



***Open Water Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
November 11, 2025***

**Committee Mission:** The Open Water Committee shall assist USA Swimming in developing and promoting successful Open Water swimming programs at all levels of competition.

**Responsibilities:**

1. Recommending development and review of programs and policies regarding the safety of athletes, officials, and spectators involved in Open Water swimming.
2. Advising USA Swimming on development programs to recruit, train, and educate open water coaches, officials, and volunteers.
3. Advising USA Swimming on the development of Open Water programs designed for success in international competition.
4. Reviewing selection procedures for the Open Water National and National Junior Teams.

**Present Virtual:** Ron Aitken, Sid Cassidy, Cory Chitwood, Marissa Delgado, Brennan Gravley, Bruce Gemmell, Catherine Kase, Mohammed Khadembashi, Yuri Suguiyama

**Absent:** Brendan Casey, John Payne, Erica Sullivan

**Call to Order:** Open Water Committee meeting was called to order November 18, 2025 at 11:00 AM Mountain Time.

**Introductions:** Mr. Suguiyama introduced himself as the National Team Senior Director & Coach with Open Water responsibilities. Mr. Gemmell introduced himself as Open Water Coach and Distance Development Advisor to the National Team. Ms. Delgado introduced herself as Specialist, National Events with Open Water responsibilities

**2026 Open Water Calendar:** The 2026 Open Water Calendar of events and camps was presented for discussion. Events included: NT Performance Camps, OW Nationals and Jr. Nationals, World Aquatics World Cups, Pan Pacific Games, World Aquatics Open Water Jr. Worlds, and an added fall 2026 national level open water event. Discussion was had on timing and location of additional national level event or events.

**Open Water Nationals and Jr. Nationals:** Proposed schedule and order of events for 2026 Open Water Nationals and Jr. Nationals was presented for discussion. Committee was in favor of adding the 3k Knockout event and the removal of the 7.5k event. Time standards need review to obtain desired field sizes of the new 3k knockout event and the removal of the 7.5k event and how it will impact 10k and 5k participation levels. Addition of a 3k Jr. Knockout event was proposed for review.

**Pan Pacific Qualifying Procedure:** Several options regarding qualifying procedures for the 2026 Pac Pacific Team were presented for review. Options were presented and discussed. Committee indicated support for a multi-event qualifying procedure. Largest support was for a 3-event process (OW Nationals and 2 World Cup events) with an aggregate scoring system used for selection. Scoring system and implementation will be reviewed and refined by USA Swimming staff.

**Jr. Worlds Qualifying Procedure:** Qualifying procedure for Open Water Jr. Worlds was briefly presented. Selection will come primarily from USA Open Water Nationals. Merits of an additional qualifying requirement (1500 m pool time) were discussed.

**Additional Committee Meeting:** Mr. Sugiyama proposed adding an additional committee meeting for December, 2025 for follow up of above events and qualifying procedures.

**Adjournment:** Meeting was adjourned at 12:20 PM Mountain Time.