

# Santa Clara River

## Watershed Area Steering Committee (WASC)



### Meeting Minutes

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Thursday, February 20, 2025  
1:00pm - 3:00pm  
Santa Clarita City Hall  
23920 Valencia Blvd. Valencia, CA 91355  
WebEx Meeting

#### Committee Members Present:

Julian Juarez, Los Angeles County Flood Control District (Agency)  
\*Najwa Pitois, Santa Clarita Water Agency (Agency)  
\*Rick Viergutz, Santa Clarita Valley Groundwater Sustainability Agency (Agency)  
Francisco Guerrero, Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts (Agency)  
Hunt Braly, Poole & Shaffery (Community)  
Mary Johnson, Agua Dulce Town Council (Community)  
Sandra Cattell, Sierra Club (Community), Vice-Chair  
Dianne Erskine-Hellrigel, Santa Clarita Valley Community Hiking Club (Community)  
Bruce Hamamoto, Los Angeles County (Municipal)  
\*Tyler Pledger, Santa Clarita (Municipal)  
Oliver Cramer, Santa Clarita (Municipal)  
\*Dan Duncan, Santa Clarita (Municipal)  
Darin Seegmiller, Santa Clarita (Municipal), Chair  
Amanda Begley, TreePeople (Watershed Coordinator, Non-voting member)

#### Committee Members Not Present:

Jerrid McKenna, City of Santa Clarita Recreation & Community Services (Agency)  
Ivan Volschenk, Evolve Business Strategies (Community)

\*Committee Member Alternate

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

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### **1. Welcome and Introductions**

Darin Seegmiller, Chair of the Santa Clara River (SCR) Watershed Area Steering Committee (WASC), welcomed Committee Members, provided an overview of the meeting agenda, and called the meeting to order.

Los Angeles County Public Works (Public Works) staff gave a brief WebEx tutorial and facilitated the roll call of Committee Members. A quorum was established.

### **2. Approval of Meeting Minutes from December 19, 2024**

Public Works staff presented the previous meeting minutes. Vice-Chair Sandra Cattell motioned to approve the meeting minutes from December 19, 2024, seconded by Member Dianne Erskine-Hellrigel. The Committee voted to approve the December 19, 2024, meeting minutes with 12 votes in favor, 2 votes in abstention, 0 opposed, and 1 absent at the time of vote (approved, see vote tracking sheet).

### **3. Ex Parte Communication Disclosure**

Vice-Chair Cattell discussed the plant palette for the Via Princessa Park project with Chair Seegmiller.

Member Najwa Pitois shared that Christopher Tull (California Data Collective), a member of the Project Developer team for the Data-Driven Resource Optimization and Planning System (DROPS) Scientific Study (hereafter to referred to as the DROPS SS), reached out to the Santa Clara Water Agency (SCWA) about how SCWA might use the DROPS Tool.



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#### 4. Committee Member and Program Updates

During the previous Regional Oversight Committee (ROC) meeting, Chair Seegmiller updated the ROC on recent progress within the SCR WASC, including on the Via Princessa Park project and this WASC's desire to incorporate removal of invasive plant species in future projects. Chair Seegmiller remarked that the SCR Watershed Area is unique within the SCW Program, because it is the only Watershed Area that is comprised of only one city and unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County. Upon inquiry, Chair Seegmiller shared that the ROC did not have any questions for this WASC.

Public Works staff provided an update, noting:

- Public Works staff are assessing the potential impacts of recent fires across Los Angeles County on funded projects and schedules and will provide updates as developments are made.
- The Fiscal Year 2023-2024 (FY 23-24) Annual Report, covering July 2023 through June 2024, was due on December 31, 2024. Project and Study Developers are encouraged to address comments and resubmit as soon as possible.
- The Mid-Year Report, covering July 2024 to December 2024, was launched on January 17 and was due on February 15. There is a 2-week extension for submittals for an alternate deadline of February 28. Additionally, Project Developers must fill out a new Metrics & Measures section by February 28. Project Developers received an email with a link to the Regional Program Performance Measure Guidelines.
- The 2025 Quarter 3 (Q3) Quarterly Funding Report & Matrix is available on the SCW Program website under the [Resources tab](#). Prepared by the Regional Coordination team, the quarterly funding report includes a high-level overview of recent funding policy highlights, and the funding matrix shares currently active and upcoming funding opportunities that may be relevant to SCW Program projects. The Regional Coordination team is monitoring ongoing activity related to Federal funding opportunities.
- The FY24-25 Transfer Agreements/Addendum distribution began 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 Quality Act (CEQA) documents, as applicable to execute agreements.
- At the next ROC meeting scheduled for March 12 from 1:00pm to 3:30pm, there will be an extended public comment period when speakers can provide up to 5 minutes of public comment. Written materials can be submitted as attachments to a public comment card found on the meeting event webpage. The ROC is interested in the public's insight on how the SCW Program has achieved its goals in the past two years, and how the SCW Program can improve in the coming two years. 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. FY23-24 Annual Reports were due December 31, 2024. Disbursements were scheduled for the end of December 2024. Cities will need to comply with all reporting requirements to receive the fifth disbursement.
- The Public Education and Community Engagement Grants Program formally launched on September 24. 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 31 and will be evaluated and awarded on a rolling basis. More information can be found on the [Water Foundation website](#).
- 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](#).



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Public Work's Watershed Planning staff provided updates, noting that the recent fires in Los Angeles County highlight the importance of proactive and resilient planning. Watershed Planning staff are evaluating how lessons learned from the fires can be incorporated into the Initial Watershed Plans. Watershed Planning staff have prepared a methodology to develop plans for each Watershed Area. 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).

Member Cattell inquired if Public Works staff had evaluated how the Hughes Fire affected the SCR Watershed Area. Additionally, Member Erskine-Hellrigel inquired if SCW Program funding could be used for fire recovery efforts. Chair Seegmiller explained that because the SCW Program evaluates projects applications based on their anticipated Water Quality and Water Supply benefits, fire mitigation projects may have challenges with meeting the scoring threshold set by the SCW Program.

#### **5. Watershed Coordinator Updates**

Watershed Coordinator Amanda Begley presented an update on Watershed Coordinator activities during January 2025. Presentation slides are available on the [SCW Program website](#).

#### **6. Public Comment Period**

There were no public comments.

#### **7. Discussion Items**

##### **a. Project Modification Requests Overview for WASC**

Ryanna Fossum (Stantec, Regional Coordination) presented an overview of Project Modification Requests (PMRs). Presentation slides are available on the [SCW Program website](#). One PMR was received in Round 6, and Public Works staff deemed the PMR consistent with the Stormwater Investment Plan (SIP). Upon inquiry, Fossum clarified that the PMR received in Round 6 does not result in any financial impacts to this WASC.

Chair Seegmiller inquired whether the PMR received in Round 6 should be reflected in the next SIP. Public Works staff clarified that consistent PMRs do not need to be included in the SIP, and elaborated that if a PMR is deemed inconsistent, the WASC would evaluate whether to fund the modified project in SIP deliberations.

Upon inquiry, Public Works Staff shared that the Regional Program Quarterly Report Summary for FY 23-24 Q3 & Q4 will be provided next month, with updates on all projects funded by this WASC.

WASC Members discussed the status of projects funded to date, and several WASC Members expressed frustration that none of the projects funded by this WASC under the Infrastructure Program have been completed or begun construction. Fossum provided additional context on the status of projects funded by other WASCs and noted that many IP projects are in the planning and design phase. Fossum shared that some of the completed projects were funded for construction in the first round because they were already shovel-ready. Chair Seegmiller commented that completed projects funded by the SCW Program can be viewed in the Project Portal on the [SCW Program website](#). Public Works staff added that the Project Dashboard will be revised soon to include project status information from the FY 24-25 Mid-Year Report.



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Member Julian Juarez and Chair Seegmiller noted that Santa Clarita had completed the Canyon Country Community Center Regional Infiltration project with funding from the Municipal Program. Upon inquiry, Member Juarez shared that the Canyon Country Community Center Regional Infiltration project is not expected to significantly minimize flooding risk, because the project mainly captures dry weather flows.

#### **i. Public Comment Period**

There were no public comments.

#### **b. Scientific Study Peer Review**

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

Fossum provided an overview of the Scientific Study Peer Review process. A peer review team was assembled with staff from CASC Engineering to review SS goals and objectives, assess the proposed technical approach and technical team, and comment on SS project's ability to further the SCW Program's goals of stormwater capture and pollutant reduction.

A peer review summary of the DROPS SS is available on the [SCW Program website](#). Christopher Tull (California Data Collaborative) was present to represent the Project Developer and answer questions from WASC Members.

Upon inquiry, Public Works staff clarified that other WASCs have not yet decided whether to fund the DROPS SS because no WASCs have started SIP deliberations.

Tull shared that if the DROPS scientific study is not funded by all WASCs, the study can still move forward but with less functionality than what was proposed in the Project Application. Because the DROPS Tool would be developed with County-wide datasets, Tull noted that this study is anticipated to have benefits for the entire County.

Member Cattell expressed concern over the reduced benefits from the SS if not all WASCs fund the SS. Chair Seegmiller mentioned that if this WASC decides to fund this study in the upcoming SIP, the WASC would re-evaluate whether to continue funding the study in the following SIP. Public Works staff clarified that if changes to the SS lead to reduced benefits, the Project Developer would submit a PMR for approval.

Member Hamamoto inquired if the Project Developer is familiar with Watershed Management Modeling System (WMMS) software used in development of the Los Angeles County Watershed Management Plans (WMPs), and inquired what datasets would be used to develop the DROPS Tool. Tull shared that the Project Developer has surveyed existing tools, such as the WMMS tool developed by Los Angeles County and the Living Infrastructure Field Kit developed by Accelerate Resilience Los Angeles (ARLA), and also have expressed interest in connecting with agencies on tool development. Tull explained that the DROPS Tool is intended to be used at a smaller scale than the WMMS software by staff at water supply agencies. The DROPS Tool also intends to consider the combined benefits of stormwater capture and water conservation.

Upon inquiry, Public Works staff shared that the Project Developers for the two SS funded by this WASC will be invited to the next WASC meeting to provide updates.

#### **ii. Public Comment Period**

Cherise Thompson (public member) confirmed with Tull that the Project Developers intend to make the DROPS Tool open source and publicly available.

### **8. Voting Items**

There were no voting items.



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### **9. Items for Next Agenda**

The next meeting will take place on Thursday, March 20, from 1:00pm – 3:00pm. Items on the next agenda include:

- a) Regional Program Quarterly Report Summary for RY 23-24 Q3 & Q4
- b) Santa Clara River Project Prioritization and Selection Discussion for population the FY 24-25 Stormwater Investment Plan (SIP)

### **10. Adjournment**

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

**SANTA CLARA RIVER WASC MEETING - FEBRUARY 20, 2025**

		Quorum Present				Voting Items (see meeting minutes)
Member Type	Position	Member	Voting/ Present?	Alternate	Voting/ Present?	Approve 12/19/2024 Meeting Minutes
Agency	District	Julian Juarez	x	Alynn Sun		not present at vote
Agency	Santa Clarita Valley Water Agency	Ali Elhassan		Najwa Pitois	x	y
Agency	Santa Clarita Valley Groundwater Sustainability Agency	Steve Cole		Rick Viergutz	x	a
Agency	LA County Sanitation Districts	Francisco Guerrero	x	Christopher Lapaz		y
Agency	Santa Clarita Recreation & Community Services	Jerrid McKenna		Susan Nelson		
Community Stakeholder	Poole & Shaffery	Hunt Braly	x			y
Community Stakeholder	Agua Dulce Town Council	Mary Johnson	x			y
Community Stakeholder	Santa Clarita Sierra Club	Sandra Cattell**	x	Diane Trautman		y
Community Stakeholder	Evolve Business Strategies	Ivan Volschenk				
Community Stakeholder	St. Francis Dam Disaster National Memorial Foundation	Dianne Erskine-Hellrigel	x	Heidi Webber		y
Municipal Members	LA County Public Works	Bruce Hamamoto	x	Allen Ma		y
Municipal Members	LA County Public Works	Bruce Hamamoto	x	Allen Ma		y
Municipal Members	LA County Public Works	Bruce Hamamoto	x	Allen Ma		y
Municipal Members	Santa Clarita	Laurene Weste, Councilmember		Tyler Pledger	x	a
Municipal Members	Santa Clarita	Oliver Cramer	x	Haley Lawton		y
Municipal Members	Santa Clarita	Damon Letz		Dan Duncan	x	y
Municipal Members	Santa Clarita	Darin Seegmiller*	x	Amber Rodriguez		y
Watershed Coordinator Non-Voting Member	TreePeople, Inc.	Amanda Begley	x	Heather Turpin		
Total Non-Vacant Seats		17			Yes (Y)	12
Total Voting Members Present		15			No (N)	0
Agency		4			Abstain (A)	2
Community Stakeholder		4			Total	14
Municipal Members		7				Approved

**Webex Attendees**  
**Santa Clara River WASC Meeting**  
**February 20, 2025**

Allen Ma - LACo Public Works

Alynn Sun LACFCD

Bryan Igboke

Chris Lapaz

Christopher Tull, CaDC

Claire Barr

Clara Dahl

Erum Razzak

Jenny Chau

LLAR WASC - Santa Clarita City Hall

Lisa Skutecki

Luis Perez SCW WP

Ryanna Fossum

SCR WASC - Santa Clarita City Hall

SCW Staff - Anthony Barreras

SCWP SCR WASC

Vicki Friesen

cherise thompson

Santa Clara River  
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 COMMITTEE MEMBER AND ALTERNATE SIGN-IN



Member Name	Municipality/ Organization	Email Address		Signature
Hunt Braly	Poole & Shaffery		P	
Ivan Volschenk	Evolve Business Strategies		P	
Jennifer Aborida	FCD		A	
Jerrid McKenna	Santa Clarita Recreation & Community Services		P	
Julian Juarez	FCD		P	
Laurene Weste, Councilmember	Santa Clarita		P	
Mary Johnson	Agua Dulce Town Council		P	
Najwa Pitois	Santa Clarita Valley Water Agency		A	
Oliver Cramer	Santa Clarita		P	
Rick Viergutz	Santa Clarita Valley GSA		A	
Sandra Cattell	Santa Clarita Sierra Club		P	
Steve Cole	Santa Clarita Valley GSA		P	
Susan Nelson	Santa Clarita Recreation & Community Services		A	
Tyler Pledger	Santa Clarita		A	
Connor Kuhn	Santa Clarita			



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 COMMITTEE MEMBER AND ALTERNATE SIGN-IN



Member Name	Municipality/ Organization	Email Address		Signature
Ali Elhassan	Santa Clarita Valley Water Agency		P	
Allen Ma	LA County Public Works		A	
Amanda Begley (non-voting)	TreePeople		WC	<i>A Begley</i>
Amber Rodriguez	Santa Clarita		A	
Bruce Hamamoto	LA County Public Works		P	<i>BH</i>
Christopher Lapaz	LA County Sanitation Districts		A	
Damon Letz	Santa Clarita		P	
Dan Duncan	Santa Clarita		A	<i>Dan Duncan</i>
Darin Seegmiller	Santa Clarita		P	<i>Darin Seegmiller</i>
Diane Trautman	Santa Clarita Sierra Club		A	
Dianne Erskine-Hellrigel	St. Francis Dam Disaster National Memorial Foundation		P	<i>Dianne Hellrigel</i>
Francisco Guerrero	LA County Sanitation Districts		P	<i>F Guerrero</i>
Haley Lawton	Santa Clarita		A	<i>Haley Lawton</i>
Heather Turpin (non-voting)	TreePeople		WC	
Heidi Webber	St. Francis Dam Disaster National Memorial Foundation		A	