

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



---

Thursday, January 23, 2025  
1:30pm – 3:30pm  
Los Angeles County Sanitation District – Conference Room E&F  
1955 Workman Mill Rd  
Whittier, CA 90601  
WebEx Meeting

## Committee Members Present:

\*Alynn Sun, Los Angeles County Flood Control District (Agency)  
\*Christopher Lapaz, Los Angeles County Sanitation District (Agency)  
Manuel Perez, Valley Vista Services, Inc. (Community)  
David Marquez, Urban Semillas (Community)  
Drew Ready, Council for Watershed Health (Community)  
Jeanette Flores, Charter Oak Unified School District (Community)  
Fernando Villaluna, Los Angeles County (Municipal), Vice-Chair  
Valerie Velasquez-Santoya, Glendora (Municipal)  
Matthew Hudson, Industry (Municipal)  
Romany Basilyous, Baldwin Park (Municipal)  
\*Mario Flores, Duarte (Municipal)  
Roberto Ortega, West Covina (Municipal)  
James Cortes, Day One (Watershed Coordinator, non-voting member)

## Committee Members Attending Virtually:

\*Andrea Vona, Los Angeles Country Parks and Recreation (Agency)

\*Committee Member Alternate

## Committee Members Not Present:

Tom Love, Upper San Gabriel District (Agency)  
Kelly Gardner, Main San Gabriel Basin (Agency)  
Julie Carver, Pomona (Municipal), Chair

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

---

## **1) Welcome and Introductions**

Fernando Villaluna, Vice-Chair of the Upper San Gabriel River (USGR) Watershed Area Steering Committee (WASC), welcomed Committee Members and called the meeting to order. Los Angeles County Public Works (Public Works) staff facilitated Committee Member introductions. A quorum was established. Public Works staff provided a brief WebEx tutorial.

## **2) Approval of Meeting Minutes from December 16, 2024**

Public Works staff presented the meeting minutes from the previous meeting. Member Manuel Perez motioned to approve the meeting minutes, seconded by Member Romany Basilyous. The WASC voted to approve the meeting minutes with 11 votes in favor, 2 vote in abstention, and 0 votes opposed (approved, see vote tracking sheet).

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



---

## 3) Committee Member and Program Updates

Public Works staff acknowledged the devastating impact of the recent fires in the Los Angeles region. The Safe, Clean Water (SCW) Program team is evaluating how the fires impacted funded projects and the Watershed Planning team is evaluating how lessons learned from these events can be integrated into the Initial Watershed Plans to enhance climate resilience.

Watershed Planning staff provided additional updates, noting that a methodology has been prepared to develop plans for each Watershed Area, and that the team is starting with the Lower Los Angeles River Watershed Area to ensure quality control and consistency across all nine Watershed Areas. Watershed Planning staff shared that based on baseline findings and benefit forecasts, strategies to achieve SCW Program goals are also being developed.

The Watershed Planning Framework is available on the SCW Program website under the [Adaptive Management](#) tab. The Community Strengths and Needs Assessment (CSNA) Survey and a Frequently Asked Questions document have also been launched and are available on the [SCW Program website](#). The Watershed Planning Tool, including a GIS map and dashboard, will also be launched to illustrate survey results and identify opportunity areas. For more information, Watershed Planning staff can be reached at [watershedplanning@pw.lacounty.gov](mailto:watershedplanning@pw.lacounty.gov).

Public Works staff provided an update, noting:

- Fiscal Year 2023-2024 (FY23-24) Annual Report (July 2023-June 2024) was due on December 31, 2024. Project Developers should address comments and resubmit as soon as possible.
- The Mid-Year Report (covering July-December 2024, previously known as Q1 & Q2) is due on February 15, 2025. There will be a two-week extension for submittals this time around. As mentioned during Watershed Planning workshops, there will also be a new Metrics & Measures section for all Project Developers to fill out by the new deadline of February 28. The Mid-Year Reports were launched last week.
- The FY24-25 Transfer Agreements/Addendum distribution began in December 2024. An email was sent out to Project Developers with instructions on how to use the Transfer Agreement functionality within the Reporting Module. Project Developers are advised to start uploading supporting documents, such as the Scope of Work (SOW), Authorization, and California Quality Act (CEQA) documents as applicable to execute agreements. For questions about specific projects, please email [SafeCleanWaterLA@pw.lacounty.gov](mailto:SafeCleanWaterLA@pw.lacounty.gov).
- The Regional Oversight Committee (ROC) met on December 11, 2024. The ROC discussed the Watershed Planning presentation on Framework, County Water Plan Overview, Implementation Update, and Interconnectivity of Initiatives. The January ROC meeting was canceled due to wildfire events in Los Angeles County. The upcoming ROC meeting is currently scheduled for February 12 from 1:00pm to 3:30pm. WASC and Scoring Committee Chairs will be reinvited to provide updates and recommendations. The ROC will also discuss updates on SCW Program Adaptive Management. More information can be found on the [ROC events webpage](#).
- The 2024 Municipal Transfer Agreements are currently being processed and executed by the Public Works staff. The initial fifth Disbursements were completed at the end of December 2024. Cities will need to comply with all reporting requirements to receive the fifth disbursement and Public Works staff is following up with pending municipalities.
- The Public Education and Community Engagement Grants Program formally launched on September 24, 2024. The Public Education and Community Engagement Grants Program, in collaboration with the Water Foundation, will support education and community engagement efforts related to stormwater and urban runoff capture. Proposals will be accepted until May 21 and will be evaluated and awarded on a rolling basis. More information can be found on the [Water Foundation website](#).

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



- The SCW Program offers a newsletter subscription to receive email notifications about Regional, Municipal, and District Program updates. Implementation updates can also be viewed on the News and Updates page on the [SCW Program website](#).

## 4) Watershed Coordinator Updates

Watershed Coordinator updates were deferred to the next meeting to allow time for Scientific Studies (SS) Presentations.

## 5) Ex Parte Communication Disclosure

There were no ex parte communication disclosures.

## 6) Presentation and Discussion Items

### a. Scientific Studies Program (SS) Presentations

#### i. Data-Driven Resource Optimization and Planning System (DROPS)

Presentation by California Data Collaborative. *Implement the DROPS tool that integrates advanced data analytics with AI to site distributed stormwater capture and filtration projects.*

Christopher Tull (California Data Collaborative (CDC)) presented on the Data-Driven Resource Optimization and Planning System (DROPS) for Los Angeles County SS. DROPS is a tool that plans to integrate advanced data analytics with artificial intelligence for site distributed stormwater capture and filtration projects. Presentation slides are available on the [SCW Program website](#).

Member Jeanette Flores confirmed with Tull that the budget will mainly be used for labor, and that an engineering consultant is expected to be used for the site verification component of the SS.

Member Drew Ready requested examples of data the SS will use to identify site and stakeholders. Tull explained that historical rain data and physical site characteristics, such as slope and soil type, will be used in site selection. Tull added there will also be sociodemographic layers included in the tool such as land ownership, disadvantaged community status, and existing infrastructure. Member Ready suggested that the data used to create the tool should be explicitly cited so users are aware of the data sources.

Member Ready highlighted that there is a Stewardship Map that could help the SS Applicant with stakeholder work and that WASC Members can share more data sources if the SS is funded. Tull noted that after working with a couple of WASCs in this pilot phase, the SS Developers will want region-wide input on the DROPS tool.

In response to a question regarding training tutorials, Tull shared that there is not a line item in the budget to include expansive, in-person training tutorials for the tool, but the SS scope includes the development of instruction documents and pre-recorded webinars.

Upon inquiry, Tull also explained that there are two pathways being discussed internally for long term maintenance of the tool, either as a service offering from the CDC or the creation of a tiered membership system. Tull noted that the SS could also return to the WASC for funding operation and maintenance. Regarding the tiered membership system, Watershed Coordinator James Cortes clarified with Tull that there would be a free version of the tool and that premium features could be accessed for an additional cost. In response to how much premium features would cost, Tull explained that the SS is currently seeking funding for tool development. Tull added that while future operation may be funded by users, that the cost is not yet known.

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

---



Tull clarified that while the core demographic during development of the tool was water agencies, the SS has received feedback that others may find the tool useful and the SS plans to incorporate additional users during the pilot phase.

## ii. **Depave LA: Prioritizing Parking Lots for Green Retrofitting**

Presentation by Council for Watershed Health (CWH). *Create a tool to identify, rank, and prioritize parking lots for greening, water quality, and/or water supply focused retrofits.*

Jason Casanova (CWH) and Craig Doberstein (Herrera) presented Depave LA: Prioritizing Parking Lots for Green Retrofitting (hereafter referred to as Depave LA). Depave LA intends to create a tool to identify, rank, and prioritize parking lots for greening and retrofitting. Presentation slides are available on the [SCW Program website](#).

Upon inquiry from Member J. Flores, Casanova noted that school districts should prioritize depaving parking lots because parking lots without trees and shade contribute to the heat island effect and that brake pad dust and oil leaking from cars create contamination that runs off from parking lots. Casanova also noted that CalFire is prioritizing depaving play areas in schools, and that this SS can align with efforts to depave multiple areas in schools and potentially serve as a future leverage funding opportunity.

Casanova noted that a cost estimate would be site dependent, but that smaller depaving projects could range from \$10,000 to \$100,000, while a larger project including best management practices (BMPs) could be hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Member Basilyous noted that many large parking lots are owned by private companies. Casanova responded that the SS Applicants would work with communities to connect with and incentivize large businesses. Casanova also noted that there are many agencies and municipalities that have large parking lots which may be easier to work with. Doberstein highlighted that the goals of the SS are long term and that the SS can be a catalyst for further work. Casanova highlighted experience working with a statewide coalition that has successfully worked with large hardware stores to stop selling invasive species in the plant department, as an example of successful partnership with larger businesses.

Member David Marques expressed concerns based on conversations heard about utilizing parking lots as potential housing locations and how to balance statewide priorities for housing supply and water supply, which may at times be seen as competing interests. Doberstein highlighted that the tool can filter out locations that are already designated for other uses and that there would still be many parking lots that require depaving.

Casanova noted that an additional outcome of this tool's development may be guidelines and best practices that can be used for building new parking lots. Casanova also noted that push back is anticipated as people do not want to lose parking spaces. The Accelerate Resilience Los Angeles (ARLA) DepaveLA Mapping and Report will help study developers with optimization.

Vice-Chair Villaluna clarified with Casanova on the differences in scope of the ARLA DepaveLA Mapping and Report with the proposed SS. Casanova explained that the ARLA DepaveLA Mapping and Report considered all impervious surfaces in Los Angeles, and that this SS would leverage such existing work.

Member Perez expressed concern that depaving would lower businesses' SCW Program's parcel tax and Casanova noted that this will be further considered during the outreach task.

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



---

### iii. **Hardscape and Brownfield Transformation Opportunity Study**

Presentation by San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments and Craftwater Engineering, Inc. *Explore the potential Safe, Clean Water Program benefits of transforming hardscapes and brownfields into permeable, multi-benefit surfaces.*

Paulina Mejia (San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments) presented on the Hardscape and Brownfield Transformation Opportunity Study. The SS explores the potential benefits of transforming hardscapes and brownfields into permeable, multi-benefit surfaces. Presentation slides are available on the [SCW Program website](#).

Member Ready asked how the tool would be managed over time as new information and data sets become available or as land use changes. Brad Wardynski (Craftwater) explained that SGVCOG would host the tool on a website for up to two years. Wardynski noted that an organization is expected to take ownership of the tool if the tool proves to be a viable resource and that the organization would then be responsible for programmatic recommendations.

### iv. **Next Gen Bioretention: Towards Living and Adaptive Stormwater Systems for a Resilient Los Angeles County**

Presentation by TreePeople. *A study assessing existing systems and delivering modeled next generation designs for resilient, multi benefit bioretention systems*

Dustin Hermann (TreePeople), Igor Bronz (TreePeople), and Craig Doberstein (Herrera) presented on the Next Gen Bioretention: Towards Living and Adaptive Stormwater Systems for a Resilient Los Angeles County Study. The SS intends to assess existing systems and deliver designs for resilient, multi-benefit bioretention systems. Presentation slides are available on the [SCW Program website](#).

Upon inquiry, the SS Applicants explained that this SS would evaluate the performance of existing systems and commented that insufficient systems were likely designed using outdated models. Member Ready commented that bioretention systems are dynamic and individual, and suggested adaptive management techniques based on successful systems, including post-construction monitoring. The SS Applicants noted that systems often do not go through extensive evaluation after construction and one of the SS project's goals is to determine the factors that contribute to a system's success or failure over time. Hermann noted that many BMPs designs are flexible and can be adjusted to increase success, such as adjusting plant choices and selecting appropriate maintenance practices. Bronz highlighted how the SS Applicants intends to integrate community input for BMP aesthetics.

Member Matthew Hudson clarified with Hermann that the SS Applicants intend to update recommended BMP specifications, but that incorporating changes into the Low Impact Development (LID) manual developed by Los Angeles Public Works, which is used by many developers, would be difficult.

Watershed Coordinator Cortes emphasized that there are many variables to consider for site selection and Bronz noted that site selection will consider many variables in order to be representative of the watershed. The SS will determine the most common variable combinations for sites in the region and develop a list of fifteen sites for the Tier 1 method, five sites for the Tier 2 method, and two sites for the Tier 3 method.

Member Ready asked if plant performance will be evaluated, noting that bioaccumulation of metals in plants can be variable. Bronz noted that the SS plans to evaluate heavy metals and Volatile Organic Compounds during Tier 2.

## 7) **Public Comment Period**

One public comment card was received prior to the meeting and is available on the [SCW Program website](#).

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

---



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

The next meeting will be on Thursday, February 27, 2025 from 1:30pm to 3:30pm. Items to be discussed at the next meeting include:

- a. Peer Review Summary of Scientific Studies
- b. Project Modification Requests (PMRs) for WASC Discussion
- c. Stormwater Investment Plan (SIP) Deliberations

The WASC will receive the Scientific Study peer review summaries prior to next meeting.

Project Developers will be invited to attend the next WASC meeting to answer questions regarding the PMRs that are preliminarily deemed inconsistent with the previously approved SIP.

Member Ready noted that there were reports overdue at a previous meeting's discussion on submitted progress reports. Public Works staff noted that the developers for these projects were invited to the last WASC meeting to provide an update on their missing reports. Public Works staff will continue to ensure that all available reporting data from completed reports is provided to the WASC before SIP deliberation.

Vice-Chair Villaluna invited WASC members to attend the next ROC meeting to listen to Chair Julie Carver's presentation on USGR WASC's progress.

## **9) Adjournment**

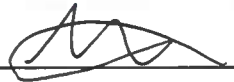


Vice-Chair Villaluna thanked the WASC Members and the public for their attendance and participation and adjourned the meeting.

**UPPER SAN GABRIEL RIVER WASC MEETING - JANUARY 23, 2025**

		Quorum Present				Voting Items (see meeting minutes)
Member Type	Position	Member	Voting/ Present?	Alternate	Voting/ Present?	Approve 12/16/2024 Meeting Minutes
Agency	Los Angeles County FCD	Julian Juarez		Alynn Sun	x	y
Agency	Upper San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District	Tom Love		Patty Cortez		
Agency	Main San Gabriel Basin	Kelly Gardner		Tony Zampielo		
Agency	Sanitation Districts	Francisco Guerrero		Christopher Lapaz	x	y
Agency	Los Angeles County Parks and Recreation	Sean Woods		Andrea Vona	x	y
Community Stakeholder	Valley Vista Services, Inc	Manuel D. Perez	x			y
Community Stakeholder	Urban Semillas	David Marquez	x	Miguel Luna		y
Community Stakeholder	Council for Watershed Health	Drew Ready	x	Jason Casanova		a
Community Stakeholder	Charter Oak Unified School District	Jeanette Flores	x			y
Community Stakeholder						
Municipal Members	Los Angeles County	Fernando Villaluna	x	Joseph Venzon		y
Municipal Members	Glendora	Valerie Velasquez-Santoya	x	Sandy Costandi		y
Municipal Members	Pomona	Julie Carver		Nicholas Delgado		
Municipal Members	Industry	Mathew Hudson	x	Don Nguyen		y
Municipal Members	Baldwin Park	Romany Basilyous	x	Shari Garwick		y
Municipal Members	Duarte	Stephanie Sandoval		Mario Flores	x	a
Municipal Members	West Covina	Roberto Ortega	x			y
Watershed Coordinator Non-Voting Member	Watershed Coordinator	James Cortes	x			
Total Non-Vacant Seats		16			Yes (Y)	11
Total Voting Members Present		13			No (N)	0
Agency		3			Abstain (A)	2
Community Stakeholder		4			Total	13
Municipal Members		6				Approved

Upper San Gabriel River  
 Watershed Area Steering Committee Meeting  
 COMMITTEE MEMBER AND ALTERNATE SIGN-IN



Member Name	Municipality/ Organization	Email Address		Signature
Alynn Sun	FCD	asun@dpw.lacounty.gov	A	
Andrea Vona	Los Angeles County Parks and Recreation	avona@parks.lacounty.gov	A	
Christopher Lapaz	Sanitation Districts	christopherlapaz@lacsdsd.org	A	
David Marquez	California Consulting, INC	jhdm.david@gmail.com	A	
Don Nguyen	El Monte	dnguyen@elmonteca.gov	A	
Drew Ready	Council for Watershed Health	drew@watershedhealth.org	P	
Fernando Villaluna	Los Angeles County	FVILLALUNA@dpw.lacounty.gov	P	
Francisco Guerrero	Sanitation Districts	fguerrero@lacsdsd.org	P	
James Cortes Rivera	Day One	james@godayone.orgv	WC	
Jason Casanova	Council for Watershed Health	cas@watershedhealth.org	A	
Jeanette Flores	Charter Oak Unified School District	jeanettevflores@gmail.com	P	
Joseph Venzon	Los Angeles County	jvenzon@dpw.lacounty.gov	A	
Julian Juarez	FCD	JJUAREZ@dpw.lacounty.gov	P	
Julie Carver	Pomona	Julie.Carver@pomonaca.gov; chris_diggs@ci.pomona.ca.us	P	
Kelly Gardner	Main San Gabriel Basin	kelly@watermaster.org	P	



Upper San Gabriel River  
 Watershed Area Steering Committee Meeting  
 COMMITTEE MEMBER AND ALTERNATE SIGN-IN



Member Name	Municipality/ Organization	Email Address		Signature
Manuel D. Perez	Valley Vista Services, Inc.	manny@myvvs.com	P	
Mario Flores	Bradbury	mflores@cityofbradbury.org	A	
Matthew Hudson	Industry	mHUDSON@cityofindustry.org	P	
Miguel Luna	Urban Semillas	miguel@urbansemillas.com	P	
Nicholas Delgado	City of Diamond Bar	ndelgado@diamondbarca.gov	A	
Patty Cortez	Upper San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District	patty@usgvmwd.org	A	
Roberto Ortega	West Covina	Rortega@westcovina.org	P	
Romany Basilyous	Baldwin Park	RBasilyous@baldwinpark.com	P	
Sandy Costandi	Covina	SCostandi@covinaca.gov	A	
Sean Woods	Los Angeles County Parks and Recreation	SWoods@parks.lacounty.gov	P	
Shari Garwick	San Dimas	SGarwick@sandimasca.gov	A	
Stephanie Sandoval	Duarte	ssandoval@accessduarte.com	P	
Tom Love	Upper San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District	tom@usgvmwd.org	P	
Tony Zampielo	Main San Gabriel Basin Watermaster	tony@watermaster.org	A	
Valerie Velasquez-Santoya	Glendora	vvelasquez@cityofglendora.org	P	

Upper San Gabriel River  
 Watershed Area Steering Committee Meeting  
 PUBLIC SIGN-IN



First Name	Last Name	Municipality/Organization	Email Address
Craig	Doberstern	Hennega	cdoberstern@hennega.com
Igor <del>Bronz</del>	Bronz	Tree People	ibronz@treepeople.org
Dustin #	HERRMANN	TREEPEOPLE	dherrmann@treepeople.org

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

**Webex Attendees**  
**Upper San Gabriel River WASC Meeting**  
**January 23, 2025**

Andrea Vona - WASC Member  
Andrew Kim  
Anna Philipp  
Anthony Ortega  
Brad Wardynski - Presenter  
Claire  
Clara Dahl  
Daria Antonova - LACPW

David Bielsik  
Donna T  
Ed Suher CASC  
Emily Ng  
Gurjot Kohli | Stantec  
Jason Pepito - SCW WP  
Jenny Chau  
Jonathan Ontiveros

Liana Poghosyan  
Mayra Cabrera - LACPW  
Melineh Aghakhabian  
Nicole Houston  
Oliver Galang  
Paulina Mejia - Presenter  
Rafael Piamonte  
Sofia Cardenas - LACDPW

Tony Howze  
Upper San Gabriel River WASC  
Uriel Cobian - LACPW  
William OBraitis  
Imarshall