



# WESTERN STATES WATER COUNCIL

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[www.westernstateswater.org](http://www.westernstateswater.org)

## **DRAFT** Agenda — Council Business Meeting

Thursday, October 22, 2026 • 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM MDT

**Hilton Garden Inn, Las Cruces, New Mexico**

### **MORNING SESSION (all times MDT):**

#### **8:00-8:25 AM Opening Remarks, Membership Updates, & Summer Meeting Minutes**

– Earl Lewis, Chair & J.D. Strong, Executive Director

- Membership updates, Governor appointments & state transitions
- Approval of minutes from Summer Virtual Meetings, July 13-16, 2026

#### **8:25-8:55 Strategic Progress: Results Since July & What's Ahead – J.D. & Michelle**

Bushman, Deputy Director & General Counsel

- Brief FY2027 Strategic Plan & budget check-in
- Rules of Organization modernization – scope and review process
- Selected WSWC reports/member resources, webinar takeaways & upcoming opportunities

#### **8:55-10:10 Roundtable: Interstate Compacts – Lessons Learned from the Rio Grande & Beyond – J.D. & Michelle**

- Brief overview of western compacts and lessons from the field trip
- *Texas v. New Mexico & Colorado* – perspectives from NM and TX (speakers TBD)
- Discussion of lessons and applications for other interstate basins

#### **10:10-10:25 Morning Break**

#### **10:25-11:10 State Capacity Exchange: Doing More with Less – J.D. & state members**

- Selected state examples on staffing, workload, permitting, technology/AI & process improvements
- Discussion: practical approaches that could transfer across states

#### **11:10-11:45 Cooperative Federalism Task Group: Policy Direction & Recommendations**

– Michelle & Task Group members

- Task Group recommendations on proposed new positions
- Discussion: remaining issues before afternoon action

**11:45 AM-1:00 PM Lunch & Informal Networking** – provided for registered attendees

**AFTERNOON SESSION (all times MDT)**

**1:00-1:55 PM Roundtable: Permitting Reform in Practice – NEPA, FAST-41 & State-Federal Coordination** – J.D. & Michelle

- Key developments since the Spring Meeting and selected state experiences
- Discussion: coordination challenges, solutions & WSWC/WestFAST follow-through

**1:55-2:45 Critical Federal Water Data: State Needs & WSWC Advocacy Priorities** – J.D. & Task Group members

- Survey results, priority programs & selected state experiences
- Task Group recommendations for WSWC advocacy & next steps

**2:45-3:00 Afternoon Break**

**3:00-3:30 Roundtable: Emerging Western Water Issues & Priorities** – J.D.

- Emerging issues where peer exchange or WSWC engagement could add value

**3:30-3:45 ACTION: Consideration of Proposed Policy Positions** – Michelle

- Cooperative Federalism in Water Resources Management
- Cooperative Federalism under the Clean Water Act

**3:45-4:10 Future Meeting Plans & Priority Topics** – J.D.

- 2027 meeting locations, plans & priority topics
- Potential Spring 2027 DC advocacy visit
- Longer-range meeting planning for 2028-2029

**4:10-4:35 Plus/Delta: Meeting Feedback, Priorities & Next Steps** – Chair Lewis

**4:35-4:45 WestFAST Update** – Michael Eberle, WestFAST Vice Chair, USFS

**4:45-5:00 Other Business, Reflections, Next Steps & Adjourn** – Chair Lewis