

# Rio Hondo

## Watershed Area Steering Committee (WASC)

### Meeting Minutes

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Tuesday, January 16, 2024  
1:00pm – 3:00pm  
Monroe Room  
119 W. Palm Avenue, Monrovia, CA 91016  
WebEx Meeting

#### Committee Members Present:

Julian Juarez, LA County Flood Control District (Agency)  
Kelly Gardner, Main San Gabriel Basin Watermaster (Agency) Vice-Chair  
\*Alysha Chan, LA County Sanitation District (Agency)  
Brent Maue, City of Pasadena Public Works (Agency)  
Mark Hall, Greater LA County Vector Control District (Community)  
Edward Belden, Monrovia Resident (Community)  
David Dolphin, Alhambra (Municipal)  
Briget Arndell, Arcadia (Municipal)  
Jalaine Verdiner, Los Angeles County  
\*Alex Tachiki, Monrovia (Municipal)  
Dawn Petschauer, Pasadena (Municipal), Chair  
Richard Watson, Richard Watson and Associates Planning (Watershed Coordinator, non-voting member)

\*Committee Member Alternate

#### Committee Members Not Present:

Tom Love, Upper San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District (Agency)  
Thomas Wong, San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District (Community)  
Daniel Rossman, The Wilderness Society (Community)  
Jill Fosselman, Resident (Community)  
Sal Mendez, El Monte (Municipal)  
Sarah Rocha, Irwindale (Municipal)

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

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### **1) Welcome and Introduction**

Dawn Petschauer, Chair of the Rio Hondo (RH) Watershed Area Steering Committee (WASC), welcomed Committee Members and called the meeting to order. Los Angeles County Flood Control District (District) staff and Chair Dawn Petschauer 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 November 21, 2023**

Chair Dawn Petschauer presented the minutes from the previous meeting. Member Mark Hall motioned to approve, seconded by Member Brent Maue. The WASC voted to approve the November 21, 2023, meeting minutes with 10 votes in favor, 0 opposed, and 1 in abstention (approved, see vote tracking sheet).

### **3) Committee Member and District Updates**

Member Julian Juarez provided an update on the County Water Plan, noting:

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- The County Water Plan was adopted by Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors (Board) on December 5, 2023.
- The County Water Plan is a forward-looking strategic plan that crafts a vision for the region's water resources management and consists of a shared, inclusive, regional path forward to sustainably and equitably achieve safe, clean, and reliable Water Resources for Los Angeles County. The County Water Plan is a living document. It is anticipated that future iterations will evolve and adapt to meet the County's changing Water Resources needs.

Member Juilan Juarez additionally provided an update on advancing implementation of the Safe Clean Water (SCW) Program, noting:

- Los Angeles County Department of Public Works is initiating development of SCW Program Watershed Plans for each of the nine diverse Watershed Areas.
- The Watershed Plans will build upon other plans, in-progress efforts, and assessment of community needs to identify the most promising opportunities for achieving high-impact water quality, water supply, and community enhancing multi-benefit outcomes.
- The Director of Public Works will initiate a high-level SCW Program goals-setting and strategic planning effort in coordination with the SCW Program Regional Oversight Committee (ROC) once the final Board appointments for the ROC members are made.

Upon inquiry, Julian Juarez provided more information on the one-year timeline and noted that the Watershed Plans will be derived from existing plans. Julian Juarez noted that the consultant will evaluate existing plans and identify information that will be incorporated as part of the Watershed Planning Process.

Chair Dawn Petschauer inquired if stakeholder meetings will be held to develop these plans. Member Julian Juarez noted the question and will provide a response via email or during the next RH WASC meeting.

The Committee expressed and highlighted the importance of the potential name of these Watershed Plans, given the myriad of different watershed-related plans and potential for some types of plans requiring compliance required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), particularly if called a "master plan." Watershed Coordinator Watson recommended positioning the plans as 'opportunity planning' to help municipalities and other organizations move projects forward. Watershed Coordinator Watson also highlighted the importance that the identified consultant would need to engage with Watershed Coordinators and the WASC to exchange ideas. Member Julian Juarez noted that potential names for the watershed plans were discussed at the ROC.

District staff provided an update, noting:

- Fiscal Year 2022-2023 (FY22-23) Regional Program Annual Reports were due December 31st, 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 for Projects. The next Quarterly Report is due on February 15th.
- The ROC prepared a draft Biennial Report, also known as the SCW Program Progress Report, for the Board. The Public Comment period for the draft Biennial Progress Report was between December 7th, 2023 to January 8th, 2024. The ROC will review public comments received at the January 31st meeting and will potentially vote to send the Biennial Progress Report to the Board. The Rio Hondo Committee is welcome to attend and provide input on the Draft Biennial Report, presentations, ROC meeting details, and more information can be found on the [SCW Program website](#), under the ROC webpage.

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- Municipal Progress/Expenditure Annual Reports were due December 31st, 2023. Municipal Annual Plans are due in April 1<sup>st</sup>,
- On November 27th, 2023, the District presented the Report Back from Supervisor Lindsey Horvath's July 25, 2023 Board Motion. More details can be found on the [SCW Program website](#), under the "Resources" tab.
- The Scoring Committee scored all RH Feasibility Study applications for the Infrastructure Program (IP). All two RH applications passed the scoring threshold and are eligible for WASC consideration for inclusion in the Stormwater Investment Plan (SIP).

Mike Antos (Stantec, Regional Coordination) provided an overview of Funding Memos. Funding Memos are a new component for all Round 5 IP projects. The presentation slide can be found on the [SCW Program website](#). Funding Memos can be found on the [SCW Program website](#) under the RH WASC webpage.

- Funding Memos are created for all projects that passed the Scoring Committee. The memos list additional funding opportunities that may apply to projects.
- Memos are created for the WASC to inform decision-making during SIP deliberations, specifically partial funding awards. The memos were also shared with project proponents after projects were deemed eligible by the Scoring Committee.
- Memos include a summary of the Project and its benefits, an overview of funding needed, and two to three additional funding opportunities.

Upon inquiry, Emily Ng (Stantec, Regional Coordination) added that funding cycle deadlines were included in the Funding Memos when information was known and available. Mike Antos informed Committee Members that the Regional Coordination team is preparing Quarterly Funding Reports and matrix of opportunities, which will be updated every four months. The draft of the first of this new resource is currently with the District for review. Mike Antos additionally reminded the Committee that Watershed Coordinators can help support leverage funding efforts including assisting proponents with grant writing and connecting proponents to communities.

Upon inquiry, Mike Antos clarified that Funding Memos were only generated for new IP project applications this year. If the memos are seen as valuable, it is possible that other projects could be considered in the future.

Watershed Coordinator Richard Watson asked for clarification on partial funding guidelines. Mike Antos stated that if the project proponent is offered less than the initial ask, the proponent will need to decide whether or not to accept the new offer and identify alternative sources of funding to complete the project. If the project proponent is unable to find other sources of funding, the proponent would need to submit a Project Modification Request (PMR) to ask for additional funding.

#### **4) Watershed Coordinator Updates**

Watershed Coordinator Julie Millet presented on recent activities. Presentation slides can be found on the [SCW Program website](#). Highlights include an upcoming engagement event for Lunar New Year, coordination with community-based organizations, and attending the Getting to Green Virtual Forum.

Watershed Coordinator Richard Watson also provided an update on the Plymouth Elementary School Infrastructure Project and identified the challenges Amigos de Los Rios encountered with the Reporting Module. Watershed Coordinator Watson concluded that understanding reporting issues related to this school project may help strengthen the SCW Program and may lead to new guidance for school projects in the future.

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Upon inquiry, Watershed Coordinator Watson clarified that the Plymouth Elementary School Project is essentially complete, but requires additional maintenance establishing vegetation.

Chair Dawn Petschauer asked if there was an opportunity to present the project at an upcoming WASC meeting or to conduct an on-site visit to observe lesson learned. Watershed Coordinator Richard Watson will coordinate and make arrangements.

#### 5) Ex Parte Communication Disclosure

Chair Petschauer disclosed that the Washington Park Stormwater Capture Project is a project submitted by the City of Pasadena and that the presentation today will be led by the project's consultant. James Tong (Engineer, City of Pasadena) will also be providing information.

Vice-Chair Kelly Gardner disclosed providing letters of support for water projects, including the Washington Park Stormwater Capture Project. Vice-Chair Kelly Gardner also disclosed being contacted by a consultant regarding the SCW Program and a premise of CEQA violations, requesting that the City of Alhambra support the notion. Vice-Chair Kelly Gardner noted that although communication was received, no action has been taken from the City.

Chair Dawn Petschauer asked District staff if it was required to disclose Projects located within City limits at each RH WASC meeting. District staff confirmed that since there is no direct monetary gain, there is no need to disclose every time. Mike Antos added that ex parte communication disclosure is intended to support transparency in the SCW Program.

Member Mark Hall disclosed reviewing the South El Monte High School Stormwater Improvement Project, since it falls within the Greater Los Angeles County Vector Control District jurisdiction.

#### 6) Public Comment Period

There were no public comments.

#### 7) Presentations and Discussion Items

##### a) Presentations for Regional Infrastructure Project (IP) Program

- i) **South El Monte High School Stormwater Improvement Project**  
***The South El Monte High Stormwater Improvement Project provides nature-based solutions to treat and detain the tributary runoff.***

Jesse Williams (Jacobs) and Lena Luna (South El Monte Union High School District) presented on the South El Monte High School Stormwater Improvement Project Presentation. Lena Luna shared that the School District has a successful track record of executing Projects and funding agreements in similar capacities, and shared funding has been secured through California Air Resources Board (CARB) and Measure H bond funding. Jesse Williams provided an overview of the project background, capture area, and water quality benefits. Presentation slides are available on the [SCW Program website](#).

Upon request, Jesse Williams highlighted four BMPs shown on the Project Site Plan, including bioretention swales, pervious pavement, tree trenches, and an optional underground storage for harvested stormwater. Jesse Williams added that these BMPs aim to reduce the urban heat island effect, provide additional greening, and serve as an opportunity to engage students with nature-based solutions.

Upon inquiry, Jesse Williams noted that main project benefit is water quality improvements. The project will help address flooding since there may be a volume reduction benefit. The design includes underdrains for

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BMPs, due to uncertainty around soil type at each location. Jesse Williams added that the School District is currently fixing a pump station that would eventually resolve flooding permanently. Watershed Coordinator Richard Watson mentioned that additional Geotechnical work could lead to more infiltration and help to reduce flood water volume.

Upon inquiry, Jesse Williams noted that facilities are intentionally located near storm drains to ensure that under drains will connect to existing storm drains. Stormwater currently flows through an existing conveyance trench northwest of the campus between the neighborhood and the school, running through the sports field to the pump station.

Member Brent Maue asked about the proportion of flood water that comes from the Caltrans right-of-way. Member Brent Maue added that this project is a great opportunity to partner with Caltrans for pollution reduction and cost sharing. Watershed Coordinator Richard Watson shared difficulties with Caltrans and timing, due to Caltrans increment funding. Chair Dawn Petschauer added that the majority of water belongs to Caltrans. Watershed Coordinator Richard Watson confirmed that Caltrans is aware of the water.

Member Alex Tachiki inquired about the discussions between the School District and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and if there has been any comments or objections. Wael Elatar (Chief Business Official, El Monte Union High School District) confirmed that part of the project area is owned by USACE. Elatar added that the School District has a good relationship with USACE and are coordinating with USACE following plan submission.

Chair Dawn Petschauer asked for clarification on the Design and Construction timeline. Committee Members also expressed concern around USACE timing. Wael Elatar replied that Design is anticipated to be completed in a year. Watershed Coordinator Richard Watson added that the project is composed of smaller components, so completing the Design Phase within that time frame is feasible.

Member Mark Hall asked if Caltrans has implemented BMPs in the area to address pollutant issues. Williams noted that there is an above-grade culvert that spills water into the entire site.

Upon inquiry, Lena Luna reiterated that the school district received a \$9.8 million grant from CARB, which has been fully executed. The South El Monte School District also received a \$109 million Measure H bond, and some of this funding will fund proposed improvements covered in this Project.

Chair Dawn Petschauer inquired about the number of new trees and overall funding allocated to BMPs. Jesse Williams replied that there would be at least one tree per tree trench, for a total of 28 trees. The bioretention areas may also incorporate more trees, but will need to be verified during the design process to avoid conflict with operations and maintenance (O&M). Chair Dawn Petschauer followed up asking if there would be any staff training to avoid O&M issues. Williams confirmed that staff was engaged and an O&M plan was prepared that identifies the activities and equipment required for each BMP, the number full-time employees, and frequency and time required to conduct that work. Jesse Williams mentioned that adding mulch on surface BMPs was one of the main feedback the project team received.

**ii) Washington Park Stormwater Capture Project**  
**Presentation by Christian Herencia PE (WSP) and James Tong PE (City of Pasadena)**  
***The project will provide an underground storage/infiltration gallery, dry wells, an enhanced ephemeral basin & drainage system improvement.***

Christian Herencia (WSP) and James Tong (City of Pasadena) presented on the Washington Park Stormwater Capture Project. Christian Herencia shared an overview of project background as well as water quality and habitat rehabilitation benefits. Slides are available on the [SCW Program website](#).

Vice-Chair Kelly Gardner asked if the City of Pasadena committed to allocating municipal funds to this project. James Tong replied that the City has looked at several sources to secure funding for this project, including the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Building Resilient Infrastructure and

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Communities (BRIC) grant, which was used to conduct an Initial Study. James Tong added that the City considered Measure A and Urban Stream Restoration Program funding. Chair Dawn Petschauer added that the project made it past a Notice of Intent for the FEMA BRIC Program but did not continue with the process after assessing Project competitiveness relative to the detailed funding program process. There are no local returns allocated to this Project, but the City has looked at other funding sources to support the Project.

Member Alex Tachiki pointed out potential cost fluctuations since construction is slated to start in year three. Christian Herencia confirmed that the Project cost includes an estimated contingency to account for those fluctuations.

Member Edward Belden asked about the potential impact to the current habitat on site, including existing trees. Christian Herencia noted that the project proposes incorporating a field of trees near the baseball fields and may consider adding trees to the parking lot. Chair Dawn Petschauer explained that the proposed infiltration basin location was once channelized and currently includes some Oak Trees that will need to be removed. Member Brent Maue added that the area is envisioned as a Riparian Habitat. Chair Dawn Petschauer also mentioned that the proposed subsurface infiltration gallery was relocated based on community feedback to avoid disrupting baseball facilities.

Member Edward Belden asked if any flow currently goes into the existing baseball field. Chair Dawn Petschauer confirmed that the corner of the baseball field and neighborhoods Southeast of the park often flood due to the steep slope. Member Brent Maue added that a 7'x10' storm drain located underground may be partially daylighted. Watershed Coordinator Richard Watson added that community members who attended the public workshop expressed appreciation for the proposed infrastructure along the south edge of the park.

Member Edward Belden questioned why the Geotechnical Report was scheduled for year two instead of the first year during the Pre-planning Phase. Christian Herencia explained the significance of the Geotechnical Report and noted that the first three tasks in the Planning Phase would be conducted prior to the Geotechnical Report.

#### **8) Public Comment Period**

There were no public comments.

#### **9) Voting Items**

There were no voting items.

#### **10) Items for Next Agenda**

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, February 20th, 2024, from 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm.

Upon inquiry, District staff shared that the next WASC meeting will include a discussion on Project Modification Request (PMR). Additional time will also be scheduled for all WASC Chairs to receive an Overview of the PMR process.

Watershed Coordinator Richard Watson requested to provide a presentation on the status update on last year's projects at a future WASC meeting.

District staff reminded the Committee Members that the SIP tool is online and updated.

#### **11) Adjournment**

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

RH WASC - January 16, 2024

Member Type	Quorum Present				Voting Item			
	Member	Voting/ Present?	Alternate	Voting/ Present?	Approve 11/21/2023 Meeting Minutes			
Agency	Julian Juarez	x	Jennifer Aborida		y			
Agency	Tom Love		Patty Cortez					
Agency	Kelly Gardner	x	Tony Zampielo		y			
Agency	Dave Pierce		Alysha Chan	x	y			
Agency	Brent Maue	x	Kris Markarian		y			
Community Stakeholder	Thomas Wong		Bryan Matsumoto					
Community Stakeholder	Jill Fosselman							
Community Stakeholder	Mark Hall	x	Mark Daniel		y			
Community Stakeholder	Edward Belden	x			y			
Community Stakeholder	Daniel Rossman		Liliana Griego					
Municipal Members	David Dolphin	x	Latoya Waters		y			
Municipal Members	Briget Arndell	x	Paul Cranmer		y			
Municipal Members	Jalaine Verdiner	x	Fernando Villaluna		y			
Municipal Members	Gloria Crudgington		Alex Tachiki	x	y			
Municipal Members	Sal Mendez							
Municipal Members	Dawn Petschauer	x	James Tong		a			
Municipal Members	Sarah Rocha							
Watershed Coordinator Non-Voting Member (RWA Planning)	Richard Watson	x	Julie Millett					
Total Non-Vacant Seats	17			Yay (Y)	10	0	0	0
Total Voting Members Present	11			Nay (N)	0	0	0	0
Agency	4			Abstain (A)	1	0	0	0
Community Stakeholder	2			Total	11	0	0	0
Municipal Members	5			Approved		Not Approved	Not Approved	Not Approved



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 COMMITTEE MEMBER AND ALTERNATE SIGN-IN



Member Name	Municipality/ Organization	Email Address	P/A	Signature
Sarah Rocha	Irwindale			
Jennifer Aborida	Los Angeles County Flood Control District			
Patty Cortez	Upper san Gabriel District			
Tony Zampielo	Main San Gabriel Basin Watermaster			
Alysha Chan	Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts	ALYSHA.CHAN@LACSD.ORG	A	
Kris Markarian	Pasadena			
Bryan Matsumoto	Nature For All			
Mark Daniel	Vector Control			
Liliana Griego	Friends of the Los Angeles River			
Latoya Waters	Alhambra			
Paul Cranmer	Arcadia			
Fernando Villaluna	LA County Public Works			
Alex Tachiki	Monrovia			
James Tong	Pasadena	JTong@ci.pasadena.net		
Richard Watson	RWA			

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 COMMITTEE MEMBER AND ALTERNATE SIGN-IN



Member Name	Municipality/ Organization	Email Address	P/A	Signature
Julian Juarez	Los Angeles County Flood Control District			
Tom Love	Upper San Gabriel District			
Kelly Gardner	Main San Gabriel Basin	kelly@watermaster.org		
Dave Pierce	Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts			
Brent Maue	Pasadena			
Thomas Wong	San Gabriel Valley MWD Division 3			
Jill Fosselman	Resident			
Mark Hall	Vector Control			
Edward Belden	Resident			
Daniel Rossman	The Wilderness Society			
David Dolphin	Alhambra			
Briget Arndell	Arcadia	barndell@arcadiaea.org		
Jalaine Verdiner	LA County Public Works	JVerdiner@pw.lacounty.gov		
Gloria Crudgington	Monrovia			
Sal Mendez	El Monte			
Dawn Petschauer	Pasadena	dpetschauer@cityofpasadena.net		

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 COMMITTEE MEMBER AND ALTERNATE SIGN-IN



Member Name	Municipality/ Organization	Email Address	P/A	Signature
Julie Millett	RWA	jmillett@rwaplanning.com		
Ryanna Fossum	Stantec			
Mike Antos	Stantec			
CHRISTIAN HERENCIA	WSP	CHRISTIAN.HERENCIA@WSP.COM		
Gabriela Gonzalez	WSP	gabriela.gonzalez@wsp.com		

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 PUBLIC SIGN-IN



First Name	Last Name	Municipality/Organization	Email Address
Jesse	Williams	Jacobs	Jesse.Williams@Jacobs.com
Lena	Luna	El Monte Union HSDist.	lena.luna@emuhsd.org
wael	Elatar	El Monte Union HSD	wael.elatar@emuhsd.org
Sophia	Soussa	Monrovia (City)	SSOUSA@ci.monrovia.ca.us
Judi	Mills	JACOBS	JUDI.MILLS@JACOBS.COM
Carmen	Marsud	Arcadia	cmarsud@arcadia.ca.gov

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