

ATASCADERO BASIN

*Groundwater
Sustainability Agency*

**Executive Committee Meeting Agenda**

Meeting Date: Wednesday, February 18, 2026

Meeting Time: 4:00 p.m.

Meeting Location: Templeton CSD Board Meeting Room
206 5th Street
Templeton, California 93465

Virtual Attendance:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86581886397?pwd=hQhfGoDDSP6y3eiBpx1wxcsqjuub7g.1>

Meeting ID: 865 8188 6397

Passcode: 691163

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1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call: Chairperson Navid Fardanesh
Vice Chairperson Heather Moreno
Secretary Rob Rossi
Committee Member Susan Funk
Committee Member John Hamon
Committee Member Grigger Jones
Non-Voting Committee Member Tom Mora
3. Pledge of Allegiance
4. Order of Business
Executive Committee members may request to change the order of business.
5. Introductions
6. General Public Comments
The Executive Committee invites members of the public to address the committee on any subject that is within the purview of the committee and that is not on today's agenda. Comments shall be limited to three minutes.
7. Consent Agenda

The following items are considered routine and non-controversial by staff and may be approved by one motion if no member of the Executive Committee wishes an item removed. If discussion is desired, the item may be removed from the Consent Agenda by an Executive Committee member and will be considered separately. Questions or clarification may be made by the Executive Committee members without removal from the Consent Agenda. Individual items on the Consent Agenda are approved by the same vote that approves the Consent Agenda unless an item is pulled for separate consideration. Members of the public may comment on the Consent Agenda items.

- a. Minutes – December 17, 2025
- 8. Old Business:
- 9. New Business:
 - a. Appointment of Executive Committee Officers
 - b. Presentation of draft WY 2025 Annual Report
 - c. Periodic Evaluation Update
 - d. Next meeting: March 18, 2026, 4:00 p.m.
- 10. Informational Items
- 11. Adjournment

ATASCADERO BASIN

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TO: Executive Committee

FROM: GSA Staff/ John Neil, Atascadero Mutual Water Company

DATE: February 18, 2026

SUBJECT: Agenda Item 7.a, Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Approve the Executive Committee meeting minutes for the meeting held on December 17, 2025.

MEETING MINUTES:

The Executive Committee (Committee) of the Atascadero Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) was held at the Templeton Community Services District boardroom and via teleconference on Wednesday, December 17, 2025, at 4:00 p.m.

Item 1 – Call to Order: Chairperson Fardanesh called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

Item 2 – Roll Call: Present in person at the Committee meeting were voting members Navid Fardanesh, Heather Moreno, Grigger Jones, John Hamon, and Susan Funk. Voting member Rob Rossi and non-voting member Tom Mora were absent. A quorum (minimum of 4 voting representatives) of the Committee was established.

Item 3 – Pledge of Allegiance: Chairperson Fardanesh lead the attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Item 4 – Order of Business: The Committee Members reviewed the order of the meeting's agenda and confirmed to conduct the meeting as presented in the agenda.

Item 5 - Introductions: The attendees listed below were noted.

<u>Templeton Community Services District</u> Jeff Briltz Justin Black	<u>City of Atascadero</u> Nick Debar
<u>Atascadero Mutual Water Company</u> John Neil	<u>County of San Luis Obispo</u> Blaine Reely
<u>Confluence Engineering Solutions Inc.</u> Nate Page (via Zoom)	<u>GEI Consultants</u> Mike Cornelius (via Zoom)
<u>Public</u> Greg Grewal Murray Powell	

Item 6 – General Public Comments: Chairperson Fardanesh opened public comment.

Greg Grewal informed the Committee of a 2010 letter that referenced that the Atascadero Basin was at 95% of its safe yield in 2006. He questioned how the basin could still be below its safe yield currently because of development in the basin and the increase in vineyard plantings. He questioned how much water from the Atascadero Basin was being used by the City of Paso Robles and whether this was accounted for in the annual report.

Murry Powell asked if the Committee reviews proposed projects in the basin, such as the Infinity Farms cannabis farm and of the new vineyard plantings along Templeton Road. GSA staff responded that project review was beyond the scope of the Committee and that land use decisions in the Atascadero Basin were made by the public entities that form the GSA. He inquired about efforts by Atascadero Mutual Water Company and others to address PFAS contamination in the basin.

Agenda Item 7.a: March 19, 2025, Meeting Minutes – The Executive Committee reviewed the minutes from the March 19, 2025, meeting.

A motion was made by Member Funk to approve the minutes. Member Jones provided a second. Voice Vote of Voting Members: Ayes – Funk, Monreno, Jones, Hamon, Fardanesh. Nays – none. Motion carried.

Item 8 – Old Business: None

Item 9 – New Business

Agenda Item 9.a: Annual Report Preparation – Staff introduced the item and distributed rate and fee schedules for GEI Consultants and Confluence Engineering Solutions Inc.. Staff informed the Committee that, under the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act, Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSA) that have adopted Groundwater Sustainability Plans (GSP) are required to prepare and submit annual reports to the Department of Water Resources (DWR) for the water year ending September 30. Reports are due April 1 following the end of the water year. The reports are to provide the data and information needed to show the hydrologic data and conditions in the basin over the past Water Year to demonstrate conformance with sustainability goals identified in the GSP.

Staff recommended that the Committee adopt Resolution 2025-03 authorizing the Atascadero Mutual Water Company to enter into an agreement with the consulting team of GEI Consultants, GSI Water Solutions, and Confluence Engineering Solutions Inc. to prepare the Annual Report for the water year ending September 30, 2025.

Mike Cornelius briefly described the history of how the Atascadero Basin boundary was established during the early stages of SGMA compliance and why the Committee chose to move forward with preparation of a GSP using state grant funds even with the Atascadero Basin being a very low priority basin. He reviewed upcoming changes for GSAs including, among other things, filing updates in the new DWR Project Management Action module and the elimination of annual reports in stand-alone .pdf format beginning in water year ending September 30, 2026. He reviewed DWR period evaluation deadlines and how the period evaluation must include honest assessment of progress toward sustainability goals, undesirable results, and adaptive management strategies. He informed the Committee that new resources will become available providing mandatory guidance for basins

experiencing subsidence and implementation guidance for complicated issue of interconnected surface waters.

Murray Powell asked if the GSA funded the annual report. The Committee informed him that the agencies that form the GSA incur the expenses associated with the annual report based on the cost allocations outlined in the GSA formation MOU and that private well owners do not bear the cost of annual report preparation.

Greg Grewal said he has seen eight annual reports prepared for the Paso Robles Basin and characterized them as boilerplate. He said he said the data in the reports was not easy to follow. He said he would like to see how runoff from the watershed affects basin recharge. He questioned why property owners are still planting vineyards when the demand for wine grapes is going down and that grapes are being left on the vine to rot. He said that property owners are scared of fallowing land and losing groundwater pumping history.

A motion was made to adopt Resolution 2025-03 by Member Hamon. Member Moreno provided second. Roll Call Vote of Voting Members: Ayes – Hamon, Moreno, Jones, Funk, Fardanesh. Nays – none. Motion carried.

Agenda Item 9.b: Periodic Evaluation/GSP Amendment – Informational item. No action required. Mike Cornelius of GEI Consultants presented a flow chart showing the Periodic Evaluation/GSP Amendment decision points. He described the differences between the periodic evaluation and a GSP amendment and how the periodic evaluation presents a lower hurdle. In either case, the GSA needs to demonstrate that it is on track to achieve its sustainability goals and how the GSA is complying with Sustainable Groundwater Management Act requirements. He described how the periodic evaluation or amendment must address the eight corrective actions noted in the DWR's letter accepting the GSP prepared for the Atascadero Basin.

Agenda Item 9.c: Future Meetings – The following dates and times were set for future meetings:

- February 18, 2026, 4:00 p.m. – review draft of annual report, appoint Committee officers
- March 18, 2026, 4:00 p.m. – approve annual report

Item 10 - Informational Items – Member Funk provided the Committee with an update on the City of Atascadero wastewater treatment plant upgrade project. She described the Regional Water Quality Control Board's discharge requirements for total dissolved solids (TDS) and how difficult it will be to meet those requirements without resorting to reverse osmosis. She informed the Committee that the TDS discharge limit was established at some time in the distant past and was based on a water sample taken from an unknown source by an unknown entity. She informed the Committee that the TDS discharge limit was lower than the average TDS in the drinking water produced by the Atascadero Mutual Water Co.

Item 11 – Adjournment: There being no further business to discuss, Chairperson Fardanesh adjourned the meeting at 4:54 p.m.

Rob Rossi, Secretary

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TO: Executive Committee

FROM: GSA Staff/ John Neil, Atascadero Mutual Water Company

DATE: February 18, 2026

SUBJECT: Agenda Item 9.a, Appointment of Executive Committee Officers

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

1. The Executive Committee, by motion, elect a member to serve as Chair for 2026
2. The Executive Committee, by motion, elect a member to serve as Vice Chair for 2026
3. The Executive Committee, by motion, elect a member to serve as Secretary for 2026
4. The Executive Committee, by motion, elect a member to serve as Treasurer for 2026

DISCUSSION:

Article 5 of the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) forming the Atascadero Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) addresses Officers of the Executive Committee (EC). The article reads:

5.1 Officers. Officers of the Agency shall be Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer. The Vice Chair shall exercise all power of the Chair in the Chair's absence or inability to act.

5.2 Appointment of Officers. Officers shall be elected annually by, and serve at the pleasure of, the EC. Officers shall be elected by simple majority vote at the first EC meeting, and thereafter at the first EC meeting following January 1st of each year, or as duly continued by the EC. An officer may serve for multiple consecutive terms, with no term limit. Any officer may resign at any time upon written notice to the EC, and may be removed and replaced by a simple majority vote of the EC.

Once elected, the officers should begin their service immediately. Staff recommends electing the Chair first, with the Chair then presiding over the remainder of the officer elections, and the remainder of the meeting.

FISCAL IMPACT:

None.

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TO: Executive Committee

FROM: GSA Staff/ John Neil, Atascadero Mutual Water Company

DATE: February 18, 2026

SUBJECT: Agenda Item 9.b, Draft Annual Report for Water Year 2025

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Review and comment on the draft annual report for the Atascadero Basin for water year ending September 30, 2025 (WY 2025).

DISCUSSION:

Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSA) are required to prepare annual reports before April 1 of each year following submittal of their Groundwater Sustainability Plans (GSP) to the California Department of Water Resources (DWR). The DWR will be reviewing annual reports and GSPs to ensure that they are in conformance with Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA), regulations, and likely to achieve the sustainability goal of the basin.

The annual report includes data and information that was used in the development of the GSP updated to reflect the most recent hydrologic data along with maps representing current conditions and narrative describing the progress made toward implementing the GSP.

A public draft of the annual report for WY 2025 will be made available on the Atascadero Basin communication portal (<https://portal.atascaderobasin.com/>) for a minimum 15-day public review and comment period. The final report will be brought before the Executive Committee for approval at its March meeting.

Following are key findings in the WY 2025 annual report:

- Water Year (WY) 2025 in California was marked by below average rainfall along the Central Coast. Current hydrologic trends suggest that state's annual hydrologic conditions are going to continue to be highly variable, oscillating between wet and dry years.
- Groundwater elevations observed in the Subbasin during WY 2025 are generally lower than the previous year, due to below-average rainfall conditions during the winter of 2024/2025 and a moderate uptick in groundwater production. Both positive and negative changes in groundwater elevations from year to year are observed in different parts of the Subbasin, as has been the pattern in the Subbasin for many years. Seasonal trends of slightly higher spring groundwater elevations compared with lower fall levels continued in each of the water years.
- Groundwater extractions in the Basin for WY 2025 totaled 16,100 acre-feet (AF).

- The net annual reduction of groundwater in storage for WY 2025 totaled 9,400 AF.
- AMWC is working on a treatment plant to remove PFAS from the water it produces. The plant is at 90% design, and AMWC is continuing to make improvements to the site and working on bid packages for long lead time equipment. The project is estimated to come online in 2028.
- The Basin continues to be managed sustainably, as evidenced by historic groundwater levels in the Basin so no projects or management actions that are required to achieve sustainability at this time.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The cost for preparation of the annual report is summarized below.

Participant	MOA Cost Allocation	Participant Cost
AMWC	43%	\$21,820
Atascadero City	1%	\$507
Paso Robles City	22%	\$11,163
SLOCO	16%	\$8,119
Small Systems	1%	\$507
TCSD	17%	\$8,626
TOTAL	100%	\$50,742

ATTACHMENTS:

Draft WY 2025 Annual Report for the Groundwater Sustainability Plan for the Atascadero Basin (available via weblink - <https://portal.atascaderobasin.com/>)



TO: Executive Committee

FROM: GSA Staff/ John Neil, Atascadero Mutual Water Company

DATE: February 18, 2026

SUBJECT: Agenda Item 9.c, Periodic Evaluation Update

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Receive oral presentation from GEI Consultants updating the Committee on the status of the periodic evaluation of the groundwater sustainability plan.

DISCUSSION:

The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act requires groundwater sustainability agencies to submit either a periodic evaluation or a groundwater sustainability plan (GSP) amendment to the Department of Water Resources (DWR) by January 2027. The evaluation or amendment must include responses to the DWR's GSP approval letter of April 2025. One of the tasks is addressing the eight corrective actions identified by DWR (see Attachment A).

FISCAL IMPACT:

None

ATTACHMENTS:

A. Corrective Actions from DWR GSP approval letter

ATTACHMENT A

GSP Assessment Staff Report
Salinas Valley – Atascadero Area Subbasin (No. 3-004.11)

April 14, 2025

2. Explore how groundwater level data from the existing monitoring network will be used to make progress towards sustainable management of the basin given increasing aridification and effects of climate change, such as prolonged drought.
3. Take into consideration changes to surface water reliability and that impact on groundwater conditions.
4. Evaluate updated watershed studies that may modify assumed frequency and magnitude of recharge projects, if applicable, and
5. Continually coordinate with the appropriate groundwater users, including but not limited to domestic well owners and state small water systems, and the appropriate overlying county jurisdictions developing drought plans and establishing local drought task forces to evaluate how their Plan's groundwater management strategy aligns with drought planning, response, and mitigation efforts within the basin.

5 STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Department staff recommend approval of the GSP with the recommended corrective actions listed below. The Atascadero Area GSP conforms with Water Code Sections 10727.2 and 10727.4 of SGMA and substantially complies with the GSP Regulations. Implementation of the GSP will likely achieve the sustainability goal for the Atascadero Area Basin. The GSA has identified several areas for improvement of its Plan and Department staff concur that those items are important and should be addressed as soon as possible. Department staff have also identified additional recommended corrective actions that should be considered by the GSA for the first periodic evaluation of its GSP. Addressing these recommended corrective actions will be important to demonstrate that implementation of the Plan is likely to achieve the sustainability goal.

The recommended corrective actions include:

RECOMMENDED CORRECTIVE ACTION 1

Provide a timeline for addressing data gaps related to improving understanding of the Rinconada Fault as a barrier to groundwater flow and vertical gradients in the Subbasin.

RECOMMENDED CORRECTIVE ACTION 2

Provide supporting data for the groundwater elevation and elevations of the Salinas River thalweg used in the analysis of interconnected surface water.

RECOMMENDED CORRECTIVE ACTION 3

Explain what "a defined area" as used in the criteria to quantitatively define undesirable results for chronic lowering of groundwater levels refers to.

RECOMMENDED CORRECTIVE ACTION 4

Address the following items related to the minimum thresholds established for chronic lowering of groundwater levels:

- a. Assess potential impacts to supply wells, including domestic wells, at the proposed minimum thresholds for chronic lowering of groundwater levels and document the degree/extent of the potential impacts including the percentage, number, and location of potentially impacted wells.
- b. Assess potential impacts on beneficial uses and users of shallow groundwater (e.g., GDEs) that may be impacted by the established minimum thresholds for chronic lowering of groundwater levels.

RECOMMENDED CORRECTIVE ACTION 5

Define what constitutes “average hydrogeologic conditions” and how the “long-term average over all hydrogeologic conditions” will be calculated for the consideration of undesirable results for reduction of groundwater storage.

RECOMMENDED CORRECTIVE ACTION 6

Address the following items related to the sustainable management criteria for degraded water quality:

- a. Define what constitutes “on average” and how it will be determined for the evaluation of undesirable results for degraded water quality.
- b. Revise the definition of undesirable results for degraded groundwater quality so that exceedances of minimum thresholds caused by groundwater pumping, whether the GSA has implemented pumping regulations or not, are considered in the assessment of undesirable results in the Subbasin.
- c. Provide the concentration values (i.e., numerical values) that will be used as the measurable objective at each representative monitoring well for the identified constituents of concern.

RECOMMENDED CORRECTIVE ACTION 7

Address the following items related to sustainable management criteria for land subsidence:

- a. Describe critical infrastructure and surface land uses in the Subbasin that may be impacted by land subsidence.
- b. Define criteria that will be used to define when and where the effects of land subsidence cause undesirable results, which should be based on a quantitative description of the combination of minimum threshold exceedances that cause significant and unreasonable effects in the Subbasin.

- c. Revise “and” to “or” in the definition of the minimum threshold for land subsidence or explain why an exceedance of 0.1 foot in any one year would not be considered an exceedance (by itself) unless a cumulative exceedance of 0.5 foot over a 5-year period has also occurred.

RECOMMENDED CORRECTIVE ACTION 8

Department staff understand that estimating the location, quantity, and timing of stream depletion due to ongoing, Subbasin-wide pumping is a complex task and that developing suitable tools may take additional time; however, it is critical for the Department’s ongoing and future evaluations of whether GSP implementation is on track to achieve sustainable groundwater management. The Department plans to provide guidance on methods and approaches to evaluate the rate, timing, and volume of depletions of interconnected surface water and support for establishing specific sustainable management criteria in the near future. This guidance is intended to assist GSAs to sustainably manage depletions of interconnected surface water.

In addition, the GSA should work to address the following items by the first periodic evaluation of the Plan:

- a. Consider using, as appropriate, the technical papers released by the Department on methods for determining the location, quantity, and timing of interconnected surface water depletion due to ongoing Subbasin-wide groundwater pumping, and guidance when issued by the Department, to establish quantifiable minimum thresholds, measurable objectives, and management actions.
- b. Continue to fill data gaps, collect additional monitoring data, and implement the current strategy to manage depletions of interconnected surface water and define segments of interconnectivity and timing.
- c. Prioritize collaborating and coordinating with local, state, and federal regulatory agencies as well as interested parties to better understand the full suite of beneficial uses and users that may be impacted by pumping induced surface water depletion within the GSA’s jurisdictional area.