

Regional Oversight Committee

Meeting Minutes



Wednesday, September 11, 2024

1:00pm – 3:30pm

LA County Public Works Headquarters, 1st Floor (Courtyard) Conference Rooms A&B
900 S. Fremont Ave, Alhambra, CA 91803

Zoom Meeting

Committee Members Present:

Maria Mehranian, Cordoba/Former LA Regional Water Quality Control Board Chair

Diana Tang, Long Beach Water Department, Vice-Chair

Kristine Guerrero, League of Cities

Belinda Faustinos, Retired NGO & State Agency Executive, Chair

Lauren Ahkiam, LAANE

Charles Trevino, Upper San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District

Diana Mahmud, Former City Councilmember, City of South Pasadena

Carl Blum, LA County Flood Control District (non-voting member)

Norma Camacho, LA Regional Water Quality Control Board Chair (non-voting member)

Committee Members Attending Virtually:

Mark Gold, Natural Resources Defense Council

Committee Members Not Present:

Barbara Romero, City of Los Angeles

Meeting Summary:

At the September 11, 2024, Regional Oversight Committee meeting Committee members discussed the SCW Program's Watershed Planning goals, focusing on Water Quality, Water Supply, and Community Investment Benefits. Key points included concerns about using a single pollutant as an indicator of progress towards the SCW Program water quality goal, and discussion on water supply challenges and infrastructure needs. Public input highlighted the importance of engagement between the different SCW Program governance committees.

There were reflections on collaboration with workforce development programs and ongoing efforts to validate Disadvantaged Community Benefits. The Committee decided to convene short-term Working Groups focused on further discussion about appropriate indicators and targets for Water Quality and Community Investment Benefits and Benefit Ratios.

Key Action Items:

- Executive Clerk and Watershed Planning Section to facilitate the formation of Water Quality and Community Investment Benefit working groups for Watershed Planning input.
- Public Works will agendize a presentation about Project Modification Requests at a future ROC meeting.
- Public Works will invite Los Angeles County Department of Economic Opportunity to present and answer questions about ongoing workforce development at a future ROC meeting.
- ROC Members will consider and contact the Executive Clerk to support identifying and securing alternative meeting locations.

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1. Welcome and Introductions

Belinda Faustinos, Chair of the Safe Clean Water (SCW) Program Regional Oversight Committee (ROC), welcomed Committee Members and called the meeting to order.

2. On-line and Spanish Language Participation Information

The Executive Clerk conducted a brief tutorial on Zoom and announced that the meeting was being broadcast live in Spanish.

3. Roll Call

The Executive Clerk conducted roll call and confirmed that a quorum was established.

4. Agenda Review and Meeting Purpose

Chair Faustinos shared that the ROC will participate in a facilitated discussion about elements of the SCW Program Watershed Planning effort that is underway and discuss key focus areas for upcoming ROC agendas for the next six months.

5. Ex Parte Communication Disclosures

There were no ex parte communication disclosures.

6. Approval of August 14, 2024, Meeting Minutes

Member Diana Mahmud motioned to approve the meeting minutes with revisions, clarifying that the minutes should describe a request to be briefed about the County's Project Labor Agreement (PLA) policy. The Executive Clerk also corrected the number of Technical Resource Program (TRP) applications received from 6 to 11. The motion was seconded by Member Carl Blum. The Committee voted to approve the August 14, 2024, meeting minutes with 3 votes in favor, 0 opposed, 2 in abstention, and 3 absent at the time of the vote (approved, see vote tracking sheet).

7. Public Comment Period

The Executive Clerk compiled all public comment cards received by 5:00pm the day before the meeting. One comment card was received prior to the beginning of the meeting and can be found on the SCW Program website. Participants on the Spanish translation line and call-in users were also invited to provide public comment.

Mike Scaduto (City of Los Angeles Sanitation and Environment) expressed appreciation to the County for supporting agencies in navigating the SCW Program process. Scaduto shared that the City of Los Angeles participates in Upper Los Angeles River, Central Santa Monica Bay, and South Santa Monica Bay Watershed Areas Steering Committees (WASCs) and commented that the City has a wide range of experiences from each Watershed Area. Scaduto encouraged the ROC to engage with WASC Chairs and the Scoring Committee, noting different roles between the ROC, Scoring Committee, and WASCs. Scaduto suggested that engagement with other committees can better support the Watershed Planning effort.

Member Camacho reflected on the 23rd anniversary of 9/11, honoring the memory of those lost and remembering the profound impact of the event.

8. Discussion Items:

a) SCW Program Watershed Planning

- SCW Program Goals, Key definitions, and Regional Population Indicators

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Los Angeles County Public Works (Public Works) staff noted that the Watershed Planning process is a significant effort and emphasized the importance of integrating the ROC into the process to ensure consistency and alignment with broader Program goals.

SCW Watershed Planning staff within Public Works presented on recent Watershed Planning efforts, highlighting the importance of engagement. Presentation slides can be found on the SCW Program website. Public Works staff recalled that the ROC had received a summary presentation of WASC Watershed Planning workshops, which highlighted key findings and future actions, at the previous ROC meeting in August. SCW Watershed Planning staff reviewed current definitions, recommendations, considerations, and target-setting processes aimed at enhancing the clarity of the Program.

The Executive Clerk noted Member Mark Gold joined the meeting virtually at a publicly noticed and accessible location.

Several Committee Members advised against selecting one pollutant per Watershed Area as the sole representative pollutant to monitor SCW Program Water Quality goal attainment across the region and suggested a more comprehensive approach. The Committee discussed instances in which addressing one contaminant (e.g., metals versus bacteria versus trash) does not correlate with addressing other contaminants.

Member Camacho recommended forming a Water Quality working group to address the specific reporting needs of the Watershed Planning process, such as leveraging existing data prior to the SCW Program's inception. Member Camacho also emphasized the importance of the nexus between Watershed Management Plans (WMPs) and the SCW Program. Committee Members shared support for the formation of a working group, and both Member Camacho and Member Gold volunteered to convene the group and report back to the ROC.

Public Works staff clarified that Watershed Planning targets are intended to be high-level and broad reporting metrics and do not replace more-specific reporting that already occurs in the MS4 Permit WMP process.

Member Camacho further noted that additional water quality pollutants not regulated as part of the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit need to be addressed, and suggested the ROC have broader conversations on existing and potential solutions. Committee Members underlined the importance of tracking and demonstrating measurable progress towards achieving water quality goals. Mike Antos (Stantec, Watershed Planning) reminded the ROC that the SCW Program plays a role in contributing funding to projects that support water quality compliance, but achieving compliance and the accountability associated with MS4 permits are not a direct responsibility of the SCW Program.

Member Diana Tang recommended that the SCW Program does not set specific targets for water quality and indicated a preference for a more transparent and intentional approach that would highlight elements of individual Watershed Areas' compliance efforts.

Public Works staff referred to the Regional Water Quality Control Board's ongoing tracking of progress for major pollutants, emphasizing that these efforts serve as a foundation for future watershed planning.

The Committee transitioned to a discussion on water supply. Member Mahmud highlighted the difficulty in generating new water supplies, especially in the Rio Hondo and San Gabriel River areas, and encouraged the ROC to prioritize measuring the net additions to the water supply resulting from the SCW Program's initiatives. Committee Members discussed potential importance of ways to move stormwater runoff from areas where it cannot be managed as supply to areas where it can.

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Committee Members suggested that water capture for environmental benefits, such as sustaining ecosystems and habitats, could be prioritized. The Committee discussed whether this benefit would be best represented under Water Supply Benefits, Water Quality Benefits, or Community Investment Benefits.

Public Works staff noted that in recent years, Water Supply Benefits have been prioritized due to recent drought conditions. Public Works staff emphasized the iterative and adaptable nature of the Program, noting that certain benefits may be prioritized more than others, depending on what is most relevant to the region at the time.

The Committee transitioned to a discussion on Community Investment Benefits and benefit ratios. Member Mahmud expressed enthusiasm that ~~next year we should receive information required under the SCW Program Ordinance that includes among other things states that municipalities will annually prepare a report that includes a summary of the expenditures benefitting municipalities, as well as~~ and Water Quality, Water Supply, and Community Investment Benefits realized through use of SCW Program funds, ~~and is looking forward to reviewing a summary analysis.~~

The Committee discussed the connections between the SCW Program Municipal and Regional Programs and highlighted the importance of engaging cities in the Watershed Planning process.

Member Mahmud shared involvement with Water Education For Latino Leaders (WELL) as a Board Member, and noted that WELL received a \$400,000 grant from the High Road Training Fund. Member Mahmud noted potential synergies between WELL's program and SCW Program's green jobs and workforce development efforts, which could help foster local employment opportunities related to watershed management.

Chair Faustinos requested a comprehensive chart comparing the findings from the Metrics and Monitoring Study (MMS) and alignment with the Watershed Planning effort.

Member Ahkiam expressed appreciation that the Watershed Planning effort has implemented recommendations from the Accelerate Resilience Los Angeles (ARLA) working group.

Upon inquiry about the recommendation for assessing municipal benefit from projects that provide Water Quality Benefits, SCW Program Watershed Planning staff clarified that each SCW Program Watershed Area is comprised of at least one Watershed Management Group (WMG). If a SCW Program project located in one municipality contributes Water Quality Benefits, it helps its associated WMG make progress towards its water quality compliance requirements, and can therefore provide benefit to all municipalities represented in a WMG.

The Committee discussed challenges with validating Disadvantaged Community Benefits claimed by project applicants.

Public Works staff highlighted the 2022 Interim Guidance Document as a resource that discusses guidance for validating Disadvantaged Community Benefits. The ROC discussed the importance of demonstrated community support as an indicator to measure and validate Disadvantaged Community Benefits.

Member Ahkiam emphasized the opportunity to integrate green jobs and workforce development programming with the Watershed Planning effort and highlighted the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District as a strong example of successfully aligning workforce development with watershed planning. Member Ahkiam noted that the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District links operations and maintenance (O&M) to the specific workforce skills needed.

The Committee expressed interest in receiving a presentation from Los Angeles County's Department of Economic Opportunity on the Workforce Development Program at a future meeting.

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SCW Program Watershed Planning staff clarified that Disadvantaged Community Benefits are currently counted on a “yes/no” basis. Potential recommendations for calculating these benefits differently could include quantifying the population served and noting the walkable network of a project to assess accessibility.

Public Works staff confirmed with the ROC that working groups can be formed to meet with the Watershed Planning team virtually on specific topic areas. SCW Program Watershed Planning staff confirmed that Member Gold and Member Camacho will lead the Water Quality working group, and Chair Faustinos, Member Mahmud, and Member Ahkiam will lead the Community Investment Benefits and Benefit Ratios working group. SCW Program Watershed Planning staff will work with working group leads to schedule virtual meetings and invite other participants to join.

Upon inquiry, Antos shared that upcoming engagement on Watershed Planning is scheduled with OurWaterLA, Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission, Rebuild SoCal Partnership, municipalities, Watershed Coordinators, and others.

b) Six-month look-ahead

This item was combined with Agenda Item 11.

9. Voting Items

There were no voting items.

10. ROC Member Updates

Chair Faustinos noted Member Kristine Guerrero’s new role as Public Affairs Director at the League of California Cities and the ROC offered congratulations.

Member Norma Camacho noted virtual attendance as a member of the public during the August 14 meeting.

11. Program Administration & Biennial Report Updates

Public Works staff shared the tentative six-month meeting schedule for the ROC:

- September 11 – SCW Program Watershed Planning
- October 9 - Review/Discuss Municipal Program Reporting
- November 13 - Regional Program Reporting, Scientific Studies review and discussion
- December 11 - Watershed Planning presentation on November Framework, County Water Plan Overview, Implementation Update, Interconnectivity of Initiatives
- January 8 - Planning for 2025 & Detailed Biennial Report update
- February 12 - Watershed Planning

Standing Topics in all ROC Meetings include status updates on both Watershed Planning and ROC Recommendations. The November meeting will be held in Long Beach. Public Works seeks volunteers within the ROC to help identify alternate locations for ROC meetings, with the goal of enabling more members of the public to attend and participate in these meetings across the county.

The Executive Clerk provided a reminder of the ROC’s previously request that Watershed Coordinators present a 15-minute update at ROC meetings. The ROC reconfirmed that preference and requested the Executive Clerk to attempt to fit those updates back into the routine meeting agendas.

Public Works staff provided an update, noting:

- Public Works staff is making progress on recommendations outlined in the Biennial Progress Report. More information can be found in the presentation slides on the [SCW Program website](#).

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- The ROC Charter and Operating Guidelines has been updated and is now available on the [SCW Program website](#)
- The deadline for Project Modification Requests (PMRs) to be incorporated into the Round 6 Stormwater Investment Plans (SIPs) is October 31.
- The Business Relations and Contracts Division released the Watershed Coordinators [Request for Statement of Qualifications](#) on August 27. Proposers have the option to attend the Proposer's Conference on September 12 at 9:00 am and September 16 at 10:00 am. The deadline to submit a [Statement of Qualifications](#) is on October 31 at 5:30 pm.

Member Blum highlighted recent advancements that have been made at Public Works since Biennial Report discussions and commended Public Works for its efforts.

Member Mahmud requested that the December ROC meeting include information about any PMRs submitted prior to the October 31, 2024 deadline for inclusion in the 2025-26 Stormwater Investment Plans.

12. Items for the Next Agenda

a) Municipal Reporting

The next ROC meeting is scheduled for October 9, 2024, at the Los Angeles County Public Works Headquarters and will include a review and discussion of Municipal Program reporting.

13. Meeting Adjourned

Chair Faustinos thanked ROC Members and the public and adjourned the meeting at 3:24 pm.

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	Quorum Present		
Member Type	Member	Present?	Approve the August 14, 2024 Meeting Minutes
Voting Member	Maria Mehranian	x	a
Voting Member	Barbara Romero		
Voting Member	Diana Tang		
Voting Member	Kristine Guerrero	x	a
Voting Member	Belinda Faustinos	x	y
Voting Member	Lauren Ahkiam		
Voting Member	Charles Trevino	x	y
Voting Member	Mark Gold		
Voting Member	Diana Mahmud	x	y
Non-Voting Member	Carl Blum	x	
Non-Voting Member	Norma Camacho	x	
Total Non-Vacant Seats	9	Yay (Y)	3
Total Voting Members Present	5	Nay (N)	0
		Abstain (A)	2
		Total	5
			Approved

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COMMITTEE MEMBER SIGN-IN



Member Name	Municipality/ Organization	Email Address	Signature
Voting Members			
Barbara Romero	City of Los Angeles	barbara.romero@lacity.org; riki.esquer@lacity.org	
Belinda Faustinos	Nature For All	belinda@lanatureforall.org	<i>Belinda Faustinos</i>
Charles Trevino	Upper San Gabriel Valley MWD	cmtwater@yahoo.com	<i>Charles Trevino</i>
✶ Diana Tang	City of Long Beach	Diana.Tang@longbeach.gov	<i>Diana Tang</i>
✶ Mark Gold	NRDC	mgold@nrdc.org	<i>Mark Gold</i>
Diana Mahmud	Former City Councilmember, City of South Pasadena	diana.mahmud@gmail.com	<i>Diana Mahmud</i>
Kristine Guerrero	League of Cities	kguerrero@cacities.org	<i>Kristine Guerrero</i>
✶ Lauren Ahkiam	LAANE	lahkiam@laane.org	<i>Lauren Ahkiam</i>
Maria Mehranian	Cordoba / Former RWQCB Chair	mmehranian@cordobacorp.com	<i>Maria Mehranian</i>
Non-Voting Members			
Carl Blum	Flood Control District	cblum@pacbell.net	<i>Carl Blum</i>
Norma Camacho	LA Regional Water Quality Control Board Chair	Norma.Camacho@Waterboards.ca.gov	<i>Norma Camacho</i>
<i>Mile Sedato</i>	<i>City of LA - LASAN</i>	PUBLIC. MOVED.	<i>Mile Sedato</i>
<i>Maria Mehranian</i>			<i>Maria Mehranian</i>

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A red arrow points from the bottom of the table back to the 'Voting Members' section.

09/11/24

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PUBLIC SIGN-IN



First Name	Last Name	Municipality/Organization	Email Address
Melanie	Rivera	HDR	melanie.rivera@hdrinc.com
Nate	Schreiner	HDR	nathan.schreiner@hdrinc.com
Maggie	Gardner	LA waterkeeper	maggie@lawaterkeeper.org
Marla	Flores	City of Huntington Park	mrflores@hpcg.gov
MIKE	SCADUTO	LA-SAN.	(see signature)

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

Zoom Attendees User Name (Original Name)

Jessica Quach - City of LA

Genevieve Osmena

Alexia Skrbic (she/her)

Annelisa Moe (she/her)

Deborah Bloome

Deborah Bloome

David Lee - LACPW

Rebecca Kaliff

Sofia Cardenas

AKim

Mark Gold

guest Guest

Veronica Carrillo

Amanda Begley

Jenny Newman

Mike Antos (Stantec)

Geraldine Trivedi

Joe Venzon - LA County

Justin Jones - LACPW

Eileen Alduenda (CWH)

Melania G

Julie Millett

Richard Watson

Javier

Haley Lawton

Paige Bistromowitz

Paige Bistromowitz - LASAN

Mark Gold

Tara Dales

Ed Suher, CASC Engineering

Donna Tran - LACPW

YAO KOUWONOU

Jenny Chau

Ghina Yamout

Ida Rubio

BrendaRojasCala

train

Alonso Garcia

Thom Epps (Craftwater)

Adam Taing (LARWQCB)

Adam Taing (LARWQCB)

Dustin Bambic

Lisa Skutecki

Austine Racelis
Jason Casanova, Council for Watershed Health
JonPaul Sarro
Luis Perez
Sara_McGaugh
Eric Bonilla
Brad Wardynski (Craftwater)
Stephanie Gebhardt Rath, Heal the Bay
Juan Diaz-Carreras
J Luis
Conor Mossavi
Fred Gonzalez - County of Los Angeles
Leslie Friedman Johnson
Leslie iPhone
Kristina Kreter
Bruce Hamamoto
Sarah Followill
Vanessa Boudreau
Joyce Amaro
Susie Santilena - LASAN, SCWID
Wilfred Hsu
Brett Perry
Ryanna Fossum
Stephanie Luu
johanna chang
Johanna Chang
Luke Ginger (He/Him SMBRC)
Ava Farriday
Craig Doberstein
Rebecca Kaliff
Bridget Lowry, Stantec
Bridget Lowry, Stantec
Bridget Lowry, Stantec
Bridget Lowry, Stantec
Raina Dwivedi
RainaDwivedi
Matilde Saucedo (she/her, Stantec)
steve watson
Larry Tran - LACPW
John_Bodenchak
Drew Ready
RAFAEL G PIAMONTE
Robyn F.
Michelle Hoalton - PACE

Bryant Alvarado
Bryant Alvarado
Kerry Quinlan
Rafael Piamonte
Dave Weeshoff
Bill O'Braitis, OES - Oneida Eng Solutions
Mayra Cabrera - LACPW
Chris Minton
Chris Minton
Richard Atwater
Devon Provo
Emily Ng (she/her)
mazizi
mazizi