

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



Wednesday, November 1, 2023

2:00pm - 4:00pm

LA County Public Works Headquarters, 1st Floor (Courtyard), Conference Room C
WebEx Meeting

Committee Members Present:

Paul Shadmani, LA County Flood Control District (Agency)

*John Huynh, 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)

Miguel Luna, Urban Semillas (Community)

Max Liles, Michael Baker International (Community)

Veronica Padilla-Campos, Pacoima Beautiful (Community)

Yazdan Emrani, Glendale (Municipal)

Patrick DeChellis, La Cañada Flintridge (Municipal)

Teresa Villegas, Los Angeles (Municipal), Chair

Karo Torossian, Los Angeles (Municipal)

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)

Kristina Kreter, Council for Watershed Health (Watershed Coordinator, non-voting member)

Committee Members Absent:

Delon Kwan, LA Department of Water and Power (Agency)

*Committee Member Alternate

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

1) Welcome and Introductions

Chair Teresa Villegas welcomed Committee Members, called the meeting to order, and reviewed today's agenda.

Los Angeles County Flood Control District (District) staff provided a brief WebEx tutorial in both English and Spanish and announced that the meeting was being broadcast live in Spanish. District staff facilitated the roll call of Committee Members, and a quorum was established.

2) Approval of Meeting Minutes from October 4, 2023

Chair Villegas motioned to approve the meeting minutes from October 4, 2023. The motion was seconded by Member Yazdan Emrani. The WASC approved the October 4, 2023, meeting minutes with 12 members in favor, 0 in abstention, 0 opposed, and 2 absent at the time of the vote (approved, see vote tracking sheet).

3) Ex Parte Communication Disclosures

There were no ex parte communication disclosures.

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4) Committee Member and District Updates

District staff provided an update, noting:

- The first term for WASC Community Stakeholder seats are up for reappointment for the next 3-year term. The next step is for the Board of Supervisors (Board) to appoint WASC Community Stakeholder seats for the next term, which could occur by the end of this year or early next year.
- FY23-24 Q1 Regional Quarterly Reports (July-September) are due November 15. Quarterly reports are to be completed even if there was no activity done on the project or if the Transfer Agreement has not been executed for projects included in the FY22-23 Stormwater Infrastructure Program (SIP).
- Municipal progress/expenditure reports are due on December 31 for activities between July 2022-June 2023. As a reminder, Municipal Annual Plans are due in April before the fiscal year, and the final report for the fiscal year is due December 31, 2023.
- Regional Infrastructure Program Project developers and municipalities should update the Reporting Module, by adding all phases of the project to the Gantt chart/schedule and adding bid and award details for projects. This will allow public to see estimated construction dates and potential future bid opportunities.
- The Project Modification Guidelines are finalized. The purpose of this document is to provide more specific guidance to WASCs, applicants, recipients, and other interested stakeholders when modifications to a Project, project concept or study are proposed. The deadline to submit the Project Modification Request (PMR) form for the current fiscal year has been extended to November 30. The Project Modification Guidelines and virtual information session recordings can be found in the Adaptive Management section in the Regional Program dropdown of the [SCW Program website](#).
- FY23-24 Transfer Agreements and addendums distribution began last month. An email was sent out to project developers with instructions on how to use the new Transfer Agreement functionality within the Reporting Module. Project developers should upload supporting documents such as the scope of work (SOW), authorizations, and CEQA documents. Please refer to the sample Transfer Agreement on the [SCW Program website](#).
- The ROC shall biennially prepare a SCW Program Progress Report for the Board, which includes a summary of the progress of the Regional Program, Municipal Program, and the District Program. The ROC has been meeting to discuss previous reports and data to date, the outline of the report, and the recommendations. The ROC will continue meeting in the upcoming months. The next meeting is scheduled for December 7. Committee Members are invited to attend to provide input during the public comment period. Meeting details can be found on the [SCW Program website](#).
- The Metrics and Monitoring Study (MMS) Team hosted two virtual sessions on October 11 to provide the final update and results of the study and share the next steps. The recording and materials are located on the [SCW Program website](#).
- The Scoring Committee began scoring Feasibility Study applications to the Infrastructure Program (IP) on October 23. ULAR projects are on the agenda for scoring November 2. See the [SCW Program website](#) for more information.

Mike Antos (Stantec, Regional Coordination) shared information on the Spatial Data Library (SDL), located on the Regional Program dropdown on the SCW Program website.

- The SDL instructional video and guide PDF are available [here](#). Antos shared that the SDL Library is a collection of over 40 public datasets relevant to the SCW Program. The SDL allows users to explore the interconnected relationships of data such as population density, stormwater channels, and the urban heat island index. Data for the first four rounds of the SCW Program and the drainage areas of IP projects is included. The SDL is periodically updated to include new project information and other changes.

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- When navigating to the SDL, the user is prompted with an option to read an instructional guide, watch a video tutorial, or download the datasets. There is also a link to view an additional list of data hubs and resources that are supplemental to the library.
- Questions on the SDL can be directed to the Regional Coordination team or Watershed Coordinators.

5) Watershed Coordinator Updates

Watershed Coordinator Adi Liberman shared upcoming events. On November 9, Watershed Coordinators will host a community tour of A.K. Warren Water Resources Facility. The event will highlight connections between the facility and stormwater diversion projects. Individuals interested in attending the event should contact Watershed Coordinator Liberman for more information. On December 4, Environmental Outreach Strategies, in partnership with California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, will host an interactive workshop titled Evaluation of Infiltration Testing Methods for Design of Stormwater Dry Well Systems. The hybrid meeting will be hosted online and at LA County Public Works Headquarters, 1st Floor (Courtyard), Conference Room C at 9:30am. The event will share results from the Scientific Study (SS). More information can be found [here](#).

On November 13, Watershed Coordinators will be participating in a kick-off meeting for the San Fernando Calles Verdes Technical Resources Program (TRP) project. The project is located in the City of San Fernando and incorporates nature-based solutions and green infrastructure for stormwater solutions.

Watershed Coordinator Liberman shared that a draft of the Sepulveda Basin Vision Plan is now available online for public comment. ULAR Watershed Coordinators are working with the City of Los Angeles on outreach in surrounding communities. The project is expected to apply to future rounds of SCW Program funding.

Watershed Coordinator Kristina Kreter discussed recent outreach and engagement activities. ULAR Watershed Coordinators tabled at 626 Golden Streets ArroyoFest on October 27. Watershed Coordinator Carlos Moran was also interviewed for an ABC7 segment on flood risks. Watershed Coordinator Kreter shared more information on school greening tours. Watershed Coordinators recently held a tour of Victory Elementary School on October 24 and another one will take place on November 17. Watershed Coordinator Kreter will send Committee Members more information to RSVP.

Watershed Coordinators mentioned recent efforts in supporting two SCW Program projects, Bowtie Demonstration Project and Elephant Hill Open Space and Stormwater Infrastructure Feasibility Study. Watershed Coordinator Moran noted Elephant Hill Open Space and Stormwater Infrastructure Feasibility Study's significance as the first TRP in the SCW Program that was submitted by community residents.

6) Public Comment Period

District staff compiled all public comment cards received by 5:00pm the day before the meeting. No comment cards were received before the meeting. There were no public comments.

7) Presentations and Discussion Items

a) Regional Program Quarterly Report Summary for FY2022-23 Q3 and Q4

District staff shared the FY22-23 Q3 and Q4 Quarterly Report Summary on screen. The summary can be found on the [SCW Program website](#). District staff noted that activity delays, scope modifications, and exhibit modifications were highlighted in pink. Committee Members were welcomed to ask project developers questions about the status of highlighted projects.

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Chair Villegas asked for clarification on the difference between quarterly summaries and relatively new policy for project modifications. District staff clarified that any project with changes will have to submit Project Modification Request (PMR) by November 30. If deemed a significant change by District staff, the PMR will be sent to the WASC for deliberation. Quarterly reports include any project updates.

Upon request from Chair Villegas, District staff agreed to denote which projects will be submitting PMRs in the future.

Upon inquiry about the summary, District staff clarified that “Funds Awarded to Date” column refers to funds that have been allocated by Board-approved SIPs. “Funds Projected” refers earmarked future funds, which are not guaranteed, but rather projected by the SIP. Chair Villegas requested that the “Funding Projected” column on the quarterly reports be clarified to add which FY it is being projected. District staff noted that there may be a delay in this reporting which could add to the complexity of understanding the funding data in the table.

District staff stated that PMRs with significant changes will be brought to the WASC after November 30 . Upon inquiry, District staff shared that PMR reviews by the WASCs have not yet been scheduled. District staff clarified that activity concerns and modifications are self-reported by project developers.

Member Patrick Dechellis asked for clarification regarding the Rory M. Shaw Wetlands Park Project. Donna Bautista (Los Angeles County Flood Control District) shared that the project schedule has been adjusted to pursue additional Federal funding from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) and confirmed that the SCW Program funding awarded was only for construction activities.

Upon inquiry, District staff clarified the “Cost-Share Modification” column refers to a change in funding sources. Member Veronica Padilla-Campos noted that this indication does not let Committee Members know whether the project is modifying to need more, or less, funding. District staff recommended Committee Members ask project developers project-specific questions regarding modifications.

Chair Villegas asked for clarification regarding the cost-share modification for the Lankershim Boulevard Local Area Urban Flow Management Network Project. Carmen Andrade (City of Los Angeles, Sanitation and Environment) stated that there is an increase in cost-share. Proponents originally stated there was no cost-share, however, the City is now contributing SCWP Municipal funds in the cost-share.

Sean Pham (City of Los Angeles, Sanitation and Environment) responded to the Committee’s question regarding the Oro Vista Local Area Urban Flow Management Project cost-share modifications and confirmed an increase due to SCWP Municipal funding. Michael Scaduto (City of Los Angeles, Sanitation and Environment) clarified that this project was in Round 1 of the SCW Program. The project is now modified to report soft costs, SCWP Municipal funds, and leveraged funds. The project has successfully secured funding from Senate Bill (SB) 1, general funds, and SCWP Municipal funds.

b) Technical Resources Program (TRP) Presentation ([SCW Portal](#))

- i) The Elephant Hill Open Space and Stormwater Infrastructure Feasibility Study by Elva Yanez (Save Elephant Hill). *Prioritize nature-based solutions and implement water quality, water supply, and community benefits.***

Elva Yanez (Save Elephant Hill) presented on the Elephant Hill Open Space and Stormwater Infrastructure Feasibility Study. More information on the presentation slides can be found on the [SCW Program website](#).

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Upon inquiry, Cesar Campos (Spherical Studio) and Watershed Coordinator Moran clarified that the TRP process is to assess the feasibility of the project and ideas presented by the community. The TRP will provide the proponent with a technical assistance team (TAT) to work on identifying the best man practices (BMPs) to address the community's concerns. Yanez added that the SCW Program TRP application was very complex and already required technical assistance.

Member DeChellis asked how the community envisions a stormwater project that would prevent current issues mentioned in the presentation, such as illegal land use, off roading, and dumping. Yanez suggested that Elephant Hill has never received the attention and protection it deserves. This situation would not have occurred in other areas, such as the Santa Monica Mountains. Yanez voiced the SCW Program's attention will change the narrative around Elephant Hill. Yanez clarified that the project itself might not directly stop the issues mentioned but were included in the presentation to outline the site's current conditions.

Member Kenneth Jones requested clarification on construction costs. Campos noted that the costs shared during the presentation were conceptual, using industry standard pricing around some of the community-proposed project components, such as the BMPs listed on the presentation slides shared.

Member Miguel Luna suggested that taxpayers want to see projects in their communities in a decentralized way, in conjunction with centralized projects that get large funding. Member Luna stated that this project is a great way to show taxes coming back to the community.

Yanez thanked Watershed Coordinators and technical support for helping bring this project before the WASC. Yanez reiterated that the application was difficult for community organizations to complete without the technical assistance. Chair Villegas mentioned the motion by Supervisor Horvath to streamline and improve the SCW Program application process and urged Yanez and other community groups to provide input.

Member Paul Shadmani requested clarification regarding the project area. Yanez stated the project area is the green area shown in the presentation. Campos clarified the parcels owned by MRCA determine the boundaries of where the project can occur. In addition to MRCA's property and City of Los Angeles boundaries, there are single family homes below the project area that have expressed interest in participating in the project.

Member Shadmani asked who will maintain the project. Yanez clarified that MRCA owns the land. Watershed Coordinator Moran added that if the TRP is funded, there are 19 different steps involved to develop a feasibility study, one of which is to establish an Operations and Maintenance (O&M) plan. An O&M plan was not needed at this stage in the SCW Program process. Yanez and Save Elephant Hill worked with MRCA and the City of Los Angeles to receive non-objection letters for the potential feasibility study. If a project is deemed feasible at the end of the TRP, then the project team would prepare an application for the SCW Program for construction, which would include the O&M plan.

Member John Huynh noted that it is important to evaluate land use issues at the site. For example, unauthorized off-roading may destroy all the trees and BMPs. Yanez noted that MRCA acquired a \$1.2 million grant for their "Off-Road Unit" to mitigate off-roading and that there is \$700,000 grant award pending from Los Angeles County Regional Park and Open Space District (RPOSD) to fund a trail. Yanez noted that resolving these issues will require MRCA leadership and coordination with the community.

Member Ernesto Pantoja echoed Member Luna's statements and added that many members of Laborers Local 300 live near the proposed project. Member Pantoja reiterated that Elephant Hill does not receive the same amount of protection as the Santa Monica Mountains. Yanez suggested that more community members engage with these issues to bring more attention to the project area.

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Chair Villegas clarified that City of Los Angeles has provided a non-objection letter and is aligned with the project.

8) Public Comment Period

There were no public comments for this section of the agenda.

9) Voting Items

There were no voting items.

10) Items for Next Agenda

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, December 6, 2:00pm – 4:00pm. See the SCW Program website for details. Items on the agenda include:

a) Scientific Studies Program (SS) Presentations

11) Adjournment

Chair Villegas thanked Committee Members and the public for their attendance and participation and adjourned the meeting. Chair Villegas honored the recent passing of local environmental justice and community leader Cindy Montañez.

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		Quorum Present				Voting Items
Member Type	Position	Member	Voting/ Present?	Alternate	Voting/ Present?	Approve October 4, 2023 Meeting Minutes
Agency	FCD	Paul Shadmani	x	Satenig Marjanian		y
Agency	Water Agency	Delon Kwan		Art Castro		
Agency	Groundwater / Water Agency 2	Jesus Gonzalez		John Huynh	x	y
Agency	Sanitation	Ida Meisami-Fard	x	Alfredo Magallanes		y
Agency	Open Space	Cathie Santo Domingo	x	Javier Solis		y
Community Stakeholder	At Large	Ernesto Pantoja	x	Sergio Rascon		y
Community Stakeholder	At Large	Miguel Luna	x			
Community Stakeholder	Environment					
Community Stakeholder	Business	Max Liles	x			y
Community Stakeholder	EJ	Veronica Padilla-Campos	x	Roxy Rivas		
Municipal Members	Glendale / Pasadena	Yazdan Emrani	x	Kris Markarian		y
Municipal Members	La Cañada Flintridge / South Pasadena	Patrick DeChellis	x	Ted Gerber		y
Municipal Members	Los Angeles	Teresa Villegas	x			y
Municipal Members	Los Angeles	Karo Torossian	x			y
Municipal Members	Los Angeles	Rafael Prieto	x			
Municipal Members	Los Angeles County	Mark Lombos	x	Thuan Nguyen		y
Municipal Members	San Fernando / Calabasas	Kenneth Jones	x	Alex Farassati		y
Watershed Coordinator (Non-Voting Member)	Environmental Outreach Strategies	Adi Liberman	x	Arlene Guzman		
Watershed Coordinator (Non-Voting Member)	Council for Watershed Health	Carlos Moran	x	Jason Casanova		
Watershed Coordinator (Non-Voting Member)	Council for Watershed Health	Kristina Kreter	x	Alonso Garcia		
Total Non-Vacant Seats		16			Yes (Y)	12
Total Voting Members Present		15			No (N)	0
Agency		4			Abstain (A)	0
Community Stakeholder		4			Total	12
Municipal Members		7				Approved

WebEx Webinar Attendees
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Brett Perry
Adriana Ortega
Alonso
Ana Rivera
Anabelle Del Valle
Angineh Shahnazarian
Anna Philipp
Arlene
Blake
Brad Wardynski Craftwater
Brenda Stevens
Brianna Datti
Call-in User_2
Carmen Andrade - LASAN
Christopher Vong
Dawn Petschauer
De Vera, Alex
Donna Bautista
Dustin Herrmann
Emily Ng
Gina L

Giselle Franco
Giselle Ramirez
Jennifer Amarant
Johanna Chang
John Bodenchak
Jon Ball
Jose Castro- LACFCD
Joyce Amaro
Juliann Rooke
Justin Jones - LACFCD
Kara Plourde
Karely Dorado
Kelsey Reed
M. Scaduto
Maggie Gardner
Marina Erfle
Mark Hall GLAmosquito
Mark Nguyen
Matt Rich
Melania Gaboyan - LACFCD
Michael Scaduto

Mike Rudd
Mossavi, Conor
Nayiri Vartanian
Nicholas Ryu
Pablo Forni
Paige Bistromowitz
Paulina Mejia
Phil Reidy - Geosyntec
Rafael Piamonte
Rosanna
Rosie
Roxan Rivas
Ryan Hiney
Ryanna Fossum Regional Coordination
Safe Clean Water LA
Sara
Seta
Sommer Sherwood-White
Susie Santilena
Ted Gerber
Tonthat, Peter

Uriel Cobian - LACFCD
Veronica Carrillo
albert kam
marina
sean phan LASAN
Mike Antos
Turner Lott

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 COMMITTEE MEMBER AND ALTERNATE SIGN-IN



Member Name	Municipality/ Organization	Member Type	Role	Signature
Adi Liberman	Environmental Outreach Strategies	Watershed Coordinator (Non-Voting Member)		
Alex Farassati	City of Calabasas	Municipal	Alternate	
Alfredo Magallanes	LA Sanitation and Environment	Agency	Alternate	
Alonso Garcia	Council for Watershed Health	Watershed Coordinator (Non-Voting Member)		
Arlene Guzman	Environmental Outreach Strategies	Watershed Coordinator (Non-Voting Member)		
Art Castro	Los Angeles Department of Water and Power	Agency	Alternate	
Carlos Moran	Council for Watershed Health	Watershed Coordinator (Non-Voting Member)		
Cathie Santo Domingo	Los Angeles Recreation & Parks	Agency	Primary	
Delon Kwan	Los Angeles Department of Water and Power	Agency	Primary	
Ernesto Pantoja	Laborers Local 300	Community Stakeholder	Primary	
Ida Meisami-Fard	LA Sanitation and Environment	Agency	Primary	
Jason Casanova	Council for Watershed Health	Watershed Coordinator (Non-Voting Member)		

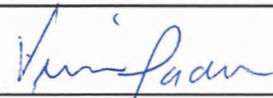
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Member Name	Municipality/ Organization	Member Type	Role	Signature
Javier Solis	Los Angeles Recreation & Parks	Community Stakeholder	Alternate	
Jesus Gonzalez	Los Angeles Department of Water and Power	Agency	Primary	
John Huynh	Los Angeles Department of Water and Power	Agency	Alternate	<i>John Huynh</i>
Karo Torossian	City of Los Angeles	Municipal	Primary	<i>Karo Torossian</i>
Kenneth Jones	City of San Fernando	Municipal	Primary	
Kris Markarian	City of Pasadena	Municipal	Alternate	
Kristina Kreter	Council for Watershed Health	Watershed Coordinator (Non-Voting Member)		
Mark Lombos	Los Angeles County	Municipal	Primary	
Max Liles	Michael Baker International	Community Stakeholder	Primary	<i>Max Liles</i>
Miguel Luna	Urban Semillas	Community Stakeholder	Primary	
Patrick DeChellis	City of La Cañada Flintridge	Municipal	Primary	<i>Patrick DeChellis</i>
Paul Shadmani	LA County Flood Control District	Agency	Primary	<i>Paul Shadmani</i>

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Member Name	Municipality/ Organization	Member Type	Role	Signature
Rafael Prieto	City of Los Angeles	Agency	Primary	
Roxy Rivas	Pacoima Beautiful	Community Stakeholder	Alternate	
Sergio Rascon	Laborers Local 300	Community Stakeholder	Alternate	
Satenig Marjanian	LA County Flood Control District	Agency	Alternate	
Ted Gerber	City of South Pasadena	Municipal	Alternate	
Teresa Villegas	City of Los Angeles	Municipal	Primary	
Thuan Nguyen	Los Angeles County	Municipal	Alternate	
Veronica Padilla- Campos	Pacoima Beautiful	Community Stakeholder	Primary	
Yazdan Emrani	City of Glendale	Municipal	Primary	

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 PUBLIC SIGN-IN



First Name	Last Name	Municipality/Organization	Email Address
Elva Yanez		San Elephamt Hill	ekyanercomm@gmail.com
Jugo Garcia		San Elephamt Hill	hgarcia4432@gmail.com
Kenneth	Jones	San Fernando	kjones@sfcity.org
William	OBrien	OBS	WOBZAT7.5@OBSGROUP.COM
Alonso Garcia		CWIF	
CEBAR CAMPOS		SPRINKLER	
Vernica	Padin		

*Signing or completing this form is voluntary for members of the public