
Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board

MINUTES

July 9-10, 2025

The Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board (Water Board)
conducted this meeting at the location shown below:

Eastern Sierra Tri-County Fairgrounds
475 Sierra Street
Bishop, CA 93514

Regular Meeting

Wednesday, July 9, 2025, 9:00 a.m.

AND

Field Tour

Thursday, July 10, 2025, 8:30 a.m.

And

Via Video and Teleconference (Gov. Code § 11133)

Water Board Members

Kimberly Cox, Ph.D., Helendale
Essra Mostafavi, Bishop
Robert Pearce, Ph.D., Chalfant

Amy Horne, Ph.D., Truckee
Rick Dever, Crestline
Jeff Loux, Ph.D., Truckee

State Water Board

Elizabeth Beryt, Office of Chief Counsel
Julie Macedo, Regional Water Programs

Nichole Morgan, Lahontan Board Liaison (absent)

Water Board Staff

Ben Letton, Executive Officer
Timothy Middlemis-Clark, Supv WRC Engineer
Daniel Sussman, Sr. Environmental Scientist
Alonzo Poach, Sr. Engineering Geologist
Ariel Lafarga, Asst. Board Clerk
Katrina Fleshman, Board Clerk

Jan Zimmerman, Supv. Engineering Geologist
Mary Fiore-Wagner, Sr. Env. Scientist
Aileen Chea, WRC Engineer
Shelby Barker, Sr. Engineering Geologist
Jasmine Enerson, Asst. Board Clerk

[View the full Agenda and listen to the audio of this meeting](#)

ESSRA MOSTAFAVI, CHAIR | BEN LETTON, EXECUTIVE OFFICER

REGULAR MEETING: Wednesday, July 9, 2025, at 9:00 a.m.

CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Water Board Chair, Essra Mostafavi, called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. The Board Chair introduced the Water Board Members, and the Water Board staff, and discussed procedures for in-person and video and teleconference meetings.

1. PUBLIC FORUM

No public speakers

2. MINUTES

Motion: Moved by Member Dr. Cox, seconded by Member Dr. Pearce, to approve May 13, 2025, meeting Minutes as presented. Board Chair Mostafavi called for a roll call vote and the motion carried by the following votes:

Board Chair Essra Mostafavi	Aye
Vice-Chair Dr. Pearce	Aye
Member Dr. Cox	Aye
Member Dr. Horne	Aye
Member Dever	Aye
Member Dr. Loux	Aye

[View the adopted May 13, 2025, Meeting Minutes](#)

3. REPORTS BY WATER BOARD CHAIR AND WATER BOARD MEMBERS

Board member Dr. Loux mentioned to the public and Water Board members, if interested in the Truckee River, the Truckee River Revitalization Steering Committee prepared a plan for improvements to the river. It's called the R3 Playbook and will be posted on the Town of Truckee website soon.

Board member, Dr. Pearce, indicated the Tri-County Ground Water Management District has a vacancy on their Board if anyone is interested.

4. 2025 TRIENNIAL REVIEW OF THE WATER QUALITY CONTROL PLAN FOR THE LAHONTAN REGION

The Water Board held a hearing to consider a resolution to approving the 2025 Triennial Review list of priority issues for the Basin Planning Program. Water Board staff, Daniel Sussman, Senior Environmental Scientist, presented an overview of the purpose of the Triennial review, the process, a description of the recommended Basin Planning priorities, comments received, and the recommendation.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Matt Kemp, Hot Creek/Mono County resident

Devin O'Dea, speaking on behalf of Back Country Hunters and Anglers

Sam Davidson, Director of Public Policy for Trout Unlimited

Matt Clifford, California Director for Trout Unlimited

Maria Depaz, Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP)

Dan Johnson, Trout Unlimited

Chris Leonard, Crowley Fish Foundation

Allison Weber, Forest and Water Quality Director for the Friends of the Inyo

Emily Markstein, campaign organizer for No Hot Creek Mine

COMMENTS BY WATER BOARD

The Water Board Chair, Essra Mostafavi, asked if there would be individual Water Quality protection, independent of designations that would prevent gold mining from going forward. Water Board staff, Mr. Sussman, replied that what an Outstanding National Resource Water (ONRW) provides is the inability for the board to allow any degradation that's not short term and temporary. Mr. Sussman went on to say that there is also a section in the Basin Plan for mining for the implementation that lays out the approach staff can take when dealing with mining proposals.

Water Board member, Dr. Horne, asked Mr. Sussman what the connection is between the Basin Plan and the enforcement program. Mr. Sussman replied that Lahontan has its Water Quality Objectives, that are protected by the Clean Water Act, and if the Discharger violates those objectives, we will enforce that. Following Mr. Sussman's response, Office of Enforcement staff attorney Julie Macedo added more explanation to address Dr. Horne's question.

Water Board member, Dr. Horne, indicated that she supports the proposal for working on the Mono Lake Tribal Beneficial Uses, supports the editorial cleanup and format update, and supports the expanded project categories for low threat discharge prohibition exemptions with the minor addition that when it comes to "pilings" on piers, Dr. Horne suggested, it is important to check to see if there are underground infrastructures.

WATER BOARD TOOK A BREAK FROM 10:28AM TO 10:40AM

Water Board member, Dr. Loux, asked how much time can be devoted to Hot Creek. Dr. Loux asked about the waters in Central Valley Region being considered for ONRW designation, and which ones are rivers. Mr. Sussman replied that the water in Region 5 is Medicine Lake, Region 1 is the Cedar and Eel Rivers. Water Board member, Dr. Loux, went on to say he likes the idea of a standardized process. Dr. Loux suggested where Dr. Horne is headed; take the two issues in reserve, and put them on the high priorities category, narrow down any one of those priorities and do away with the reserve category.

The Water Board Chair, Essra Mostafavi, stated she has every confidence in how staff prioritize issues on the Triennial Review.

Water Board member Dr. Pearce indicated regarding the ONRW discussion, he would rather see there be a format in place. Dr. Pearce stated that once the

designations are put on a stream, he would like to know what occurs and if the staff are going to have to get some baseline data on what conditions exist on that stream.

Water Board member, Dr. Cox, stated she agrees with the separation by categories. Dr. Cox went on to state she believes over the last couple of years there's been a concerted effort with the Lahontan staff in dealing with the workload and what is achievable.

Water Board Dr. Cox stated she likes the way this list has been prioritized because it gives some formality, to indicate Lahontan staff are going to put resources in these top five. Dr. Cox wanted clarification that the list doesn't exclude the possibility of getting through the issues in reserve or even beginning some groundwork on those. Water Board member, Mr. Sussman, replied, if the resources are allowed, we will begin working on other items on the list. Dr. Cox further stated, I agree with those five priorities as above the line, and let's just consider the next two in reserve at the line, and then the balance is below the line, and we'll get to them in the future and revisit those in the next Triennial Review.

Water Board member, Rick Dever, asked if staff work on the five priorities simultaneously, or one at a time? Mr. Sussman replied they are working on all five.

Water Board member, Dr. Loux mentioned he likes the idea of the priority projects being those five, but with a little bit of specificity somehow, or caveat added to the Tribal Beneficial Uses – Waterbodies to be determined. Mr. Loux proposed adding the two in reserve into that list. But instead of saying “designate Hot Creek as an ONRW”, say something like “work with Region 1 and Region 5 on developing an ONRW standardized process”.

Water Board member Dr. Horne indicated she could support Dr. Loux's statement as a motion to expand the list to include the items in reserve with more specificity to make the entire list something that can be accomplished within a three-year triennial cycle.

Water Board member Dr. Pearce indicated that he agrees with Dr. Loux's proposal. However, he would take off “moving Hot Creek up as an example” Dr. Pearce feels Lahontan needs to look at the process in general across the state on what an ONRW entails and what it's going to impact land users.

Water Board member, Dr. Cox, gave a motion to adopt the list as presented by staff, understanding that there will be some work on the Hot Creek ONRW issue.

Water Board member, Dr. Loux agreed with the motion, but to an amendment to add what Dr. Pearce stated that, “Hot Creek item not come forward as a “Hot Creek ONRW designation”, but to work with Region 1 and Region 5 on the process.

Water Board member, Dr. Cox, restated, my motion stands with that medium priority as reserve projects knowing that Lahontan is going to work on them.

Water Board member, Dr. Horne asked to amend the motion to remove the words “High Quality Beneficial Uses”. Dr. Cox agreed to amend her motion.

Water Board staff is understanding that the motion is that the Resolution will not change. However, the Priority List of Basin Planning Projects will have the following changes:

- a. Designate Explore Designating Hot Creek as an ONRW
- b. High Quality Beneficial Uses (strike the whole issue)

Motion: Moved by Member Dr. Cox, to adopt the list as presented by staff. Board member, Dr. Horne, asked that the Motion be amended to remove the words “*High Quality Beneficial Uses*”. Board member, Dr. Pearce asked that the motion be amended to be “*Explore Designating Hot Creek as an ONRW*”. Board member, Dr. Cox, agreed to amend her motion to remove the words “*High Quality Beneficial Uses*”, and add the words “*Explore Designating Hot Creek as an ONRW*”. Motion is seconded by Member Dr. Pearce, to adopt the resolution to approve the 2025 Triennial Review list of priority issues for the Basin Planning Program as amended. Board Chair, Mostafavi, called for a roll call vote and the motion carried per the following votes:

Board Chair Essra Mostafavi	Aye
Vice-Chair Dr. Pearce	Aye
Member Dr. Cox	Aye
Member Dr. Horne	Aye
Member Dever	Aye
Member Dr. Loux	Aye

5. *Recission of Multiple Waste Discharge Requirements

Water Board staff Aileen Chea, Water Resource Control Engineer, asked the Water Board to consider rescinding the individual Waste Discharge Requirements for Convict Lake Campground Wastewater Treatment Facility (6-95-37), Independence Wastewater Treatment Facility (6-95-64), Mountain High Ski Area East (6-87-115), Mountain High Ski Area West (6-85-114), Sierra View Mobile Estates (6-75-23), and Death Valley National Monument Furnace Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant (6-86-84).

Motion: Moved by Member Chair Mostafavi, seconded by Member Dever, to rescinding the individual Waste Discharge Requirements for Convict Lake Campground Wastewater Treatment Facility (6-95-37), Independence Wastewater Treatment Facility (6-95-64), Mountain High Ski Area East (6-87-115), Mountain High Ski Area West (6-85-114), Sierra View Mobile Estates (6-75-23), and Death Valley National Monument Furnace Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant (6-86-84) as presented. Board Chair, Mostafavi, called for a roll call vote and the motion carried per the following votes:

Board Chair Essra Mostafavi	Aye
Vice-Chair Dr. Pearce	Aye
Member Dr. Cox	Aye
Member Dr. Horne	Aye
Member Dever	Aye
Member Dr. Loux	Aye

6. Department of Defense Cleanup Program Overview

Water Board staff, Alonzo Poach, Sr. Engineering Geologist, provided an overview of the Department of Defense (DOD) cleanup program and its statewide implementation, with a focus on the program within the Lahontan region. The presentation included an introduction to DOD facilities within Lahontan, the personnel involved in these projects, and an overview of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) cleanup process.

Additionally, staff solicited the Board's interest in scheduling tours of DOD facilities and bringing future DOD informational items.

Water Board staff, Mr. Poach asked if the Water Board members had any input on what site interests them the most, Lahontan staff would be happy to hear that input. Mr. Poach further stated he understands there has been some interest about former George Air Force base and since it's no longer an active military facility, it would likely be more, conducive and easy to coordinate a site visit for Water Board members.

COMMENTS BY WATER BOARD

Water Board Chair, Essra Mostafavi, mentioned a new Executive order in which the White House Council on Environmental Quality, or rather the feds are now mandating NEPA to be written, and for each agency to create their own NEPA laws. Mrs. Mostafavi asked if Mr. Poach anticipates NEPA to be a big problem for Lahontan moving forward. Water Board Staff, Mr. Poach, replied most of the cleanup is exempt from NEPA and CEQA.

Water Board member, Dever, stated that the presentation was great , and he feels the collaboration with other agencies really could move things forward much faster than normal.

Water Board member Dr. Cox asked if we have a Record of Decision (ROD) for George AFB or are we pre-ROD. Water Board staff, Mr. Poach replied, yes, some sites do have a ROD and other sites are still in the remedial investigation and feasibility study phase. Water Board member, Dr. Cox, further asked about the dieldrin plume. Water Board staff, Mr. Poach, replied the dieldrin plume was not within the CERCLA process but has oversight from just the Water Board as pesticides are generally exempt from CERCLA.

Water Board member, Dr. Horne, asked about the eight bases, and their primary purpose/use . Mr. Poach replied:

- Edwards Air Force Base is a major US Air Force installation, known for flight testing and aerospace research.
 - NASA Armstrong Flight Research Center is also headquartered.
- Marine Corps logistics based in Barstow is a key logistics and maintenance hub for the US Marine Corps
- Fort Irwin is the home of the National Training Center used for large scale exercises.
- The former George Air Force Base is a decommissioned Air Force base that was used primarily to train fighter and bomber pilots before closure in the early 1990s.

- Air Force Plant 42 is a classified government owned contractor operated base in the Mojave Desert, used for large scale exercises.
- Sierra Army Depot in the north is a US Army facility that specializes in storage, maintenance, and redistribution of military equipment.
- Marine Corps Warfare Training Center is a training facility in the Sierra Nevada that preps Marines for operations in mountainous and cold weather environments.
- China Lake Naval Air Weapons station is the late Navy's largest land holding supporting research development, testing, and evaluation of weapon systems.

Water Board member Dr. Horne indicated she would be interested in having a board field trip. Water Board staff, Mr. Poach, indicated he would set that up.

Water Board Chair, Mrs. Mostafavi, asked legal counsel when we're discussing RODs, is this the ROD that results from the Environmental impact statement (EIS) process under NEPA. Counsel, Ms. Beryt replied she heard Mr. Poach described the NEPA process as being exempt, but she doesn't feel it's an exemption as much as an integration of NEPA into the CERCLA process.

Water Board Chair, Mrs. Mostafavi, indicated that she personally has always wanted to go to China Lake because of the petroglyphs and the extensive rock art features. Mr. Poach replied that this kind of site tour may be difficult to coordinate due to the remote nature of the site, but noted the interest in the site.

7. FY 24/25 Accomplishments and FY 25/26 Priorities

Water Board staff, Ben Letton, Executive Officer, presented an overview of the Region's accomplishments from the past fiscal year and the top priorities for the coming fiscal year.

WATER BOARD TOOK A BREAK FROM 2:25PM TO 2:30PM

Water Board staff, TJ Middlemis-Clark, Supervising WRC Engineer, provided an update on the Regulatory and Cleanup Division's program and objectives.

Water Board staff, Mary Fiore-Wagner, Environmental Program Manager, provided an update on the Compliance and Planning Division's FY 24/25 successes and its FY25/26 priorities.

Water Board staff, Jan Zimmerman, Supervising Engineering Geologist, presented an overview on the South Lahontan Basin Division successes, and what to expect for FY 25/26.

Water Board staff, Ben Letton, Executive Officer, gave a final presentation on the FY 24/25 Performance Targets reflections and the FY 25/26 projections.

WATER BOARD TOOK A BREAK FROM 2:25PM TO 2:31PM

COMMENTS BY WATER BOARD

Water Board member Dr. Horne asked the Executive Officer, Mr. Letton, what his vision is regarding executive leadership, pertaining to external interests. Mr. Letton replied that as the Executive Officer he will always advocate for the Lahontan staff.

Water Board member, Dr. Horne complimented the staff for the creative approach in maintaining data collection and for the Swamp program in the southern part of the Lahontan region.

Water Board member, Dr. Loux stated he is excited to see the Bishop Creek and West Fort Carson move forward.

8. 2025 Annual Enforcement Program Update

Water Board staff, Shelby Barker, Sr. Engineering Geologist, presented a summary of violations and enforcement activities for the 2024/2025 fiscal year and discuss priorities for the 2025/2026 fiscal year.

WATER BOARD TOOK A BREAK FROM 3:25PM TO 3:35PM

Julie Macedo, Attorney for the Regional Water Programs from the State Water Board presented an overview of the 2024 Enforcement Policy adopted by the State Water Board. Ms. Macedo offered to provide enforcement training to the program staff at Lahontan Water Board.

COMMENTS BY WATER BOARD

Water Board member, Dr. Horne indicated that she supports the enforcement programs policy of using enforcement tools to ensure compliance; supports progressive enforcement; supports increasing efficiency and streamlining processes; supports coordinating with regulatory staff and supports progress on formal enforcement.

Water Board member, Dr. Cox, asked Ms. Macedo about her comment that changes are coming from the Supreme Court and if the Lahontan Water Board members will get a briefing on the outcome. Ms. Macedo replied she is unaware of a formal guidance document being provided.

9. Executive Officer's Report

Water Board staff, Ben Letton, Executive Officer, provided an update to the Water Board and public on key actions and activities in the Lahontan region, including the items below.

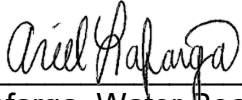
- a. Personnel Report
- b. April EO Report Articles
- c. May EO Articles

10. CLOSED SESSION

The Water Board members went into Closed Session on July 9, 2025, at 4:35 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to come before the Water Board, the meeting adjourned at 4:50 p.m. on July 9, 2025.

Prepared by:  Adopted: August 28, 2025
Ariel Lafarga, Water Board Clerk

TOUR: Thursday, July 10, 2025, at 9:00 a.m.

Bishop Creek Vision Project Field Tour. The tour included a brief project overview presented by Regional Board staff, followed by site visits that highlighted implementation progress and partnerships related to the [Bishop Creek Vision Project](#). Specific tour stops and maps were provided the morning of the tour.