

Central Santa Monica Bay Watershed Area Steering Committee (WASC) Meeting Minutes



Tuesday, May 6, 2025
1:00pm – 3:00pm
Culver City Hall, Patacchia Room
9770 Culver Blvd, Culver City, CA 90230
WebEx Meeting

Committee Members Present:

*Daniel Bradbury, Los Angeles County Flood Control District (Agency)
*Conor Mossavi, Los Angeles City Water & Power (Agency)
Susie Santilena, Los Angeles City Sanitation and Environment (Agency), Co-Chair
*Darryl Ford, Los Angeles City Recreation and Parks (Agency)
Rita Kampalath, Los Angeles County Chief Sustainability (Community), Co-Chair
Ion Cretu, PSOMAS (Community)
Gloria Medina, SCOPE (Community)
Bruce Reznik, Los Angeles Waterkeeper (Community)
Zoe Cunliffe, Black Women for Wellness (Community)
Josette Descalzo, Beverly Hills/West Hollywood (Municipal)
Sean Singletary, Culver City (Municipal)
Roberto Perez, Los Angeles (Municipal)
Geremew Amenu, Los Angeles County (Municipal)
Joshua Carvalho, Santa Monica (Municipal)
Stephanie Gebhardt Rath, Heal the Bay (Watershed Coordinator, non-voting member)
Vanessa Boudreau, S. Groner Associates (Watershed Coordinator, non-voting member)

*Committee Member Alternate

Virtual Committee Members:

Matthew Veeh, West Basin Metropolitan Water District (Agency)

Committee Members Absent:

Rafael Prieto, Los Angeles (Municipal)
Michelle Barton, Los Angeles (Municipal)

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

1) Welcome and Introductions

Co-Chair Susie Santilena of the Central Santa Monica Bay (CSMB) Watershed Area Steering Committee (WASC), welcomed Committee Members, shared housekeeping items, and called the meeting to order. Los Angeles County Public Works (Public Works) staff facilitated the roll call of Committee Members and explained rules for Committee Members attending virtually under Assembly Bill 2449. A quorum was established.

2) Approval of Meeting Minutes from April 1, 2025

Member Josette Descalzo motioned to approve meeting minutes from April 1, 2025, seconded by Co-Chair Rita Kampalath. The Committee voted to approve the April 1, 2025 minutes, with 11 votes in favor, and 4 votes in abstention (approved, see vote tracking sheet attached).

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3) Committee Member and Program Updates

Public Works staff provided an update, noting:

- Applications for Fiscal Year 2025 - 2026 (FY25-26) Low Income Senior Owned Exemptions and General Income Based Tax Reductions were due on May 1. For more information, see the Exemptions and Reductions section of the [SCW Program website](#).
- The Call for Projects deadline for FY26-27 is July 31. Informational sessions will be held virtually on May 21 from 9:00am to 11:00am and May 22 from 3:00pm to 5:00pm. Both sessions will contain the same information. For proposed projects involving Los Angeles County Flood Control District (LACFCD) infrastructure or facilities, the deadline to request a letter for conceptual approval from LACFCD is May 31.
- Mid-Year Reports covering July to December 2024, (previously separated as Quarter 1 (Q1) and Q2 Reports) were due in February. Project and Study Developers must address comments and resubmit as soon as possible, regardless of receiving funds, having expenditures or activities, or having executed the Funds Transfer Agreement.
- The upcoming Regional Oversight Committee meeting is scheduled for May 14 at 1:00pm. The ROC will receive updates from the Watershed Planning Water Quality Working Group and Community Investment Benefits and Benefit Ratio Working Group. The meeting will also include an update from Watershed Coordinators. To view meeting details please visit the [ROC events website](#).
- FY25-26 Municipal Annual Plans were due on April 1, 2025.
- The 2024 Municipal Transfer Agreements are being processed and executed by Public Works. The fifth disbursements are ongoing. Cities will need to comply with all reporting requirements to receive the fifth disbursement.
- A Metrics & Measures section has been added as a section in the Municipal Program Reporting Module. This Metrics & Measures section collects data for performance metrics specific to Municipal Program activities to align with and inform the Watershed Planning efforts and SCW Program progress assessments. The SCW Program is hosting a virtual workshop on Thursday, May 15, 2025 from 10:00am to 11:00am that will provide an overview of the Reporting Module and the Metrics and Measures tile functionality. Municipalities received an email with instructions to fill out the section along with a link to the [workshop event page](#); the information should be filled out by June 16, 2025.
- The Public Education and Community Engagement Grants Program is no longer accepting applications. To see a list of approved proposals for Round 1 you can go to the [Water Foundation's website](#).

4) Watershed Coordinator Updates

Watershed Coordinators Vanessa Boudreau and Stephanie Gebhardt Rath shared outreach, engagement, and education events from the last month. Highlights include:

- Participating in the "Walking Water: Walks of Resilience" event along the Los Angeles River
- Tabling at and attending Earth Month events at Cal State University of Dominguez Hills, Beverly Hills, Culver City, and Redondo Beach, as well as events at Kuruvungna Springs
- Conducting an inspection tour of the State Water Project with Metropolitan Water District and connecting with Council District 11 and Los Angeles Unified School District to discuss the SCW Program
- Touring the Alondra Park Multi-Benefit Stormwater Capture Project with Watershed Coordinators from South Santa Monica Bay

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The Watershed Coordinators also highlighted the Watershed Coordinators' Post-Fire Working Group and current efforts underway to develop a database of post-fire resources. The Watershed Coordinators are also finalizing a six-month Strategic Outreach and Engagement Plan update.

Upon inquiry, Ryanna Fossum (Stantec, Regional Coordination) shared that funding reports are published each quarter, and a recent Leveraged Funding Report posted on the [SCW Program website](#) includes a matrix of grant opportunities.

Co-Chair Santilena asked about the status of the Technical Resources Program's Fern Dell Restoration and Stormwater Capture Project. Watershed Coordinator Boudreau noted that the Project Proponent might apply for design funding, but that there is no confirmed update available at this time.

5) Ex parte Communication Disclosure

There were no ex parte communication disclosures.

6) Discussion

a. Watershed Planning Phase 3 Engagement

Public Work's Watershed Planning Team (Watershed Planning Team) gave a presentation on the Watershed Planning effort to date. Highlights from the presentation included:

- The Initial Watershed Plans in development will include targets, strategies, actions, and opportunities to address Watershed Area (WA) Needs and achieve the SCW Program's Goals. Needs are determined as the difference between targets and the benefit baselines of previously funded SCW Program projects. Strategies explain how to meet the WA Needs, actions outline what types of projects or programs to implement, and Opportunities identify where to implement projects for the highest impact.
- A companion to the Initial Watershed Plans, an online Watershed Planning Tool (Planning Tool) is in development that consists of a Planning Map and Dashboard, which will support visualization of Opportunities and track progress toward the established targets and WA Needs. Composite layers in the Planning Map will assist in identifying multi-benefit opportunities, which combine various Planning Themes (based on the SCW Program Goals) such as drought preparedness, public health improvement, nature-based solutions, and equitable benefit distribution; and
- The Draft Initial Watershed Plans and partially functioning Planning Tool will be available for a 30-day public review period in Fall 2025 and updated editions will be published in early 2026.

Presentation slides are available on the [SCW Program website](#). More information on Watershed Planning can be found on the Watershed Planning webpage on the [SCW Program website](#). For any questions related to Watershed Planning, contact watershedplanning@pw.lacounty.gov.

Upon inquiry, the Watershed Planning Team explained that other key regional and local efforts to date, the Metrics and Monitoring Study, and benefits information for funded SCW Program projects were evaluated to determine benefits baselines, forecasts, and targets. Member Conor Mossavi noted that the graphics in the presentation are helpful for easy interpretation and confirmed with the Watershed Planning Team the forecasts assume a linear trajectory based on the cumulative benefits of previously funded SCW Program projects. It was noted that both the baseline and forecast data is used as a reference to assist in establishing targets.

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Watershed Coordinator Gebhardt Rath suggested that the data sources for the Opportunities layers in the Planning Map be included in the Initial Watershed Plans and Planning Tool. The Watershed Planning Team suggested they would investigate a way to add the data sources.

Member Bruce Reznik expressed excitement about how the tool will drive projects and help proactively identify the best projects. Member Reznik asked when the WASC could provide feedback and the Watershed Planning Team responded that the draft Initial Watershed Plans are nearing completion and will be available for a 30-day public review period in late Summer/early Fall.

Mike Antos (Stantec, Watershed Planning) asked WASC Members how Project Developers should use these Initial Watershed Plans to be proactive. Member Reznik suggested that Project Developers should first reflect and understand the priorities in each Watershed Area, noting that most projects are focused on regulatory compliance. Member Reznik emphasized the need to prioritize the right multi-benefit projects for future funding cycles.

Co-Chair Santilena expressed that the Initial Watershed Plans and Planning Tool would highlight the interaction between Watershed Areas, targets, and the spread of benefits.

Member Reznik clarified with Antos that the tool will not incorporate prospective, unsubmitted projects. Member Descalzo inquired if there is an intent to integrate information from the Initial Watershed Plans and Planning Tool into the Scoring Criteria or Project Applications. The Watershed Planning Team explained that the Initial Watershed Plans and Planning tool will serve as a resource to Project Proponents. Antos added that the Scoring Criteria is used to judge eligibility.

Antos conducted a demonstration of the Community Strengths and Needs Assessment (CSNA) Survey and Dashboard.

Antos shared that the CSNA will remain open indefinitely, with the goal of accumulating data over time with the ability to filter data by date.

Watershed Coordinator Gebhardt Rath mentioned that at community events, people typically take five to ten minutes to complete the CSNA Survey, and that it might be beneficial to offer both short and long versions of the survey. Watershed Coordinator Gebhardt Rath pointed out that the CSNA is hard to find on the SCW Program website and suggested adding the survey as a button on the home page. Co-Chair Santilena confirmed with the Watershed Planning Team that there is a Quality Assurance / Quality Control process for all survey responses before they are uploaded to the CSNA Dashboard. The Watershed Planning Team added that the CSNA Survey is just one of many resources used for engagement.

Antos emphasized the importance of not relying entirely on the tool for engagement, but rather, as a tool to know where to engage community members. Member Darryl Ford asked whether survey questions might change over time. Antos explained that while the survey is meant to stay consistent, questions have been added about the wildfires, indicating that changes to the survey are possible.

Member Zoe Cunliffe asked if there are plans to engage with community-based organizations (CBOs) more generally to spread awareness of the CSNA. Antos responded that the Watershed Coordinators are the first method of engagement, working with OurWater Los Angeles and other groups and CBOs to familiarize everyone with the CSNA. Antos commented that paper surveys are not designed for many entities to distribute directly as there are specific distribution instructions. Member Cunliffe highlighted the importance of aligning community expertise across programs, particularly with the Public Education and Engagement grant efforts underway. Member Reznik commented on the value of validating targets before the Initial Watershed Plans are released for public comment.

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Member Descalzo confirmed with the Watershed Planning Team that agencies and municipalities are welcome to advertise the CSNA survey, the Watershed Planning Team noted that some cities have expressed interest in posting the survey on their websites.

7) Public Comment Period

There were no public comments.

8) Items for Future Agenda

The next meeting will be on June 3, 2025, held in person and online via WebEx. See the [SCW Program website](#) for meeting details. Items on the next agenda may include:

- Watershed Coordinator Capabilities and Qualifications Interviews and Selection

The Committee requested that Public Works staff add the review of the CSMB Initial Watershed Plan as an Agenda Item once available.

9) Adjournment

Co-Chair Santilena thanked Committee Members for their attendance and participation and adjourned the meeting.

CENTRAL SANTA MONICA BAY WASC MEETING - May 6, 2025

		Quorum Present					Voting Items
Member Type	Organization	Primary Member	Attendance: In-person ("x" for present)	Attendance: Virtual (Brown Act Telc Rqts, "Just Cause" - audio & video, room disclosure) ("x" for present)	Alternate Member	Attendance: In-person ("x" for present)	Vote to approve April 1, 2025 Meeting Minutes
Agency	Los Angeles County Flood Control District	Marcela Benavides			Daniel Bradbury	x	y
Agency	West Basin Municipal Water District	Matthew Veeh		x	Augustine Han		a
Agency	Los Angeles City Water & Power	Art Castro			Conor Mossavi	x	y
Agency	Los Angeles City Sanitation and Environment	<u>Susie Santilena</u>	x		Hubertus Cox		y
Agency	Los Angeles City Recreation & Parks	Cathie Santo Domingo			Darryl Ford	x	a
Community Stakeholder	Los Angeles County Chief Sustainability Office	<u>Rita Kampalath</u>	x		Rebecca Ferdman		y
Community Stakeholder	PSOMAS / Business Sector	Ion Cretu	x				y
Community Stakeholder	SCOPE	Gloria Medina	x		Tanya Borja		y
Community Stakeholder	Los Angeles Waterkeeper	Bruce Reznik	x		Maggie Gardner		y
Community Stakeholder	Black Women for Wellness	Zoe Cunliffe	x		Tianna Shaw-Wakeman		y
Municipal Members	Beverly Hills / West Hollywood	Josette Descalzo	x		Matthew Magener		y
Municipal Members	Culver City	Sean Singletary	x		Javier De La Cruz		y
Municipal Members	Los Angeles	Roberto Perez	x				a
Municipal Members	Los Angeles	Rafael Prieto			Blayne Sutton-Wills		
Municipal Members	Los Angeles	Michelle Barton					
Municipal Members	Los Angeles County	Geremew Amenu	x		Lara Awad		y
Municipal Members	Santa Monica	Joshua Carvalho	x		Selim Eren		a
Watershed Coordinator	Heal the Bay	Stephanie Gebhardt Rath	x				
Watershed Coordinator	SGA Marketing	Vanessa Boudreau	x				
Total Non-Vacant Seats		17				Yay (Y)	11
Total Voting Members Present		14				Nay (N)	0
Agency		4				Abstain (A)	4
Community Stakeholder		5				Total	15
Municipal Members		5					6

Attendees
Central Santa Monica Bay WASC Meeting
May 6, 2025

Alexia Skrbic
Aric Martinez
Armando Nunez-Fausto
Brenda Ponton
Brett Perry
Bryant Alvarado
Carlos Rodriguez
Javier De La Cruz

Justin Jones
Lara Awad
Leslie Martinez
Linnet Khechatoorian
Marisol Ibarra
Matt Veeh
Mike Antos
Omar Abdelhadi

Paul Hartman
Pearl Azizian
Rebecca Kaliff
River Nguyen
Rob Garcia Jr.
Ryanna Fossum
Samantha Torres
Vicente Villasenor

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COMMITTEE MEMBER AND ALTERNATE SIGN-IN: May 6, 2025



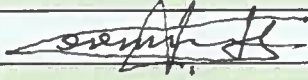
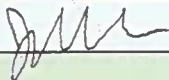

Member Type	Member Name	Municipality/ Organization	Role	Signature
Agency	Marcela Benavides	Los Angeles County Flood Control District	P	
Agency	Daniel Bradbury	Los Angeles County Flood Control District	A	
Agency	Matthew Veeh	West Basin Metropolitan Water District	P	
Agency	Augustine Han	West Basin Metropolitan Water District	A	
Agency	Art Castro	Los Angeles City Water & Power	P	
Agency	Conor Mossavi	Los Angeles City Water & Power	A	
Agency	Susie Santilena	Los Angeles City Sanitation and Environment	P	
Agency	Hubertus Cox	Los Angeles City Sanitation and Environment	A	
Agency	Cathie Santo Domingo	Los Angeles City Recreation & Parks	P	
Agency	Darryl Ford	Los Angeles City Recreation & Parks	A	
Community Stakeholder	Rita Kampalath	Los Angeles County Chief Sustainability Office	P	
Community Stakeholder	Rebecca Ferdman	Los Angeles County Chief Sustainability Office	A	
Community Stakeholder	Ion Cretu	PSOMAS / Business Sector	P	
Community Stakeholder	Gloria Medina	SCOPE	P	
Community Stakeholder	Tanya Borja	SCOPE	A	
Community Stakeholder	Bruce Reznik	Los Angeles Waterkeeper	P	
Community Stakeholder	Maggie Gardner	Los Angeles Waterkeeper	A	
Community Stakeholder	Zoe Cunliffe	Black Women for Wellness	P	
Community Stakeholder	Tianna Shaw-Wakeman	Black Women for Wellness	A	
Municipal Member	Josette Descalzo	Beverly Hills / West Hollywood	P	
Municipal Member	Matthew Magener	Beverly Hills / West Hollywood	A	
Municipal Member	Sean Singletary	Culver City	P	
Municipal Member	Javier De La Cruz	Culver City	A	
Municipal Member	Roberto Perez	Los Angeles	P	

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COMMITTEE MEMBER AND ALTERNATE SIGN-IN: May 6, 2025



Member Type	Member Name	Municipality/ Organization	Role	Signature
Municipal Member	Rafael Prieto	Los Angeles	P	
Municipal Member	Blayne Sutton-Wells	Los Angeles	A	
Municipal Member	Michelle Barton	Los Angeles	P	
Municipal Member	Geremew Amenu	Los Angeles County	P	
Municipal Member	Lara Awad	Los Angeles County	A	
Municipal Member	Joshua Carvalho	Santa Monica	P	
Municipal Member	Selim Eren	Santa Monica	A	
Watershed Coordinator	Stephanie Gebhardt Rath	Heal the Bay	WC	
Watershed Coordinator	Vanessa Boudreau	SGA Marketing	WC	