



April 6, 2026

ECA Newsletter

-CONSTRUCTING A WAY FOR A BETTER FUTURE-

Lots of ECA Actions Last Week

Last week, the ECA held or attended or chaired several meetings: Sonoma County Transportation and Climate Authority Citizens Advisory Committee, ECA Exec Committee meeting, ECA Board of Directors meeting, ECA Government Affairs Committee meeting, ECA Specifications Committee meeting, and a small group of ECA members meeting to discuss dump sites, poaching, and other issues. In this brief Soapbox, it would be too lengthy to detail everything discussed, but I think it important to discuss some of the issues we discussed, decided on, and wrestled with in those many meetings so here goes.

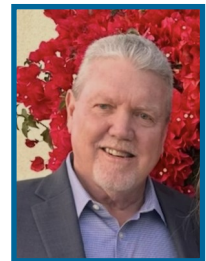
*SCTCA CAC: Yours truly was nominated and confirmed as the Chair of this important committee for another year. This committee reviews and advises on expenditures from the Measure A and Go Sonoma Act taxes that fund streets, roundabouts, bridges, bike and multi-modal paths, public transportation, and the criteria that is considered for those projects to get built. The committee is a broad based group from many segments of the community including Sierra Club, ECA, Bicycle Coalition and many others. We review and advise on expenditure accounts that currently have over \$70 million in their account and the annual amount of income is around \$32 million per year plus grants that those tax monies enable. Projects as diverse as bus scheduling and routes, Hearn avenue overpass project (our 2025 ECA Bridge Award recipient), and many other projects from Healdsburg, Sonoma, Petaluma, Santa Rosa and other jurisdictions.

*ECA Executive Committee: We not only reviewed the financial condition of the ECA, but we also discussed the nomination of Matt Verke of Team Ghilotti as the honoree for the 2025 Golden Hardhat award. This award was started years ago to facilitate educating and recognizing the benefits of the ECA to the field worker who may or may not know what the ECA does to help them. Years ago, this was initiated to honor a “boots on the ground” person that exemplifies loyalty, competence, skill, leadership, ethics, and all the items that are so integral to a company’s success. Every year, we decide to accept nominations and determine what worker deserves to be recognized and honored at the Public Officials Night event. This year, the Exec and Nominating Committee decided on Matt Verke of Team Ghilotti. Congrats Matt and Team! Other items discussed by Exec included possible Community Relations Projects to be considered including a paving job for the Sonoma County Fair Board, a possible multi use weather soccer field complex near Cardinal Newman High School, and the merits of each. We also discussed upcoming guest speakers for Board of Director meetings including Sylvia Lemus, David Noren of EBA, and Kevin Wodlinger of Sonoma Media for last week’s meeting, April meeting and May meeting. We also discussed and “vetted” new ECA member firms including DeSilva Gates and Green Valley Engineering and others that are considering joining.

Continue on page 2

John’s Soapbox

Remember my disclaimer -this Soapbox is my own opinion and does not necessarily reflect any official ECA position, nor any opinion of any ECA member firm. This is my stuff only and is intended to be thought-provoking as well as educational.



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North Bay Petroleum

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

JOHN BLY

MEMBER SERVICES DIRECTOR

MCKENZIE WEXLER

Continued from page 1

*ECA Board of Directors Meeting: We had Sylvia Lemus (running for Sonoma County Board of Supervisors District 2 seat formerly held by David Rabbitt) talk with us for 20-30 minutes. We then discussed whether we should endorse and contribute dollars to Lemus and the Board has yet to vote on that officially. We also discussed the Auction for 2026 and the problem of finding a venue that can accommodate up to 250 people with dinner serving capabilities. There are only 3-4 venues available in Sonoma County and the one we were counting on is completely booked for 2026, so we need to consider a different venue than Graton Event Center (where we have held the auction for the past 2 years). We vetted and approved accepting Green Valley Consulting and DeSilva Gates as new members and said a sad goodbye to Advanced Stormwater Protection as an ECA member who decided not to renew. The rest of the discussion included asking our members to help get the right public officials invited to our PO Night on April 30, 2026. An updated list will be attached to this newsletter and if you see public officials you would like us to invite, please let us know and we will reach out if you do not have time. Invited / attending Public Officials can be found on page 13.

*ECA Government Affairs Committee: We were honored to have Petaluma Councilman Alex DeCarli and Windsor Councilperson Tanya Potter as our guests. These meetings have included invites to NorthBay Leadership Council, North Coast Builders Exchange, and NORBAR as well as future invites to the Farm Bureau and Sonoma County Alliance Political Action Committee for a broader and more powerful group to determine future political influence. Discussions with Tanya Potter included Windsor's budget deficit and what steps are needed to correct that deficit. Corrections needed include attracting more businesses (like BoDean asphalt plant) to locate in Windsor, and for Windsor to build more housing. Discussions with Alex DeCarli included ECA suggestions that Petaluma change their contract retentions to 5% rather than 10% currently. We also discussed how progress payments problems in Petaluma lead to higher bid prices than similar projects in other areas. Alex and Tanya were reminded and invited to utilize the ECA as a resource as they consider issues in front of them as council members in the future.

*The ECA hosted a small group on Tuesday afternoon to discuss issues surrounding dump sites in our area. A new and alarming development is happening where dump trucks are being followed by an advocacy group to determine where spoils are being dumped and whether that dump site conforms to all requirements for grading, SWPP and analytics testing. For decades, contractors have made local landowners a deal to dump on their land and that is getting harder and harder to do. This group discussed current problems, and many possible solutions which could include landfill acceptance at reduced costs as a backup to the traditional dump sites. We also discussed employee "poaching" and retaining of key personnel and how big a problem that issue is.

*ECA Specification Committee: On Wednesday, the ECA Spec Committee met with representatives from Napa County and the City of Napa and a trade group that includes all of the asphalt and quarry members in the area to discuss some needed changes to their specs for paving caused by soft rock issues causing short life for some of their AC surfacing. These are the detailed discussions the Spec Committee holds that provide "insider" relationships and information that benefits those that participate. Future discussions will be review and responses to new and proposed City of Santa Rosa utility standards before they become adopted. Minutes can be found on pages 14 and 15.

I know this Soapbox is not as "edgy" and opinion based as some recent ones, but it seemed a "short version" of what the ECA is doing for its members was in order.

There is a lot going on out there, and we try to plug our members in as they are developing before the issues are in concrete.

That's All Folks

John
2

ECA COMMITTEE NEWS

1. ECA Executive Committee (Officers) Meetings are recurring every month and are held every Last Tuesday from 11:00-12:00pm, in the small NCBE conference room. Next meeting will be April 28, 2026 from 11am to 12pm.
2. ECA Board of Directors meetings are recurring every month and are held every last Tuesday from 12:00-1:30pm, in the main conference boardroom at NCBE. Next meeting will be April 28, 2026 from 12:00 noon to 1:30 pm.
3. ECA Government Affairs Committee (GAC) meetings are recurring every month and are held every last Tuesday from 2:00pm-3:30pm in the main conference boardroom at NCBE. Next meeting will have Terry Sanders (running for City of Santa Rosa City Council) as our guest. We will discuss tax measures and ballot measures more in the next few meetings as well.
4. ECA Specifications Committee are recurring every month and are held every last Wednesday from 3:00-4:30pm in the main conference board room at NCBE. Next meeting will be Wednesday, April 29 from 3:00 pm to 4:30 pm. Lori Urbanek will be our guest to present and discuss proposed new Utility standards for the City of Santa Rosa.

JOB LISTING

Business Development Manager – Commercial Landscape Maintenance | Marin County & North Bay

Landesign Construction & Maintenance, a locally owned and family-operated commercial landscaping company, is seeking an experienced Business Development Manager to grow our presence in Marin County and surrounding North Bay markets. The ideal candidate has a background in outside sales or relationship-based selling and a passion for building long-term client partnerships. Base salary \$80K–\$90K with commission and OTE of \$130K–\$150K+. To apply, send your resume to kelley.l@landesign-inc.com or call Kelley Lazzareschi at 415-412-6332



ECA EVENTS

1. April 30, 2026- the ECA Public Officials Night (Premiere Sponsor For Many Years In A Row is Team Ghilotti) will be held at The Backdrop, 1455 Corporate Center Parkway in Santa Rosa, CA from 5:30pm – 9:00pm. The Bridge Award will be given to the City of Santa Rosa for their Hearn Avenue Bridge Replacement Project, and a nice video is being edited by Sound Ideas with many participants of the Hearn Avenue overpass project from SCTCA, City of Santa Rosa, Caltrans and Ghilotti Construction Company. Matt Verke will be awarded the Golden Hardhat award. The nominating committee will be meeting and will consider modifying the qualifications that projects have to have been substantially completed before the calendar year in which they are considered for the award. One modification to be discussed is projects that can be considered if completed within the past 5 years.
2. June 21, 2026-ECA Show and Shine Car Show will be held at Julliard Park at 227 Santa Rosa, Ave. in Santa Rosa from 9:00am-3:30pm
3. July 10, 2026-The ECA Golf Tournament will be held at the Windsor Golf Course at 1340 19th Hole Drive in Windsor, CA from 11:00am-7:00pm

2026 Public Officials Night is coming up on Thursday, April 30th!

We want to thank [Team Ghilotti](#) for being our premier sponsor!!

Other sponsorships include:

[Ghilotti Construction](#) as the showcase sponsor


[RCX](#) and [Herc Rentals Trench Solutions](#) sponsoring the raffle

[River City Bank](#) sponsoring the Bridge Award

[Ghilotti Bros Inc](#) for donating 49ers pre-season tickets for a raffle item as well as a raffle sponsor

We do need other sponsorships to help pay for the expected 50 public officials who will be attending. Raffle item donations are also greatly appreciated.

If you would like to attend, sponsor or know a public official whom you think would enjoy attending this event, please respond to this newsletter or e-mail McKenzie directly at mw@nceca.org or calling 707-546-5500. Remember, the public officials are not charged to attend this dinner event.



*You are cordially invited to a
Spring Fundraiser for
Tom Schwedhelm
Candidate for Sonoma County
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Please join friends and supporters as we share wine and small bites
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Gary Huddle | Construction Superintendent (Lake/Mendocino) | Cell: (707) 272-0136 | Gary.Huddle@gcinc.com

NEWS YOU CAN USE

1. A few newsletters ago, we included a survey done in California by AGC that said many contractors were cautiously optimistic for 2026. I heard from one or two of our ECA members that that view may not be what northern Bay Area industry people think. So, we put out a survey of our own and gave folks until April 10, 2026, to respond. In the first week we got back 42 surveys from our ECA members and the NCBE has also put out the same survey for their members. This is a big deal so if you have not seen the survey (it is in this Newsletter and you can access it right here: [ECA Construction Survey](#)). Please let McKenzie know and she will get it to you ASAP. Between our ECA members and the NCBE members, we should get a very good perspective on how contractors, suppliers, and engineers are seeing 2026 shape up. It is our plan to share the results (no names of course) with planners, electeds, and staff so they can appreciate how you all are seeing 2026 unwind. I have reviewed the responses so far and it is quite powerful. PLEASE FILL OUT THE SURVEY, it only takes a few minutes. Thanks!!
2. Brelje and Race announces big new promotion-Congrats Dyanna!! [Santa Rosa engineering firm announces promotion](#)
3. Have you noticed some orange and blue items along Hwy 101? [Officials say Highway 101 cables indicate fiber optic broadband progress](#)
4. Joint trench design tool for Napa- [Napa engineering firm RSA launches utility joint trench design service](#)
5. New Solano City defends vision- [Developer of big Solano County community defends vision for annexation – The Press Democrat](#)
6. \$269 million SMART extension breaks ground-[SMART close to breaking ground on \\$269 million extension](#)

Connect with the ECA on social media!



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ECA & NCBE SAFETY & EDUCATION TRAINING

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April:

Thursday 4/9: [Worker's Comp Office Hours](#) 1 pm - 4 pm

Tuesday 4/14: [CPR + First Aid \(English & Spanish\)](#) 9 am - 11 am

Thursday 4/23: [Confined Space "Competent Person"](#) - English 9 am - 11 am

Tuesday/ Wednesday April 28 & 29: [OSHA 10-Hour for Construction](#)

April 28th 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

April 29th 1 p.m. – 4 p.m.

(Both days attendance required for certification)

MAY

Thursday 5/7: [Fall Protection "Competent Person" - English](#) 9 am - 11 am

Wednesday 5/13: [Confined Space "Competent Person" - English](#) 1 pm - 3 pm

Thursday 5/14: [Key legal Concepts for Public Works for Subcontractor](#) 9 am - 11 am

Thursday 5/14: [Worker's Comp Office Hours](#) 1 pm - 4 pm

Thursday 5/21: [Latinos in the Workplace - Leading through Uncertainty](#) 7:30 am - 11:30 am

From the Desk of Jim Persons

Communication Tools on a Jobsite

There are many different methods to communicate a message. It is important to recognize the communication tools used on the job that relay important information for your work task and the work environment. Verbal communication is not the only way to send and receive a message.

To read more: [Click HERE](#)



USEFUL LINKS TO SUPPORT YOUR BUSINESS

- A. Resilient 37 Policy Committee Meetings (open to the public) --link [State Route 37 Policy Committee - Sonoma County Transportation Authority](#)
- B. Metropolitan Transportation Commission website-link [Meetings & Events | Metropolitan Transportation Commission](#)
- C. Sonoma County Transportation Authority-link [Sonoma County Transportation Authority | SCTA](#)
- D. Transportation Authority of Marin Website-link [Transportation Authority of Marin](#)
- E. Marin Builders Exchange website-link [Home - Marin Builders Association, CA](#)
- F. North Coast Builders Exchange website-link [North Coast Builders Exchange – NCBE Online](#)



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EMERGENCY RESPONSE MANUAL 2025—2026

In the event of an emergency, we have put together the Emergency Response Manual to help our community receive quick service from our members. The manual is sent to city and county agencies in case of an emergency so they will know who to call for services, equipment and materials.

Click [HERE](#) for the 2025-2026 manual.



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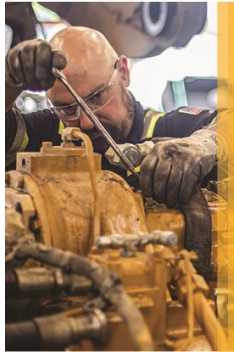
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Susan Maners, Bookkeeper
email: accounting@nceca.org

Postal Address: P.O. Box 8249 Santa Rosa, CA 95407 ~Phone: 707.546.5500

INVITED PUBLIC OFFICIALS

Attending	First	Last	Agency	Title			
	Susan	Adams	City of Rhonert Park	Councilmember	shollingsw	7078993085	
	Flannery	Banks	City of Santa Rosa, Engineering Development Services	Supervising Engineer			
	Mike	Berger	City of Sonoma, Director of Public Works	Director of Public Works			
X	Cortney	Bowser	City of Rohnert Park Department of Public Works	Management Analyst II			
	Justin	Brandt	City of Rohnert Park Department of Public Works	Deputy City Engineer			
	DeWayne	Burgess	Sonoma County Water Agency Deputy City Engineer				
	Craig	Chapin	Napa County				
	Monique	Chapman	Sonoma County Public Infrastructure Deputy Director	Deputy Director			
	Damon	Connolly		Assemblyman			
	Ashley	Cotter	City of Sonoma Project Manager	Project Manager			
	Shannon	Cotulla	Town of Windsor Public Works Director, Town Engineer	Public Works Director, Town Engineer			
	Shannon	Cotulla	Town of Windsor	PW Director			
	Eddy	Cumins	SMART, General Manager	General Manager			
	Grant	Davis	Sonoma County Water Agency	General Manager			
X	Julian	De Anda	City of Rohnert Park Department of Public Works	City Engineer			
	Julian	Deanda					
	Alex	Decarli	City of Petaluma	Vice Mayor			
	Selena	Dixon	City of Healdsburg				
	Ron	Edwards	City of Healdsburg	Vice Mayor			
	Jackie	Elward	City of Rhonert Park	Vice Mayor			
	Javier	Fernandez	City of Santa Rosa, Planning and Economic Development	Development Review Coordinator			
	Victoria	Fleming	City of Santa Rosa, Councilmember	Councilmember			
	Jake	Gann	City of Santa Rosa	Water Department			
	Cleve	Gurney	City of Santa Rosa - Planning & Economic Development	Deputy Director, Development Services			
X	David	Hagele	City of Healdsburg Councilmember	Councilmember			
	Kat	Harvey	Town of Windsor	Senior Civil Engineer			
X	Mark	Henderson	City of Rohnert Park Department of Public Works	Director of Public Works			
X	Dan	Hennessey	City of Santa Rosa, Director of Transportation & Public Works	Director of Transportation & Public Works			
	Rebecca	Hermosillo	Sonoma County Supervisor - First District	Supervisor, First District			
	Chris	Herrod	City of Healdsburg	Mayor			
	Johannes	Hovertsz	Sonoma County Public Infrastructure Director	Director			
X	Rygg	Larsen	Mendocino County	Bridge Projects Manager	larsenr@m	707-481-4109	
	Steve	Lederer	Napa County				
	Sylvia	Lemus	City of Cotati	Mayor	sylvia@votelemus.com		
	Sandra	Lowe	City of Sonoma	Vice Mayor			
	Eric	Lucan	Marin County	Supervisor			
X	Laura	Luchini	City of Rohnert Park, Public Works	Interim CIP Program Manager			
X	Dianna	MacDonald	City of Santa Rosa, Councilmember, 3rd Dist	Councilmember			
	Gregory	Mariscal	City of Santa Rosa	Supervising Engineer	gmariscal@srcity.org	(707) 495-8766	
	Susan	Mays	City of Santa Rosa	Inspector			
X	Kevin	McDonnell	City of Petaluma, Mayor	Mayor of Petaluma			
	Jason	Nutt	City of Santa Rosa, Assistant City Manager	Assistant City Manager			
X	Jeff	Okrepkie	City of Santa Rosa, Councilmember	Vice Mayor			
X	Felicia Ong	Ong	City of Santa Rosa	Associate Civil Engineer	FOng@srcity.org	(707) 495-2147	
X	Scott	Orr	Permit Sonoma	Director of Permit Sonoma	scott.orr@	7075651925	
X	Dezire	Perez					
	Marcela	Piedra	City of Rohnert Park, City Manager	City Manager of Rohnert Park			
	Tanya	Potter	City of Windsor	Vice Mayor			
	Derick	Redmond	City of Santa Rosa	Inspector			
	Rosa	Reynoza	City of Windsor	Mayor			
	Josh	Ricci	County of Sonoma				
	David	Ripperda	Sonoma County Transportation Authority	Director of Projects & Programming			
	Keith	Roberts	Community Relations Specialist Supervisor Gore's Office	Supervisor Gore's Office			
X	Jason	Sampietro	City of Rohnert Park Department of Public Works	Streets and Traffic Manager			
	Emily	Sanborn	City of Rhonert Park	Mayor			
	Jonathan	Sanglerat	City of Petaluma	Deputy Director of Public Works	jsanglerat@	7077784355	
	Scott	Sedgley	City of Napa	Mayor			
X	John	Shribbs	City of Petaluma, Councilmember	Councilmember			
	Mark	Stapp	City of Santa Rosa, Mayor	Mayor			
	Nick	Sudano	Santa Rosa Water - Environmental Services Division	Senior Environmental Specialist			
	Larry	Unsworth					
X	Ryan	Walsh	Plus 1 to Dezire Perez				
	Ron	Wellander	City of Sonoma	Mayor			
X	Lisa	Welsh	City of Santa Rosa, Capitol Projects Engineering, Supervising E	Supervising Engineer, CPE			
X	Alicia	Winokur	Mendocino County Department of Transportation	Deputy Director, Engineering	winokura@	707-234-2804	
	Chris	Worlow	Town of Windsor	Inspector			

4/2/26 - ECA Spec Meeting Minutes

Key Points

1. Project updates

- Upcoming bid openings: Devlin Road (Apr 9), Rothste Bridge (bid opening tomorrow), Partridge Road (Apr 23), Tower / South Kelly Road (May, with City of American Canyon partnering), Deer Park Road (later this month), plus various slide repairs and other projects across the county.
- Projects posted on OpenGov; county projects website to be shared.

2. Rationale for spec update

- County seeks a revised asphalt specification to improve pavement longevity after recurring premature failures historically linked to softer/absorptive aggregate from a local supplier (Vulcan).
- Goal: develop a uniform spec across Napa County agencies (City of Napa, American Canyon, Yountville, Calistoga) and pilot it on county projects this year.

3. Material quality and Vulcan

- Longstanding issues (10+ years) with variability and high air voids; some vein variability within quarries (e.g., lower specific gravity observed in some blasts).
- Vulcan and other producers have been engaged; Vulcan reportedly working to address issues (stockpile/aggregate management, separation of softer material).
- Industry reps support collaboration and data-driven metrics to allow suppliers to meet spec while protecting agencies.

4. Mix design: V²mix vs Superpave (gyratory)

- County currently prefers V²mix (historical familiarity, local roads). Open to piloting Superpave light/gyratory mixes on select projects but not county-wide rollout immediately.
- Industry discussed shadow testing protocols (compare existing V²mix results to gyratory compacted specimens; Caltrans and Southern California efforts referenced).
- Gyratory testing adoption will have equipment/operational implications; some labs/contractors already doing both.

5. Testing, verification, and source inspection

- Recommendation for production verification (Caltrans verification preferred; if unavailable, engineer verification at production startup).
- Discussion of additional aggregate durability tests: LA Rattler, sodium sulfate/durability index, micro-deval, clay lump/friable particle checks. Caltrans District 2 tests referenced as precedent.
- Need for more routine/plant-level aggregate testing and possible daily plant inspection for high-risk projects; cost implications noted (county or project to bear verification/inspection costs).
- TSR with 6" specimens criticized as ineffective; recommendation to require 4" specimens for moisture susceptibility or remove TSR and rely on Hamburg testing.

6. Warm mix asphalt (WMA) and RHMA/RAP

- County cautious on WMA due to observed field performance issues (tender/shady areas, extended curing); if used, must be produced and placed at legitimately reduced temperatures and appropriate additive dosing to avoid overdosing problems.
- RHMA/RAP use under investigation; acceptable if RAP used as additional binder (not binder replacement) per current NSSD wording; economics and binder behavior discussed.
- Water-injection WMA noted as a promising approach by some suppliers.

7. Stockpile management / mitigation strategies

- Suggested approaches: test and segregate stockpiles, blend ratios to maintain specific gravity thresholds, source inspection and ongoing testing during production to catch variability.
- Recognized difficulty in detecting small percentages of soft aggregate that still cause localized failures; need for improved objective metrics and monitoring.

Decisions / Agreements

- County will pilot the updated spec on selected county projects (two projects referenced) and proceed cautiously with any broader rollout.
- County remains comfortable staying with V₂mix for general use but will run pilot/gauging projects for Superpave/gyratory mixes.
- Keep soft aggregate language in the spec and continue incremental/testing provisions during production.
- Industry and county will continue collaborative dialogue; industry (association and producers) will provide data, test protocols, and feedback.

Action Items (owner / target)

1. Share county projects website link in meeting chat. (Owner: Speaker 1 / County) — deliver ASAP.
2. Compile and share Southern California shadow testing protocol/data comparing V₂mix and gyratory mixes (first round data). (Owner: Speaker 5 / Asphalt Producers Association) — next deliverable to county (timeline: follow up after meeting).
3. County to evaluate and propose enhanced source inspection options modeled on Caltrans practices (daily plant inspection, routine aggregate testing frequency) and cost implications. (Owner: County staff / Speaker 1 & Speaker 2) — prepare options for next discussion.
4. Industry to review county spec comments (March 26, 2026 letter referenced) and provide detailed feedback on each bullet point; include suggested objective metrics for soft aggregate (e.g., specific gravity thresholds, allowable clay lump/friable particle limits, testing frequency). (Owner: Speaker 5 and member producers) — follow up with written response.
5. County/Engineer to define verification workflow for mix design acceptance when Caltrans verification not available (engineer verification at production startup; associated costs). (Owner: County / project engineers) — incorporate into spec/admin procedures.
6. Evaluate TSR specimen size and moisture susceptibility testing approach (consider 4" specimens or remove TSR and rely on Hamburg). (Owner: Speaker 7 / County technical team) — decision/recommendation for spec update.
7. Continue investigation and pilot monitoring of WMA, water injection, and RHMA/RAP approaches (industry to supply performance data; county to consider pilot constraints). (Owner: Industry reps & County) — schedule pilots/data sharing.
8. Develop stockpile management guidance (testing, segregation, blending rules, documentation) to be shared with producers; determine enforceability in spec/contract. (Owner: County & Industry collaboration) — draft guidance for next meeting.

Follow-up / Next Steps

- Industry to send requested data (shadow testing, producer feedback) and county to review and integrate comments into spec drafts.
- County to determine budgeting/fee responsibilities for production verifications and plant inspections.
- Schedule a follow-up meeting to review producer responses, shadow testing results, proposed source inspection practices, and recommended spec revisions.