



County of Santa Cruz

Health Services Agency – Environmental Health

Fish and Wildlife Advisory Commission

(831) 454-2022 TDD/TTY – Call 711 <http://www.scceh.org>



Meeting Minutes September 4, 2025

1. **CALL TO ORDER** – 6:32 pm
2. **ROLL CALL**

District	Commissioner	Status	Commissioner	Status
I	Chris Berry	E	Kevin Butler	P
II	Brian Woodward	P	David Somerton	P
III	Liz Alter	A	Jon Jankovitz	E
IV	Brooke Sampson	P	Daniela Suarez	E
V	Jenni Gomez	P	Joanne Brown	P

P = Present R = Remote E = Excused A = Absent

3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

- o **Motion to Approve Minutes:** Somerton, **Second:** Jankovitz,
- o **All Ayes:** Minutes approved

4. **PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

- o **Steve Kennedy:** Requests an agenda item be created to be released from a promise to not request additional funding.

5. **PRESENTATION ON EXPANSION OF LOW FLOW CLOSURE ORDINANCE:**

Fisheries Biologist for CDFW, Sean Cochran, presented proposed changes to Low Flow fishing closures. In addition to language clean-up in the ordinance, the proposal would add Aptos and Soquel Creek to the closure criteria for San Lorenzo River. Available data indicates that these three water bodies are highly correlated and that 40 cubic feet per second (CFS) at San Lorenzo would indicate passage challenges exist in Aptos and Soquel Creek. This is Intended to be protective of steelhead which can be stranded by low flows and unable to escape anglers. This change would likely result in a 38% decrease in the number of fishing days in the season. The changes are to be reviewed by the [Fish and Game Commission](#) in Fall with approval in 2026.

6. DISCUSSION OF PROPOSED CHANGES TO WILDFIRE HARDENING STANDARDS:

Commissioners reviewed materials presented by the LA Audubon Society on [Defensible Space, Zone Zero, and the New Fire Hazard Severity Zones](#). Commissioners had significant concerns about indiscriminate removal of plants in the Zone Zero (0-5 feet) space, particularly in the more populated areas like downtown Boulder Creek. Commissioners voted to create a sub-committee (Gomez, Brown, and Sampson) to write a letter notifying the Board of the coming change and encourage engagement in the drafting of any local variations, as allowed in proposed rulemaking. The letter will be presented at the November meeting for approval.

- **Motion to create sub-committee:** Brown, **Second:** Sampson,
- **All Ayes:** Sub-committee creation approved

7. PUBLIC GRANTS PROGRAM APPROVALS:

Commissioners reviewed the past grant reports, grant budget for this fiscal year, and the Request for Proposals (RFP) for the upcoming grant cycle. Commissioners requested that staff send a thank you to the past applicants for their excellent work. The commissioners approved the RFP for release, with Habitat Restoration made the Work Plan Goal for this year. Staff will investigate possibility of issuing a press release on the opening of the grant window.

- **Motion to approve RFP:** Woodward, **Second:** Somerton,
- **All Ayes:** RFP approved

8. APPROVE 2025 WORKPLAN:

Commissioners reviewed the 2025 Workplan and had no significant changes required.

- **Motion to Approve 2025 Workplan:** Sampson, **Second:** Woodward,
- **All Ayes:** 2025 Workplan approved

9. STAFF AND COMMISSIONER REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- **Staff Reports:**
 - CDI contacted staff about the STO update recommendations, which was forwarded to them by District 2 supervisor.
 - The [Well Ordinance Update](#) has gone into effect, which sets higher standards for new wells in the vicinity of fish bearing streams.
 - There are upcoming Board of Supervisor agenda items that relate to our workplan items.
 - (1) A report on the Boulder Creek Water Quality and Recovery Project at the October 21st meeting
 - (2) An update on the implementation of the Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) Program on November 18th
 - (3) An update on Measure Q implementation on November 18th.

○ **Commissioner Reports:**

- **Com Sampson:** The [Measure Q Citizen Oversight Advisory Board](#) meet on September 3rd to discuss the [5-Year Vision Plan](#). In response to the results of a public survey, the funding would be focused on 3 priority areas:
 - (1) Water Resources Management,
 - (2) Wildfire Risk Reduction and Forest Health,
 - (3) Parks, Recreation and Public Access Equity.
- **Com Woodward:** An [invasive beetle called Shothole Borer](#) is spreading in the Felton/Henry Cowell area. The beetle was recently found in Paradise Park and could be significant issue for trees in urban spaces in Santa Cruz.

10. ADJOURN. **Motion to Adjourn:** Somerton, **Second:** Sampson
All Aye: meeting adjourned at 8:32 pm.