

Rio Hondo

Watershed Area Steering Committee (WASC)

Meeting Minutes



Tuesday, February 18, 2025
1:00pm – 3:00pm
Library Community Room
321 S. Myrtle Ave, Monrovia, CA 91016
WebEx Meeting

Committee Members Present:

Julian Juarez, Los Angeles County Flood Control District (Agency)
Tom Love, Upper San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District (Agency), Vice-Chair
Kelly Gardner, Main San Gabriel Basin Watermaster (Agency)
*Alysha Chan, Los Angeles County Sanitation District (Agency)
Hayden Melbourn, City of Pasadena Public Works (Agency)
Jill Fosselman, Resident (Community)
Bryan Matsumoto, Nature for All (Community)
Latoya Waters, Alhambra (Municipal)
Briget Arndell, Arcadia (Municipal)
Fernando Villaluna, Los Angeles County (Municipal)
*Sophia Sousa, Monrovia (Municipal)
Dawn Petschauer, Pasadena (Municipal), Chair
Eddie Chan, Irwindale (Municipal)

Committee Members Attending Virtually

Richard Watson, Richard Watson and Associates Planning (Watershed Coordinator, non-voting member)

Committee Members Not Present:

Brian C. Tabatabai, (Community)
Marisol Cortez, (Community)
Vacant, (Community)
Vacant, (Municipal)

*Committee Member Alternate

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.

Watershed Coordinator Richard Watson joined the meeting virtually with just cause under AB 2449.

2) Approval of Meeting Minutes from January 21, 2025

Public Works staff presented the minutes from the previous meeting. Member Hayden Melbourn motioned to approve the meeting minutes, seconded by Member Jill Fosselman. The WASC voted to approve the January 21, 2025 meeting minutes with 10 votes in favor, 0 opposed, 2 in abstention, and 1 absent at time of vote (approved, see vote tracking sheet).

3) Committee Member and Program Updates

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Member Bryan Matsumoto expressed concern about the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) staging site storing and processing hazardous materials collected from the recent fires. Member Matsumoto emphasized the WASC's responsibility to protect the Watershed Area and inquired whether the WASC should actively support the Watermaster's letter in addressing water quality and safety. Chair Petschauer mentioned that the City of Pasadena has established task force groups to aid in cleanup efforts.

Vice-Chair Tom Love commented that the processing location of hazardous waste is not as significant, since contaminants are already present in the watershed. Chair Petschauer added that projects in the City of Pasadena have made design modifications, such as incorporating fire-resistant plant species and reevaluating outreach and engagement strategies for communities impacted by the wildfires. Chair Petschauer added that the WASC can ask Project Proponents how projects are being modified to increase wildfire resiliency.

Member Matsumoto expressed gratitude to the Watermaster, highlighting the Watermaster's commitment to safety and preserving groundwater quality.

Public Works staff provided an update, noting:

- The Mid-Year Report (covering progress and expenditures between July to December, previously known as the Quarter 1 (Q1) and Q2 Reports) are due on February 28th.
- The new Metrics and Measures section is now available as a new tile in the Reporting Module for Project Developers approved for projects in the Fiscal Year 2020-2021 (FY20-21) through FY23-24 Stormwater Investment Plans (SIPs) to fill out by February 28th.
- [The 2025 Q3 Quarterly Funding Report and Matrix](#) is now available on the SCW Program website under the [Resources tab](#). The Funding Report and Matrix includes an overview of recent funding policy highlights and identifies active and upcoming funding opportunities. The Regional Coordination team has been monitoring ongoing activity related to federal funding opportunities.
- The FY24-25 Transfer Agreements and Addendum distribution began in December 2024. An email was sent out to new and continuing Project Developers with instructions on how to use the Transfer Agreement functionality within the Reporting Module. Project Developers are advised to start uploading support documents, such as the Scope of Work (SOW), Authorization, and California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) documents, as applicable, to execute agreements. For questions about specific Transfer Agreements or Addendums, email SafeCleanWaterLA@dpw.lacounty.gov.
- The Regional Oversight Committee (ROC) met on February 12th from 1:00pm to 4:30pm. The ROC invited WASC and Scoring Committee (SC) Chairs to provide updates and recommendations for the 2025 Biennial Report. The ROC discussed updates on the SCW Program Adaptive Management. More information can be found on the [ROC events webpage](#).
- Public Works' Watershed Planning staff noted that a methodology has been prepared to develop Initial Watershed Plans for each 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, [Community Strengths and Needs Assessment \(CSNA\) Survey](#), and a [Frequently Asked Questions](#) document have 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 identify opportunity areas. For more information, Watershed Planning staff can be reached at WatershedPlanning@pw.lacounty.gov.

Emily Ng (Stantec, Regional Coordination) shared that the upcoming ROC meeting on March 12th will be seeking public input on the development of the 2025 Biennial Report process. The ROC meeting will include an extended public comment period to gather feedback on the effectiveness of the SCW Program in achieving its goals in the past two years and to identify areas of improvement.

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4) Ex Parte Communication Disclosure

There were no ex parte communications.

5) Presentations and Discussion Items

a) Continuing Infrastructure Program Projects and Scientific Studies Status Update

Presented by Watershed Coordinator

Watershed Coordinator Richard Watson provided status updates on continuing Infrastructure Program (IP) projects, Technical Resource Program (TRP) project concepts, and Scientific Studies (SS). Watershed Coordinator Watson shared that some projects may consider redesigning elements to address the elevated amounts of toxins due to the recent fires. Presentation slides can be found on the [SCW Program website](#).

Upon inquiry, Public Works staff clarified that the Regional Program Distribution is evaluated over a rolling 5-year period each year. The criteria for IP activities will be calculated based on the total funding allocated over the 5-year period. The criteria for TRP activities and SS Program activities will be calculated based on the annual revenue generated by the Watershed Area over the 5-year period.

b) Scientific Studies Peer Review Summaries

Ng provided an overview of the SS Peer Review Summaries and shared that the SS were reviewed by a designated independent review team. For FY25-26, 14 SS were submitted across the nine Watershed Areas, with the RH WASC receiving four proposals.

Ng added that the ROC has expressed interest in identifying Countywide priorities for SS by forming a technical working group and hosting a symposium to share lessons learned and promote regional collaboration.

Upon inquiry, Ng clarified that Public Works staff is encouraging SS Proponents to reach out if a proposed SS focuses on a topic of countywide significance, to explore opportunities to partner on a regional study.

Watershed Coordinator Watson mentioned that the SS peer review team consists of academics recognized as experts in the field of water. Ng stated that the SS peer review team evaluates project objectives, technical approaches, and whether the SS meets the goals of the SCW Program. The SS Peer Review Summaries can be found on the [SCW Program website](#).

i) Data-Drive Resource Optimization and Planning System (DROPS) for Los Angeles County

Foothill Municipal Water District

Chair Dawn Petschauer asked the SS Proponent if existing tools had been reviewed to avoid potential redundancies and inquired about the additional value the DROPS for LA County (hereafter referred to as the DROPS Tool) SS would provide beyond existing datasets.

Christopher Tull (California Data Collaborative) referenced recent discussions with several dataset developers and review of existing databases including Craftwater Engineering's preSIP Tool, and the Accelerate Resilience LA's (ARLA) Living Infrastructure Toolkit. Tull explained that the primary distinction of the DROPS Tool is its technical design, aimed at assisting water resources staff at water agencies to better evaluate water use efficiency. Tull stated that while there is some overlap with existing tools, the DROPS Tool intends to build on existing datasets. Tull also noted that a pilot study for DROPS, independent of this request for funding through the SCW Program, is currently in progress.

iv) Hardscape and Brownfield Transformation Opportunity Study

San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments (SGVCOG)

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Vice-Chair Tom Love expressed concern regarding infiltration on a brownfield site and inquired if the Hardscape and Brownfield Transformation Opportunity Tool would identify existing site contaminations. Thom Epps (Craftwater Engineering) noted that the Hardscape and Brownfield Transformation Opportunity Tool will use EPA resources and data to identify brownfield status.

Chair Petschauer also referenced previous discussions that Member Kelly Gardner had with the EPA regarding concerns about infiltration projects on brownfield sites. Chair Petschauer emphasized the importance of securing support from the EPA and providing a letter of recommendation from the EPA's Watermaster to ensure regulation compliance.

Member Gardner noted that one of the main concerns in the RH Watershed Area is the presence of existing Superfund sites ([Superfund Alternative Approach \(SAA\)](#)). Member Gardner added that infiltration could potentially exacerbate contamination plume boundaries and commented that the Watermaster will need to evaluate infiltration projects to assess impacts to water supply and quality (please refer to the [Five-Year Water Quality and Supply Plans](#)).

Epps noted that the SS will screen brownfields using the California State Water Resources Control Board's (Water Board) GeoTracker to help identify ideal sites, but GeoTracker may not have enough information to determine whether a site is suitable for infiltration.

Upon inquiry, Mackenzie Bolger (SGVCOG) noted that ongoing Operations and Maintenance (O&M) will be managed by SGVCOG and has been included in the budget. Mackenzie also confirmed that limited funding availability across Watershed Areas is the main reason the SS does not target other areas that have more contaminated sites.

ii) Depave LA: Prioritizing Parking Lots for Green Retrofitting *Council for Watershed Health*

Chair Dawn Petschauer asked the SS Proponent if they were able to discuss their study with the proponent from the Hardscape and Brownfield Transformation Opportunity Study regarding the overlap with the brownfield infiltration sites. Craig Doberstein (Herrera Environmental) shared that the Depave LA: Prioritizing Parking Lots for Green Retrofitting (hereafter referred to as Depave LA) SS differs from the Hardscape and Brownfield Transformation Opportunity Study by focusing on a specific group of properties and evaluating parking lots at a site-specific scale. Doberstein added that the Depave LA SS would help prioritize specific sites to move forward with the SCW Program TRP process. Doberstein emphasized that, in addition to the Depave LA data, the complementary Toolkit is a critical component of the project since it facilitates project implementation by outlining Design and O&M considerations.

When asked how Depave LA addresses additional pollutant loading due to the recent fires, Jason Casanova (Council for Watershed Health) explained that the Toolkit will include wildfire resilience as a design consideration. Doberstein added that pollution-generating impervious surfaces, such as parking lots, are a large contributor to pollutant deposition. Doberstein emphasized the importance of retrofitting parking lots to manage runoff and improve stormwater treatment.

Committee Member Sophia Sousa inquired if this study will be investigating both private and public parking lots. Casanova confirmed that Depave LA will evaluate both publicly and privately owned parking lots. Chair Petschauer confirmed this overlap with the Hardscape and Brownfield Transformation Opportunity Study, since both studies are looking into schools.

iii) Next Gen Bioretention: Towards Living and Adaptive Stormwater Systems for a Resilient Los Angeles County *TreePeople*

The Committee did not have any questions for the Next Gen Bioretention SS Proponent.

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c) Project Modification Request (PMR) Overview

Ng provided an overview of PMRs submitted in FY25-26 for the RH WASC. Presentation slides can be found on the [SCW Program website](#). [PMR Guidelines](#) can be found on the [SCW Program website](#) under the Adaptive Management tab.

Ng shared that the RH WASC received four Project Modification Request (PMR) forms for consideration. Public Works staff deemed three of the four projects and study to be inconsistent with the previously approved SIP, prompting further discussion with the WASC. PMR forms for the three projects and study deemed inconsistent are available on the [SCW Program website](#).

i) East Los Angeles College Northeast Drainage Area and City of Monterey Park Biofiltration Project

Los Angeles Community College District

Daniel Apt (Olaunu) provided an overview of the PMR and noted that while the overall scope of the project has not changed, the cost of construction has increased significantly since 2020. The project is requesting an additional \$500,000 from the RH WASC. Apt added that the Los Angeles Community College District (LACCD) is contributing an additional \$2 million. Apt provided a status update on the project, including a recently executed property use agreement with the City of Monterey Park and final design submission to the Division of the State Architect (DSA) for approval. Apt noted that the project is anticipated to finalize design this month, and construction is anticipated to start this summer pending CEQA approvals.

Apt noted that funds are available to start construction, but the project will require additional funding to fully implement the project. Upon inquiry, Apt shared that East Los Angeles College maintenance staff, who have undergone a comprehensive training program, would be responsible for the O&M.

ii) Maximizing Impact of Minimum Control Measures

San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments

Brianna Datti (Craftwater Engineering) provided an overview of the PMR, noting that the main change to the original SS includes developing field data documenting runoff water quality from both unswept and swept street segments. Datti noted that the SS plans to coordinate with cities to identify streets that will be tested.

Elizabeth Fassman-Beck (Southern California Coastal Water Research Project (SCCWRP)) noted that SCCWRP has developed and pilot-tested the technology to simulate precipitation and collect reliable data. Fassman-Beck noted that the testing could produce additional data to reduce uncertainty of the model and augment what would be tested in the RH Watershed Area. Committee Member Jill Fosselman inquired on the overall applications of the data being collected, such as the possibility of improving resources for pollution runoff. Fassman-Beck stated that the data could be applied to identify cost-effective ways to improve or expand street sweeping programs that can improve pollutant removal. Datti added that identifying these opportunities can help offset a large burden of pollutants.

Upon inquiry, Fassman-Beck explained that the findings can be anonymous. Fassman-Beck added that the study would coordinate with each city to evaluate different types of sweepers, frequency, and site selection for testing.

When asked how the SS will consider increased pollutant runoff due to fires, Datti explained that the SS will integrate findings from the Fire Effects Study, which Craftwater is also leading, in the Upper Los Angeles River Watershed Management Area.

iii) Eaton Wash Stormwater Capture Project (previously known as Kinneloa Yard Stormwater Capture Project Preliminary Design and Feasibility Study)

City of Pasadena

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Jeff Khun (City of Pasadena) provided an overview of the PMR and explained that the project modification involves relocating the project (from Kinneloa Yard) to a city-owned parcel south of Del Mar Boulevard (Eaton Wash). Khun added that the alternative location may provide more benefits due to its proximity to the Eaton Wash channel, Eaton Blanche Park, and the Boys and Girls Club. Khun shared that the original site was selected for the installation of a hydrogen fueling station, since it is the only vacant city-owned site accessible by the City of Pasadena's zero-emissions bus fleet. Khun commented that the decision to utilize the original site for the zero-emissions bus fleet aligns with the City of Pasadena's Zero Emission Rollout Plan and Climate Action Plan.

Oliver Galang (Craftwater Engineering) clarified that the project would maintain its current configuration and design within the existing budget, so there would be no impact to SIP funding allocations this year because of this PMR. Galang also noted that the Kinneloa Yard site is considered a brownfield, which may not be ideal for infiltration. Galang highlighted numerous benefits of relocating the site, including increased connectivity to the park and Boys and Girls Club, as well as improved drainage to provide more Water Supply Benefits.

Member Melbourn added that a signalized intersection would be added to improve pedestrian connectivity and safety to the site. Chair Petschauer highlighted the opportunity to add a bikeway along Eaton Wash, which would provide direct access to existing facilities and support expanded access.

Galang mentioned that the City of Pasadena has the opportunity to secure \$6.5 million from Caltrans to fund this project. Galang added that further delays in funding could result in the loss of matching funds, emphasizing the importance for the project to proceed on schedule.

d) Rio Hondo Stormwater Investment Plan Tool Preview

Public Works staff provided an overview of the [SIP Tool](#) onscreen. Public Works staff reminded the WASC of the SIP requirement that 85 percent of funds are allocated for IP, 10 percent for TRP, and 5 percent for SS over the 5-year rolling period. Public Works staff confirmed that a preliminary project ranking survey and supplemental resources will be sent out to the WASC to assist with the decision-making process. Public Works staff also noted that as TRPs are completed, any unused TRP funds will be returned to the RH WASC. Public Works staff informed the WASC that the next meeting will be extended by an hour to allow more time for SIP deliberations.

6) Public Comment Period

Public Works staff compiled all public comments and have uploaded them to the SCW Program website. In person, virtual and call-in users were invited to provide public comment. Public Works staff received one public comment card, which can be found on the SCW Program website, under [Public Comment Card](#). There were no public comments made during the meeting.

7) Voting Items

There were no voting items.

8) Items for Next Agenda

The next meeting is scheduled for March 18th, 2025 from 1:00pm – 4:00pm. Items to be discussed at the next meeting include:

- a) Regional Program Quarterly Report Summary for FY23-24 Q3 and Q4
- b) Rio Hondo Project Prioritization and Selection Discussion for populating the FY25-26 SIP

9) 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 - February 18, 2025

		Quorum Present				Voting Item
Member Type	Position	Member	Voting/ Present?	Alternate	Voting/ Present?	Approve 1/21/2025 Meeting Minutes
Agency	Los Angeles County Flood Control District	Julian Juarez	x	Alynn Sun		y
Agency	Upper San Gabriel District	Tom Love**	x	Patty Cortez		y
Agency	Main San Gabriel Basin	Kelly Gardner	x	Lauren Augino		y
Agency	LA County Sanitation Districts	Dave Pierce		Alysha Chan	x	a
Agency	Pasadena	Hayden Melbourn	x	Brent Maue		y
Community Stakeholder	Resident	Brian C. Tabatabai				
Community Stakeholder	Resident	Jill Fosselman	x			y
Community Stakeholder		Marisol Cortez				
Community Stakeholder						
Community Stakeholder	Nature for All	Bryan Matsumoto	x	Jade Nguyen		a
Municipal Members	City of Alhambra	Latoya Waters	x	Gehovanny Herrera		y
Municipal Members	City of Arcadia	Briget Arndell	x	Paul Cranmer		y
Municipal Members	LA County Public Works	Fernando Villaluna	x	Paul Choy		y
Municipal Members	City of Monrovia	Alex Tachiki		Sophia Sousa	x	y
Municipal Members	City of Pasadena	Dawn Petschauer*	x	James Tong		y
Municipal Members	City of Irwindale	Eddie Chan	x			absent during voting
Municipal Members						
Watershed Coordinator						
Non-Voting Member (RWA Planning)	RWA Planning	Richard Watson	x	Julie Millett		
Total Non-Vacant Seats		15			Yay (Y)	10
Total Voting Members Present		13			Nay (N)	0
Agency		5			Abstain (A)	2
Community Stakeholder		2			Total	12
Municipal Members		6				Approved

Attendees
Rio Hondo WASC Meeting
February 18, 2025

Alynn Sun LACFCD

Emily Ng

Mei-Lin Hanna JLHA

Bryan Igboke

Jade Nguyen

Pablo Forni - Los Angeles County

Carlos Rodriguez

James - USGR WC

Public Works

Chris

Jason Casanova, CWH

Paul Choy

Christopher Tull, CaDC

Jenny Chau

Richard Watson

Clara Dahl

Julie Millett

Robert Gomez

Craig Doberstein

Katie Marsh

Ryanna Fossum

Dusadee Corhiran

Luis Perez SCW WP

SCWP

Emily Huang Stantec

Marisela Velasquez - Los Angeles

Thom Epps Craftwater

County Public Works



Member Name	Municipality/ Organization	P/A	Signature
Julian Juarez	Los Angeles County Flood Control District	P	
Alynn Sun	Los Angeles County Flood Control District	A	
Tom Love	Upper San Gabriel District	P	
Patty Cortez	Upper San Gabriel District	A	
Kelly Gardner	Main San Gabriel Basin	P	
Lauren Augino	Main San Gabriel Basin Watermaster	A	
Dave Pierce	Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts	P	
Alysha Chan	Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts	A	
Hayden Melbourn	Pasadena	P	
Brent Maue	Pasadena	A	
Brian C. Tabatabai	Resident - City of West Covina	P	
Jill Fosselman	Resident	P	
Marisol Cortez		P	
Bryan Matsumoto	Nature For All	P	
Jade Nguyen	Nature For All	A	
Latoya Waters	Alhambra	P	



Member Name	Municipality/ Organization	P/A	Signature
Gehovanny Herrera	Alhambra	A	
Briget Arndell	Arcadia	P	<i>Briget Arndell</i>
Paul Cranmer	Arcadia	A	
Fernando Villaluna	LA County Public Works	P	<i>Fernando Villaluna</i>
Paul Choy	LA County Public Works	A	
Alex Tachiki	Monrovia	P	
Sophia Sousa	Monrovia	A	
Dawn Petschauer	Pasadena	P	<i>Dawn Petschauer</i>
James Tong	Pasadena	A	
Eddie Chan	Irwindale	P	
Richard Watson	RWA	WC	
Julie Millett	RWA	WC	



First Name	Last Name	Municipality/Organization	Email Address
Mackenzie	Bolger	SGV COG	
Oliver	Galang	Craftwater	
Paulina	Mejia	SGVCOG	
Brianna	Datti	Craftwater	
Dustin	Herrmann	TREEPEOPLE	
Courtney	Semlow	Craftwater	
JEFF	KLW	CITY OF PASADENA	
Daniel	Apt	Olunuy for LACCD	
Elizabeth Fassman	Fassman-Beck	SCCWRP	

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