

North Santa Monica Bay Watershed Area Steering Committee (WASC) Meeting Minutes



Thursday, February 8, 2024
1:00pm – 3:00pm
Las Virgenes Municipal Water District Conference Room
4232 Las Virgenes Rd Calabasas, CA 91302

WebEx Meeting

Committee Members Present:

Marcela Benavides-Aguilar, Los Angeles County Flood Control District (Agency)
David Pedersen, Las Virgenes Municipal Water District (LVMWD) (Agency)
Craig Jones, Las Virgenes Municipal Water District (Agency)
Madelyn Glickfeld, Resident (Community), Chair
Tevin Schmitt, Wishtoyo Chumash Foundation Ventura County (Community)
Jessica Forte, Agoura Hills (Municipal), Vice-Chair
Tatiana Holden, Calabasas (Municipal)
Joe Bellomo, Hidden Hills (Municipal)
Aaron Ordower, Los Angeles County SD3 (Municipal)
Bruce Hamamoto, Los Angeles County (Municipal)
Mark Johnson, Malibu (Municipal)
Roxanne Hughes, Westlake Village (Municipal)
Melina Sempill Watts, Melina Sempill Watts Inc. (Watershed Coordinator, non-voting member)

*Committee Member Alternate

Committee Members Not Present:

Russ Bryden, LA County Waterworks District (Agency)
Chad Christensen, Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (Agency)
Susan Nissman, Resident (Community)
Jacy Shillan, Resident (Community)

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

1) Welcome and Introduction

Madelyn Glickfeld, Chair of the North Santa Monica Bay (NSMB) Watershed Area Steering Committee (WASC), welcomed Committee Members and called the meeting to order. Los Angeles County Flood Control District (District) staff facilitated the roll call of Committee Members. District staff and all Committee Members made self-introductions and a quorum was established. District staff provided a brief WebEx tutorial for meeting participants joining online.

2) Approval of Meeting Minutes from December 11, 2023

Chair Glickfeld presented the minutes from the previous meeting. Member David Pedersen motioned to approve the meeting minutes, seconded by Vice-Chair Jessica Forte. The WASC voted to approve the December 11, 2023 meeting minutes with 10 votes in favor, 1 in abstention, and 0 in opposition (approved, see vote tracking sheet).

3) Committee Member Updates

Member Aaron Ordower shared that the Board's Office is working on impacts from the recent storms and the emergency declaration from the County and will convey updates. Chair Glickfeld noted that there has

North Santa Monica Bay Watershed Area Steering Committee (WASC) Meeting Minutes



been historic flooding at Malibu Canyon. Member Mark Johnson noted that the City of Malibu is not currently aware of any significant damage.

Member Ordower shared that a Water Resiliency Summit is planned for April or June to work on implementation on the Los Angeles County Water Plan. Member Ordower will share details when confirmed.

Chair Glickfeld shared a discussion with Watershed Coordinator Watts, and Mike Antos (Stantec, Regional Coordination) that involved ways for this Committee to support more proactive approaches for the watershed area. The discussion resulted in Agenda Item 7d, a discussion about what scientific and technical studies might enhance the development of projects or the decision-making at the WASC.

4) District Updates

District Staff provided an update, noting:

- Fiscal Year 2022-2023 (FY22-23) Regional Program Annual Reports were due December 31, 2023. Progress reports must still be completed even if there was no activity done on the project or if the Transfer Agreement has not been executed.
- The next Quarterly Report is due on February 15.
- The Round 4 Transfer Agreements and Addendums are available for download in the Transfer Agreement Module. District staff sent an email on January 24 with instructions on how to navigate the new module. Transfer Agreements will not be downloadable until the Infrastructure Program (IP) Project Developer contract information is uploaded. The new module is for projects included in Round 4 Stormwater Investment Plans (SIPs) and future SIPs only. Projects from previous SIPs can submit documents via email.
- Annual Reports were due on December 31, 2023. As a reminder, Municipal Annual Plans are due in April before the FY and the Reports are due at the end of the year after the Fiscal Year in December.
- On January 31, the Regional Oversight Committee (ROC) voted to send the Biennial Report to the Board. The Biennial Report includes a summary of the progress of the Regional Program, Municipal Program, and the District Program. More details can be found on the [SCW Program website](#) under the ROC webpage. The ROC will begin discussing next steps at the February 15 meeting. Upon inquiry, District staff confirmed that there were no formal responses to comments released by the District or the ROC. Meeting minutes and the approved Biennial Report express the discussion and conclusions that ROC reached.

Chair Glickfeld confirmed with District staff that the letter sent from the NSMB WASC was discussed at the ROC meetings, but no specific language was taken to the Biennial Report. District staff noted that the concerns regarding the amount of effort required to prepare a project application was considered at the ROC meetings and the ROC is working to address those concerns. Chair Glickfeld conveyed that it would be useful for a representative from the NSMB WASC to provide public comment at the next ROC meeting to ensure major concerns are given a response. District staff will share the time and location of future ROC meetings.

Antos noted that the ROC prioritized a succinct and clear Biennial Report. The findings and recommendations of the ROC, drawn from a year of work and input and feedback received, are in the first few pages and easily reviewable. The Biennial Report is linked at the [SCW Program website](#).

Antos also shared that Los Angeles County is cohosting a Summit for Equity, Resilience and Water, where lessons learned from the statewide Integrated Regional Water Management Program Disadvantaged Community and Tribal Involvement Program will be shared, emphasizing how community voices can lead water management planning. The event will be in person in Alhambra on March 26 and 27, and Watershed

North Santa Monica Bay Watershed Area Steering Committee (WASC) Meeting Minutes



Coordinators have been invited to participate both days of the event. Watershed Coordinator Melina Sempill Watts will share more information with the District to distribute to the Committee Members.

Member Joe Bellomo confirmed with District staff that Municipal Transfer Agreements expire this Fiscal Year and updated Transfer Agreements are in the process of disbursement.

5) Watershed Coordinator Updates

Watershed Coordinator Watts shared about recent outreach and engagement efforts. Presentation slides can be found on the [SCW Program website](#).

Watershed Coordinator Watts also highlighted events this upcoming year:

- Pepperdine University event for Earth Day on April 22
- NSMB State of the Watershed 2024, hosted by City of Malibu on April 25
- Agoura Hills Arbor Day at Sumac Elementary on April 26
- Topanga Days event from May 25 to May 27
- 2024 Calabasas Pumpkin Festival in October
- Malibu Lagoon Celebration at Mountains Recreation and Conservation Association or at Santa Monica City College at Malibu on November 5. Interested Committee Members should contact Watershed Coordinator Watts. Chair Glickfeld advocated for the Santa Monica City College location.
- A day-long seminar about with anyone conducting water quality testing in the region planned for December. Watershed Coordinator Watts would like confirmation that the Committee is still interested in this event.

Watershed Coordinator Watts shared current conversations with various school stakeholders. Chair Glickfeld encouraged Committee Members representing cities to help Las Virgenes Unified School District understand the technical aspects of the SCW Program.

Watershed Coordinator Watts will reconnect with Santa Monica Malibu Unified School District after the new CSMB Watershed Coordinator is brought on, as the School District representative in charge of the two sites at Santa Monica and Malibu would benefit from one group meeting with both Watershed Coordinators.

6) Public Comment Period

No public comment cards were received by 5:00 pm the day before the meeting. In person, virtual, and call-in users were invited to provide public comment.

There were no public comments.

7) Discussion

a) Ex Parte Communication Disclosure

Vice-Chair Forte had an online meeting with Watershed Coordinator Watts and Chair Glickfeld.

b) SS Presentation: Identifying Best Practices for Maintaining Stormwater Drywell Capacity *Mehrad Kamalzare, California State Polytechnic University, Pomona*

The project applicant shared that the purpose of this Scientific Study (SS) is to create a stormwater manual that contains best practices for maintaining deep infiltration infrastructure. Presentation slides can be found on the [SCW Program website](#). Two drywell sites would be selected in the NSMB Watershed Area.

Chair Glickfeld asked the project applicant to provide some background on drywells and drywell locations. The project applicant explained that drywells are essentially vertical recharge basins, which are very

North Santa Monica Bay Watershed Area Steering Committee (WASC) Meeting Minutes



important for many areas of Los Angeles County who rely solely on groundwater a water source. Because of this and the concretizing of channels, the groundwater table levels have been getting lower.

Chair Glickfeld asked if drywells are applicable for this watershed area if there is no specific aquifers or groundwater. The project applicant explained that groundwater tables span across regions so helping in one area affects others. The applicant noted that drywells are also a way to manage stormwater and promote infiltration. In response to the fact that this watershed area has a lot of clay soil, the project applicant noted that the application of drywells is used for areas with clay soil as the drywell can be deeply dug to pass the clay soil layer. Watershed Coordinator Watts mentioned that this presentation is for all of Los Angeles County's watershed areas but this watershed has no groundwater, so the applicant needs to make sure the presentation is tailored appropriately.

The goals of the study, in addition to developing best practices, include training the next generation of engineers. The funding requested is five years for a total of \$4,951,453, with \$408,871 being requested from NSMB WASC. The study is requesting funds from at all nine WASCs.

District staff noted that the independent review of the SS will be presented at the next meeting, before the WACS decides on the SIP.

Upon inquiry, the project applicant clarified that the study does not evaluate the water quality after water passes through the drywell, but the effectiveness of the drywell itself, and that the study does not currently include monitoring the change of pollutants of concern.

The project applicant noted that most drywells are around 40-50 feet deep and the largest are 48 inches in diameter. The project applicant clarified that no drywells are being constructed with this study, but that the study would evaluate recently constructed drywells.

Member Ordower noted that this watershed area does not have the same opportunity to infiltrate stormwater to groundwater supply as other watershed areas may have and asked how this study would benefit this watershed area. The project applicant noted that even if this watershed area has limited groundwater, drywells are still able to manage stormwater and infiltrate water instead of directing water straight to the ocean, creating a shared resource across the County.

Member Pedersen expressed that there seems to be a real benefit of this study and clarified the total cost of the project with the applicant.

Committee Members expressed concern that since this watershed area relies 100% on imported water and has significant clay soils in the region, it may be difficult to even find newly constructed drywells in this region. The project applicant noted that drywells are useful to penetrate clay soil layers and that drywells have in general become more common in the last five to ten years.

Member Bellomo confirmed with the project applicant that other WASCs are interested in the study but have not made any formal commitments yet. Member Bellomo explained that while it is fair of the study to develop a funding request based on the number of drywells, this watershed area has less funding than other WASCs. Therefore, this funding request represents a larger portion of available funding in this WASC and brought up the concern that funding a large request could discourage other applicants from applying. The project applicant noted that there is flexibility with the budget and is open to discussion.

Watershed Coordinator Watts requested that the project applicant review and report back about any candidate drywells in this watershed area before the SIP deliberation meetings.

Chair Glickfeld noted that studies that investigate how to maintain technology and infrastructure to improve its longevity, such as this one, are the type that this watershed needs.

North Santa Monica Bay Watershed Area Steering Committee (WASC) Meeting Minutes



c) LVMWD x Oceanwell Pilot Desalination Project ***Michael McNutt, Las Virgenes Municipal Water District (LVMWD)***

McNutt provided an informational presentation about the LVMWD and Oceanwell Pilot Desalination Project. This is an opportunity for LVMWD to answer the community's request to investigate desalination as way to reduce reliance on imported water. Presentation slides can be found on the [SCW Program website](#). This project is not seeking SCWP funding, this was an informational presentation only.

Following the presentation the Committee asked questions about the technology, its scale, and challenges remaining before wider adoption including regulatory hurdles.

Member Pedersen noted that this is obviously very new technology that is not yet ready for implementation, and everyone has a lot of questions, which is the purpose of the pilot study.

d) Prioritizing Science Needs for the NSMB Watershed: Presentation and Discussion ***Richard Ambrose, UCLA Fielding School of Public Health***

Chair Glickfeld and Antos set the context of this discussion item and shared that the SCW Program has been working to be more proactive in determining what Scientific Studies and Technical Resource Program (TRP) projects would help this watershed area, and how scientific analyses on best management practices (BMPs) can illuminate what projects the watershed needs.

Richard Ambrose opened the floor to brainstorming different ways to understand the watershed area needs and solicit successful project proposals that are customized and strategic. The watershed area can be split into two types of areas: areas that are served by sewer systems and those that are not. A challenge in this watershed area has always been achieving water supply benefits despite not having groundwater supply—diverting stormwater and connecting to sewer lines could be one option.

Member Forte noted that the City of Agoura Hills is looking to fill the capacity available at Tapia Water Reclamation Facility by considering urban runoff influence on municipal separate storm sewer systems (MS4). One area of study would be generating urban subwatershed maps to understand the contribution of urban stormwater to each MS4 outfall. This would lead way to a strategic understanding of which diversions to prioritize, rather than accepting whichever project is proposed first. Chair Glickfeld would also like to see an evaluation of alternative diversion locations to ensure project benefits are maximized.

Member Pedersen expressed support for the diversion idea and noted that LVMWD would be open to contributing to funding, as LVMWD has already been working with the City of Agoura Hills and is aware that the City of Calabasas is also interested. Member Pedersen also noted that since Tapia Water Reclamation Facility has a limited capacity, it would be prudent to be smart and equitable on which sites are chosen to fill that capacity.

Member Forte noted that a secondary benefit to this diversion location analysis is that whether a project decides to divert to LVMWD plants or propose a BMP like other SCW Program projects, a diversion structure is necessary either way. The BMP could be a treat and release structure or infiltration, the latter of which could have ecological restoration benefits.

Ambrose noted that another research idea could investigate how much water is supposed to be in the streams to maintain ecological needs and balance that amount with the water required to increase water supply and better water quality. Malibu Creek might be well researched, but the other streams are not. Member Hughes agreed that it would be important to be careful how strategic planning prioritizes water quality by taking water to treatment plants versus keeping streams wet.

Chair Glickfeld brought up a potential study that tests water quality through the region at a finer scale, making it easier to identify water quality hot spots in the region. This could help the Committee understand for example, that having one project in Topanga Canyon would benefit water quality as much as having 100 projects in Viewridge.

North Santa Monica Bay Watershed Area Steering Committee (WASC) Meeting Minutes



Member Hughes noted that a secondary benefit to regional and strategic planning would be addressing the concerns with drywells in this watershed area. If drywells can inject water into the ground in this watershed area, it could bring water supply benefits downstream or in other regions. Watershed Coordinator Watts mentioned the history of groundwater in this region, where arsenic issues in water quality is what led to the creation of a water district.

Several Committee Members discussed the anthropogenic impacts on streams in the area. Before the region started taking water from the State Water Project, the streams may have not necessarily needed as much water as they currently do, and people have created that dependency. However, Watershed Coordinator Watts noted that in earlier history, the area had semi-functional creeks, but levels decreased because of the increase of wells as people settled in the area. Ambrose noted that regardless of the impacts, it would be important to understand the history of in-stream flows in the region and future needs.

Member Forte clarified that the City of Agoura Hills would only be diverting subsurface urban flow and not from any creeks or open channels. During wet weather, the stormwater flows would not be diverted and during dry weather, the City assumes flow as a result of irrigation overspray and water distribution system leaks.

Member Pedersen suggested that an entire meeting be dedicated towards this. One major issue is wet weather compliance, specifically compliance to bacteria and nutrient limits. Diversion is a great strategy but does not always work for wet weather, using the recent storm as an example. Member Pedersen noted that Tapia Water Reclamation Facility was reaching its limit during the storm and that good wet weather projects are needed. Ambrose agreed that the strategy to tackle dry weather and wet weather are very different, as wet weather projects would help more with water quality and prevent inundation at treatment plants.

Member Ordower noted that the WASC's strategic planning goals are in alignment with the ROC and the District's initiatives of watershed wide planning. Chair Glickfeld requested that Watershed Coordinator Watts consolidate the discussions among Committee Members and public members. This way, Watershed Coordinator Watts can generate a list of study topics to publicize. Antos noted that the Watershed Coordinator is meant to work on the Committee's behalf to signal the interests and priorities to potential project proponents. Antos noted that while many of the Committee Members have a dual stake in soliciting projects as members of municipalities, the Watershed Coordinator is in a position to engage with the public and solicit the community's priorities.

Per Chair Glickfeld's suggestion, it would be beneficial if Member Pedersen could help plan a deeper discussion continuing this topic before creating this as a standing item for Committee Members to continually share project ideas.

Chair Glickfeld noted that there are only a few of months left to meet the next project application deadline. Chair Glickfeld offered to work with scientists and universities to get a project idea submitted.

Member Bellomo agreed with prioritizing community engagement and noted that the existing Enhanced Watershed Management Program (EWMP) is a good starting point. Member Bellomo noted that Larry Walker Associates and Paradigm have done a lot of the modeling that went into the EMWP and should be engaged to help with prioritizing projects.

8) Public Comment Period

Alan Fuchs (Associate Dean, Cal Poly Pomona (CPP)) provided public comment and expressed experience working with many engineering departments and a background on membranes for water treatment. Fuchs noted that the Committee has yet to mention a community college conducting research. Fuchs noted that part of the Associate Dean's role at CPP is to integrate the different levels of academic institutions- the University of California (UC) system that is more researched focused, the California State Universities

North Santa Monica Bay Watershed Area Steering Committee (WASC) Meeting Minutes



(CSUs), and community colleges. Fuchs shared that a proposal was recently approved by legislature to allow CSUs to have doctorate programs and community colleges to have Bachelor's degree programs.

Larken Cumberland (member of the public) shared that a broad agency announcement (BSA) is a short paragraph that explains what a grant program is looking for and is easily shareable amongst the scientific community. Cumberland offered to assist in developing a BSA to release and solicit project applications. Cumberland shared that as a member of the scientific community, scientists often prefer to be told what the research questions and intentions are, so solidifying a BSA would be great. Cumberland also noted that data scientists would also be interested in these topics regarding optimization.

Craig Doberstein (Herrera Environmental and Topanga resident) is a stormwater engineer that has been listening to the WASC meeting and noted that the scientific community, non-government organizations, and consultants alike are all interested to know what the WASCs prioritize. Doberstein shared that there are similar grant programs in Washington state that advocate the priorities of the program and it greatly helps project proponents develop a project application rather than just starting from an idea with no support. Doberstein expressed support in this WASC's actions and expressed that they have many ideas to share with the Committee.

9) Voting Items

There were no voting items.

10) Items for Next Agenda

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, March 14, 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm and will be held in person at the Las Virgenes Metropolitan Water District Conference Room.

11) Adjournment

Chair Glickfeld thanked the WASC Members and the public for their attendance and participation and adjourned the meeting.

NORTH SANTA MONICA BAY WASC MEETING - February 8, 2024

		Quorum Present				Voting Items
Member Type	Organization	Member	Voting?	Alternate	Voting?	Vote to Approve December 14, 2023 WASC Meeting Minutes
Agency	LACFCD	Marcela Benavides-Aguilar	x	Mark Beltran		y
Agency	LAC Waterworks District	Russ Bryden				
Agency	MRCA	Chad Christensen				
Agency	LVMWD	<u>David Pedersen</u>	x	Craig Jones		y
Agency	LVMWD	<u>David Pedersen</u>		Craig Jones	x	
Community Stakeholder	Resident	<u>Madelyn Glickfeld</u>	x	Richard Ambrose		y
Community Stakeholder	Community Stakeholder	Vacant				
Community Stakeholder	Resident	Susan Nissman				
Community Stakeholder	Wishtoyo Chumash Foundation Ventura County	Tevin Schmitt	x			y
Community Stakeholder	Community	Jacy Shillan				
Municipal Members	Agoura Hills	Jessica Forte	x	Kelly Fisher		y
Municipal Members	Calabasas	Tatiana Holden	x			y
Municipal Members	Hidden Hills	Joe Bellomo	x	Kerry Kallman		a
Municipal Members	LAC Supervisor District 3	Aaron Ordower	x	Rachel Fox		y
Municipal Members	LAC Public Works	Bruce Hamamoto	x	Allen Ma		y
Municipal Members	Malibu	Mark Johnson	x	Solishia Andico		y
Municipal Members	Westlake Village	Roxanne Hughes	x	Josephine Wilson		y
Watershed Coordinator	Melina S. Watts Consulting, LLC	Melina Watts				
Total Non-Vacant Seats		17			Yay (Y)	10
Total Voting Members Present		12			Nay (N)	0
Agency		3			Abstain (A)	1
Community Stakeholder		2			Total	11
Municipal Members		7				Approved

Other Attendees

Mehrad Kamalzare
 Alan Fuchs
 Louker Cumberland
 Rich Ambrose
 Katie Marsh
 Craig Doberstein



Safe, Clean Water Program Watershed Area Steering Committee North Santa Monica Bay

Date Thursday, February 8, 2024
Time 1:00 PM – 3:00 PM
Location Las Virgenes Municipal Water District Conference
Room - 4232 Las Virgenes Rd Calabasas, CA 91302

WebEx Hybrid Meeting – See below or [SCW website](#)
for WebEx Meeting details

WebEx Meeting Details

Committee members are expected to attend in-person at the address listed above. Members of the public may participate by joining the WebEx Event Meeting below. Please refer to the [Video Conferencing Guidelines](#) available on the Safe, Clean Water Program website for additional information.

Join via WebEx Events (recommended)

Event number: 2498 345 2293

Password: scwp (7297 from phones and video systems)

<https://lacountydpw.webex.com/lacountydpw/j.php?MTID=m2bca1d82893c608ee25ab0955bcc354a>

Join by phone

+1-408-418-9388 United States Toll or

+1-213-306-3065 United States Toll (Los Angeles)

Access Code: 2481 037 5685

Public Comment

Phone participants and the public are encouraged to submit public comments (or a request to make a public comment) to SafeCleanWaterLA@pw.lacounty.gov. All public comments will become part of the official record.

Please complete the [Comment Card Form](#) available on the Safe, Clean Water website and email to SafeCleanWaterLA@pw.lacounty.gov by at least 5:00pm the day prior to the meeting.

Para solicitudes de comentarios públicos en español, envíe un correo electrónico a SafeCleanWaterLA@pw.lacounty.gov o lláme al (833) 275-7297 dos días antes de la reunión para asegurarse de que haya un traductor presente para transmitir el comentario para consideración del comité.

Requests for accommodations may be made to SafeCleanWaterLA@pw.lacounty.gov or by telephone to 833-ASK-SCWP at least three working days in advance of the meeting.

Supporting documentation will be available on the Safe, Clean Water website at www.safecleanwaterla.org.



Agenda:

- 1) Welcome and Introductions
- 2) Approval of Meeting Minutes from December 14, 2023
- 3) Committee Member Updates
- 4) District Updates
- 5) Watershed Coordinator Updates
- 6) Public Comment Period
- 7) Discussion
 - a) Ex Parte Communications Disclosure
 - b) SS Presentation: Identifying Best Practices for Maintaining Stormwater Drywell Capacity
by Dr. Ali Sharbat and Dr. Mehrad Kamalzare
 - c) LVMWD x Oceanwell Pilot Desalination Project
by Michael McNutt
 - d) Prioritizing Science Needs for the NSMB Watershed: Presentation and Discussion
by Dr. Richard Ambrose
- 8) Public Comment Period
- 9) Voting Items
- 10) Items for Next Agenda
- 11) Adjournment

Next Meeting: March 14, 2024 (TBD)
1:00pm – 3:00pm
Las Virgenes Municipal Water District Conference Room
4232 Las Virgenes Rd Calabasas, CA 91302

Requests for accommodations may be made to SafeCleanWaterLA@pw.lacounty.gov or by telephone to 833-ASK-SCWP at least three working days in advance of the meeting.

Supporting documentation will be available on the Safe, Clean Water website at www.safecleanwaterla.org.