

## **STAFF REPORT**

**To:** Coastside County Water District Board of Directors

**From:** Mary Rogren, General Manager

**Agenda:** August 12, 2025

**Report Date:** August 8, 2025

**Agenda Title:** Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA) Election of Board Officers and Region 5 Board Members for the 2026-2027 term.

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### **Recommendation/Motion:**

Authorize the District's Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA) Board Representative (Director Feldman) to cast the District vote for the ACWA 1) Board Officers of President and Vice President; and 2) Region 5 Chair, Vice-Chair, and Board members for the 2026-2027 term.

### **Background:**

- ACWA has invited member agencies to elect the positions of President and Vice President of ACWA for the 2026-2027 (2-year) term. ACWA has sent out to the authorized voting representative, Director Feldman, a link to an electronic ballot for the President and Vice President elections.
- The Region 5 Board Ballot includes the Nominating Committee's Recommended Slate and those individual Board Candidate nominations. The District may vote either for the slate recommended by the Region 5 Nominating Committee or vote for the individual Region 5 Board Candidates. Director Feldman recommends that the District vote for the Nominating Committee's Recommended Slate. Upon approval, Director Feldman will submit the electronic ballot.

All votes for Board Officers and Region 5 Board are due by September 19, 2025.

### **Attachments:**

- A. Candidates for ACWA President and Vice President
- B. Candidates for ACWA Region 5
- C. ACWA Ballot and Region 5 Nominating Committee Recommended Slate



“The Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA) truly represents the nexus of knowledge and leadership in water for California. As the current Vice-President of the Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA), I am most proud of the thought, energy and collaboration that went into developing the 2025-’29 Strategic Plan. I want to be the next ACWA President to continue the momentum we have built focusing on four primary goals of Advocacy, Connections, Education and Organizational Effectiveness. This Strategic Plan is about finding new ways to benefit the members of ACWA as we navigate the shifts in water policy at the state and federal level. My commitment is to unify our collective efforts and better assert ACWA’s leadership in shaping California’s water policy.”

– Ernesto (Ernie) Avila, P.E.

## ACWA LEADERSHIP

- Vice-President
- Executive Committee of the ACWA Board of Directors
- ACWA Strategic Plan Task Force Chair
- ACWA Region 5 Board of Directors
- ACWA JPIA Executive Committee

## ACWA COMMITTEES

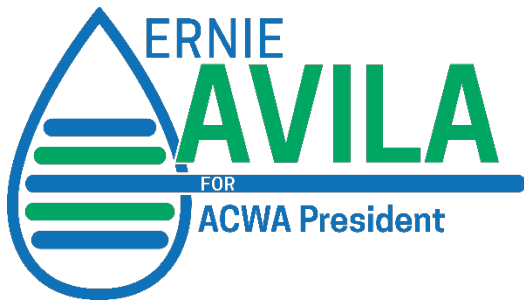
- Local Government Committee, Chair
  - Property Tax Working Group
  - Housing Densification Working Group
  - Paving Standards Working Group
- Federal Affairs Committee
- Foundation Fundraising Working Group

## CONTRA COSTA WATER DISTRICT

- Contra Costa Water District, Board President
- Operations & Engineering, Committee Chair
- East Bay Leadership Council, Director

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- Vice-President, Avila and Associates Consulting Engineers, Inc.
- Monterey Peninsula Water Management District, General Manager
- Director of Engineering, Contra Costa Water District
- California Urban Water Agencies, Executive Director



**Ernesto (Ernie) Avila, PE**  
**Board President**  
**Contra Costa Water District**

**Recent ACWA and Regional Water Coalition Experience**

**Association of CA Water Agencies (ACWA).** I have had the honor of supporting ACWA over twenty years at the regional, state and federal level. My recent ACWA experience has included serving on ACWA's:

- Vice President
- Executive Committee of the ACWA Board of Directors
- Strategic Plan Task Force Chair
- Region 5 Board of Directors
- ACWA JPIA Executive Committee of the Board
- Local Government Committee (Chair)
  - Property Tax Working Group
  - Housing Densification Working Group
  - Paving Standards Working Group
- Federal Affairs Committee
- Foundation Steering Committee
  - Foundation Fundraising Working Group



Most recently, I led ACWA's effort to develop the 2025 – 2029 Five-Year Strategic Plan. This work included revising ACWA's mission, vision and values followed by identifying four primary goals: Advocacy, Connections, Education and Organizational Effectiveness. This Plan will provide a framework to unify the ACWA community and better assert our leadership in shaping California Water Policy.

I led ACWA's assessment of potential water industry impacts associated with Sacramento-based housing initiatives including Auxiliary Dwelling Units, Commercial Properties and Transit Center Hubs and led a workshop to consider potential ACWA next steps associated with these new initiatives and their related changes to water agency fees and charges. I also participated in the ACWA Foundation Steering Committee including several related Ad Hoc committees and contributed to Federal Affairs Committee work groups associated with the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA).

**Multi-State Salinity Coalition (MSSC).** For over 20 years, I have served as Program Director and Board member of MSSC which consists over 30+ water agencies from New Mexico, northern and southern California, Nevada, Colorado, Arizona and Texas. The MSSC mission is to promote advancements in technologies for desalination, reuse, salinity control strategies (watersheds and agriculture), water/energy efficiencies and related policies that will assist communities in meeting their water needs. I also helped to establish relationships regarding salinity management and desalination with water agencies in Australia, Mexico and Israel. In February 2023, the MSSC awarded me with the **MSSC "Salt of**

***the Earth” National Award*** for outstanding commitment, leadership, vision and dedication to our water industry.

**Contra Costa Water District (CCWD).** As President of CCWD, I am focused on the investments needed in infrastructure to serve our community and improve water supply reliability today and into the future. The aging Contra Costa Canal, built by the Bureau of Reclamation in 1930s, is the backbone of CCWD’s water system and essential to water system reliability for the region. In order to move forward with plans to replace the aging canal with a pipeline, I worked closely with federal legislators to secure needed legislation to transfer title of the facility from Reclamation to CCWD.

**California Urban Water Agencies (CUWA).** As Executive Director, I led CUWA’s effort in the development of Department of Water Resources (DWR) Methodologies for Calculating Baseline and Compliance Urban Per Capita Water Use as part of the Water Conservation Act of 2009 (Senate Bill X7-7) with our southern and northern California water agency members. I also made certain that CUWA’s finances and practices were sound and transparent.

**Northern California Salinity Coalition.** As Executive Director, I led a coalition of ten San Francisco Bay Area water agencies in crafting grant application strategies and DWR outreach that would demonstrate the value of supporting watershed management, brackish desalination and groundwater project associated with salinity management. Working with the Coalition agencies, we secured the largest Proposition 50 grant funding for our region.

### Professional Work Experience (40 years)

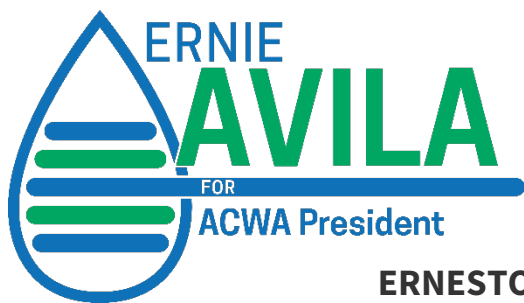
- Vice-President, Avila and Associates Consulting Engineers, Inc.
- General Manager, Monterey Peninsula Water Management District
- Director of Engineering, Contra Costa Water District
- Associate Engineer, East Bay Municipal Water District
- Construction Manager, CH2M Hill
- Professional Civil Engineer (California – C41727)

### Community Service Experience

- Contra Costa Water District, President of the Board
- John Muir Community Health Fund Board of Directors (Treasurer)
- Association of California Engineering Companies – Chair of the Healthcare Trust (non-profit)
- Knights of Columbus, Scholarship Chair
- St. Francis of Assisi School Board, President
- City of Concord, CA – Planning Commission, Chair
- City of Concord, CA – Design Review Board
- City of Walnut Creek, CA – Transportation Commission, Vice-Chair

### Education and Related Credentials

- B.S. – Civil Engineering, Santa Clara University
- M.B.A. – St. Mary’s College of California
- Professional Civil Engineer (California – C41727)
- California Farm Bureau Member



## **ERNESTO (ERNIE) AVILA | BIOGRAPHY AND QUALIFICATIONS**

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Ernesto (Ernie) A. Avila, P.E., was appointed in March 2016 to represent Division 3 for the Contra Costa Water District, which includes eastern Concord, Clayton, and part of Walnut Creek and Pleasant Hill. He began serving as President in May 2022.

Mr. Avila has over 42 years of professional experience in planning, environmental compliance, regulation, design, and construction of water, wastewater and recycled water works and municipal facilities in excess of \$10 Billion in value. He is currently Vice-President of a private civil and environmental engineering firm.

Mr. Avila has been involved with the Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA) for over twenty years at the regional, state and federal level. He currently serves as Vice President. He has also represented ACWA members on the Executive Committee of the ACWA Board of Directors, Region 5 Board, Local Government Committee (Chair), Federal Affairs Committee, ACWA Foundation Steering Committee and the ACWA JPIA Executive Committee of the Board.

Over his first year as Vice President, Mr. Avila led ACWA's effort to develop the 2025-'29 Strategic Plan which identifies four primary goals of Advocacy, Connections, Education and Organizational Effectiveness. This Plan provides clearly defined strategies and objectives to achieve each goal and 50 key performance indicators to gauge progress. The aim of this effort is to unify our collective efforts and better assert ACWA's leadership in shaping California's water policy

For the community, Mr. Avila has volunteered for many citizen-based committees / organizations including the Walnut Creek Transportation Commission, the Concord Planning Commission, the John Muir/Mount Diablo Community Health Fund, the Knights of Columbus, the East Bay Leadership Council, and the St. Francis of Assisi School Board. While working full time, he has made volunteering in the community a priority, representing his neighbors and family on important issues that affect their everyday life.

Mr. Avila is passionate about water issues in his professional life, working on a variety of issues statewide during his career. Among several relevant positions, he served as Director of Engineering at Contra Costa Water District before moving on to become General Manager of Monterey Peninsula Water Management District. He also served as Executive Director for the California Urban Water Agencies, Program Director for the Multi-State Salinity Coalition, and

is on the Executive Committee of the Association of California Water Agencies Board of Directors and ACWA JPIA. He has experience on water projects of all shapes and sizes, including water treatment plant improvements, dam retrofits, and watershed management and habitat conservation projects. In recognition of his work, Mr. Avila recently received the 2023 ***“Salt of Earth” Award*** by the Multi State Salinity Coalition for his commitment, leadership, vision and dedication to the water industry by promoting advancements in technologies for desalination, reuse, salinity control strategies, water/energy efficiencies, and related public policies that assist communities in meeting water needs.

Mr. Avila lives in Clayton with his family and is a licensed civil engineer with a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering from Santa Clara University and a master’s degree in Business Administration from St. Mary’s College of California. He is also a proud member of the California Farm Bureau.



## ELECT CAROL LEE GONZALES-BRADY ACWA VICE PRESIDENT

PROTECTING OUR WATER, TODAY AND TOMORROW

### BACKGROUND

As an elected Director of Rancho California Water District in Temecula, I understand that water issues are complex and we sometimes have different opinions on solutions. I serve as Vice-Chair for ACWA's Region 9, representing members - desert, coastal, residential, commercial, and agricultural - with diverse priorities and perspectives. ACWA's Regions statewide may be different, but we can agree on one thing - that the need for prudent, sustainable water management in California is critical.

I've served as a member on several Standing Committees, Sub-committees, Task Forces and Work Groups. My experience on our ACWA Board, on our Executive Committee, and on our Strategic Planning and Water Policy Task Forces has prepared me for our next steps as we execute the initiatives of our recently streamlined strategic plan. It will provide us with a clear, focused framework as we address water issues and position ACWA in its continued role as a strong, vital industry leader.

I earned my Bachelor of Science degree (magna cum laude) in Business Management from Pepperdine University. My professional career in procurement, contracts and strategic management has spanned federally regulated industries including water and electric utilities. I am committed to building relationships, partnerships and alliances with other water, business and community leaders. In addition to my work at ACWA, I serve on the Boards of Southern California Water Coalition and Urban Water Institute, and was twice appointed by our Board of Supervisors as a Director of a Resource Conservation District.

I'm a grower for local wineries, and my husband and I have lived on our family vineyard for over 20 years. I support important causes and my community through participation and memberships in charities, churches, associations, and advocacy groups such as the Farm Bureau and Southwest California Legislative Council.

You can learn more about me by visiting [RanchoWater.com/ACWAVP](https://RanchoWater.com/ACWAVP). Thank you for your support.

### RANCHO CALIFORNIA WATER DISTRICT (RCWD)

Vice President, Board of Directors  
Elected 2017; Re-elected 2022  
Past Board President (2021 & 2022)

### ASSOCIATION OF CALIFORNIA WATER AGENCIES (ACWA)

Executive Committee (2024-2025)  
Board of Directors (2024-2025)  
Region 9 Vice Chair (2024-2025)  
Region 9 Board Member (2019-2025)  
Committees: Membership, Communications, Election (past)  
Task Forces: Strategic Planning, Water Policy (Vice Chair)

### ACWA/JOINT POWERS INSURANCE AUTHORITY (JPIA)

JPIA Director, representing Rancho Water (2022-2024)

### SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA WATER COALITION (SCWC)

Board of Trustees, Water Segment (2021-present)  
Co-Chair, Legislative Task Force (2021-present)

### URBAN WATER INSTITUTE (UWI)

Board Member (2023-present)



**CAROL LEE  
GONZALES-BRADY**  
FOR ACWA VICE PRESIDENT

[RanchoWater.com/ACWAVP](https://RanchoWater.com/ACWAVP)

The ACWA Election Committee has formally endorsed and recommended Carol Lee Gonzales-Brady as the preferred candidate for ACWA Vice President for the 2026-2027 term.



**CAROL LEE GONZALES-BRADY IS PROUD TO BE  
ENDORSED BY THE FOLLOWING AGENCIES**

**ACWA ELECTION COMMITTEE**

**CHINO BASIN WATER CONSERVATION  
DISTRICT**

**COACHELLA VALLEY WATER DISTRICT**

**DESERT WATER AGENCY**

**EASTERN MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT**

**ELSINORE VALLEY MUNICIPAL WATER  
DISTRICT**

**FALLBROOK PUBLIC UTILITY DISTRICT**

**HELIX WATER DISTRICT**

**IMPERIAL IRRIGATION DISTRICT**

**INLAND EMPIRE UTILITIES AGENCY**

**IRVINE RANCH WATER DISTRICT**

**LAS VIRGENES MUNICIPAL WATER  
DISTRICT**

**MESA WATER DISTRICT**

**MONTE VISTA WATER DISTRICT**

**MONTECITO WATER DISTRICT**

**MOULTON NIGUEL WATER DISTRICT**

**MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT OF ORANGE  
COUNTY**

**OLIVENHAIN MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT**

**RAINBOW MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT**

**RANCHO CALIFORNIA WATER DISTRICT**

**SALTON SEA AUTHORITY**

**SANTA CLARITA VALLEY WATER DISTRICT**

**SANTA FE IRRIGATION DISTRICT**

**SANTA MARGARITA WATER DISTRICT**

**VALLEY CENTER MUNICIPAL WATER  
DISTRICT**

**VISTA IRRIGATION DISTRICT**

**WESTERN CANAL WATER DISTRICT**

**WESTERN MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT**

**YUIMA MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT**





## Biography and Qualifications

### Candidate for ACWA Vice President

Carol Lee Gonzales-Brady was elected to the Rancho California Water District (RCWD) Board of Directors in 2017 and re-elected in 2022, serving as Board President for two terms. Rancho Water is a Special District that provides water and wastewater services to residential, commercial, and agricultural customers. It is the 10<sup>th</sup> largest retail water district in California (based on water sales), serves more than 150,000 people, and covers 100,000 acres of service area.



Director Gonzales-Brady has been a member of the Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA) since 2017. She joined the Region 9 Board in 2019 and currently serves as Vice Chair, representing the Region on ACWA's Board of Directors. In 2024, she was elected by the Board to the Executive Committee.

She has been active on standing committees and task forces in volunteer and appointed roles such as the Membership and Communications Committees, Communications Ag Sub-Committee, Election Committee, Region 9 Membership Engagement Work Group (Chair), Strategic Planning Task Force, and Water Policy Task Force (Vice Chair). Sound water policy, aligned with the guiding principles of ACWA's Strategic Plan, will be key as ACWA navigates complex water issues and advocates on behalf of its members.

Dedicated to building alliances and cultivating partnerships, Director Gonzales-Brady serves on the Board of Trustees of Southern California Water Coalition (SCWC) and is co-Chair of their Legislative Task Force. She is also on the Board of Directors of Urban Water Institute (UWI) and is a past Director of ACWA/JPIA, representing RCWD. Prior to her election to Rancho Water's Board, she was twice appointed by the Riverside County Board of Supervisors to the Board of Directors of their Resource Conservation District.

Director Gonzales-Brady earned her Bachelor of Science degree (*magna cum laude*) from Pepperdine University's Graziadio School of Business and Management. Her international professional experience, with an emphasis in procurement, contracts, and strategic management includes federally regulated industries such as water and electric utilities, nuclear procurement, geothermal power plant design/engineering/construction, and medical device manufacturing.

A native Californian and winegrape grower in Temecula's Wine Country, Director Gonzales-Brady and her husband have lived on their vineyard for over 20 years. She is immersed in her community and supports the outreach and assistance provided by local organizations, charities, and advocacy groups. Her volunteer efforts and memberships include Temecula Winegrowers' Association, Riverside County Farm Bureau, Temecula Valley Horsemen's Association, and Southwest California Legislative Council.



# Carol Lee Gonzales-Brady

Director, Rancho California Water District

## Candidate Statement

### Candidate for ACWA Vice President

I am pleased to offer my Statement of Qualifications as a Candidate for ACWA Vice President. I'm passionate about delivering prudent fiscal and environmental stewardship and advocating for sound policy. My philosophy: Protect our water, today and tomorrow, with a diversified portfolio of both immediate and long-range strategies and solutions.

I was elected to the Rancho California Water District (RCWD)'s Board of Directors in 2017 and re-elected in 2022, serving two terms as Board President. I joined ACWA in 2017 and became a Region 9 Director in 2019, serving as Vice Chair for the 2024-25 term. I represent the Region on ACWA's Board of Directors, and in 2024 was honored to be elected by the Board to the Executive Committee.

Other committees and task forces include:

- Water Policy Task Force - Vice Chair
- Membership and Communications Committees
- Region 9 Membership Engagement Work Group - Chair
- Strategic Planning Task Force (past)
- Election Committee (past)

Committed to building alliances and cultivating partnerships, I also am a past Director of ACWA/JPIA and serve on other industry Boards including Urban Water Institute (UWI) and Southern California Water Coalition (SCWC) - Legislative Task Force co-Chair.

I earned my BS (magna cum laude) in Business Management from Pepperdine University. My professional career in procurement, contracts, and strategic management has spanned federally regulated industries including water and electric utilities. A native Californian and vineyard owner, I have given back to my community as an appointed Director on a Resource Conservation District Board and through charities, associations, and local advocacy groups such as the Southwest California Legislative Council.

It has been my honor to serve alongside my dedicated colleagues on the ACWA Board. I look forward to continuing to build upon ACWA's work to promote and advance the priorities, initiatives, and interests of our members.




Please visit [RanchoWater.com/ACWAVP](https://RanchoWater.com/ACWAVP). Thank you for your support.



42135 Winchester Road, Temecula, CA  
(951) 296-6900 [RanchoWater.com](https://RanchoWater.com)

## Region 5 Candidates



	<p><b>Steve Huber</b> Director United Water Conservation District <b>Candidate</b> <b>Qualifications</b></p>
	<p><b>Antonio Martinez</b> Vice Presi Contra Costa Water District</p>
	<p><b>John H. Muller</b> Director Coastside County Water District</p>



**Sarah Palmer**  
Director  
Zone 7 Water Agency [Candidate Qualifications](#)



**John Varela**  
Board of Director  
Santa Clara Valley Water District



**John H. Weed**  
Board Member  
Alameda County Water District [Candidate Qualifications](#)



**Floyd Wicks**  
Board Director  
Montecito Water District [Candidate Qualifications](#)

**Board Officers' Election for President & Vice President and Region Boards for 2026-'27**

Both questions below are optional.

Please vote for only **one** candidate for each seat.

To write-in your vote, select Write-in and then type out your choice. Write-in candidates must be an elected or appointed director of an ACWA member agency and must submit a nominating/support resolution from their member agency's board no later than September 19.

Deadline to submit ballots is 5 p.m. on September 19.

**ACWA President**☐**Ernesto A. Avila (Election Committee's preferred candidate)**

As the current Vice-President of the Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA), I am most proud of the thought, energy and collaboration that went into...  
[Show more](#)

☐**Write-in:****ACWA Vice President**☐**Carol Lee Gonzales-Brady (Election Committee's preferred candidate)**

I am pleased to offer my Statement of Qualifications as a Candidate for ACWA Vice President. I'm passionate about delivering prudent fiscal and environmental...  
[Show more](#)

☐**Write-in:**



### Region 5 Election Ballot for 2026-'27 Term

Submitted board candidate bios and headshots are available on <https://www.acwa.com/elections>

You may either vote for the slate recommended by the Region Nominating Committee or vote for individual region board members (please note rules & regulations for specific qualifications).

View full rules and regulations [HERE](#)

### Region 5 Nominating Committee Recommended Slate

Chair:

- Sarah Palmer, Director, Zone 7 Water Agency

Vice Chair:

- John Varela, Board of Director, Santa Clara Valley Water District

Board Members:

- Steve Huber, Director, United Water Conservation District
- Antonio Martinez, Vice President, Contra Costa Water District
- John H. Muller, Director, Coastside County Water District
- John H. Weed, Board Member, Alameda County Water District
- Floyd Wicks, Board Director, Montecito Water District

### Nominating Committee's Recommended Slate

You may select **one** of the following.

☐

I concur with the Region's Nominating Committee's recommended slate above.

☐

I do not concur with the Region's Nominating Committee's recommended slate. I will vote for individual candidates below as indicated.