

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



Thursday, August 14, 2025
12:30pm – 3:00pm
Las Virgenes Municipal Water District Conference Room
4232 Las Virgenes Rd, Calabasas, CA 91302
WebEx Meeting

Committee Members Present:

Marcela Benavides-Aguilar, Los Angeles County (Agency)
William Johnson, Los Angeles County Waterworks (Agency)
Brian Baldauf, Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (Agency)
Jessica Forte, Las Virgenes Municipal Water District (Agency), Chair
Madelyn Glickfeld, Resident (Community)
Andrew Nickerson, PSOMAS (Community)
Susan Nissman, Resident (Community)
Tevin Schmitt, Wishtoyo Chumash Foundation Ventura (Community)
Jacy Shillan, Resident (Community)
*Kelly Fisher, Agoura Hills (Municipal)
Curtis Castle, Calabasas (Municipal)
Kelsey Reed, Hidden Hills (Municipal)
Aaron Ordower, LAC Supervisor District 3 (Municipal)
Bruce Hamamoto, Los Angeles County (Municipal)
*Ewelina Mutkowska, Malibu (Municipal)
Roxanne Hughes, Westlake Village (Municipal), Vice-Chair
Melina Sempill Watts, Melina Sempill Watts Inc. (Watershed Coordinator, non-voting member)

Committee Members Absent:

David Pedersen, Las Virgenes Municipal Water District (Agency)

*Committee Member Alternate

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

1) Welcome and Introduction

Jessica Forte, Chair of the NSMB Watershed Area Steering Committee (WASC), welcomed Committee Members and called the meeting to order. Public Works staff facilitated the roll call of Committee Members. Committee Members made self-introductions and a quorum was established. Public Works staff provided a brief WebEx tutorial for meeting participants online.

2) Approval of Meeting Minutes from June 12, 2025

Chair Forte presented the minutes from June 12, 2025. Member Bruce Hamamoto motioned to approve the minutes, seconded by Member Jacy Shillan. The WASC voted to approve the June 12, 2025 meeting minutes with 10 votes in favor, 3 in abstention, 0 opposed, and 3 absent at the time of the vote (approved, see vote tracking sheet).

5) Ex Parte Communication Disclosures

Member Kelsey Reed disclosed a working relationship with Vice-Chair Roxanne Hughes on Westlake Village MS4 Compliance Project, related to the submittal of the Infrastructure Program (IP) Project application.

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Chair Forte disclosed briefly discussing the Westlake Village MS4 Compliance Project with Watershed Coordinator Mellina Watts as well, regarding how well the Project scored, offering congratulations to the project team. The success of the Westlake Village MS4 Project's previous Technical Resources Program (TRP) process and positive experiences with the Technical Assistance Team (TAT) were also noted.

6) Public Comment Period

There were no public comments.

7) Discussion Items

a) Regional Program FY24-25 Mid-Year Report Summary

Melanie Rivera (HDR) presented the Regional Program Fiscal Year (FY) 24-25 Mid-Year Report Summaries. Presentation slides were made available on the [SCW Program website](#).

Rivera mentioned updates regarding the Liberty Canyon Road Green Improvement Project, specifically that it will divert and treat stormwater using filtration units and incorporate drought-tolerant landscaping in unincorporated Los Angeles County. A Phase I Environmental Site Assessment and 30% design plans were completed. Community outreach has begun following wildfire-related delays, including a virtual event, with a project walkthrough planned this quarter. Watershed Coordinator Watts requested the walkthrough date be shared, which will be provided to the WASC once scheduled.

Committee Members discussed the Viewridge Road Stormwater Improvements Project (hereafter referred to as the Viewridge Project). Member Madelyn Glickfeld reflected that in the past there were concerns raised by members of the public about this project and emphasized the need to avoid a stalled or failed project. The Committee discussed post-fire impacts on multiple SCW Program projects' construction efforts related to site challenges and cost issues, including within the Viewridge Project. Due to fire-related impacts, staff resources have been diverted to emergency response, delaying but not stopping progress. Member Aaron Ordower mentioned that there could be additional state funding through Proposition 1 that may be available for the Project.

The Committee requested regular updates on the status of the Viewridge Project.

a) Summary of submitted Infrastructure Program Projects, Scientific Studies, and Technical Resources Program Project Concepts

Watershed Coordinator Watts presented on the summary of submitted Infrastructure Program (IP) Projects, Scientific Studies (SS), and Technical Resources Program (TRP) Project Concepts. Presentation slides can be found on the [SCW Program website](#).

It was confirmed that at least \$90,000 remains available for SS in the current funding cycle for the NSMB WASC, though the exact number will vary.

The Building a Green Infrastructure Workforce in the LA Region SS (hereafter referred to as the Workforce SS) was discussed. Member Glickfeld expressed surprise that the Workforce SS could support infrastructure-related goals. Member Ordower emphasized the region's need for a workforce program, noting alignment with SCW Program objectives.

Public Works staff noted that links to all project applications will be distributed after the meeting. These materials will include budget details and are intended to help members prepare for future proponent presentations.

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Member Ordower asked whether the A Holistic Assessment of Trash in Watersheds SS aligns with gaps identified by the County's Water Quality Team, suggesting this be part of the independent review process. Antos reminded that SSs are not scored by the Scoring Committee, are reviewed independently, and that such questions may be forwarded for consideration.

a) Review of Committee Roles and Responsibilities

Antos presented WASC roles and responsibilities. Presentation slides are available on the [SCW Program website](#). Antos clarified that TRP work is developed by the TAT, with Project Developers serving only in an advisory capacity and not receiving direct funding.

Upon inquiry, Antos confirmed that Operations & Maintenance (O&M) activities fall under the IP application, and that the plan next year is to allow standalone O&M applications. Committee Members discussed the importance of planning to reserve funds for long-term O&M. Member Susan Nissman emphasized the importance of long-term planning and tracking project trajectories over five years to ensure sustainability.

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

Public Works staff initiated the discussion regarding the selection of Chair and Vice-Chair for the upcoming term. Member Schmitt nominated Jessica Forte and Roxanne Hughes to continue serving as Chair and Vice Chair, respectively. Both members indicated their willingness to remain in their current roles.

8) Public Comment Period

There were no public comments.

9) Voting Item

a) Vote to send none, some, or all completed feasibility studies to the Scoring Committee for consideration

Member Glickfeld motioned to approve sending all completed feasibility studies to the Scoring Committee for consideration, seconded by Member Nissman. The WASC voted to approve sending all completed feasibility studies to the Scoring Committee for consideration with 15 votes in favor, 1 in abstention, 0 opposed, and 0 absent at the time of the vote (approved, see vote tracking sheet).

a) Selection of Chair, Vice-Chair, or Co-Chairs for the North Santa Monica Bay Watershed Area

Member Schmitt motioned to approve the selection of Jessica Forte as Chair and Roxanne Hughes as Vice-Chair for NSMB WASC, seconded by Member Curtis Castle. The WASC voted to approve the selection of Jessica Forte as Chair and Roxanne Hughes as Vice-Chair for NSMB WASC with 16 votes in favor, 0 in abstention, 0 opposed, and 0 absent at the time of the vote (approved, see vote tracking sheet).

3) Committee Member and Program Updates

This item was moved down after Item 9 to allow sufficient time for Discussion and Voting Items.

Committee Members provided updates:

- Member Hamamoto introduced a new alternate member, Paul Choy, as the Los Angeles County alternate representative.
- Member Ordower shared remarks on behalf of Supervisor Lindsey Horvath, acknowledging the significant challenges faced in the region due to recent fires. Personal and professional responsibilities related to fire recovery efforts have limited Member Ordower's participation in recent meetings, and appreciation was expressed for the Committee's continued support and flexibility.

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- Member Ordower noted that a full return to pre-fire operations will take time, but continued engagement remains encouraged, both for areas directly impacted by the fires and for other regions at heightened risk. Supervisor Horvath convened a group of national experts across fields including insurance, infrastructure, and watershed recovery. [A resulting report with 57 recommendations was completed in June](#), offering insights into both response strategies and long-term lessons learned. Committee Members were encouraged to review the report as a potentially valuable resource.

Public Works staff provided an update, noting:

- The Call for Projects deadline for consideration in the FY26-27 Stormwater Investment Plan (SIP) was July 31.
- The Regional Program Annual Report covering July 2024 - June 2025 is due on August 15, 2025, for Project Developers and SS approved in FY20 through FY25 SIPs. Reports must be submitted regardless of whether funding was received, expenditures or activities occurred, or a Funds Transfer Agreement was executed. The Annual Report Module is live and ready for submittals.
- The ROC meeting took place on August 13 at 1:00pm. During the meeting, the ROC received updates on regional project development, partnership efforts, a preview of initial Watershed Plans, and discussions related to Water Program education initiatives.
- The Municipal Program Reporting Module now includes a new Metrics & Measures section, which is intended to collect performance metrics specific to Municipal Program project activities. These metrics will help align with and inform Watershed Planning efforts and overall SCW Program progress assessments. The section was to be completed by June 16. A virtual workshop covering this topic was hosted on May 15 and materials including the presentation slides, recording, and Q&A document are available on the SCW Program Events page.
- Applications for the Public Education and Community Engagement Grants Program are no longer being accepted. A list of approved proposals from Rounds 1 and 2 is available on the [Water Foundation's website](#).
- The Quarter 1 2026 Funding Report has been posted to the [SCW Program website](#) under the Resources tab. In support of Public Works, the Regional Coordination team prepares quarterly funding reports that include a high-level overview of recent funding policy developments and a funding matrix outlining currently active and upcoming funding opportunities relevant to SCW Program projects. Public Works staff and the Regional Coordination Team continue to track productivity to better understand impacts on future funding.
- The Land Cover Survey for FY25-26 has been updated. While the tax rate remains unchanged at 2.5 cents per square foot of impermeable area, parcel-specific impermeable area values may have changed. A formal announcement with additional details is anticipated in September or October, in preparation for the FY25-26 Los Angeles County annual property tax bills.

Public Works Watershed Planning staff provided an update, noting:

- The SCW Program Watershed Planning team hosted a virtual Technical Information Session on August 12 from 1:00pm to 3:00pm. The session was open to WASC Members and the public. During the session, staff shared details on the analytical processes used to develop watershed area baselines and targets in the Draft Initial Watershed Plans, as well as how these components contribute to countywide program goals. Meeting materials will be posted to the Watershed Planning page on the [SCW Program website](#) once available.
- Draft Initial Watershed Plans are now available for public review and comment on the [SCW Program website](#). Comments may be submitted through an online form through September 28, 2025.
- As part of the ongoing Community Strengths and Needs Assessment (CSNA), 561 new survey responses have been collected to date, including 34 responses specific to the NSMB Watershed Area. To support awareness and outreach efforts, a promotional toolkit is available on the

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[Watershed Planning webpage](#), along with access to the CSNA Survey and Dashboard. The toolkit is available to anyone interested in promoting the CSNA.

- Each WASC will host Watershed Planning Workshop #4 during their regularly scheduled meetings in October or November 2025 to present on the Draft Initial Watershed Plans. Finalized Initial Watershed Plans are expected to be published in early 2026.
- To stay informed on SCW Program activities, stakeholders are encouraged to subscribe to the SCW Program newsletter, which provides ongoing updates on the Regional, Municipal, and District programs. Program implementation updates are also available on the “News and Updates” page of the [SCW Program website](#).

4) Watershed Coordinator Updates

This item was moved down to allow sufficient time for Discussion and Voting Items.

Watershed Coordinator Watts provided an update on ongoing activities within the NSMB Watershed Area. Presentation slides related to the update are available on the [SCW Program website](#).

Member Glickfeld acknowledged ongoing efforts occurring in connecting the beachfront area affected by the Woolsey Fire to the Hyperion Water Reclamation Plant. If successful, this would involve the installation of a sewer line that would run past the current project site. While still in the early stages and not yet confirmed, the concept is actively being considered. It was also noted that the California State Park had previously expressed interest in connecting to the system, but the costs were prohibitive. The City of Malibu may also face similar financial challenges. However, even a small infusion of funding could be meaningful in keeping the broader project, and its associated funding, on track.

The Committee discussed that the California State Parks needs \$2 million in gap funding to maintain eligibility for a larger California Coastal Conservancy grant, which would fund 90% of the restoration design for the Topanga Lagoon Restoration Project. Local SCW Program funds were mentioned as a potential resource to help bridge that gap. While it's a significant amount, WASC Members agreed the situation warrants continued discussion given the potential to unlock substantial external funding.

10) Items for next agenda

The next meeting will be on September 11, 2025 at 1:00pm – 3:00pm, held in person and online via WebEx. See the [SCW Program website](#) for meeting details. Items on the next agenda may include:

- a) Safe, Clean Water Program 12 Projects, 9 Watersheds Presentation by Melina Watts
- b) Water Quality Talk Presentation by Heal the Bay

Member Nisman requested a report back on the ROC's decisions regarding O&M funding. Member Hughes underscored the importance of financial transparency when evaluating specific project proposals, emphasizing that as project requests become more detailed, it will be essential to clearly identify and communicate funding allocations, particularly those related to ongoing costs. The Committee noted that municipal funds, though prorated and receiving a smaller allocation, could potentially be used to support maintenance needs.

Watershed Coordinator Watts suggested including a future agenda item focused on tools that can support the SCW Program's implementation of Nature-based Solutions. Antos added that the Council for Watershed Health is involved in the County Water Plan's Nature-based Solutions Task Force and will be included in relevant discussions moving forward.

11) Adjournment

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

NSMB WASC - August 14, 2025								
		Quorum Present				Voting Items		
Member Type	Organization	Member	Voting?	Alternate	Voting?	Approve June 12, 2025 NSMB WASC Meeting Minutes	Send all completed feasibility studies to the Scoring Committee for consideration	Approve Selection of Jessica Forte as Chair and Roxanne Hughes as Vice-Chair for NSMB WASC
Agency	LACFCD	Marcela Benavides-Aguilar	X	Daniel Bradbury		Y	Y	Y
Agency	LAC Waterworks District	William Johnson	X			Y	Y	Y
Agency	MRCA	Brian Baldauf	X	Rebecca Correa		Y	Y	Y
Agency	LVMWD	David Pedersen		Craig Jones				
Agency	LVMWD	Jessica Forte	X	Jeremy Wolf		Y	Y	Y
Community Stakeholder	Resident	Madelyn Glickfeld	X	Richard Ambrose		Absent at Vote	Y	Y
Community Stakeholder	PSOMAS	Andrew Nickerson	X	Ion Cretu		Absent at Vote	Y	Y
Community Stakeholder	Resident	Susan Nissman	X			Absent at Vote	Y	Y
Community Stakeholder	Wishtoyo Chumash Foundation Ventura County	Tevin Schmitt	X	Natalia Cuellar		Y	Y	Y
Community Stakeholder	Resident	Jacy Shillan	X			Y	Y	Y
Municipal Members	Agoura Hills	Charmaine Yambao		Kelly Fisher	X	Y	Y	Y
Municipal Members	Calabasas	Curtis Castle	X	Melanis Stepanian		A	Y	Y
Municipal Members	Hidden Hills	Kelsey Reed	X	Mayra Martinez		A	Y	Y
Municipal Members	LAC Supervisor District 3	Aaron Ordower	X	Rachel Fox		A	Y	Y
Municipal Members	LAC Public Works	Bruce Hamamoto	X	Paul Choy		Y	Y	Y
Municipal Members	Malibu	Kiernan Brtalik		Ewelina Mutkowska	X	Y	Y	Y
Municipal Members	Westlake Village	Roxanne Hughes	X	Josephine Wilson		Y	A	Y
Watershed Coordinator	Melina S. Watts Consulting, LLC	Melina Watts	X					
Total Non-Vacant Seats		17			Yay (Y)	10	15	16
Total Voting Members Present		16			Nay (N)	0	0	0
Agency		4			Abstain (A)	3	1	0
Community Stakeholder		5			Total	13	16	16
Municipal Members		7				Approved	Approved	Approved

Other Attendees

Alberto Grajeda
 Bryan Igboke
 Craig Doberstein
 Dusadee Corhiran
 Eric Bonilla
 Hannah Daum
 Jason Jade Pepito
 Jonathan Ontiveros
 Lisa (Jin) Kim - Los A
 Melanie Rivera
 Mike Antos
 Rich Ambrose
 Roxanne Hughes
 Safe Clean Water Pri
 cherise thompson
 db

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COMMITTEE MEMBER AND ALTERNATE SIGN-IN



Member Name	Municipality/ Organization		Signature
Marcela Benavides-Aguilar	Los Angeles County Flood Control District	Primary	<i>Marcela Benavides</i>
Daniel Bradbury	Los Angeles County Flood Control District	Alternate	
Brian Baldauf	Mountains Recreation & Conservation Authority	Primary	<i>Brian Baldauf</i>
Rebecca Correa	Mountains Recreation & Conservation Authority	Alternate	
William Johnson	LA County Waterworks District	Primary	<i>W. Johnson</i>
David Pedersen	Las Virgenes Municipal Water District	Primary	
Craig Jones	Las Virgenes Municipal Water District	Alternate	
Jessica Forte	Las Virgenes Municipal Water District	Primary	<i>Jessica Forte</i>
Jeremy Wolf	Las Virgenes Municipal Water District	Alternate	
Madelyn Glickfeld	Resident	Primary	<i>M. Glickfeld</i>
Richard Ambrose	Resident	Alternate	
Andrew Nickerson	Community Stakeholder	Primary	

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COMMITTEE MEMBER AND ALTERNATE SIGN-IN



Member Name	Municipality/ Organization		Signature
Ion Cretu	Community Stakeholder	Alternate	
Susan Nissman	Resident	Primary	<i>Susan Nissman</i>
Tevin Schmitt	Wishtoyo Chumash Foundation Ventura County	Primary	<i>Tevin Schmitt</i>
Natalia Cuellar	Wishtoyo Chumash Foundation Ventura County	Alternate	
Jacy Shillan	Resident	Primary	<i>Jacy Shillan</i>
Charmaine Yambao	Agoura Hills	Primary	
Kelly Fisher	Agoura Hills	Alternate	<i>Kelly Fisher</i>
Curtis Castle	Calabasas	Primary	<i>Curtis Castle</i>
Melanis Stepanian	Calabasas	Alternate	
Kelsey Reed	Hidden Hills	Primary	<i>Kelsey Reed</i>
Mayra Martinez	Hidden Hills	Alternate	
Aaron Ordower	LAC Supervisor District 3	Primary	<i>Aaron Ordower</i>

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COMMITTEE MEMBER AND ALTERNATE SIGN-IN



Member Name	Municipality/ Organization		Signature
Rachel Fox	LAC Supervisor District 3	Alternate	
Bruce Hamamoto	Los Angeles County	Primary	<i>Bruce Hamamoto</i>
Paul Choy	Los Angeles County	Alternate	<i>Paul Choy</i>
Kiernan Brtalik	Malibu	Primary	
Ewelina Mutkowska	Malibu	Alternate	<i>Ewelina Mutkowska</i>
Roxanne Hughes	Westlake Village	Primary	<i>Roxanne Hughes</i>
Josephine Wilson	Westlake Village	Alternate	
Melina Watts	Watershed Coordinator	Primary	<i>M. Watts</i>