

## **Las Posas Valley Groundwater Basin Technical Advisory Committee Regular Meeting**

Tuesday January 20, 2026, 2:00 PM

Via Zoom:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84168071218?pwd=Kv42H0XegH4TthbvJUgzTrzACgXM8b.1>

Webinar ID: 841 6807 1218

Passcode: 150451

### **NOTICE OF MEETING**

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Las Posas Basin Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) will hold a regular meeting via Zoom at **2:00 PM on Tuesday January 20, 2026.**

### **AGENDA**

- A. Call to Order**
- B. Roll Call**
- C. Agenda Review**
- D. Public Comments**
- E. TAC Member Comments**
- F. Regular Agenda**

#### **1. Approve Minutes from Previous Meeting**

The TAC will review and consider adoption of minutes from the previous meeting held on January 6, 2026; draft minutes for which are attached beginning on agenda page 3.

#### **2. Review Discussion: Draft Basin Optimization Yield Study Report**

The Las Posas Valley Basin Watermaster (Watermaster) requested TAC consultation on the Draft Las Posas Valley Basin Optimization Yield Study (Draft BOY Study) on December 17, 2025. Initial TAC discussion of the Draft BOY Study occurred in the January 6, 2026 Regular TAC Meeting. The Watermaster consultation request and Draft BOY Study were included in the agenda packet for that meeting. In the January 6, 2026 meeting, TAC members agreed to further discussion and compilation of comments and recommendations for preparation of a Recommendation Report.

The TAC will continue discussion of the Draft BOY Study including review of comments from individual TAC members, finalization of plans for submittal of all comments to the TAC Administrator, and drafting and review of a Recommendation Report by the Watermaster deadline of February 16, 2026.

#### **3. Consultation Request: Draft Water Year 2025 Annual Report**

The Watermaster has requested TAC consultation on the draft Water Year 2025 Las Posas Valley Basin Annual Report (draft WY2025 Annual Report). The Las Posas Valley Basin is required by the Adjudication Judgment (Las Posas Valley Water Rights Coalition, et al. v. Fox Canyon Groundwater Management Agency, Santa Barbara Sup. Ct. Case No. VENC100509700), the

Watermaster must comply with the requirements of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA). This includes preparation of an Annual Report for each water year. The Judgment also requires that Annual Reports be developed in consultation with the TAC before submission to the Department of Water Resources (DWR) and the Court.

The Watermaster prepared the Draft WY2025 Annual Report with their groundwater consultant, Dudek and referred the document to the TAC for consultation on January 15, 2026. The Watermaster indicated that the amended Watermaster Rules associated with the Judgment affords the TAC 31 days to review the Draft WY2025 Annual Report and submit recommendations or comments in the form of a Recommendation Report to the Watermaster. TAC feedback on the Draft WY2025 Annual Report is due to the Watermaster by February 15, 2026.

The memorandum from the Watermaster to the TAC requesting consultation on the Draft WY2025 Annual Report is attached on agenda page 10 and a link to the document is included in that memorandum.

#### **4. Continued Discussion of Request for TAC Members to Sign Acknowledgement and Agreement to be Bound to the Protective Order Regarding United Water Conservation District Model**

In the January 6, 2026 TAC meeting, the TAC discussed the request to sign an acknowledgement and agreement to be bound by a protective order regarding United Water Conservation District's model. Questions regarding the specific limitations on data and information the Protective Order would allow the TAC to access, review, and include in public meetings were raised during this discussion. A set of testing questions designed to help clarify the goals and application of the Protective Order are attached on agenda page 12. The TAC will review and discuss these questions in preparation for submitting them to the Watermaster in response to the request to be bound by the Protective Order.

#### **5. Update on Upcoming Committee Consultation Review Requests**

The TAC will receive an update on the schedule for upcoming committee consultations from the Watermaster Representative. Known current and upcoming consultation are summarized in the table below:

<b>Consultation Description</b>	<b>Expected Request Date</b>	<b>Expected Review Due Date</b>
Draft Basin Optimization Yield Study	12/17/2025	2/16/2026
Draft Annual Report	1/15/2026	2/15/2026
Calleguas ASR Project Operations Plan	TBD	TBD

#### **6. Schedule for Completing Current Committee Consultations and Recommendation Reports**

The TAC will discuss the schedule for completing current consultation requests from the Watermaster.

#### **G. Items for Future Agenda**

Potential items for future agenda will be considered by the TAC

#### **H. Adjourn**

## **Attachment 1**

### **Minutes of January 6, 2026 TAC Regular Meeting**

## **Las Posas Valley Groundwater Basin Technical Advisory Committee Regular Meeting**

Meeting Minutes  
for  
January 6<sup>th</sup> 2026

**A. Call to Order**

Chair Taylor called the meeting to order at 2:00 pm.

**B. Roll Call**

All voting TAC members were present (via Zoom):

- Vice Chair Tony Morgan – Present
- Chair Chad Taylor – Present
- Dr. Bob Abrams – Present

All non-voting TAC members were present (via Zoom):

- Bryan Bondy – Present
- Kim Loeb – Present

Chair Taylor reported that all voting and non-voting members of the Las Posas Valley Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) were present, representing a quorum.

**C. Agenda Review**

Chair Taylor reported that an agenda for the meeting was published and notified by the Watermaster. He indicated that the agenda was full and included items that may require significant discussion. Mr. Taylor asked for TAC member or public attendee comments on the agenda and none were raised.

**D. Public Comments**

Chair Taylor offered an opportunity for members of the public to raise items not on the agenda and none were provided.

**E. TAC Member Comments**

Chair Taylor asked the TAC members for comments on items not on the agenda; none were provided.

**F. Regular Agenda**

**1. Approve Minutes from previous meetings**

Chair Taylor advanced to the first item on the regular agenda; review of minutes of the previous TAC meeting, which was a regular meeting held on September, 16 2025. These minutes were included in the agenda package. TAC members reviewed the draft minutes and requested edits which Chair Taylor made during the meeting.

Chair Taylor asked public attendees for comments or other feedback on the minutes, none were received.

Mr. Taylor asked if TAC members were willing to accept the revised minutes of the September 16, 2025 regular TAC meeting through a motion and no objections were presented.

**MOTION:** Mr. Morgan moved to accept the revised minutes of the September 16, 2025 meeting

**SECOND:** Dr. Abrams seconded the motion

**VOTE:** Unanimously approved

## **2. Consultation Request: Draft Basin Optimization Yield Study Report Review**

Chair Taylor introduced the Watermaster's formal consultation request for TAC review of the Draft Basin Optimization Yield Study, which was distributed to the committee in mid-December. The TAC's written comments are due to the Watermaster by February 16.

Chair Taylor outlined the proposed review schedule. The TAC has two regularly scheduled meetings before the due date — January 20<sup>th</sup> and February 3<sup>rd</sup>. Mr. Taylor suggests circulating a draft TAC recommendation report in the February 3<sup>rd</sup> agenda packet so that, absent major unresolved issues, the committee can adopt it that day and submit it early. If substantial revisions are needed, a special meeting could be scheduled during the week of February 3<sup>rd</sup> or the week of February 9<sup>th</sup>.

To organize the review efficiently, Chair Taylor proposed that TAC members submit tabular written comments (including both substantive and editorial comments) in advance, to assist in drafting the recommendation report. He requested that these be submitted by Friday, January 23, 2026.

TAC members agreed that this schedule was reasonable and would allow time for both written and meeting-based discussion.

Mr. Bondy asked for clarification on how Simi Valley inflows were handled in the model runs, noting that it appeared the same inflow was used in all scenarios. Mr. Loeb confirmed that, to his understanding, Simi Valley inflows were not varied between model runs.

Mr. Bondy also asked why pumping from the Epworth Gravels Management Area was reduced in the ramp-down scenarios even though pumping was already below the aquifer's reported sustainable yield. Mr. Loeb explained that this reflected the Watermaster's interpretation of the Judgment, which applies ramp-down to the entire basin; the ultimate application would be a policy decision.

Chair Taylor indicated that there may be variability in the ramp-down rate cited in different sections of the report. Mr. Loeb recommended that any discrepancies be flagged in the TAC's written comments for clarification.

The TAC members indicated they were still completing their reviews and preferred to reserve detailed discussion for the next regular meeting, scheduled for January 20<sup>th</sup>.

Chair Taylor closed the item by inviting public comment on the Draft Basin Optimization Yield Study. No public comments were received.

### **3. Watermaster Response to TAC Recommendation Report – Las Posas Valley Basin, Basin Optimization Yield Study Numerical Modeling Results, dated September 16, 2025**

Mr. Taylor reported that the Watermaster issued a written response to TAC's September 16, 2025 Recommendation Report on the Basin Optimization Yield Study initial model results. The response, included in the agenda packet, generally agreed with TAC's recommendations and incorporated them into the current draft study, but did not agree to conduct multiple iterative model simulations to test the minimum pumping volume that could achieve basin sustainability.

Neither the TAC members or public attendees had comments on this item.

### **4. Request for TAC Members to Sign Acknowledgement and Agreement to be Bound to the Protective Order Regarding United Water Conservation District Model**

Chair Taylor explained that TAC members were asked by the Watermaster to acknowledge and sign an agreement to be bound by a Protective Order governing access to the United Water Conservation District (UWCD) Coastal Plain groundwater model. Watermaster legal counsel advised that the court in the Adjudication entered the Protective Order to give certain parties and individuals access and use of UWCD's groundwater model, which will likely be used to assess and plan for future basin management activities. The Protective Order contains limitations and restrictions on accessing and using the Coastal Plain model. If the protective order creates an issue for sharing modeling results with the public in TAC meetings, revisions may need to be coordinated with UWCD. Mr. Taylor also reported that Watermaster counsel asked TAC members to familiarize themselves with the protective order and return a signed agreement to Watermaster so that the TAC may access the model once it's made available by UWCD.

Chair Taylor noted concerns that such restrictions could conflict with TAC's obligations to operate in public meetings under the Brown Act.

TAC Members raised several concerns and questions, including the following:

- Whether the Protective Order would apply only to TAC activities or to members' other professional work.
- Why TAC was being asked to sign the agreement when TAC had not formally requested access to model files.
- Whether spreadsheets, tables, and other data and information used as model inputs or model-derived outputs previously shared would now be considered protected.
- How TAC could publicly discuss or display model input and outputs data and information if they were subject to the Protective Order.

Mr. John Demers, Fox Canyon Groundwater Management Agency and Watermaster Executive Officer, explained that the request was proactive, anticipating that TAC and Watermaster staff may need to review model inputs, outputs, assumptions, and documentation in order to properly evaluate and defend technical studies such as the Basin Optimization Yield Study and Annual Reports. He stated that UWCD considers most model-related technical materials to fall under the Protective Order and that Watermaster staff also questioned what materials could be shown or discussed in detail in public meetings and presented in published reports.

TAC members expressed concern that the lack of clear boundaries would impair their ability to conduct transparent public review. Chair Taylor emphasized that TAC must conduct its work in public meetings and that the line between public and protected materials was unclear, especially given that the draft study already contains maps, charts, and model-derived data.

Mr. Demers acknowledged the ambiguity and suggested that TAC compile specific questions for Watermaster counsel to clarify what materials fall under the Protective Order and how they may be used in public meetings. Several members indicated a preference to continue working with the materials already provided and to defer signing the agreement unless and until access to additional protected materials becomes necessary.

Chair Taylor summarized that TAC would continue its current review and develop targeted questions for counsel to clarify the scope and implications of the Protective Order.

Chair Taylor asked for public comments on the TAC Recommendation Report schedule; none were provided.

#### **5. Correspondence to TAC Regarding Green Hills Ranch, LLC February 2025 Well Permit Application**

Chair Taylor reported that the TAC had received correspondence from multiple parties concerning an application for a new well construction permit on property owned by Green Hills Ranch, a party to the Judgment. The correspondence included a letter from counsel for Green Hills Ranch requesting that the TAC make a recommendation to the Watermaster to allow the TAC to conduct a material injury analysis and related technical review.

Chair Taylor stated that the Watermaster had responded to the TAC and to Green Hills Ranch in November and had specifically requested that the TAC not take up the matter. Chair Taylor reminded the TAC that, under the Judgment, the TAC serves as a consultation body to the Watermaster, and addresses matters at the request of the Watermaster. While the TAC may recommend that the Watermaster consider additional technical review, such action is at the Watermaster's discretion. Chair Taylor explained that the Watermaster had directed the TAC not to review the material injury analysis for this well permit, and accordingly the TAC was not being asked to review the merits of the application, but only to acknowledge and discuss the correspondence included in the agenda.

Mr. Morgan stated that it appeared clear the TAC had been asked by the Watermaster to stand down.

Mr. Loeb noted that the Watermaster Board had noticed a public hearing on the well permit application for January 28, 2026.

Mr. Bondy disclosed that the applicant had contacted him directly, and that he informed the applicant that it was not within the TAC's jurisdiction to decide what it reviews, as that determination rests with the Watermaster.

Chair Taylor asked whether any other TAC members had communications that should be disclosed regarding this matter; none were reported.

Chair Taylor then opened the item to public comments.

Mr. Brian Hamilton, counsel for Green Hills Ranch, addressed the TAC. Mr. Hamilton stated that part of Green Hills Ranch's request was not only to have the TAC review the specific material

injury analysis for the well permit, but also to provide technical guidance to the Watermaster regarding how such an analysis should be conducted. He stated that Green Hills Ranch had not yet received information from the Watermaster regarding the methodology for determining material injury and noted that a hearing was scheduled for January 28<sup>th</sup>, with Watermaster staff recommendations expected shortly before the hearing. Mr. Hamilton expressed concern that Green Hills Ranch was being asked to demonstrate no material injury without knowing the Watermaster's standards and reiterated his view that the TAC could provide technically competent guidance. He further stated that Green Hills Ranch disagreed with the Watermaster's characterization of the TAC's referral authority and hoped the process would allow the well to proceed based on a fair and technically sound analysis.

Following Mr. Hamilton's comments, Chair Taylor asked whether TAC members had any thoughts on whether and how the TAC could be helpful to the Watermaster regarding material injury analyses.

Mr. Loeb stated that it was clear the Watermaster had not requested TAC involvement in this matter.

No further public comment

#### **6. Update on Upcoming Committee Consultation Review Requests**

Chair Taylor provided an update on upcoming consultation and review requests. He noted a table of known requests, including the draft Basin Optimization Yield Study with a request date of December 17, 2025, and a due date of February 16, 2026, was included in the meeting agenda. Mr. Taylor asked if there were additional items TAC members should be aware of.

Mr. Loeb reported that the Water Year 2025 Annual Report review request is expected on January 15, 2026, with a due date of February 15, 2026. He noted this would be a tight timeline.

Mr. Loeb further informed the TAC that an evaluation of the monitoring program in Las Posas Valley, including a review of data gaps and a recommendation report, is in progress. While a draft date was not yet available, it is expected in the near future, likely in the mid-first quarter of the year.

Mr. Loeb also mentioned that the Calleguas ASR Study Group has been formed, with its initial meeting to be held in February, and that project development is underway, though no review dates for the TAC have been established.

Chair Taylor asked the TAC members if they had any comments on these upcoming items; none were provided. He then opened the item to public commentary, and no comments were raised.

#### **7. Schedule for Completing Current Committee Consultations and Recommendation Reports**

Mr. Taylor then outlined the schedule for completing current consultation and recommendation reports. TAC members are requested to provide commentary on the Basin Optimization Yield Study by January 23, 2026, in tabular format, which may be accompanied by explanatory narrative memoranda if desired. Comments should be submitted in Excel format and will be included in the agenda for the following TAC meeting on February 3, 2026.



The January 20, 2026, meeting will include initial discussion of both the Basin Optimization Yield Study and the Water Year 2025 Annual Report. Comments for the Annual Report are also requested by January 23, 2026, to allow preparation of a recommendation report for discussion at the February 3, 2026 meeting. Chair Taylor noted that draft recommendation reports for both documents will be included in the February 3, 2026 agenda for TAC review and potential adoption and submittal to the Watermaster. If additional time is needed, a special meeting may be scheduled the week of February 9, 2026, to finalize review and ensure compliance with deadlines for submittal to the Watermaster on February 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> for the Annual Report and Basin Optimization Yield Study, respectively.

Mr. Bondy confirmed understanding of the schedule and noted the timing hinges on receipt of the Annual Report on January 15, 2026.

Chair Taylor and Mr. Loeb confirmed that the report is expected on January 15 and emphasized the statutory requirement for submittal to the Board and DWR by April 1, 2026.

Chair Taylor asked if there were any public comments on the schedule; none were raised. He then invited TAC members to identify items for future agendas; none were proposed. No public items were raised.

#### **G. Items for Future Agenda**

Chair Taylor asked if TAC members or the public wanted to bring items to the TAC's attention for consideration in future TAC meeting agendas. No comments were provided.

#### **H. Adjourn**

Chair Taylor thanked the TAC members and public for attending and made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

**MOTION:** Chair Taylor moved to adjourn the meeting at 2:58 pm

**SECOND:** dr. Abrams seconded the motion

**VOTE:** Unanimously approved

## **Attachment 2**

**Watermaster Committee Consultation Request: Draft Las Posas Valley Basin Groundwater Sustainability Plan Water Year 2025 Annual Report, January 15, 2026**

# FOX CANYON GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT AGENCY

## LAS POSAS VALLEY WATERMASTER

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### MEMORANDUM

**Date:** January 15, 2026  
**To:** Las Posas Valley Watermaster Technical Advisory Committee  
**From:** Kudzai F. Kaseke, Assistant Groundwater Manager  
**Subject:** Draft Las Posas Valley Basin Groundwater Sustainability Plan Water Year 2025 Annual Report.

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Dear Las Posas Valley Watermaster Technical Advisory Committee (TAC):

Pursuant to Section 4.9 of the *Las Posas Valley Water Rights Coalition, et al. v. Fox Canyon Groundwater Management Agency, Santa Barbara Sup. Ct. Case No. VENC100509700* (Judgment), Watermaster shall comply with the requirements of SGMA, including developing an Annual Report each year and undertaking the GSP Updates. (Wat. Code, §§ 10728, 10728.2). The Judgment requires that the Annual Reports and GSP Updates be developed in consultation with the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and Policy Advisory Committee (PAC) before submission to the Department of Water Resources and the Court.

Watermaster and Dudek have completed a draft version of the Las Posas Valley Basin Groundwater Sustainability Plan Water Year 2025 (October 1, 2024, through September 30, 2025) Annual Report, and in compliance with the provisions of the Judgment, refer said draft for committee consultation. Watermaster requests TAC recommendations or comments on the draft. Access to the draft is available through the following link for the next 60 days:

[WY2025 LPVB GSP Annual Report DRAFT.pdf](#)

The Judgment, amended Watermaster Rules, affords your committee 31 days to prepare and submit recommendation reports to Watermaster. Therefore, your committee's recommendation report is due February 15, 2026.

Please contact me at 805-654-2010 or [LPV.Watermaster@venturacounty.gov](mailto:LPV.Watermaster@venturacounty.gov) with any questions or concerns.

### **Attachment 3**

#### **TAC Questions on Protective Order Regarding United Water Conservation District Model**

In December 2025, the members of the Las Posas Valley Basin Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) were asked by the Las Posas Valley Basin Watermaster (Watermaster) to acknowledge and sign an agreement to be bound by a Protective Order governing access to the United Water Conservation District (UWCD) Coastal Plain groundwater model.

During discussion of this request in a public TAC meeting held on January 6, 2026, TAC members raised questions and concerns about their ability to access data and information required for review of ongoing Las Posas Valley Basin groundwater management within the context of Brown Act governed public meetings, as required by the Las Posas Valley Basin Adjudication Judgment (Las Posas Valley Water Rights Coalition, et al. v. Fox Canyon Groundwater Management Agency, Santa Barbara Sup. Ct. Case No. VENC100509700).

TAC members expressed specific concern about the lack of clear boundaries on what data and information could be shared in public meetings and noted that the Watermaster is required to publish documents that include maps, charts, tables, and other information derived from the Coastal Plain model.

In response to TAC concerns, Watermaster staff reported that UWCD considers most model-related technical materials to fall under the Protective Order and that Watermaster staff also question what materials could be shown or discussed in detail in public meetings and presented in published reports. Staff further suggested that TAC compile specific questions for Watermaster counsel to clarify what materials fall under the Protective Order (PO) and how they may be used in public meetings. Draft questions for this purpose follow:

- Why is it necessary to have a PO specifically for the Basin Optimization Yield Study (BOYS) project and not for TAC review efforts for previous documents that relied on modeling results?
  - To date, the TAC has not formally requested model files in support of the Draft BOYS review.
  - However, the TAC did request and receive tabular data of pumping that was used as inputs to model simulations for the BOYS analyses and model results in the form of water budget data and simulated head hydrographs for representative monitoring wells in the West Las Posas Management Area (WLPMA). Would those data have been subject to the PO? If so, would inclusion of these data, slides prepared by Dudek summarizing model results, and summary tables prepared by TAC to facilitate review and discussion have been subject to the PO?
- Initial interpretations of the PO suggest that the information contained in the Draft BOYS is covered by the PO (page 3, lines 17-21) and cannot be shared, discussed, etc. with anyone who has not signed the PO. However, the PO also exempts

information in the public domain (page 3, lines 21-28). Since a link to the Draft BOYS document was included in the publicly available agenda packets for both the TAC and PAC meetings, does that mean that the Draft BOYS document is not subject to the PO?

- The Draft BOYS document has not been labeled as “SUBJECT TO PROTECTIVE ORDER – HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL – ATTORNEY’S EYES ONLY” as stipulated in V.b. of the PO, therefore we can assume it is NOT subject to the PO?
- Section VI c lists the persons/entities allowed to access the model files. Stakeholders are not on this list. How are stakeholders supposed to gain access to this information?

#### Administrative questions:

- If the information in the Draft BOYS document or other model files received from UWCD are to be discussed at a TAC meeting, how are public/stakeholders in attendance supposed to engage in the discussions?
- Typically, TAC agendas include maps, graphs, data tables, etc. from documents and supporting data the Watermaster has requested the TAC review. In addition, during TAC meetings these and similar data and information are sometimes shared onscreen to facilitate technical discussions. Assuming the TAC members have signed the PO and are free to share model files, how can this be accomplished with stakeholders in attendance at the TAC meetings? The TAC has Brown Act compliance requirements and cannot hold closed meetings in this case.
- If the TAC members have NOT signed the PO, then the TAC members cannot discuss, share, etc. the model files between themselves or speak with their constituents about the data. This is contrary to the TAC’s mission. What alternative mechanisms for conducting routine TAC business are proposed?