



Tehama County  
Wednesday, April 8, 2026 8:30 AM  
Groundwater Commission  
Meeting Minutes

Tehama County Board of Supervisors  
Chambers  
727 Oak Street, Red Bluff, CA 96080  
<https://tehamacounty.legistar.com/Calendar.aspx>

## 8:30 AM

Commissioners: Elijah Stanley, City of Corning; Jeff Godwin, City of Red Bluff; Hal Crain, City of Tehama; Kris Lamkin, El Camino Irrigation District; Todd Hamer, Los Molinos Community Services District; Martha Slack, Rio Alto Water District; Liz Merry District 1; Adam Englehardt, District 2; Seth Lawrence, District 3; Michael Ward, District 4; David Lester, District 5;

Justin Jenson, Flood Control/Water Resources Manager; Lena Sequeira, Administration

### Call to Order / Pledge of Allegiance / Introductions

8:31am

**Present** Commissioner Todd Hamer, Commissioner Martha Slack, Commissioner Kris Lamkin, Commissioner Michael Ward, Commissioner Seth Lawrence, Commissioner Adam Englehardt, Commissioner David Lester, Commissioner Liz Merry, Commissioner Jeff Godwin, and Commissioner Elijah Stanley

**ABSENT** Commissioner Hal Crain

### Public Comment

A resident commented on the fee methodology, referencing information from the District website and sharing their views.

A resident called in and introduced herself as Susan Price, noting that she was attending remotely.

**1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES - January 14 2026**

**26-0514**

a) Waive the reading and approve the minutes of the regular meeting held 1/14/2026

- RESULT:** APPROVE
- MOVER:** Martha Slack
- SECONDER:** David Lester
- AYES:** Commissioner Hamer, Commissioner Slack, Commissioner Lamkin, Commissioner Ward, Commissioner Lawrence, Commissioner Englehardt, Commissioner Lester, Commissioner Merry, Commissioner Godwin, and Commissioner Stanley
- ABSENT:** Commissioner Crain

**2. RCD - Presentation**

**26-0523**

Kevin with the RCD presented a PowerPoint on the completion of projects conducted in partnership with LSCE.

A resident was called to speak and asked where the project funding originated. Kevin responded that funding came from Proposition 68.

Discussion followed regarding the total acreage benefited by the projects, the importance of continued funding to support similar efforts, and clarification regarding the use of acronyms.

**3. Public Meeting Review**

**26-0518**

Jenson provided an update on public outreach meetings held earlier in the month.

Hamer asked if additional meetings were scheduled, and Jenson provided clarification.

A resident shared their opinion on the projects performed, followed by discussion regarding the resident's concerns.

A resident commented on the public meeting overview and requested clarification on how they would be impacted by the proposed fees. Jenson responded to the concerns raised.

A resident commented on the assessor fee included in the fee presentation and noted they had contacted the assessor's office regarding the matter.

A resident also commented on burying drip lines.

**4. Fee Report Overview**

**26-0519**

Ward asked what The Commission was recommending today

Jenson clarified that options are being presented to the Board regarding adoption of the fee study, and that the data shown is the same information presented at the public outreach meetings.

He presented a PowerPoint outlining the fee overview, walking through the different options and the reasoning behind each.

Discussion followed regarding recommended scenarios, maximum amounts, and the process used to arrive at the proposed figures.

Slack asked how successful grant funding efforts, including Proposition 4 opportunities, could affect proposed fees. Jenson clarified staff's recommendations.

Lawrence asked whether the budget projections were based on a five-year period. Jenson explained that budgets would be reviewed annually, with fee adjustments or a new fee cycle considered after five years.

Discussion continued regarding the fee recommendations.

Klausner clarified the two recommendations that needed to be considered and provided an explanation. Jenson agreed and stated he would present the calculations for clarification.

Discussion followed regarding the annual budget, five-year assessments, and implementation timelines.

Lawrence asked whether fees would be adjusted if the subbasin were to come out of overdraft. Jenson explained that budgets and fees could be re-evaluated and adjusted as needed.

Discussion continued regarding allocation of fees between countywide and in-basin users. Lester shared his opinion on distributing fees on a per-parcel basis.

Jenson explained that the document uses estimated usage by land use type but allows users to report actual volumes to adjust assumed use. He noted the approach is intended to address groundwater overuse and will be refined over time as more actual data is collected.

Ward asked for clarification on the built-in assumptions. Jenson explained that the methodology relies on residents registering their wells, and that assumptions must be used when data is unavailable. He provided additional explanation on the process.

Merry asked whether residents would be able to contest.

Jenson confirmed residents could contest and said a flyer would be sent out. He explained the calculations and noted a county restriction that prevents metering wells.

Englehardt commented that accurate reporting is important under demand management.

Jenson continued the presentation on fee options.

Ward asked about managed subbasins and where the administrative fee should be applied. Jenson clarified.

Discussion continued on managed subbasins and fee assessment.

Lawrence asked about the annual escalator included in the budget. Jenson clarified and explained how average calculations were developed.

Discussion followed regarding residential connections and associated fees.

Hamer asked whether actual usage would ever be compared to connection-based estimates for urban residential users. Jenson responded that reported usage is received from the city and explained the billing process, including coordination with the Assessor's Office.

Discussion continued regarding how different user types are charged.

Jenson clarified the charges and noted that the group could recommend changes if desired. He continued reviewing the parcel-wide recommendation and associated costs.

Englehardt asked whether similar fees are used in other counties. Jenson responded that some counties use variations of the approach and explained different methodologies.

Jenson reviewed the recommendations from the fee study and consultants.

Englehardt moved to recommend Option 1 for administrative fees in the managed subbasins, as proposed. Merry seconded the motion.

Discussion followed regarding the proposed motion.

Hamer opened the floor for public comment before the vote.

A resident referenced the budget and shared their opinion. Jenson provided clarification in response.

Discussion followed regarding separation of fees.

A resident suggested holding a special meeting to discuss the fees in more detail and shared concerns about the calculations shown. Jenson clarified that annual reported volumes are separate from the data used in the current methodology.

A resident commented on the budget timeline and shared their opinion. Englehardt asked about reviewing budget decisions, and Jenson provided clarification.

A resident asked about dry wells and how the County would respond to those issues.

Ward clarified that the Board was not approving a specific dollar amount or budget, but was determining how fees would be applied.

Lawrence noted that Jenson was working with estimated fees due to the process being new, and that exact figures would not be available until implementation begins.

Lester shared his opinion on the fees and emphasized the importance of moving forward with the available information.

Slack commented on the need to make a decision.

Merry asked whether Adam would amend his recommendation to assess rural residential properties per connection instead of per acre and whether domestic users could be excluded.

Englehardt stated he would keep his motion as originally made, consistent with staff recommendations, and explained his reasoning.

Lawrence clarified that rural residential is assessed per connection, not per acre.

Jenson confirmed that residential parcels are included based on connections, with differences based on usage.

Hamer clarified that Recommendation No. 1 had been moved and seconded to assess residential properties per connection rather than per acre within the managed subbasins.

**RESULT:** APPROVE  
**MOVER:** Adam Englehardt  
**SECONDER:** Liz Merry  
**AYES:** Commissioner Hamer, Commissioner Slack, Commissioner Lamkin, Commissioner Ward, Commissioner Lawrence, Commissioner Englehardt, Commissioner Lester, Commissioner Merry, Commissioner Godwin, and Commissioner Stanley  
**ABSENT:** Commissioner Crain

Hamer clarified that there was a recommendation for administrative fees at that point. The group moved to Section 2 of the item to consider a recommendation for PMA fees.

Jenson explained that PMA fees are based on a per acre-foot cost and would be presented using the maximum recommended rate. He noted that both fee methods include funding for consultant support and data work related to Demand Management.

Englehardt asked about the maximum cap.

Jenson clarified that the recommendation would include a five-year cap to provide a consistent planning number.

Discussion followed regarding the five-year timeline.

Jenson reviewed the estimates and explained how average versus actual calculations were used to determine costs, along with an overview of the fee recommendations, next steps, and deadlines.

Englehardt asked whether administrative and PMA fees were separated. Jenson provided clarification.

Englehardt made a motion to set the maximum at \$1 million annually for five years and \$750,000 for 2026, noting a proposed 5% annual increase and explaining his rationale.

The motion died for lack of a second.

Lester requested clarification on the administrative and PMA fees.

Discussion continued on the fee proposal.

Jenson explained that the maximum budget is an estimate used for planning purposes and may be adjusted depending on needs, particularly in addressing overdraft conditions in certain areas. He noted that Demand Management discussions include phasing implementation over time and provided examples.

Discussion followed regarding fee collection and the five-year review process.

Hamer opened public comment.

Klausner clarified that the motion on the floor had not been seconded. Hamer stated the group would return to making a motion after public comment.

A resident commented on the proposed budget. Jenson clarified the resident's comments and reviewed the process.

Lawrence clarified Englehardt's comments regarding budget changes.

Jenson responded that he understood and explained how the budget would be adjusted under the proposed method.

Hamer asked for additional public comment and commissioner input, and inquired about a standing motion.

Lester stated he had no issue with the changes as long as funding needs were met.

Jenson responded that the budget could be adjusted as needed within Demand Management and explained its flexibility.

Englehardt reiterated his perspective that the PMA fee should apply to all subbasins in overdraft and restated his motion. Lester seconded the motion.

Hamer clarified that the motion had been moved and seconded to approve a \$1 million maximum fee cap recommendation for the budget.

Jenson clarified and stated he would adjust the budget accordingly.

Englehardt clarified that the motion also included recommending the 2026 budget as proposed by staff.

Hamer reiterated that the motion included a \$1 million cap and acceptance of the 2026–2027 budget at the recommended amount.

**RESULT:** APPROVE  
**MOVER:** Adam Englehardt  
**SECONDER:** David Lester  
**AYES:** Commissioner Lamkin, Commissioner Ward, Commissioner Lawrence, Commissioner Englehardt, Commissioner Lester, Commissioner Godwin, and Commissioner Stanley  
**NAYS:** Commissioner Hamer, Commissioner Slack, and Commissioner Merry  
**ABSENT:** Commissioner Crain

## **5. Standing Agenda Items**

**26-0515**

### **Groundwater Recharge**

Jenson stated there were few updates but noted a consultant document that could establish thresholds for floodwater diversions. He explained that these thresholds would not be implemented until next season and outlined the related process and next steps. Discussion followed.

### **Grant Status**

Jenson stated there is a hold in Corning, with remaining funds available, but an extension from DWR is pending until June. He noted that no funds can be spent until the extension decision is made, with hopes of extending the project through December. He added that extensions were approved for Los Molinos and Antelope, and Red Bluff funds have been fully expended.

### **DM Working Group**

Englehardt expressed positive comments and stated he was pleased with progress, noting he hoped to have a document ready soon.

Jenson added they were weeks away from local legal review and a working draft.

Englehardt noted that if the plan is adopted, it would be beneficial to keep the same group involved to complete remaining work. Jenson agreed.

Discussion followed on defining the committee. Hamer stated the Ad Hoc would remain in place for now, with potential changes considered later.

Ward expressed appreciation for the process and for Joe Hughes' contributions, stating confidence in developing a clear framework.

Merry shared that she had learned a lot and appreciated hearing different perspectives, also thanking Joe Hughes and CBI.

Jenson expressed appreciation for the input. Hamer noted that the upcoming board document was a framework, with additional details to follow.

### **Outreach Ad Hoc**

Jenson stated that a poll would be sent out regarding preferences for the next community outreach meetings. Englehardt requested that it be completed prior to the fee hearing. Jenson

stated that it likely could be done.

### **Annual Report**

Jenson stated that the Annual Reports had been submitted and that no data had changed since the review.

Merry asked about increases in rural residential and urban residential user numbers.

Discussion followed regarding the estimated figures.

Teasdale stated he would return with a presentation to clarify the numbers. Merry shared her interpretation of the data, and Teasdale confirmed he would provide further clarification.

Ward expressed concerns regarding the topic. Discussion continued on the numbers and data sources.

Hamer clarified that a full explanation would be provided at the next meeting.

### **Outreach**

Provided earlier in the meeting.

### **6. Commission Matters**

None

### **Adjourn**

11:36am