

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



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

Committee Members Present:

Marcela Benavides, Los Angeles County Flood Control District (Agency)
*Augustine Han, West Basin Metropolitan Water District (Agency)
*Conor Mossavi, Los Angeles City Water & Power (Agency)
Susie Santilena, Los Angeles City Sanitation and Environment (Agency), Co-Chair
Rita Kampalath, Los Angeles County Chief Sustainability (Community), Co-Chair
*Andrew Nickerson, PSOMAS (Community)
*Tanya Borja, SCOPE (Community)
Bruce Reznik, Los Angeles Waterkeeper (Community)
Zoe Cunliffe, Black Women for Wellness (Community)
Josette Descalzo, Beverly Hills/West Hollywood (Municipal)
*Javier De La Cruz, 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

Committee Members Absent:

Cathie Santo Domingo, Los Angeles City Recreation and Parks (Agency)
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 Rita Kampalath 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 May 6, 2025

Co-Chair Susie Santilena motioned to approve meeting minutes from May 6, 2025, seconded by Member Josette Descalzo. The Committee voted to approve the May 6, 2025, minutes, with 9 votes in favor, 4 votes in abstention, and 1 Member absent at the time of vote (approved, see vote tracking sheet attached).

3) Committee Member and Program Updates

Public Works staff provided an update, noting:

- The Call for Projects deadline for consideration within the Fiscal Year 2026 – 2027 (FY26-27) Stormwater Investment Plan is July 31, 2025. Two virtual information sessions were held on May

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21 and May 22. For projects involving LA County Flood Control District infrastructure, the deadline to request a conceptual approval letter was May 31, 2025.

- The Regional Program Annual Report for July 2024 through June 2025 is due August 15, 2025, for all Projects and Studies approved in FY2020 through FY2025. Reports must be submitted regardless of whether funds were received, expenditures made, activities conducted, or Funds Transfer Agreements executed.
- The next Regional Oversight Committee (ROC) meeting is scheduled for June 11 at 1:00pm. The ROC will review four of the nine Stormwater Investment Plans (SIP), including the CSMB SIP. To view meeting details please visit the [ROC event website](#).
- A new Metrics & Measures section is now available in the Municipal Program Reporting Module and must be completed by June 16. This section gathers data on project performance to support Watershed Planning and overall program assessments. A virtual workshop was held on May 15; presentation slides, the recording, and the Q&A document are available on the [SCW Program website](#).
- The Public Education and Community Engagement Grants Program is not currently accepting applications. Approved proposals from Round 1 are available on the [SCW Program website](#) under the community engagement section.
- Requests for accommodations can be made via email to SafeCleanWaterLA@pw.lacounty.gov or by calling 833-ASK-SCWP at least three working days before a meeting. Supporting documentation for meetings will be available at www.safecleanwaterla.org.
- The Quarter 4 2025 Funding Report is posted on the [SCW Program website](#) under the Resources tab. The report includes recent funding policy highlights and a matrix of active and upcoming funding opportunities. Public Works staff and the Regional Coordination team are monitoring funding activity to evaluate future impacts.
- Drafts of the Initial Watershed Plans and the partially functioning Planning Tool will be available for a 30-day public review period in Fall 2025. A new Watershed Planning page is now live on the [SCW Program website](#) and will host all current and future Watershed Planning resources.
- The Community Strengths & Needs Assessment (CSNA) Survey has gained momentum due to engagement by the Watershed Coordinators. Since launch, 343 new survey responses have been collected overall. CSMB has 46 responses. A CSNA promotional toolkit is available on the Watershed Planning webpage and can be used by Municipalities, non-profit organizations (NGOs), community-based organizations (CBOs), and others to support outreach. The CSNA Survey and Dashboard are also accessible on the Watershed Planning webpage.
- As part of Adaptive Management, the Nature-Based Solutions (NBS) Task Force and Blue Ribbon Panel are creating a standard NBS definition and criteria to address existing gaps. These NBS updates will be integrated into future Watershed Planning efforts once finalized.
- Draft Initial Watershed Plans will be released for a 30-day public comment period in Fall 2025. After the public comment period, presentations on the Initial Watershed Plans will be made to each WASC and the ROC in Fall 2025. Initial Watershed Plans are expected to be officially published in early 2026.

4) Watershed Coordinator Updates

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

- Submitted the FY25 Strategic Outreach & Engagement Plan (SOEP) six-month extension and engaged potential funders and stakeholders, and supported Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District's successful grant application.
- Participated in Earth Month events, attended the Beach Ecology spring meeting, and plan to join upcoming events such as Green LA Coalition event on June 5, Nick Gabaldon Day on June 7, Edward Vincent Park tabling, and the Hyperion Community Tour on June 18.

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- Took part in the Water Hub's "Water Messaging That Bridges Divides" workshop and supported educational programs through partnerships with the Garden School Foundation and Pacific America Volunteer Association (PAVA) World.

5) Ex parte Communication Disclosure

There were no ex parte communication disclosures.

6) Public Comment Period

One public comment card was received by Public Works staff and can be found on the [SCW Program Website](#). There were no public comments discussed during the meeting.

7) Discussion

a. Watershed Coordinator Capabilities and Qualifications Interviews and Selection

Public Works staff opened the meeting by explaining the Watershed Coordinator selection process and stating the required qualifications. Presentation slides can be found on the [SCW Program Website](#).

For the CSMB WASC, two Watershed Coordinator positions are available. All remaining Watershed Coordinator selections are expected to be completed by the end of July, with agreements executed by December and work starting in January 2026. Qualified proposers received interview questions in advance. Each interview includes seven identical questions, a 15-minute response period, and 10 minutes for follow-up. Interviews are not scored. Each WASC member has one vote per position; alternate members may vote in the absence of their primary member. Selected Watershed Coordinators will remain in place after appointment.

Watershed Coordinators Gebhardt Rath and Boudreau temporarily exited the room during the internal WASC discussion. Member Geremew Amenu questioned the need for interviews when there are only two qualified candidates for two positions. Co-Chair Santilena asked for clarification on the options the WASC had for the Watershed Coordinator selection. Public Works staff confirmed that conducting interviews is optional given that they have an equal number of positions and qualified proposers. The WASC has the authority to decide whether to fill both vacancies at this time. Selections can be made without interviews if deemed unnecessary. Public Works staff emphasized that full interviews would need to be conducted for both candidates, or not at all. Public Works staff noted that both applicants applied specifically to the CSMB WASC.

Mike Antos (Stantec, Regional Coordination) stated that the scope of work has evolved, presenting an opportunity to set expectations for the future and allow Members to ask questions if the WASC were to move forward with the interview process. Public Works staff reiterated that the decision to proceed with interviews is decided by the WASC Members.

Public Works staff shared that the application deadline for candidates was extended multiple times to maximize outreach, with evaluation criteria released in August 2024, proposals due in September 2024, and the final deadline set for November 2024. Optional proposers' conferences were also held to increase accessibility to understand the Request for Statement of Qualifications. Public Works staff noted that Watershed Coordinators are expected to have a minimum of two years of experience within the past seven years and that applicants currently serving had already demonstrated what is expected. Public Works staff clarified that the evaluation process included a pass/fail round to ensure compliance with the minimum mandatory requirements. The WASC agreed to move forward with the interview process.

The WASC first interviewed Candidate Boudreau. In response to the questions previously shared, and asked by Public Works staff, Candidate Boudreau highlighted extensive experience relevant to the Watershed Coordinator role for the CSMB WASC.

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During the scheduled questions and answers section of the interview, Member Amenu asked Candidate Boudreau to speak on lessons learned from being a Watershed Coordinator. Candidate Boudreau noted initial challenges in public understanding of stormwater issues and emphasized the value of providing early and ongoing resources to CBOs, including maintaining a resource list to bridge knowledge gaps and streamline support.

Candidate Boudreau promised strong commitment to the role, enthusiasm for continuing current efforts, and numerous ideas for enhanced community engagement in the coming months.

The WASC then interviewed Candidate Gebhardt Rath. In response to the questions previously shared and asked by Public Works staff, Candidate Gebhardt Rath highlighted outreach efforts through Heal the Bay, which has hosted 1,179 education events and 211 engagement events, reaching over 12,800 people through partnerships with S. Groner Associates, Inc. (SGA), Urban LA, and others. Events included Coastal Cleanup Day, conducted annually for 35 years and reaching 20,000 volunteers each year, and educational campaigns such as “Know the Flow”, and the Speakers Bureau program, which annually reaches 7,000 students.

During the scheduled questions and answers section of the interview, Member Amenu asked Candidate Gebhardt Rath to speak on lessons learned from being a Watershed Coordinator. Candidate Gebhardt Rath highlighted wanting to work with new and more diverse Project Applicant groups, including past recipients of Water Foundation grants, and focus on interactive, community-driven project visioning. Co-Chair Santilena raised the issue of the digital divide, which Candidate Gebhardt Rath acknowledged, noting reliance on community partnerships and multilingual staff to reach frontline communities. On the topic of reaching frontline communities, Jesse de la Cruz (Heal the Bay) shared reflections on door-to-door outreach and the importance of reaching communities not yet engaged with SCW programs.

The WASC discussed the candidates, and Co-Chair Santilena commented on the strength of collaboration between the two Watershed Coordinator organizations, SGA Marketing and Heal the Bay. Member Roberto Perez confirmed with Public Works staff that the annual Watershed Coordinator contract value is \$200,000 per position per year.

8) Public Comment Period

There were no public comments.

9) Voting Items

a. Watershed Coordinator Capabilities and Qualifications Interviews and Selection

Member Augustine Han made a motion to appoint S. Groner Associates, Inc. and Heal the Bay as the two Central Santa Monica Bay Watershed Coordinators, seconded by Member Bruce Reznik. The Committee voted with 14 in favor, 0 in abstention, and 0 absent at the time of vote (approved, see vote tracking sheet attached).

10) Items for Future Agenda

The next meeting will be on July 1, 2025, held in person and online via WebEx. See the [SCW Program website](#) for meeting details. Items on the next agenda may include:

- FY24-25 Regional Program Mid-Year Report Summary

11) Adjournment

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

CENTRAL SANTA MONICA BAY WASC MEETING - June 3, 2025

CENTRAL SANTA MONICA BAY WASC MEETING - June 3, 2025							
		Quorum Present				Voting Items	
Member Type	Organization	Primary Member	Attendance: In-person ("x" for present)	Alternate Member	Attendance: In-person ("x" for present)	Vote to approve May 6, 2025 Meeting Minutes	Vote to appoint S. Groner Associates, Inc. and Heal the Bay as the two Central Santa Monica Bay Watershed Coordinators
Agency	Los Angeles County Flood Control District	Marcela Benavides	x	Daniel Bradbury		a	y
Agency	West Basin Municipal Water District	Matthew Veeh		Augustine Han	x	a	y
Agency	Los Angeles City Water & Power	Art Castro		Conor Mossavi	x	y	y
Agency	Los Angeles City Sanitation and Environment	<u>Susie Santilena</u>	x	Hubertus Cox		y	y
Agency	Los Angeles City Recreation & Parks	Cathie Santo Domingo		Darryl Ford			
Community Stakeholder	Los Angeles County Chief Sustainability Office	<u>Rita Kampalath</u>	x	Rebecca Ferdman		y	y
Community Stakeholder	PSOMAS / Business Sector	Ion Cretu		Andrew Nickerson	x	a	y
Community Stakeholder	SCOPE	Gloria Medina		Tanya Borja	x	a	y
Community Stakeholder	Los Angeles Waterkeeper	Bruce Reznik	x	Maggie Gardner		y	y
Community Stakeholder	Black Women for Wellness	Zoe Cunliffe	x	Tianna Shaw-Wakeman		y	y
Municipal Members	Beverly Hills / West Hollywood	Josette Descalzo	x	Matthew Magener		y	y
Municipal Members	Culver City	Sean Singletary		Javier De La Cruz	x	y	y
Municipal Members	Los Angeles	Roberto Perez	x			not present during vote	y
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	y
Municipal Members	Santa Monica	Joshua Carvalho	x	Selim Eren		y	y
Watershed Coordinator	Heal the Bay	Stephanie Gebhardt Rath	x				
Watershed Coordinator	SGA Marketing	Vanessa Boudreau	x				
Total Non-Vacant Seats		17			Yay (Y)	9	14
Total Voting Members Present		14			Nay (N)	0	0
Agency		4			Abstain (A)	4	0
Community Stakeholder		5			Total	13	14
Municipal Members		5				Approved	Approved

Attendees
Central Santa Monica Bay WASC Meeting
June 3, 2025

Alonso Garcia	Eric Bonilla	Marisela Velasquez
Aric Martinez	Felipe Vazquez	Marisol Ibarra
Armando Nunez-Fausto	Josafat Flores	Meredith McCarthy
Bhetsua Tinoco Lima	Kirk Allen	Omar Abdelhadi
Carlos Rodriguez	Kristina Kreter	Pablo Forni
Christopher Vong	Lara Awad	Pearl Azizian
Daniel Bradbury	Luis Perez	Samantha Torres
Dusadee Corhiran	Luke Ginger	

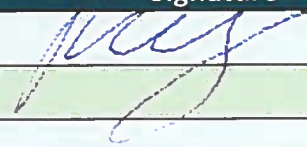
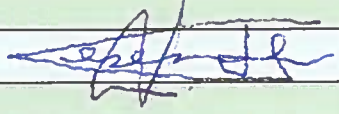
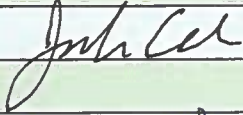
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COMMITTEE MEMBER AND ALTERNATE SIGN-IN: June 3, 2025



Member Type	Member Name	Municipality/ Organization	Role	Signature
Agency	Marcela Benavides	Los Angeles County Flood Control District	P	<i>MB</i>
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	<i>Augustine Han</i>
Agency	Art Castro	Los Angeles City Water & Power	P	
Agency	Conor Mossavi	Los Angeles City Water & Power	A	<i>Conor Mossavi</i>
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	<i>Rita Kampalath</i>
Community Stakeholder	Rebecca Ferdman	Los Angeles County Chief Sustainability Office	A	
Community Stakeholder	Ion Cretu	PSOMAS / Business Sector	P	
Community Stakeholder	Andrew Nickerson	PSOMAS / Business Sector	A	
Community Stakeholder	Gloria Medina	SCOPE	P	
Community Stakeholder	Tanya Borja	SCOPE	A	<i>Tanya Borja</i>
Community Stakeholder	Bruce Reznik	Los Angeles Waterkeeper	P	<i>Bruce Reznik</i>
Community Stakeholder	Maggie Gardner	Los Angeles Waterkeeper	A	
Community Stakeholder	Zoe Cunliffe	Black Women for Wellness	P	<i>Zoe Cunliffe</i>
Community Stakeholder	Tianna Shaw-Wakeman	Black Women for Wellness	A	
Municipal Member	Josette Descalzo	Beverly Hills / West Hollywood	P	<i>Josette Descalzo</i>
Municipal Member	Matthew Magener	Beverly Hills / West Hollywood	A	<i>Matthew Magener</i>
Municipal Member	Sean Singletary	Culver City	P	
Municipal Member	Javier De La Cruz	Culver City	A	<i>Javier De La Cruz</i>

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COMMITTEE MEMBER AND ALTERNATE SIGN-IN: June 3, 2025



Member Type	Member Name	Municipality/ Organization	Role	Signature
Municipal Member	Roberto Perez	Los Angeles	P	
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	

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PUBLIC SIGN-IN: June 3, 2025



First Name	Last Name	Municipality/Organization	Email Address
Tanya	Borja	Scope LA	
Masih	Bari	Atkins Réalis	
Nancy Shrodes		Heal the Bay	
Alexia Sklaric		Heal the Bay	
Zoe	Griffith	Black Women	
John Candel			
Jesse De	De La Cruz	Urban Strategies	
Vicente Villaseca	Villaseca	Heal the Bay	