



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

May 7, 2026

1. **CALL TO ORDER** – 6:31 pm
2. **ROLL CALL**

District	Commissioner	Status	Commissioner	Status
I	Chris Berry	P	Kevin Butler	P
II	Brian Woodward	P	David Somerton	P
III	Liz Alter	E	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 and 2026-27 Schedule:

- **Motion to Approve Minutes:** Sampson, **Second:** Somerton,
 - **Commissioner Berry Abstains**
 - **All Ayes:** Minutes approved
- **Motion to Approve Meeting Schedule:** Berry, **Second:** Woodward
 - **All Ayes:** Meeting Schedule Approved

4. PUBLIC COMMENTS:

- None

5. PRESENTATION ON WILDLIFE CONNECTIVITY USING CULVERTS: Fraser Shilling, Director of the Road Ecology Center at UC Davis, presented on incorporating wildlife crossings and fencing in roadway design. The presentation provided a background on wildlife connectivity challenges and lessons learned from crossing infrastructure. An important take away was that fencing is a key part of success in crossing infrastructure. The presentation also included information on the [CROS](#) database system to track vehicle strikes and the [CROSPAN](#) system that can be used to determine whether an existing culvert could be utilized by wildlife. Commissioners asked questions about applying these tools and lessons locally to identify possible crossing locations.

6. **PRESENTATION ON [STREAMWOOD PROGRAM](#):** Erin McCarthy with Santa Cruz County presented on the history, purpose, and processes of the County Streamwood program. The program is meant to help streamside residents feel comfortable with maintaining fallen trees on their property but also makes modifications to trees that pose a threat to property.
Commissioners asked questions regarding when and where trees tend to be removed and why.
7. **PRESENTATION ON WESTERN POND TURTLE LISTING:** An update was provided by Commissioner Berry on a petition by the [Center for Biological Diversity](#) to list Western Pond Turtle (WPT) under the California Endangered Species Act after federal listing was stopped by the current administration. They are also suing the federal government to restart the federal filing process. No action at this meeting but could consider requesting a letter of support from the Board of Supervisors at a future meeting.
8. **VOTE ON PROPOSED WILDLIFE CROSSING PROJECT USING iNATURALIST:** The Wildlife Crossing Sub-Committee presented on the work that has been done to date on this topic. They proposed using the FWAC iNaturalist account to create two projects: 1) a project requesting residents to report animals killed by traffic, and 2) a “bio-blitz” project that would involve recording species present at culverts identified by the sub-committee as possibly high value crossings.
 - **Motion to Create Projects:** [Woodward](#), **Second:** [Sampson](#),
 - **All Ayes:** Creation of two iNaturalist projects are approved
9. **VOTE FOR COMMISSION OFFICERS:** Commissioners discussed possibly changing officers but chose to re-elect the current Chair and Vice-chair as they are not yet term limited. Both will be ineligible for re-election in 2027.
 - **Motion to Elect Gomez and Chair:** [Sampson](#), **Second:** [Somerton](#),
 - **All Ayes:** Com Gomez will serve as Chair
 - **Motion to Elect Jankovitz as Vice-Chair:** [Woodward](#), **Second:** [Somerton](#)
 - **All Ayes:** Com Jankovitz will serve as Vice-chair
10. **STAFF AND COMMISSIONER REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:**
 - **Staff Reports:**
 - A pending settlement of \$5,000 was recently deposited in the FWAC Trust Fund.
 - **Commissioner Reports:**

- **Com Sampson:** The Measure Q Citizen Oversight Advisory Board recently reviewed [Grant Program Preliminary Funding Recommendations](#) and will be making selections at their May 27th meeting. These recommendations will be made to the Board of Supervisors in June.
- **Brown:** May 9th is [Global Big Day– eBird](#)
- **Com Gomez:** A [Dead gray whale washed ashore at Wilder Ranch State Park](#)
- **Com Gomez:** Provided notice about state legislation ([AB-2494 State forest management](#)) that the county dropped opposition to. Com Woodward provided additional context on the bill, which would change the purpose of state demonstration forests to focus on restoration of forests instead of lumber yield, while also changing the funding stream from harvesting to recreational uses. It is likely too late to act on the bill as a commission, but a future informational item might be requested.

11. ADJOURN. Motion to Adjourn: Somerton, **Second:** Sampson
All Aye: meeting adjourned at 8:52 pm.