

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



Thursday, October 24, 2024
1:30 PM – 4:00 PM
LA County Sanitation District – Conference Room E&F
1955 Workman Mill Rd
Whittier, CA 90601
WebEx Meeting

Committee Members Present:

Julian Juarez, LA County Flood Control District (Agency)
Tom Love, Upper San Gabriel District (Agency)
*Christopher Lapaz, LA County Sanitation District (Agency)
*Andrea Vona, Los Angeles County Parks and Recreation (Agency)
Drew Ready, Council for Watershed Health (Community)
David Marquez, Urban Semillas (Community)
David Diaz, Active SGV (Community)
Fernando Villaluna, Los Angeles County (Municipal), Vice-Chair
Valerie Velasquez-Santoya, Glendora (Municipal)
*Nicholas Delgado, Pomona (Municipal)
Stephanie Sandoval, Duarte (Municipal)
Roberto Ortega, West Covina (Municipal)
James Cortes, Day One (Watershed Coordinator, non-voting member)

*Committee Member Alternate

Committee Members Not Present:

Kelly Gardner, Main San Gabriel Basin (Agency)
Matthew Hudson, Industry (Municipal)
Romany Basilyous, Baldwin Park (Municipal)

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 August 22, 2024

Public Works staff presented the meeting minutes from the previous meeting. Member Tom Love motioned to approve the meeting minutes, seconded by Member Julian Juarez. The WASC voted to approve the meeting minutes with 10 votes in favor, 1 vote in abstention, 0 votes opposed, 1 absent at the time of the vote (approved, see vote tracking sheet).

3) Committee Member and Program Updates

Member Drew Ready confirmed with Public Works staff that the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors (Board) is working to fill vacant Community Stakeholder seats. Public Works staff will provide an update at the next meeting.

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Public Works staff provided an update, noting:

- The Municipal Program Reporting Module has been updated to streamline the renewal process for the Municipal Transfer Agreements. Safe, Clean Water (SCW) Payments are generally available for disbursement by December 31, based on the timing of revenues collected by the Program. The Municipal Program will be transferred to another team within Public Works soon.
- The Public Education and Community Engagement Grants Program formally launched in September, and in collaboration with The Water Foundation, will support education and community engagement efforts related to stormwater and urban runoff capture within Los Angeles County. An informational online session was held on October 8 from 2:00pm-3:00pm. Proposals will be accepted until May 31, 2025 and will be evaluated and awarded on a rolling basis. For more information, visit the [SCW Program website](#).
- The SCW Program continues to work towards launching the Credit Trading Program. The Procedures and Guidelines document will be available for a 30-Day Public Comment period towards the end of 2024. An online stakeholder workshop was scheduled for October 30 at 10:00am.
- To receive updates, subscribe to the SCW Program newsletter on the SCW Program website. The newsletter provides important updates on the Regional, Municipal, and District Programs, designed to help the community stay informed and engaged. Implementation Updates may also be viewed on the News and Updates page on the [SCW Program website](#).

4) Ex Parte Communication Disclosure

There were no ex parte communication disclosures.

5) Presentation and Discussion Items

a. Regional Program Quarterly Report Summary for Fiscal Year 2023-2024 (FY23-24) Quarter 1 (Q1) and Quarter 2 (Q2)

Public Works staff presented the Quarterly Report Summary for FY23-24 Q1 and Q2, available on the [SCW Program website](#). Public Works staff stated that each projects' full Quarterly Reports are available on the [SCW Program website](#).

Member Love requested additional information on the projects that are listed as "Not Started." Member Valerie Velasquez-Santoya noted that the City of Glendora has had many staffing changes and is actively working to resume progress on the Glendora Avenue Green Streets Project

The Project Developers of Pelota Park were invited to comment but were not present. Public Works staff will follow up with the Project Developers to ensure attendance at the next meeting.

Member David Diaz suggested that the Quarterly Report Summary note the specific "Activity Delay/Concern". Member Ready also requested that the summary show the length of project delays, expressing concern that delays often increase costs.

Nan Jia (CWE) provided an update on Barnes Park, which was delayed for one month during the bid and award process in Q1. Jia added that there was a delay in obtaining the Los Angeles County Flood Control District permit during Q2. The project is now in construction and expected to complete construction in April 2025.

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Jia also shared that Garvey Avenue Grade Separation Drainage Improvement Project had a delay in Q1 during the development of the operations and maintenance (O&M) plan. The project is now in construction, with the infiltration gallery constructed in September. Project Developers decided to delay the development of the O&M plan until after construction to ensure that everything in the O&M plan matches what is being constructed. Jia confirmed that the construction end date noted in the Quarterly Report is still correct.

Member Nicholas Delgado noted that FY23-24 Q3 is the most recent report available on the SCW Program website and suggested that the Quarterly Report Summary should be clearer about what time frame the summary covers. Public Works staff noted that there are many Quarterly Reports submitted, which take time to process. Project Developers are given 45 days after the quarter ends to compile the reports. Therefore, the Quarterly Report Summary will not be immediately available when the quarter ends. Public Works staff also noted that, in alignment with the May 2024 Board motion, reporting will shift to semi-annual reporting.

Public Works staff also clarified that the delays reported in the Quarterly Reports only require a Project Modification Request (PMR) if it affects funding. Public Works staff also noted that PMRs are due October 31 to be considered in FY25-26 Stormwater Investment Plan (SIP) deliberations.

Member Juarez requested an update from the Pedley Spreading Grounds Project, given the reported activity delay. Anthony Ortega (City of Pomona) noted that the activity delay was due to a funding gap, but that Project Developers now anticipate advertising the project by the end of the year.

Jia provided an update on the Wingate Park Regional Enhanced Watershed Management Program (EWMP) project's activity delay. Jia noted that the final design is complete, but the Project Developers are now resolving utility conflicts. The project anticipates beginning construction in 2025.

Ed Suher (CASC Engineering) provided an update on the Zamora Park Renovation Project, noting that a minor change caused the project to be resent out for bid. Project Developers are expecting the bids to be returned on November 6 and for construction to begin January 2025.

Public Works staff confirmed that Project Developers who did not attend this WASC meeting will be invited to attend the next meeting. Committee Members emphasized the importance of Project Developers' attendance at meetings where project updates are requested. Public Works staff noted that reporting is mandatory, and any misconduct will be brought to the WASC's attention.

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

Vice-Chair Villaluna noted that both Vice-Chair Villaluna and Chair Julie Carver welcome other interested Committee Members to volunteer to serve in the Chair and Vice-Chair seats. Both Chair Carver and Vice-Chair Villaluna expressed willingness to continue their current roles.

c. Watershed Planning

i) Watershed Planning Recap Phase 1

Watershed Planning staff within Public Works presented on the Watershed Planning progress, including an update of the initial plan framework and the Community Strengths and Needs Assessment (CSNA). Mike Antos (Stantec, Watershed Planning) provided an overview of the outcomes from Phase 1 of Watershed Planning, which included a Program-wide and Watershed Area synthesis of engagement activities from previous Watershed Planning workshops. Presentation slides can be found on the [SCW Program website](#).

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Antos facilitated a discussion with the Committee Members to ensure that the ideas were correctly summarized from the first Watershed Planning workshop.

Member Ready requested clarification as to whether the SCW Program will utilize municipal climate action plans and municipal green infrastructure plans. Watershed Planning staff confirmed that the OurCounty Sustainability Plan is a major plan that will be incorporated, but it is undecided if municipal climate action plans will be included at this time into the Watershed Plans. Watershed Planning staff will continue collaborating with municipalities in the future.

Watershed Coordinator James Cortes requested an update on existing projects and expected project life spans. Antos reiterated that capture capacity needs to be reanalyzed across the region. Member Love added that proper maintenance would prevent projects from losing capture capacity over time and suggested that each project needs to include operational life span considerations into project O&M plans. Antos clarified with Member Love that poor maintenance is currently the main contributor to reduced capacity, rather than capacity issues in the face of climate change causing higher future flows.

Member Love expressed a preference for projects at school sites and in flood control areas, citing locations such as the Santa Anita Racetrack, large shopping centers, or spreading grounds. Member Love also expressed concern over infiltration projects being located at brownfield sites that have not been fully remediated.

Member Andrea Vona inquired whether the SCW Program is pursuing land acquisition for project sites. Antos noted this topic has been discussed at other WASCs, and that the SCW Program has yet to determine if land acquisition should be included as a region wide goal.

Watershed Coordinator Cortes suggested that public health should be more emphasized in the presented synthesis.

Member Ready confirmed with Antos that habitat, ecological, and hydrological connection between projects, such as upstream/downstream relationships, will be considered.

ii) Initial Watershed Plan Framework and Next steps

Watershed Planning staff with Public Works summarized the Initial Watershed Plan Framework, the Watershed Plan Outline, and Opportunity Areas with the highest cumulative need. Presentation slides can be found on the [SCW Program website](#).

Member Vona stated that the County Chief Sustainability Office's Community Forest Management Plan engagement efforts recently included a large amount of public engagement and outreach surveys. Member Vona asked if there were synergies or overlap between the engagement efforts, and expressed hesitancy that some communities may begin to experience engagement fatigue. Member Vona confirmed with Antos that external data is able to be added to the Spatial Data Library, and Antos clarified that the CSNA survey results will be shown in the Spatial Data Library.

Member Ready confirmed with Antos that currently, significant ecological areas are not shown in the Spatial Data Library. Member Ready suggested that showing habitat connectivity, along with school and park sites, would be beneficial.

Member Ready commented that the interactive tablets that Watershed Coordinator Cortes used at community events were beneficial in engaging community members and illustrating the various data layers. Member Ready suggested that interactive tablets would be beneficial for all Watershed Coordinators.

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Watershed Coordinator Cortes commented that the CSNA will be a useful tool because of how it includes all Watersheds. Watershed Coordinator Cortes asked how the tool would benefit Watershed Area specific planning, reflecting that conversations with individual community members often provide more area-specific feedback. Antos explained that spatial data currently exists for Water Quality and Water Supply Benefits, but the SCW Program currently lacks a consistent dataset for Community Investment Benefits. The CSNA is intended to be a spatial dataset that will illustrate community priorities based on location.

Antos informed the WASC that Watershed Planning staff will present the CSNA survey during the December WASC meeting so Committee Members can discuss the results. Antos clarified that every survey response will be associated with a geographic location. Antos added that the survey does not explicitly ask about water related priorities to ensure that the multi-benefit elements that the SCW Program encourages are captured.

The Committee discussed the importance of engaging local governments in the CSNA process. Member Delgado suggested that local governments be included in the survey to capture the perspective of agencies that would be responsible for delivering projects that support the community's priorities, captured through the CSNA survey. Member Love noted that the CSNA results' accessibility to both project proponents and the WASC will be beneficial. Member Love commented that project costs may increase as proponents begin including additional components that the community desires.

Watershed Planning staff noted that there are plans to tie the SCW Program Project Application directly to Watershed Planning and SCW Program targets.

Member Stephanie Sandoval confirmed with Watershed Planning staff that projects will not be scored differently based on how well they have incorporated CSNA results, but Committee Members can use CSNA results as a resource during SIP deliberations to prioritize projects.

Watershed Coordinator Cortes highlighted the importance of continuing community engagement and using the survey as a tool, not a replacement, for effective engagement.

Watershed Planning staff presented the tentative SCW Program Adaptive Management timeline, highlighting that the Project Application Module updates should be ready by the end of May 2025, in time for the FY25-26 Call for Projects deadline at the end of July 2025.

Member Diaz noted that a two to three months' notice may not be enough time for Project Applicants to incorporate potentially significant changes into proposals. Antos added that some components will be available to Project Applicants in March, such as key definitions and revised Scoring Guidelines. Member Diaz requested that Public Works staff begin outreach as soon as possible so Project Applicants are aware of the upcoming changes. Watershed Planning staff clarified that projects that do not comply with the Project Application Module updates will not be penalized during the FY25-26 Call for Projects given the short turnaround timeline.

Member Ready expressed that adaptive management, in general, should be continuous and begin as early as possible, rather than every three to five years, citing the Metrics and Monitoring Study. Member Ready recommended that the SCW Program receive feedback from the WASC, cities, and non-governmental organizations that propose projects, and Watershed Coordinators. Public Works staff confirmed the involvement of the listed parties in the Adaptive Management Plan and agreed that continued engagement is beneficial.

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6) Public Comment Period

There were no public comments.

7) Voting Item

a. Selection of Chair, Vice-Chair, or Co-Chairs

Member Love motioned to select Julie Carver as Chair and Fernando Villaluna as Vice-Chair, seconded by Member Ready. The WASC voted to approve the motion with 11 votes in favor, 0 vote in abstention, 0 votes opposed, and 1 absent at the time of the vote (approved, see vote tracking sheet).

8) Items for Next Agenda

Public Works staff noted that the currently scheduled November and December meetings conflict with upcoming holidays. Public Works staff will send out a survey to Committee Members to determine a new meeting time. Items to be discussed at the next meeting include:

a. Summary of submitted Scientific Studies (Presentation by Watershed Coordinator)

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 - OCTOBER 24, 2024								
		Quorum Present				Voting Items (see meeting minutes for additional details)		
Member Type	Position	Member	Voting/ Present?	Alternate	Voting/ Present?	Approve 8/22/2024 Meeting Minutes	Selection of Chair (Julie Carver)	Selection of Vice Chair (Fernando Villaluna)
Agency	FCD	Julian Juarez	x	Jennifer Aborida		y	Y	Y
Agency	Upper San Gabriel District	Tom Love	x	Jennifer Aguilar		y	Y	Y
Agency	Main San Gabriel Basin	Kelly Gardner		Tony Zampiello				
Agency	Sanitation Districts	Francisco Guerrero		Christopher Lapaz	x	y	Y	Y
Agency	Los Angeles County Parks and Recreation	Sean Woods		Andrea Vona	x	y	Y	Y
Community Stakeholder								
Community Stakeholder	Council for Watershed Health	Drew Ready	x	Jason Casanova		y	Y	Y
Community Stakeholder								
Community Stakeholder	Urban Semillas	David Marquez	x	Miguel Luna			Y	Y
Community Stakeholder	Active SGV	David Diaz	x	Wesley Reutimann		y		
Municipal Members	Los Angeles County	Fernando Villaluna	x	Joseph Venzon		y	Y	Y
Municipal Members	Glendora	Valerie Velasquez-Santoya	x	Sandy Costandi		a	Y	Y
Municipal Members	Pomona	Julie Carver		Nicholas Delgado	x	y	Y	Y
Municipal Members	Industry	Mathew Hudson		Don Nguyen				
Municipal Members	Baldwin Park	Romany Basilyous		Shari Garwick				
Municipal Members	Duarte	Stephanie Sandoval	x	Mario Flores		y	Y	Y
Municipal Members	West Covina	Roberto Ortega	x	Gerardo Lopez		y	Y	Y
Watershed Coordinator								
Non-Voting Member	Watershed Coordinator	James Cortes	x					
Total Non-Vacant Seats		15			Yes (Y)	10	11	11
Total Voting Members Present		12			No (N)	0	0	0
Agency		4			Abstain (A)	1	0	0
Community Stakeholder		3			Total	11	11	11
Municipal Members		5				Approved	Approved	Approved

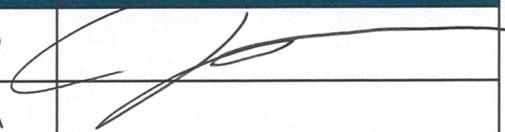
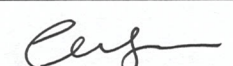
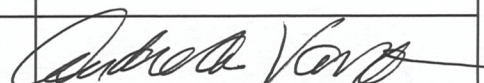
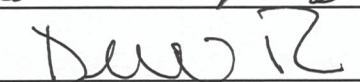

Webex Attendees
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Alexis Wrzesien Craftwater	Grant Garcia - City of San Dimas	Oliver Galang Craftwater	Sofia Cardenas LACDPW
Andrew Kim	Larry Tran - Public Works	Rafael Piamonte	Steve Bell CWE
Anthony Barreras	Liana Poghosyan	Raina	USGR WASC - Presenter
Anthony Ortega	Luis Perez SCW WP	SCW - USGR WASC	Imarshall
Daria Antonova - LACPW	Marisela Velasquez - Public Works	SCW Staff - Anthony Barreras	
Ed Suher CASC	Melineh Aghakhabian	Shari San Dimas	
Emily Ng	Nan Jia - CWE	Sofia Cardenas - LACDPW	

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COMMITTEE MEMBER AND ALTERNATE SIGN-IN



Member Name	Municipality/ Organization	Email Address		Signature
Julian Juarez	FCD	JJUAREZ@dpw.lacounty.gov	P	
Jennifer Aborida	FCD	jaborida@dpw.lacounty.gov	A	
Tom Love	Upper San Gabriel District	tom@usgvmwd.org	P	
Jennifer Aguilar	Upper San Gabriel District	jennifer@usgvmwd.org	A	
Kelly Gardner	Main San Gabriel Basin	kelly@watermaster.org	P	
Tony Zampielo	Main San Gabriel Basin Watermaster	tony@watermaster.org	A	
Francisco Guerrero	Sanitation Districts	fguerrero@lacsds.org	P	
Christopher Lapaz	Sanitation Districts	christopherlapaz@lacsds.org	A	
Sean Woods	Los Angeles County Parks and Recreation	Swoods@parks.lacounty.gov	P	
Andrea Vona	Los Angeles County Parks and Recreation	Avona@parks.lacounty.gov	A	
Drew ready	Council for Watershed Health	dew@watershedhealth.org	P	
Jason Casanova	Council for Watershed Health	ca@watershedhealth.org	A	
David Marquez	Urban Semillas	jhdm.david@gmail.com	P	
Miguel Luna	Urban Semillas	miguel@urbansemillas.com	A	
David Diaz	Active SGV	david@activesgv.org	P	

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COMMITTEE MEMBER AND ALTERNATE SIGN-IN



Member Name	Municipality/ Organization	Email Address		Signature
Wesley Reutimann	Active SGV	wes@activesgv.org	A	
Fernando Villaluna	Los Angeles County	fvillaluna@dpw.lacounty.gov	P	
Joseph Venzon	Los Angeles County	jvenzon@dpw.lacounty.gov	A	
Valerie Velasquez-Santoya	Glendora	vvelasquez@cityofglendora.org	P	
Sandy Costandi	Glendora	Scostandi@covinaca.gov	A	
Julie Carver	Pomona	Julie.Carver@pomonaca.gov	P	
Nicholas Delgado	Pomona	mndelgado@diamondbarca.gov	A	
Mathew Hudson	Industry	mhudson@cityofindustry.org	P	
Don Nguyen	Industry	dnguyen@elmonte.gov	A	
Romany Basilyous	Baldwin Park	Rbasilyous@baldwinpark.com	P	
Shari Garwick	Baldwin Park	sgarwick@sandimasca.gov	A	
Stephanie Sandoval	Duarte	ssandoval@accessduarte.com	P	
Mario Flores	Duarte	mflores@cityofbradbury.org	A	
Roberto Ortega	West Covina	rortega@westcovina.org	P	
Gerardo Lopez	West Covina	glopez@westcovina.org	A	

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COMMITTEE MEMBER AND ALTERNATE SIGN-IN



Member Name	Municipality/ Organization	Email Address		Signature
James Cortes	Watershed Coordinator	James@godayone.org		