

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



Thursday, February 21, 2024
1:00pm - 3:00pm
Edward C. Little Water Recycling Facility
1935 S Hughes Way, El Segundo, CA 90245
WebEx Meeting

Committee Members Present:

Marcela Benavides-Aguilar, LA County Flood Control District (Agency)
*Matthew Veeh, West Basin MWD (Agency)
*Aimee Zhao, Water Replenishment District (Agency)
Dave Pierce, Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts (Agency)
*Darryl Ford, Los Angeles Recreation and Parks (Agency)
Caryn Mandelbaum, Resident (Community)
Craig Cadwallader, Surfrider Foundation (Community), Chair
Bo Savage, Los Angeles Conservation Corps (Community)
*Roland Jen, Carson (Municipal)
*Ryan Jackson, Los Angeles (Municipal)
Thuan Nguyen, Los Angeles County (Municipal)
*Wilson Mendoza, Torrance (Municipal)
Geraldine Trivedi, EWMP: Beach Cities (Municipal), Vice-Chair
Carla Dillon, (Lomita) EWMP: Dominguez (Municipal)
Vanessa Hevener, (Rancho Palos Verdes) EWMP: Peninsula (Municipal)
Nancy Shrodes, Heal the Bay (Watershed Coordinator, non-voting member)

*Committee Member Alternate

Committee Members Not Present:

Hany Fangary, Fangary Law Group (Community)

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

1. Welcome and Introductions

Craig Cadwallader, Chair of the South Santa Monica Bay (SSMB) Watershed Area Steering Committee (WASC), welcomed Committee Members and called the meeting to order.

Los Angeles County Flood Control District (District) staff facilitated Committee Member introductions. A quorum was established. District staff provided a brief WebEx tutorial and direction on submission of public comments to the Safe, Clean Water (SCW) Program website.

2. Approval of Meeting Minutes from January 17, 2024

Chair Cadwallader presented the minutes from the last SSMB WASC meeting held on January 17, 2024. Member Doug Krauss motioned to approve the meeting minutes, seconded by Member Carla Dillon. The WASC voted to approve the meeting minutes with 14 Members in favor and 1 in abstention (approved, see vote tracking sheet attached).

3. Committee Member and 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

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if the Transfer Agreement has not been executed for projects. Quarterly Reports were due on February 15.

- The Regional Oversight Committee (ROC) prepared a Biennial Report, also known as the SCW Program Progress Report, which includes a summary of the progress of the Regional Program, Municipal Program, and the District Program. On January 31, the ROC voted to send the Biennial Report to the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors. More details can be found on the [SCW Program website](#) under the ROC webpage. The ROC will begin the watershed goal setting session at the next meeting.
- The District reviewed submitted Project Modification Request (PMR) forms. If found inconsistent with the SIP, the PMR discussion items will be scheduled in the project's respective WASC. SSMB PMRs will be discussed during today's meeting.
- WASC Members whose job connects to specific projects should ask colleagues or consultants to attend WASC meetings to share about or advocate for those projects during SIP deliberations to ensure a fair and transparent process.
- District staff demonstrated the use of the SIP tool, which can be found on the SCW Program website.
- The SSMB Scientific Studies (SS) Peer Review Summary has been prepared for the WASC and the public. The summary is available for download on the [SCW Program website](#).

4. Watershed Coordinator Updates

Watershed Coordinator Nancy Shrodes gave an update on recent outreach and engagement efforts. Highlights included attending a ribbon-cutting ceremony at Castellanos Elementary and presenting community survey data in collaboration with the Lower Los Angeles River and Central Santa Monica Bay Watershed Coordinators at the January 31 ROC meeting. Watershed Coordinator Shrodes also participated in various events such as the Urban Forest Management Plan Workshop with the West Athens Westmont Community Task Force, the Stormwater x First Last Mile LA Metro planning event, and the Nothin' but Sand Beach Cleanup at Cabrillo Beach. Upcoming events include a green school yard tour at Environmental Charter High School in Lawndale and Daniel Webster Middle School in Los Angeles on March 12 and a tour of Edward C. Little Water Recycling Facility on February 24.

5. Ex Parte Communication Disclosure

Member Geraldine Trivedi disclosed broad discussions regarding WASC projects with Member Krauss and Member Wilson Mendoza at a Beach Cities Watershed Management Group meeting.

6. Public Comment Period

District Staff compiled all public comment cards received by 5:00pm the day before the meeting, loaded them to the SCW Program website, and displayed them on-screen. In-person, virtual and call-in users were invited to provide public comments.

Mehrad Kamalzare (California State Polytechnic University, Pomona (Cal Poly Pomona)) provided more details regarding the SS proposal submitted to the SSMB WASC for Round 5 of funding. Kamalzare provided the WASC with clarification on how the number of drywell study sites was selected based on the size and geography of different watershed areas. Kamalzare emphasized three key points about the SS including the availability of resources, the diversity in geological conditions of the watersheds, and the novelty of the study. This information is available on the [SCW Program website](#).

7. Discussion Items

- a) **Scientific Studies Peer Review Summary (FY24-25)**
 - i) **Identifying Best Practices for Maintaining Stormwater Drywell Capacity**
Presentation by Ali Sharbat and Mehrad Kamalzare (California State Polytechnic

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University, Pomona (Cal Poly Pomona)). Evaluation of alternative well designs, existing pre-treatment practices, maintenance intervals for maintaining stormwater drywell capacity.

Chair Cadwallader inquired about funding allocation per watershed. Kamalzare explained that the study seeks to examine a reasonable number of dry wells to enhance data reliability. Kamalzare emphasized the absence of prior publications focused on Operations and Maintenance (O&M), and the significant presence of drywells in Los Angeles, and underscored the study's aim to determine O&M best practices.

Member Marcela Benavides-Aguilar raised concerns about potential shortcomings in the technical approach highlighted in Question 6 on the SSMB SS Peer Review Summary. Kamalzare affirmed the planned assessment of infiltration rates but noted the absence of plans for evaluating pollutant loading or pre-treatment devices at selected drywell sites.

Chair Cadwallader questioned whether the recent prevalence of atmospheric rivers requires parameter adjustments for the SS. Sharbat expressed that the SS will support management of stormwater runoff and best O&M practices.

Member Dave Pierce sought clarification on the technical approach to the infiltration rate assessment. Kamalzare clarified that the SS intends to focus on infiltration, with a designated technical team as subcontractors to the SS. Further inquiry from Member Pierce regarding the execution of infiltration testing revealed that students, supervised by university professors, will conduct the testing. The Committee discussed concerns about insurance coverage and permit requirements. The project proponent noted Cal Poly Pomona's blanket insurance policy covering students and fieldwork. Sharbat and Kamalzare also shared that plans are in place to obtain necessary permits and street closures to ensure a safe environment to conduct the SS.

Member Caryn Mandelbaum inquired about stakeholder engagement and interest around the SS. Sharbat highlighted stakeholder interest in drywell O&M and reiterated the study's academic gap-filling objective, pledging ongoing stakeholder outreach throughout the project.

**iii) Street Sweeping Study
Presentation by Jon Ball (City of Los Angeles). Collect information to identify enhancements to the City's Street sweeping program that would improve water quality.**

This agenda item was addressed out of sequence and was moved before Item 7a.ii.

Member Mandelbaum inquired about the effectiveness of street sweepers in removing metals and the equipment's expected lifespan. Jon Ball explained that while there is not a definitive understanding, preliminary testing comparing the existing brush fleet to a vacuum sweeper has been conducted in a controlled environment. Although the testing was not specifically aimed at analyzing metal reduction, the vacuum sweeper demonstrated greater efficiency in picking up street dust. While the results are not yet fully studied, recommendations will be based on the preliminary testing.

Member Mandelbaum requested documentation of the results at the next meeting. Brian Parks (City of Los Angeles Sanitation and Environment (LASAN)) clarified that the City of Los Angeles currently lacks data on efficacy, which prompted the study in a controlled setting. Parks shared that typically, specific data on metals isn't included in such studies.

Chair Cadwallader inquired whether the applicants explored leaf blower typologies. Although not a part of the study, Park elaborated on the mechanics of a broom sweeper and highlighted that air vacuums generate fewer dust particles. Park also mentioned the possibility of installing filters on mechanical sweepers to prevent particle escape.

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ii) Pollutant Source Characterization Study
Presentation by Jon Ball (City of Los Angeles). Collect data to better understand pollutant sources, improve water quality.

Watershed Coordinator Shrodes inquired about the timeline and workforce development for the project. Ball stated that the timeline was proposed to be ambitious without jeopardizing completion of the study. Multiple WASC Members expressed the importance of timely and urgent study results and advocated for a quick timeline. Ball shared confidence in the study's ability to meet the proposed timeline.

Member Benavides-Aguilar asked about concerns raised regarding the existing list of pollutants. Ball explained that the updated list is awaiting stakeholder engagement, and noted that it would be premature to establish a list of pollutants before developing a work plan.

b) Project Modification Requests Overview for WASC Presentation
Presentation by Ryanna Fossum, Stantec, Regional Coordination

Ryanna Fossum (Stantec, Regional Coordination) presented an overview of the PMR Guidelines. Presentation slides can be found on the [SCW Program website](#). Fossum noted that all PMRs undergo review by District staff and are categorized based on consistency or inconsistency with the adopted Stormwater Implementation Plan (SIP). If a PMR is consistent with the SIP, District staff will notify WASC Members. However, inconsistent PMRs, indicating significant alterations that may affect budgets or project scopes, are flagged for WASC discussion. Fossum provided example questions the Committee Members can ask the project proponents to make informed decisions. Fossum shared the possible options available to WASCs to address inconsistent PMRs. More information can be found in the presentation or in the [Project Modification Guidelines](#).

c) Project Modification Requests for WASC Discussion
i) City of Los Angeles, Department of Public Works, LA Sanitation and Environment
(2) Wilmington Neighborhood Greening Project

This agenda item was addressed out of sequence and was moved before Item 7ci1.

Sean Phan (LASAN) provided an overview of the Wilmington Neighborhood Greening Project PMR. LASAN, in collaboration with the City of Los Angeles Bureau of Engineering (BOE) and consultants, completed the pre-design phase, assessing three alternative designs that meet water quality and supply requirements. Phan noted, however, that project costs escalated due to inflation and Covid-19-related factors. BOE issued inflation rate reports in July 2022 and August 2023, available for reference. The project seeks an additional \$4.5 million from the SSMB WASC.

Member Trivedi inquired about managing costs by reducing staff time. Phan noted that updated costs were not reflected in the package, confirming the project's design phase. Watershed Coordinator Shrodes asked about the PMR's "like for like" substitution, and the proponent shared that the original plan was to use the stormwater for on-site irrigation, but the current plan is to divert stormwater to a sanitary sewer for reuse.

Upon inquiry, Phan clarified that there is a possibility that project costs could increase during the design phase and explained that funding requests could fluctuate based on various factors.

Member Aimee Zhao sought clarification based on the BOE inflation report. Phan explained that BOE cited labor shortages and material cost increases as reasons for escalating project costs. Mike Scaduto (LASAN) emphasized the necessity of using revised escalation rates for accurate construction cost estimates.

Member Trivedi asked about LASAN's plan if the full PMR funding request could not be allocated, and the agency's project priorities. Scaduto shared that LASAN intends to continue the project, in phased

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construction, with the City's commitment. Scaduto noted that projects are typically set up as design, bid, build, with some exceptions. Scaduto stated that LASAN would prioritize the Wilmington Neighborhood Project.

Upon inquiry, Phan noted that no other changes have occurred, aside from what has been presented.

(1) Wilmington Q Street Local Urban Area Flow Management Project

Phan presented an overview of the Wilmington Q Street Local Urban Area Flow Management Project PMR, seeking an additional \$7.6 million from the SSMB WASC. The PMR highlights LASAN's completion of the pre-design phase with BOE and consultants. Phan noted project cost escalations are due to inflation and Covid-19-related factors. To date, the City has utilized municipal funds to support project delivery.

Member Trivedi sought clarification on the funding escalation and any design changes. Phan clarified that LASAN has not altered the design, attributing the funding increase to earlier project packaging.

Member Pierce inquired about construction management costs. Phan explained that technical management during construction contributed to the cost increase.

District staff reviewed the SIP tool on the SCW Program website to demonstrate how the change in funding requests will impact the WASC's overall budget in the instance that the Committee approves the PMRs. In a scenario in which both the PMRs and new projects are awarded based on their full funding request, the budget for FY24-25 would be 147% allocated.

8. Public Comment Period

There were no public comments.

9. Voting Items

There were no voting items.

10. Items for Next Agenda

The next SSMB WASC meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 20, 2024. Items on the agenda include:

- a) South Santa Monica Project Prioritization and Selection Discussion for populating the Fiscal Year 2024-25 Stormwater Investment Plan

Member Mandelbaum requested LASAN provide efficacy results from the street sweeping vs street vacuuming analysis.

11. Adjournment

Chair Cadwallader 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	Organization	Member	Voting?	Alternate	Voting?	Vote to approve January 17, 2024 meeting Minutes
Agency	LACFCD	Marcela Benevides-Aguilar	X	CJ Caluag		y
Agency	West Basin MWD	E.J. Caldwell		Matthew Veeh	X	y
Agency	Water Replenishment District	Robert Beste		Aimee Zhao	X	y
Agency	LAC Sanitation District	Dave Pierce	X	Christopher Lapaz		a
Agency	LA Recreation & Parks	Cathie Santo Domingo		Darryl Ford	x	y
Community Stakeholder	Resident	Caryn Mandelbaum	x			y
Community Stakeholder	Surfrider Foundation South Bay Chapter	<u>Craig Cadwallader</u>	X	Mary Simun		y
Community Stakeholder	(Vacant)					
Community Stakeholder	Fangary Law Group	Hany Fangary				
Community Stakeholder	Los Angeles Conservation Corp	Bo Savage	x	Wendy Butts		y
Municipal Members	Carson	Gilbert Marquez		Roland Jen	x	y
Municipal Members	Los Angeles	Susie Santilena		Ryan Jackson	X	y
Municipal Members	LAC Public Works	Thuan Nguyen	x	Jalaine Verdiner		y
Municipal Members	Torrance	James Flannigan		Wilson Mendoza	X	y
Municipal Members	EWMP: Beach Cities	Geraldine Trivedi	x	Doug Krauss		y
Municipal Members	EWMP: Dominguez	Carla Dillon	X	Heecheol Kwon		y
Municipal Members	EWMP: Peninsula	Vanessa Hevener	X	David Wahba		y
Watershed Coordinator	Heal the Bay	Nancy Shrodes	X			
Total Non-Vacant Seats		16			Yay (Y)	14
Total Voting Members Present		15			Nay (N)	0
Agency		5			Abstain (A)	1
Community Stakeholder		3			Total	15
Municipal Members		7			Approved	

Other Attendees
Doug Krauss
Yisak Kim
Melanie Hu
Matt Veeh
Ryanna Fossum
Jon Ball
Ryan Parks

South Santa Monica Bay
 Watershed Area Steering Committee Meeting
 PUBLIC SIGN-IN



First Name	Last Name	Municipality/Organization	Email Address
Patrick	Nguyen	Cal Poly Pomona	patricknguyen427@gmail.com
Mehrad	Kamalzare	Cal Poly Pomona	mkamalzare@cpp.edu
Carla	Dillon	DC Watershed/Lomita	c.dillon@lomita-city.com
Margie	Hoyt	Gardena Citizen	on file.
Shaun	Peng	Glendora Citizen/ Cal Poly Pomona	stpeng@cpp.edu
Ali	Shahid	Cal Poly	
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Mike	Scoduro	City of LA	
Sean	Phan	" "	
Ben		" "	
Noel		" "	

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