computer Use Policy](#)



Board Benefits Overview

Medical Reimbursement Plan

Board members and full-time staff of the San Geronio Pass Water Agency are eligible to participate in the Medical Reimbursement Plan, which reimburses uninsured medical, dental, and vision expenses for themselves and qualified dependents, up to an annual credit amount set by the Board (currently \$5,000, adjusted yearly for inflation).

Credits accumulate up to four times the annual amount and can be used to cover eligible medical costs as defined by IRS guidelines. Participants must submit original receipts for expenses incurred while covered under the plan, and reimbursements are limited to expenses not covered by insurance or other programs. Participation ends upon leaving the Agency or Board, and claims must be submitted within 30 days of termination. The Board may amend or terminate the plan as needed.

[View the Medical Reimbursement Form](#)

Board Resources

Board members are encouraged to attend conferences, seminars, trainings, and professional meetings that support the improvement of the Agency's operations. Any number of Directors may attend the same event if it's clearly beneficial to the Agency. However, to comply with the Ralph M. Brown Act, a majority of the Board must not discuss Agency business during these events. Directors should avoid attending any event that does not offer a clear benefit to the Agency.

Industry Associations

Water industry associations play a vital role in supporting the mission and effectiveness of public water agencies. For Board Members, being engaged with these associations provides access to the latest developments in water policy, regulations, technology, and best practices.

These organizations offer valuable networking opportunities with peers, experts, and regulators, helping Board Members stay informed and better equipped to make sound, strategic decisions.

Participation also allows the Agency to have a voice in shaping regional and statewide water issues.

In short, involvement in water industry associations strengthens Board Members' understanding of the complex challenges facing the water sector and enhances their ability to serve the public responsibly and effectively.

- ACWA (Association of California Water Agencies)
- AWWA – CA/NV (American Water Works Association – California – Nevada Section)
- UWI (Urban Water Institute)
- WEF (Water Education Foundation)
- WELL (Water Education for Latino Leaders)
- CSDA (California Special Districts Association)

Additional Board Resources

- Rosenberg's Rules of Order Cheat Sheet
- CSDA Board Resources
- ILG Good Governance Checklist
- Understanding the Basics of Public Service Ethics Laws
- SDLF District Transparency Cert. of Excellence Checklist
- SDLF High Performing District Checklist
- CDIAC Local Agency Investment Guidelines

SGPWA Board Member Annual Calendar

Monthly SGPWA Board Meetings

- Regular Board Meetings: Held on the first Monday of each month at 1:30 p.m. and on the third Monday at 6:00 p.m.
- Committee Meetings: Scheduled as needed; check the SGPWA Calendar for updates.

Local Community Events

- Beaumont Cherry Festival
 - Late May to early June
 - A four-day celebration featuring a parade, carnival, and live entertainment.
- Stagecoach Days in Banning
 - Labor Day Weekend (typically the first weekend in September).
 - Includes a parade, rodeo, concerts, and vendors.

Regional Water Agency Meetings

- San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District (SBVMWD)
 - Regular Board Meetings are typically held on the first and third Tuesdays of each month at 2:00 p.m. Committee workshops are scheduled as needed.
 - San Geronio Pass Groundwater Sustainability Agency (SGP GSA)
 - Board meetings are scheduled quarterly. Check the SGP GSA Meetings Page for specific dates and agendas.
- Yucaipa Valley Water District
- SGMA
- Watermaster



Member Agency Board and Council Meetings

City of Banning

Regular City Council Meetings are held on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of each month at 5:00 p.m. at City Hall, 99 E. Ramsey St. banning.ca.us

City of Beaumont

City Council Meetings occur on the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of each month at 6:00 p.m. at the Beaumont Civic Center, 550 E. Sixth St. beaumontca.gov

Beaumont-Cherry Valley Water District (BCVWD)

Regular Board Meetings are held on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of each month at 6:00 p.m. at BCVWD's Administrative Offices, 560 Magnolia Ave, Beaumont, CA 92223. bcvwd.gov

Cabazon Water District

Board Meetings are held on the 3rd Tuesday of each month at 6:00 p.m. Meetings are conducted via teleconference. cabazonwater.org

Banning Heights Mutual Water Company

Regular Board Meetings are held on the 2nd Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at the City of Banning Senior Center, 769 San Geronio Ave., Banning, CA 92220. bhmwc.com

City of Calimesa

City Council Meetings are held on the 1st and 3rd Mondays of each month at 6:00 p.m. at Calimesa City Hall. calimesa.gov

High Valleys Water District

Board Meetings are held on the 3rd Wednesday of each month at 3:00 p.m. at the High Valleys Water District Office, 47781 Twin Pines Road, Banning, CA 92220. highvalleyswater.com

South Mesa Water Company

Board Meetings are held on the 2nd Wednesday of each month at 4:00 p.m. at their offices at 391 West Avenue L in Calimesa. southmesawater.com

Yucaipa Valley Water District

Board Meetings are held on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of each month at 6:00 p.m. at the Yucaipa Valley Water District Office. yvwd.us

Cherry Valley Water Company

Board Meetings are held quarterly. Check the Cherry Valley Water Company Meetings Page for specific dates and agendas.

Confirm agency meetings by checking online.

Industry Conferences

Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA) Conferences

California Special Districts Association (CSDA) Annual Conference and Exhibitor Showcase



Glossary

A

Acre-Foot

A unit of volume commonly used in water resource management. One acre-foot equals about 325,851 gallons and represents the amount of water needed to cover one acre of land one foot deep.

Antelope Valley-East Kern Water Agency (AVEK)

A fellow State Water Contractor and SGPWA partner in water banking, exchanges, and “Nickel” water agreements.

B

Brookside Recharge Facility

A groundwater recharge facility operated by SGPWA, which includes recharge ponds and a pipeline. It stores imported water during wet years for use in dry years.

Brown Act

California law that governs open meetings for local government bodies, including provisions for emergency meetings.

C

California Department of Water Resources (DWR)

The state agency that operates the State Water Project and manages water allocations to State Water Contractors, including SGPWA.

Crafton Hills and Cherry Valley Pump Stations

Pump stations that are part of the East Branch Extension, helping deliver SWP water to the Pass area.

D

Delta Conveyance Project (DCP)

A major infrastructure initiative to modernize California’s State Water Project by improving water conveyance reliability and safeguarding supplies against climate change and seismic risks.

Distribution and Treatment Workshops
Training sessions provided under the Small Systems Assistance Program to support small water providers in improving water quality and system management.

E

East Branch Extension (EBX)

An extension of the State Water Project that delivers water to the Pass area. It includes pump stations, reservoirs, and pipelines critical to the Agency’s supply system.

G

Gap Funding

Financial support provided by SGPWA to small water systems to help them access and implement state or federal grants when they lack upfront capital.

Groundwater Basin

A geologic formation that stores groundwater. SGPWA helps protect and recharge local basins like Beaumont and Cabazon.

Groundwater Sustainability Plans (GSPs)

Planning documents developed to ensure long-term sustainability of groundwater resources in compliance with California’s Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA).

I

Inland Empire Resource Conservation District (IERCD)

A regional partner of SGPWA that provides educational programs related to water and resource management in schools and communities.

M

Metering Station

An installation on a pipeline that measures the volume of water delivered to local retailers.

N

Nickel Water

A reliable, non-SWP water supply leased from AVEK under a long-term agreement; considered “100% reliable.”

P

Pump Station

Infrastructure that moves water through pipelines, critical to water delivery in elevation-variable terrain like the Pass area.

R

Recharge Facility

Infrastructure designed to allow water to percolate into groundwater basins to replenish supplies.

S

San Geronio Pass Water Agency (SGPWA)

A wholesale State Water Contractor established in 1961, responsible for importing and managing supplemental water supplies for the Pass area.

Sites Reservoir Project

A major water storage project capturing excess stormwater for later use. SGPWA is the third-largest investor, securing long-term storage capacity.

Small Systems Assistance Program

A SGPWA program offering support, training, and funding assistance to small water retailers to help them meet regulatory and operational challenges.

State Water Contractor

One of 29 public agencies (including SGPWA) with contracts to purchase water from the State Water Project.

State Water Project (SWP)

California’s major water infrastructure system, delivering water from Northern California to urban and agricultural users in the south, including SGPWA.

T

Table A Water

The maximum annual amount of water a State Water Contractor is entitled to under its SWP contract. SGPWA’s Table A amount is 17,300 acre-feet.

V

Ventura Agreement

An agreement with the City of Ventura to increase SGPWA’s SWP allocation by up to 27,300 acre-feet per year for 20 years.

Y

Yuba Accord

An agreement allowing SGPWA to purchase supplemental water from Yuba County, supporting water needs for up to 900 local families.



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