

# Upper Los Angeles River

## Watershed Area Steering Committee (WASC)

### Meeting Minutes

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Wednesday, July 2, 2025

2:00pm - 4:00pm

LA County Public Works Headquarters, 1st Floor (Courtyard), Conference Room C

900 S Fremont Ave, Alhambra, CA 91803

WebEx Meeting

#### Committee Members Present:

Ernesto Rivera, Los Angeles Flood Control District (Agency)

Art Castro, Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (Agency)

John Huynh, Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (Agency)

Ida Meisami-Fard, Los Angeles Sanitation & Environment (Agency)

Cathie Santo Domingo, Los Angeles Recreation & Parks (Agency)

Ernesto Pantoja, Laborers Local 300 (Community)

Jill Sohm, University of Southern California (Community)

\*Roxy Rivas, Pacoima Beautiful (Community)

Brent Maue, Pasadena (Municipal)

Michael Vartanians, City of South Pasadena (Municipal)

Rafael Prieto, Los Angeles (Municipal)

Karo Torossian, Los Angeles (Municipal), Vice-Chair

Teresa Villegas, Los Angeles (Municipal), Chair

\*Kara Plourde, Los Angeles County (Municipal)

Adi Liberman, Environmental Outreach Strategies (Watershed Coordinator, non-voting member)

Alonso Garcia, Council for Watershed Health (Watershed Coordinator, non-voting member)

Kristina Kreter, Council for Watershed Health (Watershed Coordinator, non-voting member)

#### Committee Members Absent:

Edith de Guzman, University of California, Los Angeles (Community)

Miguel Luna, Urban Semillas (Community)

\*Committee Member Alternate

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

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#### **1) Welcome and Introductions**

Teresa Villegas, Chair of the Upper Los Angeles River (ULAR) Watershed Area Steering Committee (WASC), welcomed Committee Members and called the meeting to order.

Los Angeles County Public Works (Public Works) staff provided a brief WebEx tutorial and announced that a Spanish interpreter was not yet available in the online meeting. Public Works staff facilitated the roll call of Committee Members, and a quorum was established.

#### **2) Approval of Meeting Minutes from June 18, 2025**

The Committee decided to defer this Agenda Item to the next ULAR WASC meeting on September 3, 2025.

#### **3) Ex Parte Communication Disclosures**

There were no ex-parte communication disclosures.

#### **4) Committee Member and Program Updates**

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Public Works staff provided updates, noting:

- The Call for Projects deadline for consideration in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2026-2027 Stormwater Investment Plan (SIP) is July 31, 2025.
- The Projects Application Module is now live for Infrastructure Program (IP) Project, Technical Resources Program (TRP) Project concept, and Scientific Study (SS) Applicants. Please visit the [Call for Projects webpage](#) for more information, which includes the Projects Module, the Information Session Presentation, recording of the Live Demonstration for Applications, updated 2025 Interim Program Guidance, and new Supplemental Guidance to Support Feasibility Study Guidelines.
- The Regional Program Annual Report (covering July 2024 - June 2025) is due on August 15 for Project Developers and Scientific Studies approved in FY2020 through FY2025 SIPs. Project and Study Developers are to submit reports regardless of receiving funds, having expenditures or activities, or having executed the Funds Transfer Agreement.
- The upcoming Regional Oversight Committee (ROC) meeting is scheduled for July 9 at 1:00pm where the ROC will be reviewing the last five of the nine SIPs. It is anticipated that the ROC will review the ULAR SIP during the ROC meeting on July 9.
- To keep up with Program Updates as they are shared, please subscribe to receive email notifications. The SCW Program newsletter provides important updates on the Regional, Municipal, and District Programs, designed to help our community stay informed and engaged.

#### 5) Public Comment Period

Tim Brick (member of the public) shared his concern on the Arroyo Seco-San Rafael Treatment Wetlands Project regarding the project's alignment with SCW Program goals and public outreach strategy. He suggested the WASC review the project's funding in further detail.

Barbara Eisenstein (South Pasadena Nature Parks) shared concern that the Arroyo Seco-San Rafael Treatment Wetlands Project could potentially impact habitat for native plant species. And she invited WASC Members and Watershed Coordinators to visit South Pasadena Nature Parks to observe an example of a nature-based approach that incorporates native plant species.

Je-Show Yang (Asian Pacific Islander Forward Movement) expressed support for Council for Watershed Health (CWH) to be reappointed as ULAR Watershed Coordinators. Yang commented that CWH supported Asian Pacific Islander Forward Movement's involvement in the SCW Program and participation in regional planning conversations. Yang remarked that CWH has built trust across agencies, supported environmental justice, and understood the unique aspects of ULAR Watershed Area as Watershed Coordinators.

Angelo Gladding (member of the public) shared concern that the Arroyo Seco-San Rafael Treatment Wetlands project could potentially impact habitat for native plant species. He also shared concern about potential changes from the project's description in the original application.

Azeneth Martinez (Nature for All) shared support for CWH to be reappointed as ULAR Watershed Coordinators. Martinez commented that Kristina Kreter (CWH) and Alonso Garcia (CWH) have helped community members learn about and participate in the SCW Program during their current roles as Watershed Coordinators by providing live-translation services and printed materials in multiple languages.

Jean Park (Asian Pacific Island Forward Movement) shared support for CWH to be reappointed as ULAR Watershed Coordinators. Park shared that CWH supported Asian Pacific Islander Forward Movement with establishing its first water-related project and provided educational and networking opportunities.

Julia Lindner (Tataviam Land Conservancy) shared support for CWH to be reappointed as ULAR Watershed Coordinators. Linder shared that CWH assisted Tataviam Land Conservancy with preparing a

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state funding application to return 50 acres of land to the Tataviam Tribe and securing funding from the SCW Public Education and Community Engagement Grants Program.

Jerry Calderon (Tataviam Land Conservancy) shared support for CWH to be reappointed as ULAR Watershed Coordinators. Calderon commented that CWH has facilitated knowledge sharing and technical growth within different agencies.

Elva Yanez (Save Elephant Hill) shared support for CWH to be reappointed as ULAR Watershed Coordinators. Yanez commented that CWH provided technical assistance to Save Elephant Hill on stormwater runoff and water quality impacts. Yanez remarked that Save Elephant Hill was the first community-based organization in the ULAR Watershed Area to be awarded a Technical Resource Program grant, with guidance from CWH.

Itzel Flores Castillo Wong (River in Action) shared support for CWH to be reappointed as ULAR Watershed Coordinators. Flores Castillo Wong commented that CWH has helped River in Action navigate complexities in the SCW Program and participate in public planning efforts.

Liliana Tirado (Nature for All) shared support for CWH to be reappointed as ULAR Watershed Coordinators. Tirado commented that CWH has engaged Nature for All with the SCW Program, including through tours of stormwater projects.

#### **6) Presentations and Discussion Items**

##### **a) Watershed Coordinator Interview and Selection Process Overview**

Public Works staff provided an overview of the Watershed Coordinator Interview and Selection Process. Presentation slides are available on the [SCW Program website](#). There are three Watershed Coordinator positions in the ULAR Watershed Area, and three qualified proposers applied – two applicants from Council for Watershed Health and one applicant from Environmental Outreach Strategies.

Upon inquiry, Public Works staff shared that the Los Angeles County Contracts Division managed the Watershed Coordinator solicitation process and publicized the positions on social media, newspapers, and job posting boards.

Public Works staff clarified that the WASC is not required to conduct interviews with the proposers, since the WASC can use information from the proposers' applications and experience working with the proposers to select Watershed Coordinators. The WASC discussed and decided to proceed with the interviews.

##### **b) Watershed Coordinator Interviews**

Public Works staff and WASC Members conducted interviews with the proposers, who received interview questions in advance. Each interview included seven identical questions, a 15-minute response period, and 10 minutes for follow-up questions. Proposers were asked to temporarily exit the room while the other proposer was interviewed.

Following the interviews, the WASC discussed the candidates. Chair Villegas remarked that the three applicants have done great work and helped refine the SCW Program in their current positions as Watershed Coordinators. WASC members commented on the importance of continuity within the Watershed Coordinator positions.

#### **7) Public Comment Period**

Lora O'Connor shared support for CWH to be reappointed as ULAR Watershed Coordinators. O'Connor commented that CWH has experience supporting tribal groups on water resources management.

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#### **8) Voting Items**

Vice-Chair Karo Torossian motioned to appoint Council for Watershed Health as Primary for two (2) Watershed Coordinators and Environmental Outreach Strategies, Inc for one (1) Primary Watershed Coordinator for Upper Los Angeles River Watershed Area, seconded by Member Ernesto Pantoja. The Committee voted to approve the motion with 14 votes in favor, 0 votes in abstention, 0 opposed, and 0 absent at the time of vote (approved, see vote tracking sheet).

#### **9) Items for Next Agenda**

The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for Wednesday September 3, 2025 from 1:30pm to 4:00pm at Public Works Headquarters. Items on the next agenda include:

- a) Selection of Chair, Vice-Chair, or Co-Chairs
- b) Review of Committee Roles and Responsibilities
- c) Present Regional Reporting Summary FY24-25 Mid-Year (HDR)

#### **10) Adjournment**

Chair Villegas thanked Committee Members and the public for their attendance and participation and adjourned the meeting.