

Rio Hondo

Watershed Area Steering Committee (WASC)

Meeting Minutes



Tuesday, August 20, 2024
1:00pm – 3:00pm
Library Community Room
321 S Myrtle Ave, Monrovia, CA 91016
WebEx Meeting

Committee Members Present:

Julian Juarez, LA County Flood Control District (Agency)
*Jennifer Aguilar, Upper San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District (Agency)
Kelly Gardner, Main San Gabriel Basin Watermaster (Vice-Chair)
*Alysha Chan, LA County Sanitation District (Agency)
Richard Yee, City of Pasadena Public Works (Agency)
*Bryan Matsumoto, Nature for All (Community)
Jill Fosselman, Resident (Community)
Mark Hall, Greater LA County Vector Control District (Community)
Daniel Rossman, The Wilderness Society (Community)
*Lotoya Waters, Alhambra (Municipal)
Fernando Villaluna, LA County (Municipal)
Dawn Petschauer, Pasadena (Municipal), Chair
Eddie Chan, Irwindale, (Municipal)
Richard Watson, Richard Watson and Associates Planning (Watershed Coordinator, non-voting member)
Julie Millett, Richard Watson and Associates Planning (Watershed Coordinator, non-voting member)

*Committee Member Alternate

Committee Members Not Present:

Briget Arndell, Arcadia (Municipal)
Gloria Crudgington, Monrovia (Municipal)

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

1) Welcome and Introductions

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 Public Works (Public Works) staff conducted a brief tutorial on WebEx and facilitated the roll call of Committee Members. Public Works staff made self-introductions and a quorum was established.

2) Approval of Meeting Minutes from July 30, 2024

Public Works staff presented the minutes from the previous meeting. Member Julian Juarez motioned to approve the meeting minutes, seconded by Member Mark Hall. The WASC voted to approve the July 30, 2024 meeting minutes with 11 votes in favor, 0 opposed, and 2 in abstention (approved, see vote tracking sheet).

3) Committee Member and Program Updates

Member Bryan Matsumoto provided feedback on the Safe, Clean Water (SCW) Program's Public Education and Community Engagement Grants Program, and a formal comment was also submitted during the Grant Program's public input period. More information can be found on the [SCW Program website](#). Member Matsumoto noted that grant guidelines could be improved to include expenses for food, refreshments, and

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childcare during outreach events to ensure community needs are met. Member Matsumoto added that SCW Program educational materials should be made available to applicants and community-based organizations on the website to streamline efforts to distribute informational and educational materials about the SCW Program. Chair Petschauer added that access to these materials prepared for specific cities and agencies would also help Watershed Coordinators.

Public Works staff provided an update, noting:

- Round 6 Call for Projects will defer Infrastructure Program (IP) project submissions until Summer 2025. The deadline for Scientific Study (SS) and Technical Resource Program (TRP) applications was July 31. This WASC received four SS and two TRP applications. Public Works staff will conduct completeness checks on applications brought to the WASC.
- The Quarter 1 Funding Report is now available on 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.

SCW Program Watershed Planning staff within Public Works provided an update on Watershed Planning and shared that the first Watershed Planning workshops were held at all WASCs. The Watershed Planning Team, consisting of SCW Program Watershed Planning staff within Public Works and consultants, will return to WASCs in October for an additional engagement session.

Feedback has been received from Committee Members on existing data. This includes, previously funded projects, the Metrics and Monitoring Study (MMS), and from existing plans and data sets. This data will be compiled and synthesized to begin identifying Watershed Area Needs and Opportunity Areas, which are the building blocks for developing initial Watershed Plans. SCW Program Watershed Planning staff clarified that these Watershed Plans are not project-specific. The Watershed Plans are intended to guide applicants, WASCs, and other interested parties through Population Indicators and Opportunity Areas. These plans will be outlined specific to each Watershed Area. The updated list of plans, data sets, and synthesized results from the workshops will be shared with committee members once available. SCW Program Watershed Planning staff shared that the Watershed Plans are being developed alongside the Community Strengths and Needs Assessment survey. This will help gather feedback from communities regarding needs and preferences for the SCW Program projects. It will build upon previous community outreach efforts completed by Watershed Coordinators, the DACIP Watertalks Needs Assessment, and other County data sets.

Engagement with other interested parties, such as Our Water LA (OWLA), Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission, Rebuild SoCal Partnership, Watershed Coordinators, and Municipalities is also underway. Additionally, the Watershed Planning Team is also soliciting feedback from the Regional Oversight Committee and the Scoring Committee to refine key definitions for ensuring consistent terminology used by the SCW Program.

4) Watershed Coordinator Updates

Watershed Coordinator Julie Millet presented on recent and upcoming activities. Presentation slides can be found on the [SCW Program website](#). Highlighted events include the WaterFest 2024 that took place on May 11, the Nothin' but Nature Inland Clean-up event where 200 people within two hours collected 2,000 pounds of trash, and the El Monte "Beach Day" where beach umbrellas, kid pools, and a big water slide were set up to keep the community cool.

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Meetings under the category of Community Engagement included the Sacred Places Institute for Indigenous Peoples, and the Tribal Allyship Working Group. The Sacred Places Institute for Indigenous Peoples is an indigenous community organization located in the ancestral homelands of the Tongva people in Los Angeles. Richard Watson held the first virtual meeting with this organization to better understand how to work with the tribal population throughout the Coordination Cohort. The Tribal Allyship Working Group was developed by the Watershed Coordination Cohort (WCC) for better understanding and working with the tribal population.

Project engagement included the Burke Heritage Project, the South El Monte High School Stormwater Improvement Project, School and Stormwater Watershed Coordinator Subcommittee, and the review of current and future projects with respect to future Watershed Planning.

Activities related to the SCWP and the WCC included the revision of the Strategic Outreach and Engagement Plan (SOEP), SCWP Public Education and Community Engagement Grants Program session, MMS, monthly meetings with the WCC and Stantec Regional Coordination Team, and Reporting. In addition, the Watershed Coordinators worked with school district representatives on analyzing the distribution of projects across the Watersheds to determine potential future projects.

Watershed Coordinator Richard Watson mentioned that a project status update presentation will be presented to the WASC at the next meeting in September.

5) Ex Parte Communication Disclosure

Upon inquiry, Mike Antos (Stantec, Regional Coordination) clarified that ex-parte communication is designed to ensure transparency during discussions about projects within the SCW Program outside of WASC meetings. Vice-Chair Kelly Gardner disclosed being contacted by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) with concerns about approved SCW Program infiltration projects located in Operable Units, that may have the potential to move contamination plumes. Public Works staff explained that SCW Program approved projects go through a Site Assessment during their Design process. During the Design process any issues with the movement of contamination plumes should have been assessed. Vice-Chair Gardner connected the EPA contact with Public Works staff.

6) Public Comment Period

There were no public comments.

7) Presentations and Discussion Items

a) WASC Roles and Responsibilities

Presentation by Regional Coordination

Antos provided an overview of the SCW Program structure, timeline, and WASC roles and responsibilities. Presentation slides can be found on the [SCW Program website](#).

Chair Petschauer asked if there is a method for determining close outs for Infrastructure Projects, Scientific Studies (SS), or Technical Resource Projects (TRPs) for their respective WASCs. Antos explained that the SCW Program currently does not have a process for sharing project closeouts with the WASC, but it is something Public Works staff can consider. Antos added that WASC Members can request project proponents to present on projects. Chair Petschauer emphasized the value of understanding lessons learned and how these studies can be used as a tool for smaller cities. Watershed Coordinator Watson added that project updates will be presented at the next WASC meeting.

Chair Petschauer inquired if Public Works' Infrastructure LA initiative ties into the SCW Program for matching funds. Public Works' staff, Haris Harouny, mentioned that Project Developers are encouraged to seek out leverage funding as it provides points for their projects in the Scoring Criteria. Funding for the [Infrastructure Initiative](#) has mainly been seen for Transportation, but Developers can try applying for funding

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as multi benefit projects that provide road improvements and water quality improvements. Projects may also seek funding through the [Bipartisan Infrastructure Law](#) if their projects provide improvement to communities in Climate, Energy, and Environmental changes (please see links for more information related to [Water funding](#)). Antos noted that the Infrastructure LA initiative is a strategy for agencies across the region to collaborate to pursue federal funding. Chair Petschauer suggested creating a County webpage to showcase a portfolio of all the SCW Program funded projects.

Chair Petschauer requested the removal of a Stormwater Investment Plan (SIP) “Assumed Construction Costs” table in the Watershed Area Regional Program Progress Report (WARPP) that showed a scenario of 2,000% in funding. Watershed Coordinator Watson agreed that the table should have been shown to the WASC before it was included in the WARPP. Public Works staff explained that the RH WASC prioritized the five-year outlook, rather than considering a scenario that is unlikely to occur. Public Works staff emphasized the table was shown during SIP deliberations in the previous cycle. Antos added that every Design-only project in the SIP is considered a potential funding need for Construction funding, and those costs are reflected in the table. Chair Petschauer noted that the numbers also do not reflect any matching funds, despite it being easier to get matching funds for Construction than Design. Public Works staff highlighted the importance of the table, and noted that, as projects move to a more phased approach it will help the WASC to determine which projects should be revisited and which ones may need future funding.

b) Updated Fiscal Year (FY) 2024-25 Rio Hondo Strategic Outreach and Engagement Plan (SOEP)

Watershed Coordinator Richard Watson provided an overview of the FY2024-25 RH SOEP. Presentation slides can be found on the [SCW Program website](#).

Member Mark Hall noted that many projects require local employment but have trouble acquiring an employment base from the community. Watson mentioned part of the issue with this problem is the lack of focus and time given to stormwater, along with not properly training enough people in this matter. He then mentioned working with a Tribal group that has had effective workforce and development training. Watershed Coordinator Watson commented that the County recognizes the challenges of workforce training and will require additional research. Chair Petschauer mentioned the [City of Pasadena’s Municipal Assistance, Solutions, and Hiring \(MASH\) Program](#). MASH is a maintenance training program to help participants pursue a Municipal career within the strong workforce development. The program is looking into creating a white paper for including a green infrastructure portfolio to address routine maintenance within bioswales and subsurface infiltration galleries. Watershed Coordinator Watson referenced the Plymouth School Neighborhood Stormwater Capture Demonstration Project (hereafter referenced as Plymouth School Project) as an example of maintenance challenges due to high turnover and emphasized the importance of training school district personnel to support maintenance. Member Daniel Rossman noted that the Tataviam Band of Mission Indians has the first state recognized Tribal Conservation Corps that could be another great resource for this maintenance issue.

Member Rossman suggested that the Watershed Coordination team prepare an update tracking engagement and progress towards meeting the RH SOEP goals and outcomes. Member Matsumoto suggested that an action item could be preparing a template for an engagement tracker. Member Matsumoto also inquired about the Watershed Coordinator role and whether it includes engaging with developers to help inform large residential and commercial Development Projects. Watershed Coordinator Watson explained that while there is engagement with Public Agencies, including the San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments Public Works Directors, and City Managers, it may not be appropriate to directly approach those Development Projects. Watershed Coordinator Watson noted recent site visits to opportunity areas along public roadways with County staff and will report back to the WASC at the next meeting in September. Chair Petschauer suggested that, in addition to updates, the Watershed Coordinator could also include measurable metrics to help track engagement. Chair Petschauer expressed appreciation to the Watershed Coordinators and the value brought to outreach events.

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Member Rossman expressed concern about school greening projects that may not meet the same level of project benefits for the SCW Program, compared to other technical projects. Watershed Coordinator Watson shared how the Plymouth School Project demonstrated flood mitigation benefits. Watershed Coordinator Watson referred to a conversation with Claire Robinson (Amigos de los Rios), who suggested focusing on schools experiencing flooding.

c) Selection of Chair, Vice-Chair, or Co-Chairs

Public Works staff outlined the process to select the next Chair, Vice-Chair, and Co-Chairs for the RH WASC for the term spanning between August 2024 and July 2025. Public Works staff explained that Committee Members can nominate Committee Members during the meeting. Public Works staff described the responsibilities of the Chair, Vice-Chair, and Co-Chairs.

Vice-Chair Gardner nominated Chair Petschauer to continue serving as Chair for the RH WASC and announced the decision to step down as Vice-Chair. She then nominated Jennifer Aguilar with the contingency of member Aguilar becoming the Primary for the Upper San Gabriel Valley MWD. The WASC nominated Member Jennifer Aguilar as Vice-Chair with the contingency of Tom Love becoming the Alternate and Jennifer Aguilar becoming the Primary. Public Works staff noted that since Member Aguilar is the Committee Member Alternate, Public Works staff will need to formally make the change with Member Tom Love before Member Aguilar can serve as Vice-Chair.

8) Public Comment Period

There were no public comments.

9) Voting Items

a) Approve the Updated FY2024-25 RH SOEP

Member Rossman made a motion to approve the updated FY2024-25 RH SOEP, seconded by Member Juarez. The WASC voted to approve the updated FY2024-25 RH SOEP with 13 votes in favor, 0 opposed, and 0 in abstention (approved, see vote tracking sheet).

b) Selection of Chair, Vice-Chair or Co-Chairs

Vice-Chair Gardner made a motion to select Chair Petschauer as Chair and Member Aguilar as Vice-Chair, seconded by Member Hall. It was understood that Member Aguilar, who currently is an Alternate to Member Love, will “swap” roles to become the Primary representative of the Upper San Gabriel Valley MWD and therefore be eligible to serve as the Vice-Chair. The WASC voted to approve the selection of Chair and Vice-Chair with 13 votes in favor, 0 opposed, and 0 in abstention (approved, see vote tracking sheet).

10) Items for Next Agenda

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, September 17, 2024 from 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm. Items to be discussed at the next meeting include:

a) Regional Program Quarterly Summary for FY2023-24 Q1 and Q2

Watershed Coordinator Watson informed the WASC that there will be a presentation giving an overview of current projects in the current SIP at the next meeting.

Upon inquiry, Public Works staff informed the WASC that the TRP and SS project information will be available in the coming weeks for the WASC to review. If sufficient information is available, the TRP and SS may be ready for discussion at a future meeting.

11) Adjournment

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

RH WASC - August 20th, 2024							
Member Type	Quorum Present				Voting Item		
	Member	Voting/ Present?	Alternate	Voting/ Present?	Approve 07/30/2024 Meeting Minutes	Approve the updated 2024 Rio Hondo Strategic Outreach and Engagement Plan	Vote for Dawn Petschauer for Chair and Jennifer Aguilar for Vice-Chair of the Rio Hondo WASC
Agency	Julian Juarez	x	Jennifer Aborida		y	y	y
Agency	Tom Love		Jennifer Aguilar	x	y	y	y
Agency	Kelly Gardner	x	Lauren Augino		y	y	y
Agency	Dave Pierce		Alysha Chan	x	y	y	y
Agency	Richard Yee	x	Brent Maue		y	y	y
Community Stakeholder	Thomas Wong		Bryan Matsumoto	x	y	y	y
Community Stakeholder	Jill Fosselman	x			y	y	y
Community Stakeholder	Mark Hall	x	Mark Daniel		y	y	y
Community Stakeholder							
Community Stakeholder	Daniel Rossman	x	Liliana Griego		y	y	y
Municipal Members	David Dolphin		Latoya Waters	x	y	y	y
Municipal Members	Briget Arndell		Paul Cranmer				
Municipal Members	Jalaine Verdiner		Fernando Villaluna	x	a	y	y
Municipal Members	Gloria Crudgington		Alex Tachiki				
Municipal Members	Dawn Petschauer	x	James Tong		y	y	y
Municipal Members	Eddie Chan	x			a	y	y
Municipal Members							
Watershed Coordinator Non-Voting Member (RWA Planning)	Richard Watson	x	Julie Millett	x			
Total Non-Vacant Seats	15			Yay (Y)	11	13	13
Total Voting Members Present	13			Nay (N)	0	0	0
Agency	5			Abstain (A)	2	0	0
Community Stakeholder	4			Total	13	13	13
Municipal Members	4				Approved	Approved	Approved

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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			<i>[Handwritten Signature]</i>
Tom Love	Upper San Gabriel District			
Kelly Gardner	Main San Gabriel Basin			
Dave Pierce	Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts			
Richard Yee	Pasadena			<i>[Handwritten Signature]</i>
Thomas Wong	San Gabriel Valley MWD Division 3			
Jill Fosselman	Resident			
Mark Hall	Vector Control			<i>[Handwritten Signature]</i>
Daniel Rossman	The Wilderness Society			<i>[Handwritten Signature]</i>
David Dolphin	Alhambra			
Briget Arndell	Arcadia			
Jalaine Verdiner	LA County Public Works			
Gloria Crudgington	Monrovia			
Dawn Petschauer	Pasadena			
Eddie Chan	Irwindale			<i>[Handwritten Signature]</i>
Jennifer Aborida	Los Angeles County Flood Control District			

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 COMMITTEE MEMBER AND ALTERNATE SIGN-IN



Member Name	Municipality/ Organization	Email Address	P/A	Signature
Jennifer Aguilar	Upper San Gabriel District			<i>Jennifer Aguilar</i>
Lauren Augino	Main San Gabriel Basin Watermaster			
Alysha Chan	Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts			<i>Alysha Chan</i>
Brent Maue	Pasadena			
Bryan Matsumoto	Nature For All			<i>Bryan Matsumoto</i>
Mark Daniel	Vector Control			
Liliana Griego	Friends of the Los Angeles River			
Latoya Waters	Alhambra			<i>Latoya Waters</i>
Paul Cranmer	Arcadia			
Fernando Villaluna	LA County Public Works			<i>Fernando Villaluna</i>
Alex Tachiki	Monrovia			
James Tong	Pasadena			
Richard Watson	RWA			<i>Richard Watson</i>
Julie Millett	RWA			<i>Julie Millett</i>

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PUBLIC SIGN-IN



First Name	Last Name	Municipality/Organization	Email Address
Steve	Gibson	Pasadena city college	

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