

# Upper Los Angeles River Watershed Area Steering Committee (WASC) Meeting Minutes



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Wednesday, September 7, 2022  
2:00pm - 4:00pm  
WebEx Meeting

## Committee Members Present:

Genevieve Osmena, LA County Flood Control District (Agency)  
Delon Kwan, LA Department of Water and Power (Agency)  
Ida Meisami-Fard, LA Sanitation & Environment (Agency)  
Cathie Santo Domingo, LA Recreation & Parks (Agency)  
Ernesto Pantoja, Laborers Local 300 (Community)  
John Luker, Santa Susana Mountain Park Association (Community)  
Veronica Padilla-Campos, Pacoima Beautiful (Community)  
Yazdan Emrani, Glendale (Municipal)  
Patrick DeChellis, La Cañada Flintridge (Municipal)  
Teresa Villegas, Los Angeles (Municipal), Chair  
Max Podemski, Los Angeles (Municipal), Vice-Chair  
Rafael Prieto\*, Los Angeles (Municipal)  
Mark Lombos, Los Angeles County (Municipal)  
Kenneth Jones, San Fernando (Municipal)  
Adi Liberman, Environmental Outreach Strategies (Watershed Coordinator, non-voting member)  
Carlos Moran, Council for Watershed Health (Watershed Coordinator, non-voting member)

\*Committee Member Alternate

## Committee Members Not Present:

Paul Liu, LA Department of Water and Power (Agency)  
Miguel Luna, Urban Semillas (Community)  
Max Liles, NBCUniversal, Inc. (Community)

See attached sign-in sheet for full list of attendees.

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## **1. Welcome and Introductions**

District staff provided a brief WebEx tutorial in both English and Spanish and announced that the meeting was being broadcast live in Spanish. Staff also provided direction on submitting and sharing public comments.

Chair Villegas of the Upper Los Angeles River (ULAR) WASC, welcomed Committee Members and called the meeting to order. District staff facilitated the roll call of Committee Members. Committee Members made self-introductions and a quorum was established.

## **2. Approval of Meeting Minutes from April 21, 2022**

District staff presented the meeting minutes from the previous meeting. Chair Villegas motioned to approve the meeting minutes from April 21 and Member Patrick DeChellis seconded the motion. The WASC voted to approve the April 21 meeting minutes with 10 in favor, 2 abstentions, and 0 opposed (approved, see vote tracking sheet).

## **3. Ex Parte Communication Disclosures**

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There were no ex parte communication disclosures.

## **4. Committee Member and District Updates**

District staff provided an update:

- On August 30, the Board of Supervisors (Board) voted to continue meeting virtually, acting under the authority of Assembly Bill 361 which authorizes public committees to meet without complying with all the teleconferencing requirements of the Brown Act when the situation warrants it. The Board is reviewing its position every 30 days and will act to cover all the commissions and committees under their authority. This will also act as an indicator for when in-person meetings may resume.
- The Call for Projects for Fiscal Year 2023-2024 (FY23-24) closed on July 31. The District conducted completeness checks for the submitted Infrastructure Program projects. The preliminary total number of applications for all 9 watersheds is as follows: 33 IP projects, 4 Scientific Studies (SS), and 4 Technical Resource Program (TRP) projects. In the ULAR region, 13 IPs were submitted (one was a re-submittal and four were previously TRPs), 2 SSs were submitted, and no TRPs were submitted.
- Quarterly Reports for IP and SS projects were due August 15. Past-due reports must still be completed even if no project activities have occurred, as they may be discussed at future WASC meetings.
- The Regional Oversight Committee advanced all nine watershed area Round 3 (FY22-23) and prior funded project SIPs to the Board which is scheduled for approval on October 4.
- As a reminder, Article 5 of the WASC Operating Guidelines require regular attendance. Failure to attend WASC meetings could result in removal, so be sure to select an alternate.
- Form 700 is required for onboarding onto the WASC, leaving the WASC, changing roles between Alternate and Primary member, or changing contact information. Annual form should be filled out annually if served in the WASC that calendar year.

Chair Villegas requested that the District check which Committee Members have filled out their Form 700 and to resend it to those who have not.

There were no updates from Committee Members.

### **a) Selection of Chair, Vice-Chair, or Co-Chairs**

Member of the Committee commended Chair Villegas on their past work and recommended they continue as Chair of the WASC. Members also discussed nominating Vice-Chair Max Podemski to act as Vice-Chair again. Chair Villegas disclosed that as a mayoral appointee with a term ending in 2024, they can act as Chair until then, at the discretion of the WASC.

## **5. Watershed Coordinator Updates**

### **a) Updated Upper Los Angeles River Watershed Area Strategic Outreach and Engagement Plan (Presented by Watershed Coordinators)**

Watershed Coordinators Adi Liberman and Carlos Moran provided a presentation on the updated ULAR Watershed Strategic Outreach and Engagement Plan (SOEP). The Watershed Coordinators submitted the updated SOEP to the District on July 6 and the District posted it on the ULAR webpage. Recent and upcoming activities include (refer to Watershed Coordinators Presentation):

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- Plan for forming partnerships with interested parties,
- Continuation of previously successful engagement activities, including community water tours, coordination with municipal stakeholders, and amplification of parallel efforts like the Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM), Disadvantaged Community Involvement Program (DACIP) initiative, WaterTalks.

The Watershed Coordinators encouraged the WASC to review Section IV of the revised SOEP for further details on outreach strategies.

The Watershed Coordinators shared general updates. They have attended project development meetings, co-developed six projects for Round 4, engaged multidisciplinary interested parties (community-based organizations, businesses, city agencies, and others), and tabled and presented at outreach and education events.

Watershed Coordinator Liberman mentioned that they have received phone calls from community members who interacted with their table at events and had project or program ideas to share. This is an indicator of successful outreach. Additionally, the ULAR newsletter has received a lot of internet traffic. Watershed Coordinator Liberman encouraged the WASC to share relevant news or information with the Watershed Coordinators to include in the ULAR newsletter.

## **6. Public Comment Period**

District Staff compiled all public comment cards received by 5:00pm the day before the meeting, posted them on the SCWP website, and displayed them on-screen. Public comment cards or other correspondence received after 5:00pm will be added to the meeting minutes. Refer to Meeting Minutes Attachment.

Joe Sullivan (NECA-IBEW of Los Angeles) made a public comment regarding Project Labor Agreements.

Promesa Boyle Heights expressed support of the proposed Hollenbeck Park Lake Rehabilitation Project to be sent by the WASC to the Scoring Committee and Regional Oversight Committee.

## **9. Voting Items (moved up on the agenda)**

### **a) Selection of Chair, Vice-Chair, or Co-Chairs**

Member Veronica Padilla-Campos motioned for Chair Villegas and Vice-Chair Podemski to continue as Chair and Vice-Chair of the ULAR WASC. The motion was seconded by Member DeChellis. The WASC voted to approve Chair Villegas as returning Chair and Vice-Chair Podemski as returning Vice-Chair with 14 in favor and 0 opposed (approved, see vote tracking sheet).

### **b) Approve the Updated Upper Los Angeles River Watershed Area Strategic Outreach and Engagement Plan**

Chair Villegas motioned to approve the updated SOEP and Member Genevieve Osmena seconded the motion. The WASC voted to approve the updated SOEP with 14 in favor and 0 opposed (approved, see vote tracking sheet).

## **7. Discussion Items**

### **a) Review of WASC Roles and Responsibilities (Presentation by Stantec)**

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Mike Antos (Stantec, Regional Coordination) shared a presentation on the roles and responsibilities of the WASC, projects received in the FY23-24 call for projects, Interim Guidance and the Metrics and Monitoring Study, and an update on funding. Refer to Stantec presentation.

## **b) Summary of Submitted Infrastructure Program (IP) projects and Scientific Studies (Presentation by Watershed Coordinators)**

Antos noted that the WASC can decide which projects are forwarded to the Scoring Committee. Project information is available on the SCWP Portal.

The Watershed Coordinators provided a brief overview of the project proposals. There are 13 Infrastructure Program projects, 4 of which were previously funded as TRPs. No new TRPs were submitted. IP projects include:

- Emerald Necklace John Muir High School Campus Natural Improvement Project
- Hollenbeck Park Lake Rehabilitation Project
- Mission Mile Sepulveda Urban Greenway
- South Pasadena Huntington Drive Regional Green Street Project
- McCambridge Park Stormwater Capture Multi-Benefit Project
- Brookside Park Stormwater Capture Project
- Arroyo Seco Projects
- Sylmar Channel
- Eagle Rock Boulevard Multimodal Stormwater Capture Project
- Green Street Demonstration Project on Main Street
- Earvin "Magic" Johnson Park Operation and Maintenance Project
- California Avenue and Adjacent Streets Stormwater Capture
- Bowtie Demonstration Project

Scientific Studies include:

- Groundwater Quality Monitoring
- Regional Pathogen Reduction Study

All submitted project information including, but not limited to, project descriptions, funding amounts requested, and potential benefits that could be provided are available on the SCWP project portal.

Antos shared that choosing a selection of projects go to the Scoring Committee is a multi-step process and this moment is not the only chance to decide which projects will be approved for funding.

The WASC discussed the difficulties that await them with awarding funding this year because \$2 million is available for the budgeted FY23-24 (including amounts left from previous years) and \$10.2 million has been requested for the budgeted year for Infrastructure Program projects. For this reason, the WASC was reminded that they can select which projects to send to Scoring Committee. Alternatively, the WASC could send all completed projects to the Scoring Committee and revisit the ones they have more questions about at a later meeting, with the option of presentations from the project applicants. The Committee asked about when a financial analysis will be conducted and Antos replied that budget analyses are conducted closer to the SIP deliberation stage.

Members weighed the pros and cons of sending all projects versus a select few. In one hand, the Scoring Committee's review and final scores may help inform the WASC's considerations. Alternatively, sending a

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select few projects would make the volume of reviews more digestible for the Scoring Committee and SIP deliberations later on.

The District shared the Scoring Committee schedule, noting that the ULAR projects will be reviewed over at least two Scoring Committee meetings, starting in October.

The WASC observed that even a selection of projects with the lowest funding requests would surpass the \$2 million available for the budgeted FY.

Member Delon Kwan requested clarification about the process of scoring and the amount of detail necessary for the Committee to know at this stage of the program. It was clarified that in previous years, the WASC has sent all projects to the Scoring Committee. This moment provides WASCs the opportunity to reflect upon how well the projects and their proponents align with the priorities of the communities and community-based organizations in the areas of implementation.

Member Cathie Santo Domingo recommended that project applicants obtain formal, written support from owners of properties they seek to implement their project upon. This suggestion was made in the previous cycle and would be consistent with Propositions 12 and 40. Antos acknowledged the recommendation and noted that it would be incorporated into the biennial review of the program.

## **8. Public Comment Period**

Karen Barnette expressing that there are currently no scoring criteria for scientific studies. Barnette asked whether monitoring points had been added between the Verdugo Wash and Arroyo Seco projects, where Heal the Bay has consistently documented water quality issues in their Report Card.

## **9. Voting Items (continued)**

Voting Items a and b were moved up on the Agenda to follow Item 6.

### **c) Send none, some, or all completed Infrastructure Program projects to the Scoring Committee**

The Committee considered advancing projects with lower self-scores (i.e., preliminary scores generated from submitting the application). Given that the Scoring Committee has determined scores in the past to be significantly different than the self-score, the Committee reached consensus that allowing all projects to be scored would be most fair.

Member Kenneth Jones motioned to send all the IP project applications to the Scoring Committee. Member Rafael Prieto seconded the motion. The WASC voted to approve to send all completed Infrastructure Program projects to Scoring Committee with 14 in favor and 0 opposed (approved, see vote tracking sheet).

Member Padilla-Campos asked if it is possible for the WASC vote to include zero projects in the SIP so that the \$2 million is rolled over to the following year. Chair Villegas confirmed that the option is available, though would not come into play until later on during SIP deliberations.

District Staff shared that Brent Maue requested to make a public comment through the chat function of WebEx. Maue asked to see how much money has been spent to-date versus the amount allocated. Chair Villegas reminded the Committee and the public that this data is available on the SCWP site.

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Vice-Chair Podemski observed that sending all projects to the Scoring Committee will make the WASC's deliberations challenging, and asked if their dilemma could be revisited once the Scoring Committee returns their evaluation. Chair Villegas confirmed that the WASC can revisit and adjust their approach as necessary up until presentations happen.

## **10. Items for Next Agenda**

The next meeting will take place on Wednesday, October 5 from 2:00pm - 4:00pm. See the SCWP website for meeting details. Items proposed for the next meeting agenda include:

- Regional Program Quarterly Report Summary FY21-22 Q1 and Q2
- Scientific Studies Presentations
- Other agenda items to be discussed offline

## **11. Adjournment**

Chair Villegas thanked WASC members and the public for their attendance and participation and adjourned the meeting.

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		Quorum Present				Voting Items			
Member Type	Position	Member	Voting/ Present?	Alternate	Voting/ Present?	Approve 4-21-2022 Meeting Minutes	Approve Chair (Teresa Villegas) & Vice-Chair (Max Podemski) for ULAR WASC	Approve Updated ULAR Strategic Outreach and Engagement Plan	Send ALL completed Infrastructure Program projects to Scoring Committee
Agency	FCD	Genevieve Osmena	x	Ramy Gindi		Y	Y	Y	Y
Agency	Water Agency	Delon Kwan	x	Art Castro		A	Y	Y	Y
Agency	Groundwater / Water Agency 2	Paul Liu		John Huynh					
Agency	Sanitation	Ida Meisami-Fard	x	Alfredo Magallanes		Y	Y	Y	Y
Agency	Open Space	Cathie Santo Domingo	x	Javier Solis		Y	Y	Y	Y
Community Stakeholder	At Large	Ernesto Pantoja	x	Sergio Rascon		Y	Y	Y	Y
Community Stakeholder	At Large	Miguel Luna		Yvette Lopez-Ledesma					
Community Stakeholder	Environment	John Luker	x	Wendi Gladstone		Y	Y	Y	Y
Community Stakeholder	Business	Max Liles							
Community Stakeholder	EJ	Veronica Padilla-Campos	x	Felipe Escobar		Y	Y	Y	Y
Municipal Members	Glendale / Pasadena	Yazdan Emrani	x	Kris Markarian		Y	Y	Y	Y
Municipal Members	La Cañada Flintridge / South Pasadena	Patrick DeChellis	x	Ted Gerber		Y	Y	Y	Y
Municipal Members	Los Angeles	Teresa Villegas	x	Barbara Romero		Y	Y	Y	Y
Municipal Members	Los Angeles	Max Podemski	x				Y	Y	Y
Municipal Members	Los Angeles	Christine Peters		Rafael Prieto	x		Y	Y	Y
Municipal Members	Los Angeles County	Mark Lombos	x	Thuan Nguyen		A	Y	Y	Y
Municipal Members	San Fernando / Calabasas	Kenneth Jones	x	Alex Farassati		Y	Y	Y	Y
Watershed Coordinator Non-Voting Member	Environmental Outreach Strategies	Adi Liberman	x						
Watershed Coordinator Non-Voting Member	Council for Watershed Health	Clarasophia Gust							
Watershed Coordinator Non-Voting Member	Council for Watershed Health	Carlos Moran	x						
Total Non-Vacant Seats		17			Yes (Y)	10	14	14	14
Total Voting Members Present		14			No (N)	0	0	0	0
Agency		4			Abstain (A)	2	0	0	0
Community Stakeholder		3			Total	12	14	14	14
Municipal Members		7				Approved	Approved	Approved	Approved

## Attendees

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Mike	Dawn Petschauer	Cathie Santo Domingo	Kris Markarian
Shahriar Eftekhazadeh	Lauro Alvarado	Ted Gerber	Paige Bistromowitz
Carmen Andrade	max podemski	Craig Doberstein	Amanda Zeidner
Joyce Amaro	wendy Dinh	Jennifer Amarant	Shahriar Eftekhazadeh
Carmen Andrade	Francisco Romero (Promesa)	brett perry	Kayla Urbina
Tony Hancock	Julie Allen	Ryanna Fossum	Patrick DeChellis
H. Ted Gerber	Conor Mossavi	Mayra Martinez	Christine McLeod
Jose Luis Escajeda	Mike Scaduto	Ernesto Pantoja	Carlos Moran
Carmen Andrade	sheila brice	Thuan Nguyen	Rafael Piamonte
Ernesto Pantoja	Sarai Bhaga	Veronica Padilla	Carmen Andrade
William OBraitis	Wendi Gladstone	John Luker	Kara Plourde
Lorena Matos	Joyce Amaro	Kristina Leyva	Mike Antos (Regional Coordination)
Karen Barnett	Mike	Mark Lombos	Giselle Ramirez
Tanya Sullivan	Mike	Alonso Garcia	Pablo Forni
Alba Lemus	Rafael Prieto	Hayat Rasul	Ida Meisami
benny kona	Amanda Zeidner	Maggie Gardner	Haris Harouny - LACFCD
Eileen Alduenda	Arlene Guzman	Yaz Emrani	Ida Meisami
Maria merino	Mark Nguyen	Lidia Rivera	Mayra Cabrera - LACFCD
Jeannette Hernandez	JUSTIN JONES - LACFCD	Delon Kwan	Brianne Logasa
Cameron McCullough	Felicia Yin	Kenneth Jones	Alynn Sun
Brent Maue	Jennifer Amarant	Genevieve Osmena	Adi Liberman
Teresa Villegas	Call-in User_2	Call-in User_3	