

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

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Thursday, January 8, 2025  
1:00pm – 3:00pm  
Las Virgenes Municipal Water District Conference Room  
4232 Las Virgenes Road  
Calabasas, CA 91302  
WebEx Meeting

## Committee Members Present:

Marcela Benavides-Aguilar, Los Angeles County Flood Control District (Agency)  
William Johnson, Los Angeles County Waterworks District (Agency)  
Brian Baldauf, Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (Agency)  
\*Craig Jones, Las Virgenes Municipal Water District (Agency)  
Jessica Forte, Las Virgenes Municipal Water District (Agency), Chair  
Madelyn Glickfeld, Resident (Community)  
\*Ion Cretu, PSOMAS (Community)  
Susan Nissman, Resident (Community)  
Jacy Shillan, Resident (Community)  
\*Kelly Fisher, Agoura Hills (Municipal)  
Curtis Castle, Calabasas (Municipal)  
Kelsey Reed, Hidden Hills (Municipal)  
Aaron Ordower, Los Angeles County Supervisor District 3 (Municipal)  
\*Paul Choy, Los Angeles County Public Works (Municipal)  
Kiernan Brtalik, Malibu (Municipal)  
Roxanne Hughes, Westlake Village (Municipal), Vice-Chair  
Melina Sempill Watts, Melina Sempill Watts Consulting, LLC (Watershed Coordinator, non-voting member)

## Committee Members Absent:

Tevin Schmitt, Wishtoyo Chumash Foundation Ventura (Community)

\*Committee Member Alternate

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

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## **1) Welcome and Introductions**

Chair Jessica Forte welcomed Committee Members and called the meeting to order. Public Works staff facilitated the roll call of Committee Members. Committee Members introduced themselves, and a quorum was established. Public Works staff provided a brief WebEx tutorial for meeting participants online.

## **2) Approval of Meeting Minutes from November 13, 2025**

Public Works staff presented the minutes from November 13, 2025. Member Craig Jones motioned to approve the minutes, seconded by Member Kelsey Reed. The North Santa Monica Bay (NSMB) Watershed Steering Committee (WASC) voted to approve the November 13, 2025 meeting minutes with 12 votes in favor, 1 in abstention, 0 opposed, and 3 absent at the time of the vote (approved, see vote tracking sheet).

## **3) Ex Parte Communication Disclosures**

Member Reed disclosed a meeting with Vice-chair Roxanne Hughes regarding the Westlake Village MS4 Compliance Project that included project proponent Cherise Thompson.

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Upon discussion of appropriate *ex parte* communication disclosures, it was emphasized that disclosure decisions are ultimately up to each WASC Member, and transparency is encouraged to avoid any perception of improper influence. It was also noted that routine coordination on Projects already funded, or communications with staff, coordinators, or non-voting Members, do not typically require disclosure. Public Works staff agreed to email the *ex parte* communication guidelines to all Committee Members for reference.

## **4) Committee Member and Program Updates**

Public Works staff provided an update, noting:

- The Board of Supervisors approved the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 (FY25-26) Stormwater Investment Plan (SIP) on November 4, 2025.
- Public Works staff conducted completeness checks of all Project Applications in the Call for Projects. The Scoring Committee finished scoring all IP applications at the most recent meeting on 12/15. Those projects that score above the threshold score will be sent to the NSMB WASC for consideration in the Stormwater Investment Plan.
- The applications that were determined to be ineligible have been notified and are part of ongoing discussion with Public Works about potential solutions or other pathways to advance in the Safe, Clean Water (SCW) Programs such as the District Program.
- The deadline to submit a Project Modification Request (PMR) for consideration in the FY26-27 Stormwater Investment Plan was October 31, 2025. The SCW Team is in the process of reviewing submitted PMRs.
- The Scientific Symposium was held on November 12, 2025 at Los Angeles County Public Works Headquarters.
- The upcoming Regional Oversight Committee (ROC) meeting is scheduled for January 14 at 1:00pm, where the ROC will discuss the Draft Biennial Progress Report and opening the 30-day Public Comment Period.
- The Q2 2026 Leveraged Funding Report has been posted to the SCW Program website under the Resources tab. In support of Public Works, the Regional Coordination team prepares quarterly funding reports that include a high-level overview of recent funding policy highlights and a funding matrix that shares currently active and upcoming funding opportunities that may be relevant to SCW Program projects. Los Angeles County Public Works staff and the Regional Coordination team are actively tracking activity to better understand impacts to future funding.
- The Watershed Planning Team is currently working on updating the Initial Watershed Plans and the online companion Planning Tool, which are both scheduled to launch in early 2026.

To keep up with Program Updates as they are shared, subscribe to receive email notifications on the SCW website. This newsletter provides important updates on the Regional, Municipal, and District Programs, designed to help our community stay informed and engaged. Implementation Updates are also available in the News and Updates webpage on the [SCW Program website](#).

Regional Coordinator Mike Antos supplied the WASC Members with SIP deliberation workbooks for Members to use during the Infrastructure Project and two Scientific Studies (SS) presentations being heard by the NSMB WASC. The workbooks included project reviews, scoring worksheets, and funding memos summarizing the project's request and potential alternative funding. WASC Members can use the workbooks to track notes and updates over time.

## **5) Discussion Items**

### **a) Scientific Studies Program Application Presentations**

#### **i) A Holistic Assessment of Trash in Watersheds**

**Presentation by the Moore Institute for Plastic Pollution Research**

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*MIPPR will measure roadside trash loading, harmonize public data, create watershed models to assess WASC BMPs; 4 year plan costs \$366k/WASC.*

Project proponent Andrea Amend (Moore Institute) presented A Holistic Assessment of Trash in Watersheds Scientific Study (SS). The Moore Institute for Plastic Pollution Research (MIPPR) will measure roadside trash loading, harmonize existing public datasets, and develop watershed-scale models to evaluate the effectiveness of WASC best management practices (BMPs). The proposed 4-year plan is estimated to cost \$366,000 per WASC. Slides can be found on the [SCW Program website](#).

Member Aaron Ordower asked about the expected outcomes of the research. Amend explained that the database the Study intends to develop could help cities or watersheds by providing targeted insights, such as the timing and sources of trash accumulation, to inform the development of policy or management strategies. Watershed Coordinator Melina Watts noted that NSMB has the least funding among the WASCs and asked whether participation in the Study could be scaled down, suggesting the selection of fewer sites or fewer visits to reduce costs, while expressing interest in understanding trash by brand.

Member Susan Nissman emphasized that the NSMB WASC is diverse and rural, containing two major watersheds, and asked how the Study would be customized to the landscape and local conditions. Members discussed the richness of existing data, including Caltrans roadside trash data, volunteer cleanup programs, and multi-year catch basin datasets. Amend highlighted that the proposed Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) would determine which variables and sampling times are most relevant, helping to identify hotspots and accumulation patterns, and to understand what is not captured by street sweepers or catch basins. Member Marcela Benavides-Aguilar asked about timing and variables for sampling, noting that existing measures may already capture some trash, while Member Madelyn Glickfeld emphasized the importance of integrating long-term catch basin data to understand accumulation over time, rather than just current street trash.

Members also raised the importance of coordinating with local public works directors to access existing data and ensure the Project complements ongoing efforts. Chair Forte noted that the NSMB WASC has limited funding and a relatively pristine environment. Chair Forte suggested that the Study tailor its approach to NSMB and gave the example of considering trash from national parks, which are not regulated in the same ways as urban areas are. Member Nissman emphasized that understanding already-collected data could establish a baseline for the Study and allow comparisons with ongoing and new interventions. WASC Members discussed the need to harmonize multiple data portals, leverage prior data, customize approaches for rural and diverse watersheds, and ensure that the research produces actionable insights for local cities, watershed groups, and regulatory agencies while remaining cost-effective.

## **ii) Assessment and Treatment of Contaminants of Emerging Concern Presentation by Stillwater Sciences**

*An assessment of contaminants of emerging concern and recommendations for improving their treatment by stormwater and dry-weather projects.*

Project proponents Rowan Roderick-Jones and Nate Butler of Stillwater Sciences presented the Assessment and Treatment of Contaminants of Emerging Concern (CECs) Scientific Study. The presentation addressed key sources and pathways of CECs, the efficacy of current treatments, and opportunities to enhance management strategies. Presentation slides can be found on the [SCW Program website](#).

Member Kiernan Btralik inquired what trends are being observed for CECs in the region, particularly in the context of regulation and community risk. Butler noted that current data are limited and that the region is essentially in a “data vacuum.” While it is known that CECs exist, information is lacking on their distribution, concentrations, and changes over time. Some modeling in the Los Angeles River has indicated that perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS) and per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) primarily originate from stormwater rather than wastewater treatment plant discharges. Other compounds, such as 6PPD-

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quinone (6PPDQ), were detected in earlier studies, while more extensive monitoring data exists on insecticides like bifenthrin and fipronil because these substances have been recognized and regulated for longer periods. Although some regulation exists for these compounds, enforcement and thresholds vary, and their impacts on ecosystems are not yet fully understood.

The Project proponents emphasized that the Study will enhance the role the SCW Program can play in addressing water pollution by providing guidance on retrofitting existing Projects or informing the design of new Projects under the Program. Member Ordower asked whether the State Water Resources Control Board or the US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) have indicated regulatory directions for the CECs under consideration. Butler explained that while some compounds are being examined by federal and state task forces, the timeline for regulation is uncertain. Water quality standards are in development for PFOS, PFAS, and certain insecticides, but compounds such as 6PPDQ are less well understood, particularly in terms of ecological effects. Member Ordower highlighted that the Study represents a good investment for understanding these compounds and anticipating future regulatory requirements.

Watershed Coordinator Watts asked whether assessing CECs could shed light on the decline of steelhead trout in Malibu Creek. Butler explained that identifying the presence of specific contaminants could help determine whether they are contributing to population declines. Roderick-Jones clarified that the study focuses on stormwater, not drinking water, and noted that it would be useful to understand patterns related to local industrial activity. Roderick-Jones further explained that land use, traffic, and residential patterns could influence CEC concentrations in the NSMB Watershed area.

Members raised questions about legislation limiting certain CECs and the interpretation of monitoring results, noting that because this is a relatively new and cutting-edge area of study, it is often unclear how detected concentrations relate to health or environmental risk. The Project proponents emphasized that this Study would contribute to the broader knowledge base, allowing the SCW Program to measure and evaluate CECs while comparing results to evolving research and safety thresholds. Testing will include detailed analysis of PFAS and PFOS, with laboratories capable of detecting concentrations considered relevant for future regulatory guidance.

Member Nissman noted that recent wildfires could introduce new CECs into coastal waters where the public swims and suggested reviewing overlapping data from organizations such as Heal the Bay. The Project proponents acknowledged potential overlap with some post-fire CECs and emphasized that the Study focuses on what could be intercepted and treated by SCW Program projects. Data from the watershed, stormwater, and coastal areas could be compared to understand the sources and transport of these compounds.

Member Glickfeld expressed concerns about whether this Study is necessary for the NSMB watershed, noting that current evidence does not demonstrate a significant local problem. In response, Roderick-Jones explained that one of the compounds under study, 6PPDQ, is highly detrimental to steelhead trout even at low concentrations and originates from tire wear along heavily trafficked roads, like those in the watershed area. Including NSMB in the Study would allow for the creation of a robust dataset that captures urban versus non-urban differences to inform regional planning and land use analysis.

The presenters also discussed ways to reduce costs, such as decreasing the number of sampling sites or focusing on critical periods in the hydrologic cycle rather than conducting uniform monthly sampling. Member Brtalik asked about the specific monitoring locations and how the data would be used to inform Project implementation. Butler clarified that the Study is designed to assess where CEC concentrations exist rather than full mass loading, and that BMP Project sites will also be evaluated to measure treatment performance.

Overall, the Study is intended to provide a detailed understanding of CEC distribution and concentrations in the NSMB watershed, contributing valuable knowledge for stormwater management, BMP design, and future regulatory compliance, while also considering ecological impacts and community safety.

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## **b) Infrastructure Project Application Presentation**

### **i) Westlake Village MS4 Compliance Project Presentation by City of Westlake Village**

*In Westlake Village, two sites divert first flush to sewer, and one also treats 85th percentile flows before release to the receiving water.*

Project proponent Cherise Thompson (City of Westlake Village) presented the Westlake Village MS4 Compliance Project. Presentation slides can be found on [the SCW Program website](#). The Infrastructure Program Project Funding Assessment for the Westlake Village MS4 Compliance Project can also be found on the [SCW Program Website](#).

Chair Forte inquired if the Project included both dry and wet weather flows. Thompson clarified that the diversions were intended for dry weather only. Chair Forte raised concern about source control from these diversions once the Las Virgenes Pure Water Project comes online; it was specified that regulatory constraints may require that diversions operate only during dry weather. Chair Forte also asked whether the City would still pursue the project if it were limited to dry weather flows and first flush only. Thompson explained that if the diversions do not discharge to the sewer, the Project could still serve as a Water Quality improvement initiative, though any changes would need to be reviewed by the SCW Program for funding eligibility and compliance with project criteria.

Several Members expressed the importance of ensuring the Project continues to provide high-quality water. Member Glickfeld emphasized the need for assurance that even if the Project were unable to provide a Water Supply Benefit, it would still meet SCW Program eligibility.

Member Brian Baldauf inquired about potential grant sources, including Proposition 1 and Proposition 4, to understand which funders might support the Project. Thompson and Vice-chair Hughes noted the State granting agencies had not yet finalized the Prop 4 funding programs, so the City could not provide specifics at this time. Chair Forte emphasized that the Las Virgenes Project represents the third indirect potable water reuse project in California, making it a pioneering effort, and clarified that the novelty of potable water use does not complicate the Project's implementation.

Member Jones explained that dry weather diversions into the wastewater system carry inherent risks, particularly regarding treatment performance and bacterial management. Chair Forte noted that in some cases, such as certain dry weather diversions to Hyperion, the volume of diverted water could impact bacterial populations and treatment processes. Vice-chair Hughes added that neighboring projects, such as the Agoura Hills Stormwater Diversion Project, may provide data that can help inform this Project.

WASC Members discussed the complexities of integrating diverted stormwater into the drinking water system, emphasizing regulatory challenges and operational considerations. Member Nissman noted that in other projects, stormwater discharged into creeks effectively adds clean water to the environment, benefiting safe recreational use, even if it does not directly supplement potable water supplies. Overall, Members agreed that despite regulatory and operational hurdles, the Westlake Village MS4 Compliance Project represents a critical opportunity to manage stormwater, protect water quality, and advance sustainable water supply strategies in the region.

## **6) Public Comment Period**

Public Works staff received six Public Comment Cards by 5pm the day prior to the meeting. Public Comment Cards can be found on the [SCW Program Website](#).

Those who submitted comments were called on to speak, starting with Jessica Rivas, Program Coordinator for the City of Pasadena. Rivas highlighted a regional workforce gap in maintaining green infrastructure, emphasizing that the rapid pace of new stormwater and nature-based projects is outpacing the availability of trained personnel. Rivas explained that Pasadena has conducted extensive outreach to identify



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workforce needs and is committed to developing regional training programs to ensure long-term maintenance, water quality performance, and resilient infrastructure. The City is dedicating \$500,000 in local funds and seeking collaboration with regional and state partners.

Jeff Khun, a landscape architect with the City of Pasadena, reinforced the need for consistent and standardized training for municipal staff, noting that poor maintenance of green infrastructure - such as clogged infiltration systems or improperly pruned vegetation- often results from a lack of training rather than from neglect. Khun emphasized that a regional workforce development program is critical to ensuring the success of green infrastructure projects.

Dawn Petschauer, Stormwater Program Administrator for the City of Pasadena, highlighted that the City's workforce development Scientific Study application had previously been deemed ineligible for District funding. Petschauer expressed that the Study is scientifically relevant because it directly supports the implementation, operations, and long-term performance of green infrastructure. Petschauer stressed the urgency of workforce development to ensure billions of dollars invested in infrastructure achieve their intended outcomes, noting that Pasadena's program is ready to implement immediately.

John Mendoza, a resident of Pomona, spoke on street trash and industrial debris in the Pomona community. Mendoza highlighted ongoing challenges with street sweeping and debris removal, particularly from large companies, and suggested that regional data collection could help hold these entities accountable.

Antos clarified that the Scientific Study applications were deemed ineligible for the Scientific Study program and not related to the merit of the ideas themselves. Discussions are ongoing about advancing workforce development through other SCW Program elements. Public Works staff shared that a workforce development presentation will be agendaized for an upcoming meeting.

#### **7) Watershed Coordinator Updates**

Watershed Coordinator updates were deferred to the next NSMB WASC meeting.

#### **8) Items for Next Agenda**

- a) Regional Program FY24-25 Annual Report Summary
- b) FY26-27 Scientific Studies (SS) Peer Review Summary
- c) Workforce Development Presentation by Jolene Guerrero, Assistant Deputy Director at Los Angeles County Public Works

#### **9) Adjournment**

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

Next Meeting: Thursday, February 12, 2026  
1:00 pm - 3:00 pm  
See SCW website for meeting details

NSMB WASC - January 8, 2026							
		Quorum Present				Voting Items	
Member Type	Organization	Member	Voting?	Alternate	Voting?	Approve the November 13, 2025 NSMB WASC Meeting Minutes	
Agency	LACFCD	Marcela Benavides-Aguilar	x	Daniel Bradbury		y	
Agency	LAC Waterworks District	William Johnson	x			y	
Agency	MRCA	Brian Baldauf	x	Rebecca Correa		y	
Agency	LVMWD	David Pedersen		Craig Jones	x	y	
Agency	LVMWD	Jessica Forte	x	Jeremy Wolf		y	
Community Stakeholder	Resident	Madelyn Glickfeld	x	Richard Ambrose		y	
Community Stakeholder	PSOMAS	Andrew Nickerson		Ion Cretu	x	a	
Community Stakeholder	Resident	Susan Nissman	x			absent at vote	
Community Stakeholder	Wishtoyo Chumash Foundation Ventura County	Tevin Schmitt		Natalia Cuellar			
Community Stakeholder	Resident	Jacy Shillan	x			y	
Municipal Members	Agoura Hills	Charmaine Yambao		Kelly Fisher	x	y	
Municipal Members	Calabasas	Curtis Castle	x	Melanis Stepanian		absent at vote	
Municipal Members	Hidden Hills	Kelsey Reed	x	Mayra Martinez		y	
Municipal Members	LAC Supervisor District 3	Aaron Ordower	x	Emily Ellison			
Municipal Members	LAC Public Works	Bruce Hamamoto		Paul Choy	x	y	
Municipal Members	Malibu	Kiernan Brtalik	x	Ewelina Mutkowska		y	
Municipal Members	Westlake Village	Roxanne Hughes	x	Josephine Wilson		y	
Watershed Coordinator	Melina S. Watts Consulting, LLC	Melina Watts	x				
Total Non-Vacant Seats		17			Yay (Y)	12	0
Total Voting Members Present		16			Nay (N)	0	0
Agency		5			Abstain (A)	1	0
Community Stakeholder		4			Total	13	0
Municipal Members		7				Approved	Not Approved

Other Attendees
Angela
Annelisa Moe
Call-in User_1
Call-in User_2
Cesar Ramirez
Craig Doberstein
Daniel A.
Dawn Petschauer, St
Eric Bonilla - SCWP
Henry Lopez
Jeff Khun
Jessica Rivas
John Mendoza
Kevin Keegan
Larry Tran - SCWP
Lisa (Jin) Kim - SCWF
Mayra Martinez
Mike Antos (Region:
NSMB AV
Roxanne Hughes
Ruby Cornejo
Sam Ward
Stacy Luell
dbradbury

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### COMMITTEE MEMBER AND ALTERNATE SIGN-IN



Member Name	Municipality/ Organization		Signature
Marcela Benavides-Aguilar	Los Angeles County Flood Control District	Primary	MBS
Daniel Bradbury	Los Angeles County Flood Control District	Alternate	
Brian Baldauf	Mountains Recreation & Conservation Authority	Primary	B. Baldauf
Rebecca Correa	Mountains Recreation & Conservation Authority	Alternate	
William Johnson	LA County Waterworks District	Primary	
David Pedersen	Las Virgenes Municipal Water District	Primary	
Craig Jones	Las Virgenes Municipal Water District	Alternate	C. Jones
Jessica Forte	Las Virgenes Municipal Water District	Primary	J. Forte
Jeremy Wolf	Las Virgenes Municipal Water District	Alternate	
Madelyn Glickfeld	Resident	Primary	
Richard Ambrose	Resident	Alternate	
Andrew Nickerson	Community Stakeholder	Primary	
Ion Cretu	Community Stakeholder	Alternate	I. Cretu
Susan Nissman	Resident	Primary	S. Nissman
Tevin Schmitt	Wishtoyo Chumash Foundation Ventura County	Primary	



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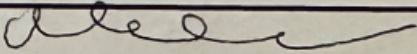


Member Name	Municipality/ Organization		Signature
Natalia Cuellar	Wishtoyo Chumash Foundation Ventura County	Alternate	
Jacy Shillan	Resident	Primary	
Charmaine Yambao	Agoura Hills	Primary	
Kelly Fisher	Agoura Hills	Alternate	
Curtis Castle	Calabasas	Primary	
Melanis Stepanian	Calabasas	Alternate	
Kelsey Reed	Hidden Hills	Primary	
Mayra Martinez	Hidden Hills	Alternate	
Aaron Ordower	LAC Supervisor District 3	Primary	
Emily Ellison	LAC Supervisor District 3	Alternate	
Bruce Hamamoto	Los Angeles County	Primary	
Paul Choy	Los Angeles County	Alternate	
Kiernan Brtalik	Malibu	Primary	
Ewelina Mutkowska	Malibu	Alternate	
Roxanne Hughes	Westlake Village	Primary	

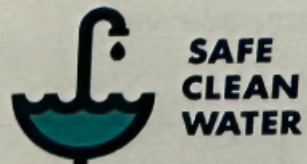


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Member Name	Municipality/ Organization		Signature
Josephine Wilson	Westlake Village	Alternate	
Melina Watts	Watershed Coordinator	Primary	





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PUBLIC SIGN-IN

First Name	Last Name	Municipality/Organization	Email Address
Rowan	Roderick-Jones	stillwater sciences	
Nate	Butler	Stillwater Science	
Cherise	Thompson	PACE	
M	Wells	WC	
ANDREA	AMEND	MOORE INSTITUTE	