

Lower San Gabriel River Watershed Area Steering Committee (WASC) Meeting Minutes



Tuesday, February 13, 2024
10:00 am – 12:00 pm
Lakewood City Hall Executive Board Room
WebEx Meeting

Committee Members Present

CJ Caluag, LA County Flood Control District (Agency)
*Asha Kreiling, Water Replenishment District (Agency)
Francisco Guerrero, LA County Sanitation Districts (Agency)
Dan Knapp, Conservation Corps of Long Beach (Community)
*Chad Oberly, Rivers Mountains Conservancy (Community)
Gabrielle Weeks, Long Beach Coalition for a Safe Environment (Community)
Len Gorecki, Bellflower (Municipal)
Dan Mueller, Downey (Municipal)
*Konya Vivanti, Lakewood (Municipal)
Melissa You, Long Beach (Municipal), Chair
Fernando Villaluna, Unincorporated Areas of LA County (Municipal)
Vicki Smith, Whittier (Municipal)
Kekoa Anderson, OhanaVets (Watershed Coordinator, non-voting member)

Committee Members Not Present

Alex Rojas, Central Basin Municipal Water District (Agency)
Todd Leland, City of Long Beach Parks and Recreation (Agency)
Adam Galia, Resident (Community)
Mike O'Grady, Cerritos (Municipal)

*Committee Member Alternate

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

1) Welcome and Introductions

Melissa You, Chair of the Lower San Gabriel River (LSGR) Watershed Area Steering Committee (WASC), welcomed Committee Members and called the meeting to order. Chair You acknowledged the passing of Lisa Ann Rapp in late 2023 and invited Committee Members to share any thoughts or memories about the former Vice-Chair. Member Konya Vivanti announced that a celebration of life event will be held in honor of Lisa Ann Rapp at the Centre Ballroom in Lakewood on February 16. The event will also be livestreamed.

Los Angeles County Flood Control District (District) staff conducted a brief tutorial on WebEx and facilitated the roll call of Committee Members. District staff made self-introductions and a quorum was established.

2) Approval of Meeting Minutes from November 14, 2023

District staff presented the meeting minutes from November 14, 2023. Member Dan Knapp motioned to approve the meeting minutes, seconded by Member CJ Caluag. The Committee voted to approve the November 14, 2023 meeting minutes with 11 Committee Members in favor, 0 opposed, and 1 in abstention (approved, see vote tracking sheet attached).

3) Committee Member and District Updates

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

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- The County Water Plan was adopted by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors (Board) on December 5, 2023.
- The 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 sustainability 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 Caluag additionally provided an update on advancing implementation of the Safe, Clean Water Program (SCWP), noting:

- Los Angeles County Department of Public Works (LA County Public Works) is initiating development of SCWP 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 SCWP goal-setting and strategic planning effort in coordination with the SCWP Regional Oversight Committee (ROC) once the final Board appointments for the ROC members are made.

District staff provided an update, noting:

- Fiscal Year 22-23 (FY22-23) Regional Program Annual Reports were due December 31, 2023. The reports must still be completed even if there were no activities completed for the project or if the Transfer Agreement has not yet been executed. The next Quarterly Report is due February 15.
- The ROC prepared the Biennial Report, also known as the SCWP 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 Board. 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.
- Municipal Annual Reports were due December 31, 2023. Municipal Annual Plans are due in April each year before the start of the upcoming FY and the Annual Reports are due in December.
- The Scoring Committee scored all LSGR Feasibility Study applications to the Infrastructure Program (IP). All five applications passed the scoring threshold and are eligible for WASC consideration for inclusion in the Stormwater Investment Plan (SIP).
- 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 IP Project Developer contract information is uploaded. The new Module is for projects included in Round 4 SIPs and future SIPs only. Projects from previous SIPs can submit documents via email.
- 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. One project, the GAP Analysis Phase 2 Project, was submitted in LSGR and deemed consistent. The only change was the scheduled completion date.
- 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.

4) Watershed Coordinator Updates

Watershed Coordinator Kekoa Anderson provided an update on recent and upcoming educational outreach events, including a stormwater speaker series and an Earth Walk in the City of Lakewood. Member Vivanti encouraged attendance, highlighting hands-on activities for children and family. Presentation slides can be

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found on the [SCW Program website](#). Watershed Coordinator Anderson shared a refresher on the LSGR WASC Prioritization Criteria and an overview of funded projects and project applications to-date.

5) Ex Parte Communication Disclosures.

Member Vicki Smith disclosed speaking with Los Angeles County representatives regarding the proposed Sorensen Park located south of Whittier in unincorporated Los Angeles County.

6) Public Comment Period

There were no public comments.

7) Discussion

a) Project Presentations

i) **Infrastructure Program – Sorensen Park Multi-Benefit Stormwater Capture Project Presentation by LA County Public Works. Construction of a stormwater storage and infiltration facility at Sorensen Park, in unincorporated South Whittier.**

Andrew Kim (LA County Public Works) presented on the Sorensen Park Multi-Benefit Stormwater Capture Project and provided an overview of the project and summarized primary benefits, including increasing water supply, improving stormwater quality, and enhancing park space. Presentation slides are available on the [SCW Program website](#).

Member Knapp expressed concern over construction costs and requested clarification on how funding will be distributed for construction. Kim confirmed that although LA County Public Works has not leveraged alternative sources of funding for construction, the County is committed to a 50% cost share. Currently, the project is only requesting funding for design, but will revisit the WASC in future rounds to request funding for construction.

Upon inquiry, Kim confirmed that the project drainage location is within the LSGR watershed, but the project is covered by the Upper San Gabriel Watershed Management Plan area. Kim also clarified that the diversion location for Sorensen Park Project is different than that of another LA County infiltration project, Adventure Park, which is anticipated to complete construction this year, however, both projects work in unison.

Ryanna Fossum (Stantec, Regional Coordination) added that the Funding Memo prepared for Sorensen Park includes opportunities for leveraged funding. The Funding Memo can be found on the [SCW Program website](#).

Member Asha Kreiling commented that the Funding Memo noted Water Supply Benefits, but the Scoring Committee did not award water supply points. The WASC discussed whether this was due to the Scoring Criteria taking cost-effectiveness (volume per acre-feet) into account. Kim clarified that the project is not claiming Water Supply points, and the \$10,408.93 per ac-ft is the cost to capture and treat the water. The WASC also noted uncertainty around what the average cost-effectiveness for a project should typically be, since Water Supply and Water Quality cost-effectiveness are both calculated using the total project cost. District staff explained the Scoring Criteria for Water Supply Benefits and informed the WASC that the Feasibility Study Guidelines detail the point breakdown. The Feasibility Study Guidelines are available on the [SCW Program website](#).

Jennifer Walker (Watearth) also clarified that the project received zero points for Water Supply because the aquifer beneath the project location is not managed by a local agency. Member Kreiling added that the project is located within an adjudicated groundwater basin, however the project received zero points because the infiltrated water would not reach a drinking water aquifer.

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ii) Infrastructure Program – Reservoir Park Stormwater Capture Project Presentation by Craftwater, Inc. Regional stormwater capture, infiltration/filtration facility, and new park equipment/community garden at Reservoir Park in Signal Hill.

Richard Watson (Richard Watson & Associates) and Merrill Taylor (Craftwater, Inc.) presented on the Reservoir Park Stormwater Capture Project at Reservoir Park in Signal Hill. Watson provided an overview of the project and summarized benefits, specifically improving water quality and enhancing park amenities. Presentation slides are available on the [SCW Program website](#).

Upon inquiry, Taylor noted that irrigation for the proposed community garden would be taken on-site from the existing system, explaining that the water supply from the dry weather is very low. Using captured water to irrigate the community garden was determined to be too costly.

Upon inquiry, Taylor explained that the project is not part of a managed aquifer, so it did not claim Water Supply Benefits. When asked about the effectiveness of permeable pavement, Taylor mentioned that the permeable pavement would be used for walkways to help reduce the project's impervious footprint. Taylor also mentioned that effective construction methods and maintenance is key to preserving permeable pavement.

Watershed Coordinator Anderson requested clarification on the project's use of nature-based solutions. Taylor explained that the underground infiltration process is considered a nature-based process from a stormwater perspective. The project is also adding trees, which is not a specific nature-based solution for water, but rather a Community Investment Benefit.

iii) Infrastructure Program – Heartwell Park at Clark Channel Stormwater Capture Project Presentation by Richard Watson & Associates, Inc. Regional stormwater capture and filtration facility at Heartwell Park and existing lake improvements.

Watson and Taylor presented on Heartwell Park at Clark Channel Stormwater Capture Project and provided an overview of the project and summarized benefits, including improved water quality, added recreational opportunities, and a recirculated stream. Presentation slides are available on the [SCW Program website](#).

The WASC expressed support of the recirculating stream due to its interactive elements. Watershed Coordinator Anderson inquired about the stream's cost in relation to the project and how other park projects can incorporate a similar feature. Watson stated that the project is looking at ways to further filtration, due to water quality issues stemming from birds. Filtration designs are exploring natural materials to maintain the organic look of the stream.

Member Knapp raised concerns over the stream's potential issues around operations and maintenance (O&M), due to its technical design. Watson noted that the project is designed to have a 50-year lifespan and is using more durable materials, such as concrete, to maintain functionality. Watson also mentioned that the project will refer to built projects to identify ways to reduce O&M costs.

Member Knapp noted that workforce development should be further examined to support ongoing O&M for projects. Watson stated that the Watershed Coordinators have been meeting to discuss ways to further workforce development within the SCW Program.

b) Presentation on Claimed Disadvantaged Community Benefits Presentation by Regional Coordinator (Stantec)

Fossum presented on claimed Disadvantaged Community Benefits and provided an overview of program definitions and policies, as well as resources to allow WASCs to validate direct benefits. Fossum shared that validating the claims of a direct benefit to a disadvantaged community is a decision made by WASCs

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on a project-by-project basis. Fossum described three different categories a project can fall into based on location and demonstrated how funded and proposed projects in the LSGR Watershed Area fell into each category. Presentation slides can be found on the [SCW Program website](#).

Member Knapp questioned the applicability of park need, since most projects are located at a park. Member Knapp also suggested asking project applicants to include community members who support the project in the project's presentation. Fossum responded that the Los Angeles County Parks Needs Assessment looks at a much broader region than just the project location, noting that the project may be located at the only park in a neighborhood, resulting in a higher park need.

Watershed Coordinator Anderson stated that it is the WASC's responsibility to determine and validate Disadvantaged Community Benefits, highlighting the importance of defining the criteria and engaging with the community. Watershed Coordinator Anderson noted that Disadvantaged Community Benefits should be identified and supported by those community members. Member Knapp added that the Reservoir Park Project community garden was an example of community members explicitly expressing a specific need for a project.

Upon inquiry, Fossum stated that park need is determined by a dataset provided by LA County. Member Knapp and Weeks added that the park need considers park space per capita and relative population density.

8) Public Comment Period

Thomas Bekele (City of Signal Hill Public Works Department) expressed support of the Reservoir Park Stormwater Capture Project and reiterated how it will benefit the community.

9) Voting Items

There were no voting items.

10) Items for Next Agenda

- a) Regional Program Project Presentations
- b) Scientific Study Peer Review Summary Review

The next meeting is scheduled for March 12, 2024 from 10:00 am - 12:00 pm.

Member Weeks inquired about next steps for the Vice-Chair position. District staff will follow up with the WASC regarding appointment timelines and duties for Vice-Chair.

11) Adjournment

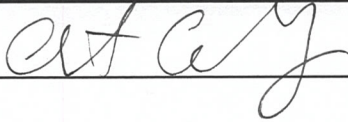
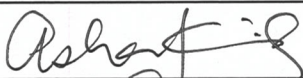
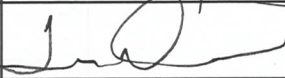
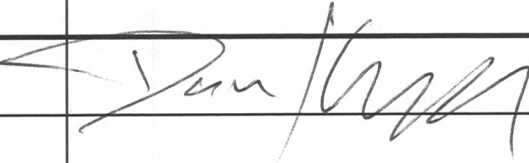
Chair You thanked Committee Members and the public for their attendance and participation and adjourned the meeting.

LSGR WASC - February 13, 2024

		Quorum Present				Voting Items (see meeting minutes for additional details)		
Member Type	Position	Member	Voting/ Present?	Alternate	Voting/ Present?	Approve the November 14, 2023 LSGR WASC Meeting Minutes		
Agency	FCD	CJ Caluag	x	Mark Beltran		y		
Agency	Central Basin	Alex Rojas		Madeline Chen				
Agency	Water Replenishment District	Rob Beste		Asha Kreiling	x	y		
Agency	Sanitation Districts	Francisco Guerrero	x	Alysha Chan		y		
Agency	City of Long Beach Parks and Recreation	Todd Leland		Stephen Scott				
Community Stakeholder	Conservation Corps of Long Beach	Dan Knapp	x	Irene Lopez-Muro		y		
Community Stakeholder	Resident	Adam Galia		Noya Wang				
Community Stakeholder	Rivers Mountains Conservancy	Mark Stanley		Chad Oberly	x	y		
Community Stakeholder	Long Beach Coalition for a Safe Environment	Gabrielle Weeks	x			y		
Community Stakeholder								
Municipal	Bellflower	Len Gorecki	x			a		
Municipal	Cerritos	Mike O'Grady		Sergio Huizar				
Municipal	Downey	Dan Mueller	x			y		
Municipal	Lakewood	Kelli Pickler		Konya Vivanti	x	y		
Municipal	Long Beach	Melissa You	x	Wataru Kumagai		y		
Municipal	Unincorporated	Fernando Villaluna	x	Joseph Venzon		y		
Municipal	Whittier	Vicki Smith	x	Kyle Cason		y		
Non-Voting	Watershed Coordinator	Kekoa Anderson	x	Grace Kast	x			
Total Non-Vacant Seats		16			Yay (Y)	11	0	0
Total Voting Members Present		12			Nay (N)	0	0	0
Agency		3			Abstain (A)	1	0	0
Community Stakeholder		3			Total	12	0	0
Municipal		6				Approved	Not Approved	Not Approved

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 COMMITTEE MEMBER AND ALTERNATE SIGN-IN



Member Name	Municipality/ Organization		Signature
CJ Caluag	Los Angeles County Flood Control District	Primary	
Mark Beltran	Los Angeles County Flood Control District	Alternate	
Alex Rojas	Central Basin	Primary	
Madeline Chen	Central Basin	Alternate	
Rob Beste	Water Replenishment District	Primary	
Asha Kreiling	Water Replenishment District	Alternate	
Francisco Guerrero	Sanitation Districts	Primary	
Alysha Chan	Sanitation Districts	Alternate	
Todd Leland	City of Long Beach Parks and Recreation	Primary	
Stephen Scott	City of Long Beach Parks and Recreation	Alternate	
Dan Knapp	Conservation Corps of Long Beach	Primary	
Irene Lopez-Muro	Conservation Corps of Long Beach	Alternate	


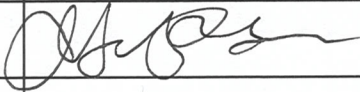
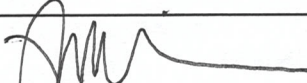
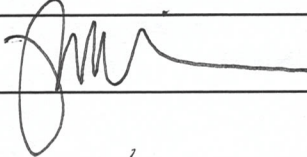
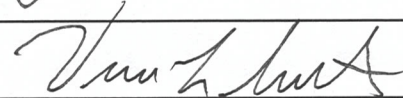

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 COMMITTEE MEMBER AND ALTERNATE SIGN-IN



Member Name	Municipality/ Organization		Signature
Adam Galia	Resident	Primary	
Noya Wang	City of Alhambra	Alternate	
Mark Stanley	Rivers Mountains Conservancy	Primary	
Chad Oberly	Rivers Mountains Conservancy	Alternate	<i>Chad Oberly</i>
Gabrielle Weeks	Long Beach Coalition for a Safe Environment	Primary	
Len Gorecki	Bellflower	Primary	<i>Len Gorecki</i>
Natalie Rivera-Estrada	Bellflower	Alternate	
Mike O'Grady	Cerritos	Primary	
Sergio Huizar	Cerritos	Alternate	
Dan Mueller	Downey	Primary	<i>Dan Mueller</i>
Kelli Pickler	Lakewood	Primary	

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 COMMITTEE MEMBER AND ALTERNATE SIGN-IN



Member Name	Municipality/ Organization		Signature
Konya Vivanti	Lakewood	Alternate	
Melissa You	Long Beach	Primary	
Wataru Kumagai	Long Beach	Alternate	
Fernando Villaluna	Los Angeles County	Primary	
Joseph Venzon	Los Angeles County	Alternate	
Vicki Smith	Whittier	Primary	
Kyle Cason	Whittier	Alternate	
Kekoa Anderson	Watershed Coordinator		
Grace Kast	Watershed Coordinator		
Traci Gleason	Watershed Coordinator		

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 PUBLIC SIGN-IN



First Name	Last Name	Municipality/Organization	Email Address
Richard	Watson	RWA	[Redacted]
GABRIELLE	WEEKS	COALITION FOR SUSTAINABLE WATER	[Redacted]
Kathlyn	Allen	lake wood	[Redacted]
MERRILL Taylor	Taylor	CRAFTWATER	[Redacted]
Ryanna Fossum		Stantec	
Andrew	Kim	LA COUNTY PW	[Redacted]
Jennifer	Walker	Waterarth	[Redacted]
Thomas Bekke	Bekke	City of Signal Hill	[Redacted]

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