

Upper Los Angeles River Watershed Area Steering Committee (WASC) Meeting Minutes



Wednesday, February 7, 2024

2:00pm - 4:00pm

LA County Public Works Headquarters, 1st Floor (Courtyard), Conference Room C
WebEx Meeting

Committee Members Present:

Paul Shadmani, LA Flood Control District (Agency)

*Art Castro, LA Department of Water and Power (Agency)

Ida Meisami-Fard, LA Sanitation & Environment (Agency)

Cathie Santo Domingo, LA Recreation & Parks (Agency)

Ernesto Pantoja, Laborers Local 300 (Community)

Max Liles, Michael Baker International (Community)

*Roxy Rivas, Pacoima Beautiful (Community)

Kris Markarian, Pasadena (Municipal)

Patrick DeChellis, La Cañada Flintridge (Municipal)

Teresa Villegas, Los Angeles (Municipal), Chair

Karo Torossian, Los Angeles (Municipal)

Rafael Prieto, Los Angeles (Municipal)

*Thuan Nguyen, Los Angeles County (Municipal)

Adi Liberman, Environmental Outreach Strategies (Watershed Coordinator, non-voting member)

Carlos Moran, Council for Watershed Health (Watershed Coordinator, non-voting member)

Kristina Kreter, Council for Watershed Health (Watershed Coordinator, non-voting member)

Committee Members Absent:

Jesus Gonzalez, LA Department of Water and Power (Agency)

Miguel Luna, Urban Semillas (Community)

Kenneth Jones, San Fernando (Municipal)

*Committee Member Alternate

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

1) Welcome and Introductions

Chair Teresa Villegas welcomed Committee Members, called the meeting to order, and reviewed the meeting agenda.

Los Angeles County Flood Control District (District) staff provided a brief WebEx tutorial in both English and Spanish and announced that the meeting was being broadcast live in Spanish. District staff facilitated the roll call of Committee Members, and a quorum was established.

2) Approval of Meeting Minutes from January 25, 2024

This agenda item was deferred to the next meeting. District staff noted that the meeting minutes from January 25, 2024, will be posted on the ULAR WASC webpage in the coming weeks.

3) Ex Parte Communication Disclosures

Member Thuan Nguyen disclosed affiliation with the planning team for La Crescenta Avenue Green Improvement Project.

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4) Committee Member and District Updates

District staff provided an update noting:

- The next Regional Program Quarterly Report is due February 15.
- On January 31, the Regional Oversight Committee (ROC) voted to send the Biennial Progress Report to the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors (Board). The ROC will discuss next steps and conduct strategic planning sessions at the February 15 meeting. WASC Members are welcome to attend to provide input. More information can be found on the [SCW Program website](#).

5) Watershed Coordinator Updates

Watershed Coordinator Kristina Kreter shared updates noting:

- Preparing for the first water tour of 2024 which will be of the East Los Angeles Sustainable Median on February 15. All WASC members are invited, and participation is appreciated.
- The Elephant Hill community planning meeting on January 20, where Watershed Coordinators shared details and spoke on public involvement in the SCW Program.
- Recent involvement with Technical Assistance Team (TAT) for two SCW Program-funded Technical Resources Program (TRP) project concepts. Watershed Coordinators provided comments on plans and attended Feasibility Study meetings.
- Coordination with the District and Regional Coordinators for Disadvantaged Community Benefit presentations for Round 5 projects and Project Modification Requests (PMRs). The presentation will be given prior to Stormwater Investment Plan (SIP) deliberations.

Watershed Coordinator Adi Liberman noted that the Scientific Study Evaluation of Infiltration Testing Methods for Design of Stormwater Drywell Systems workshop held in December 2023 was a success and there are ongoing efforts to coordinate additional SCW Program-funded Scientific Study workshops.

Chair Villegas asked if the WASC could see the final close-out reports from Scientific Studies before sharing with the public. District staff affirmed and shared that scientific study developers are asked to provide a final close-out report to the WASC to share any findings and conclusions through the Reporting Module. Chair Villegas supported the idea of future workshops to share Scientific Study findings with the public and mentioned workshops are a good way to demonstrate the benefits from the efforts undertaken.

6) Public Comment Period

District staff compiled all public comment cards and have uploaded them to the SCW Program website. In-person, virtual, and call-in users were invited to provide public comment.

Emily Spokes (California Creative Learning Academy) expressed support for the Bowtie Demonstration Project, noting that the project directly benefits the surrounding communities and the school that borders the project parcel. Spokes invited fifth- and sixth- grade students to provide public comment. They expressed support for the project, noting improved air quality, increased tree coverage, and a new recreational space.

Sue Bell Yank (Clockshop) expressed support for shared for the Bowtie Demonstration Project, noting that Clockshop collaborated with The Nature Conservancy on community engagement efforts for the project. Yank highlighted the project's multiple benefits, including tree canopy, improved water quality, and educational opportunities.

Brian Kramer (Great Cypress Park Neighborhood Council)) expressed support for shared for the Bowtie Demonstration Project, agreeing with all previous comments and highlighting that everyone in the

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community would benefit from the project. Kramer added that The Nature Conservancy has been present throughout this project's development, practicing transparency, attention to detail, and excellent communication.

Yvette Corona (City of Alhambra, Environmental Commission) expressed support for the Green Street Demonstration Project on Main Street, noting support for WASC to consider funding smaller cities like the City of Alhambra. Corona stated that is the first of its kind for the City of Alhambra, allowing for rainwater capture and bioremediation.

Karen Barnette (Atwater Village Neighborhood Council) expressed support for the Bowtie Demonstration Project, noting The Nature Conservancy's efforts in community engagement, including attending WASC and Board meetings and sharing updates about every aspect of the process. Barnette noted that the project will benefit the community of Atwater Village and noted that this is a great opportunity to acquire operation and maintenance (O&M) funds, which are often hard to get.

Kathleen Johnson (Los Angeles River State Park Partners) expressed support for the Bowtie Demonstration Project, noting the project includes community benefits, including tree canopy, habitat, community access, and educational opportunities.

7) Presentations and Discussion Items

a) Infrastructure Program (IP) Project Presentations ([SCW Portal](#))

i) Arroyo Park Infiltration Gallery Project Presentation by City of Pasadena

Ted Gerber (City of Pasadena) and Jon Abelson (Stantec) presented the Arroyo Park Infiltration Gallery Project. Abelson described the four facilities that constitute the project and highlighted Site #2, which proposes an underground infiltration gallery to be located underneath a soccer field at Arroyo Park. Presentation slides can be found on the [SCW Program website](#).

Upon inquiry, Gerber noted that the City of Pasadena prioritizes the Arroyo Seco-San Rafael Treatment Wetlands Project over the Arroyo Park Infiltration Gallery Project application as the Arroyo Seco-San Rafael Treatment Wetlands Project it is nearing construction.

Upon inquiry, Gerber highlighted community engagement efforts taken, including various community outreach meetings and discussions with main stakeholders about ways to improve the soccer field and any potential concerns. Abelson added that meetings were held with different stakeholders groups based on how they would be affected.

Upon inquiry, Abelson noted that the project design was based on a metric approach, designed to meet the 85th percentile storm volume, volumetrically reducing the water discharged to Arroyo Seco as required by the cities' MS4 permits.

Gerber clarified that the project is requesting additional \$7 million from the WASC, with funds primarily going towards Sites #2 and #5.

Upon inquiry, Abelson noted that some water from Arroyo Seco will be used for this project. Abelson stated that Site #5, which includes a water stream, had been added to the project in response to concerns about water usage. Abelson restated that the goal for the project is to accomplish treatment and infiltration of the urban runoff in the watershed that currently flows towards Arroyo Seco.

ii) Bowtie Demonstration Project Presentation by The Nature Conservancy

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Kelsey Jessup (The Nature Conservancy) and Jon Abelson (Stantec) presented on the Bowtie Demonstration Project, a multi-benefit stormwater management and habitat enhancement demonstration project along the Los Angeles River. Presentation slides can be found on the [SCW Program website](#).

Upon inquiry, Jessup clarified that the project is in the final design stage and project developers are working on refining the cost estimates to reflect an accurate budget. Jessup noted that the access to the park will be across the Casitas Neighborhood and that the project team is working with State Parks and public transportation to make the park accessible. Jessup added that future connections on the other side of the G2 parcel and across the train tracks are envisioned, but efforts are still under development.

Jessup clarified that the \$10 million already secured is for construction and highlighted the importance of securing O&M funds to sustain the project. Jessup noted that other partnerships are being explored and that there are ongoing efforts to make this project a priority. Jessup shared that there is a lack of funding opportunities for O&M and noted that the project team has been working on policy papers to voice concerns.

Member DeChellis asked how confident project developers are in maintaining the project timeline. Jessup noted that construction begins this year and all the construction funding has been acquired. Jessup shared that the project team is in a good position regarding permitting. Jessup clarified that the total project cost, from planning to construction, is \$11.2 million. Jessup added that the project is currently requesting an additional \$1.8 million from the WASC for O&M. The first five years of O&M will be managed by The Nature Conservancy, afterwards this project will be a small component of the larger G2 parcel State Park, and under State Park's management.

Member Ernesto Pantoja noted that most contractors offer a one-year warranty period post-construction. Abelson noted that the contractor has not been contracted yet, however it is a good consideration.

iii) Green Street Demonstration Project on Main Street Presentation by City of Alhambra

David Dolphin (City of Alhambra) and Chris Carandang (Paradigm) presented on the Green Street Demonstration Project on Main Street, a sustainable stormwater streetscape project on Main Street near Fremont Avenue. Presentation slides are available on the [SCW Program website](#).

Upon inquiry, Dolphin confirmed that the project team secured funding from the Urban Greening Grant. Dolphin added that project developers are interested in returning to the WASC in the future to request O&M funds. Dolphin shared that if PMR funds are not secured in the future, the City of Alhambra would rely on the SCW Program Municipal Program funds.

iv) La Crescenta Avenue Green Improvement Project Presentation by Unincorporated County

Felicia Yin (Los Angeles County Public Works) and Kara Plourde (Los Angeles County Public Works) gave a presentation on the La Crescenta Avenue Green Improvement Project, a project that will divert & capture stormwater runoff through the implementation of best management practices (BMPs) within the road right-of-way. Presentation slides available on the [SCW Program website](#).

Upon inquiry, Plourde clarified that the project is requesting an additional \$2 million from the WASC. Also, \$1 million has already been secured through Proposition 1 and \$4.7 million will come from SCW Program Municipal funds. Member DeChellis pointed out the remaining funding gap to reach the total cost of \$11.6 million. Plourde added that project developers are actively seeking other funding sources and that additional funding may come from the County's stormwater program (County General Funds). Plourde noted that the

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total funding request would be too large, so project developers are strategically trying to acquire several smaller funding groups to reach the total required.

Upon inquiry, Plourde noted that the funds requested will be used only for the stormwater portion of the project and not for roadway improvements. Plourde noted that the trees added to the area will be maintained by the City of Los Angeles.

8) Public Comment Period

Jennifer Ng (member of the public) expressed support for the Green Street Demonstration Project on Main Street, noting that this would be the first project of this kind for the City of Alhambra.

9) Voting Items

There were no voting items.

10) Items for Next Agenda

Chair Villegas shared that the next meeting will be held on March 21, 2024, from 2:00pm – 4:30pm and asked the WASC to plan accordingly.

Items for the next meeting include:

- a) FY24-25 Scientific Studies Peer Review Summary
- b) Upper Los Angeles River Project Prioritization and Selection Discussion for populating the Fiscal Year 2024-25 Stormwater Investment Plan

11) Adjournment

Chair Villegas adjourned the meeting by thanking Committee Members and the public for their attendance and participation.

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		Quorum Present			
Member Type	Position	Member	Voting/ Present?	Alternate	Voting/ Present?
Agency	FCD	Paul Shadmani	x	Satenig Marjanian	
Agency	Water Agency	Delon Kwan		Art Castro	x
Agency	Groundwater / Water Agency 2	Jesus Gonzalez		John Huynh	
Agency	Sanitation	Ida Meisami-Fard	x	Alfredo Magallanes	
Agency	Open Space	Cathie Santo Domingo		Javier Solis	
Community Stakeholder	At Large	Ernesto Pantoja		Sergio Rascon	
Community Stakeholder	At Large	Miguel Luna			
Community Stakeholder	Environment				
Community Stakeholder	Business	Max Liles	x		
Community Stakeholder	EJ	Veronica Padilla-Campos		Roxy Rivas	x
Municipal Members	Pasadena	Kris Markarian			
Municipal Members	La Cañada Flintridge / South Pasadena	Patrick DeChellis	x	Ted Gerber	
Municipal Members	Los Angeles	Teresa Villegas	x		
Municipal Members	Los Angeles	Karo Torossian	x		
Municipal Members	Los Angeles	Rafael Prieto			
Municipal Members	Los Angeles County	Mark Lombos		Thuan Nguyen	x
Municipal Members	San Fernando / Calabasas	Kenneth Jones		Alex Farassati	
Watershed Coordinator (Non-Voting Member)	Environmental Outreach Strategies	Adi Liberman	x	Arlene Guzman	
Watershed Coordinator (Non-Voting Member)	Council for Watershed Health	Carlos Moran	x	Jason Casanova	
Watershed Coordinator (Non-Voting Member)	Council for Watershed Health	Kristina Kreter	x	Alonso Garcia	
Total Non-Vacant Seats		16			Yes (Y)
Total Voting Members Present		9			No (N)
Agency		3			Abstain (A)
Community Stakeholder		2			Total
Municipal Members		4			

WebEx Webinar Attendees
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Albert Kam
Alonso
Andrea Prado Iriarte
Angineh Shahnazarian
Brian Baldauf
Bryan Kramer
Call-in User_2
Chris Carandang
Conor Mossavi
Donna Bautista
Emily Spokes

Guerrero, Jonathan
Gurjot Kohli | Stantec
Jeannette Spanish Interpreter
Jennifer Ng, Alhambra Resident
Jenny Chau
Jim C.
Johanna Chang
John Bodenchak
Jose Castro - LACFCD
Justin Jones
Kathleen Johnson
Larry Tran

M. Scaduto
Maggie Gardner
Marisela Velasquez
Mark Hall GLAмосquito
Mayra Cabrera - LACFCD
Melanie Hu
Melanie Paola
Mike Antos
Nayda Cantabrana
Paige Bistromowitz
Paul Mead
Rosanna

Ryan Hiney
SCWP - Presenter
Safe Clean Water LA
Sarai Jimenez
Shannon Johnson
Sue Bell Yank
Susie Santilena
ULAR WASC Monitor
Willa
William OBraitis
Yisak Kim
Karen Barnett
Raul Macias
Yvette

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 COMMITTEE MEMBER AND ALTERNATE SIGN-IN



Member Name	Municipality/ Organization	Member Type	Role	Signature
Adi Liberman	Environmental Outreach Strategies	Watershed Coordinator (Non-Voting Member)		<i>Adi Liberman</i>
Alex Farassati	City of Calabasas	Municipal	Alternate	
Alfredo Magallanes	LA Sanitation and Environment	Agency	Alternate	
Alonso Garcia	Council for Watershed Health	Watershed Coordinator (Non-Voting Member)		
Arlene Guzman	Environmental Outreach Strategies	Watershed Coordinator (Non-Voting Member)		
Art Castro	Los Angeles Department of Water and Power	Agency	Alternate	<i>Art Castro</i>
Carlos Moran	Council for Watershed Health	Watershed Coordinator (Non-Voting Member)		<i>Carlos Moran</i>
Cathie Santo Domingo	Los Angeles Recreation & Parks	Agency	Primary	<i>C Santo Domingo</i>
Delon Kwan	Los Angeles Department of Water and Power	Agency	Primary	
Ernesto Pantoja	Laborers Local 300	Community Stakeholder	Primary	<i>Ernesto Pantoja</i>
Ida Meisami-Fard	LA Sanitation and Environment	Agency	Primary	<i>Ida Meisami-Fard</i>
Jason Casanova	Council for Watershed Health	Watershed Coordinator (Non-Voting Member)		



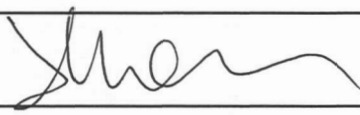
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 COMMITTEE MEMBER AND ALTERNATE SIGN-IN



Member Name	Municipality/ Organization	Member Type	Role	Signature
Javier Solis	Los Angeles Recreation & Parks	Community Stakeholder	Alternate	
Jesus Gonzalez	Los Angeles Department of Water and Power	Agency	Primary	
John Huynh	Los Angeles Department of Water and Power	Agency	Alternate	
Karo Torossian	City of Los Angeles	Municipal	Primary	
Kenneth Jones	City of San Fernando	Municipal	Primary	
Kris Markarian	City of Pasadena	Municipal	Alternate	
Kristina Kreter	Council for Watershed Health	Watershed Coordinator (Non-Voting Member)		
Mark Lombos	Los Angeles County	Municipal	Primary	
Max Liles	Michael Baker International	Community Stakeholder	Primary	
Miguel Luna	Urban Semillas	Community Stakeholder	Primary	
Patrick DeChellis	City of La Cañada Flintridge	Municipal	Primary	
Paul Shadmani	LA County Flood Control District	Agency	Primary	

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Member Name	Municipality/ Organization	Member Type	Role	Signature
Rafael Prieto	City of Los Angeles	Agency	Primary	
Roxy Rivas	Pacoima Beautiful	Community Stakeholder	Alternate	
Sergio Rascon	Laborers Local 300	Community Stakeholder	Alternate	
Satenig Marjanian	LA County Flood Control District	Agency	Alternate	
Ted Gerber	City of South Pasadena	Municipal	Alternate	
Teresa Villegas	City of Los Angeles	Municipal	Primary	
Thuan Nguyen	Los Angeles County	Municipal	Alternate	
Veronica Padilla- Campos	Pacoima Beautiful	Community Stakeholder	Primary	

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 PUBLIC SIGN-IN



First Name	Last Name	Municipality/Organization	Email Address
Jonathan Abelson	Abelson	Stanrec	jonathan.abelson@stanrec.com
DAVID	DOLPHIN	ALHAMBRA BIA	ddolphin@cityofalhambra.org
H. TED	GERBER	SOUTH PASADENA	TGERBER@SOUTHPASADENA.GOV
Felicia	Yin	LA COUNTY PUBLIC WORKS	Fyin@dpw.lacounty.gov
Kara Burd		"	kto kdroz@dpw.lacounty.gov
Kelsey	Jessup	The Nature Conservancy	Kelsey.jessup@tnc.org
Ahous Garcia	Garcia	Council Watershed	

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