

Upper Los Angeles River

Watershed Area Steering Committee (WASC)

Meeting Minutes



Wednesday, September 3, 2025

1:30pm - 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)

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

Ernesto Pantoja, Laborers Local 300 (Community)

Jill Sohm, University of Southern California (Community)

Veronica Padilla-Campos, Pacoima Beautiful (Community)

*Dawn Petschauer, Pasadena (Municipal)

Michael Vartanians, City of South Pasadena (Municipal)

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

Teresa Villegas, Los Angeles (Municipal), Chair

Rafael Prieto, Los Angeles (Municipal)

Thuan Nguyen, Los Angeles County (Municipal)

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

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

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

Committee Members Absent:

Miguel Luna, Urban Semillas (Community)

*Committee Member Alternate

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

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 would soon join 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 and July 2, 2025

Public Works staff presented the meeting minutes from June 18, 2025, and July 2, 2025. Member Ernesto Pantoja motioned to approve the June 18 and July 2 meeting minutes, seconded by Member Dawn Petschauer. The WASC voted to approve the June 18 and July 2 meeting minutes with 7 votes in favor, 6 votes in abstention, 0 votes opposed, and 2 absent at the time of voting (approved, see vote tracking sheet).

3) Ex Parte Communication Disclosures

There were no ex-parte communication disclosures.

Upper Los Angeles River

Watershed Area Steering Committee (WASC)

Meeting Minutes



4) Committee Member and Program Updates

Vice-Chair Karo Torossian shared that the Regional Oversight Committee (ROC) unanimously adopted the Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 - 2026 Stormwater Investment Plan (SIP) for ULAR at the last ROC meeting.

Public Works staff provided updates, noting:

- The Call for Projects deadline for consideration in the FY26-27 SIP was July 31, 2025. Program-wide, 29 Infrastructure Program (IP) Projects, 7 Technical Resources Program (TRP) Project concepts, and 12 unique Scientific Studies (SS) applications were received. ULAR received three IPs, one TRP, and nine SS applications. Please visit the [Call for Projects page](#) of the SCW website for more information.
- The deadline for submitting a Project Modification Request (PMR) for consideration in the FY26-27 SIP is October 31, 2025. The PMR forms are currently in PDF format, but they will be transitioned to an online version to allow direct submittal through the Reporting Module. The new online form is anticipated to be available in early October 2025. For updates, please visit the Guidelines for Project Modification section on the [Adaptive Management page](#) of the SCW website.
- The Regional Program Annual Report (covering July 2024 - June 2025) was 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 ROC meeting is scheduled for September 10 at 1:00pm where the ROC will be reviewing the last five of the nine SIPs. The ROC will discuss high-level comments and questions regarding the Initial Watershed Plans and their use across the SCW Program.
- On behalf of the City of Los Angeles, there is an invitation to collaborate on Community-Proposed Projects funded by the Safe, Clean Water Regional Program (SCW Program) and the associated City of Los Angeles' Policies and Procedures for Community-Proposed SCW Program Projects. These projects would apply during Round 8 (FY27-28). Please ask the Watershed Coordinators for more information.
- The District Program [Quarter 1 \(Q1\) 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 highlights and a funding matrix that shares currently active and upcoming funding opportunities that may be relevant to SCW Program projects. Public Works staff and the Regional Coordination team are actively tracking activity to better understand impacts to future funding.
- 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) SCW Program Watershed Planning Updates

Public Works' Watershed Planning team provided updates, noting:

- The SCW Watershed Planning team hosted a virtual Technical Info Session on August 12 that was open to WASC members and the public. The team presented analytical processes used to produce the Watershed Area Baseline and Targets in the Draft Initial Watershed Plans and shared how the processes are utilized to contribute to their respective Countywide Goals. Meeting materials and a recording are posted to the [Watershed Planning page](#) of the SCW Program website.
- Drafts of the Initial Watershed Plans are posted to the [Watershed Planning page](#) of the SCW Program website for review and Public Comment. Comments may be submitted using an online form from now until September 28.
- The Community Strengths & Needs Assessment (CSNA) survey has received 638 responses since its launch. In the ULAR Watershed Area, 143 responses have been collected. A promotional tool

Upper Los Angeles River

Watershed Area Steering Committee (WASC)

Meeting Minutes



kit is available on the [Watershed Planning page](#) of the SCW Program website for anyone interested in utilizing and promoting the CSNA.

- The fourth Watershed Planning Workshop will be held for each WASC during their October or November meetings to present on the Draft Initial Watershed Plans. The Initial Watershed Plans will be published in early 2026.

6) Watershed Coordinator Updates

Watershed Coordinator Alonso Garcia shared that Council for Watershed Health provided support for seven applicants to the FY26-27 Call for Projects and grant recipients of the SCW Program's Public Education and Community Engagement Grants Program. Watershed Coordinator Garcia noted that Council for Watershed Health supported Los Angeles Waterkeeper with watershed planning workshops, Save Elephant Hill with developing community engagement materials, Nature for All with educational nature tours, Willowbrook Inclusion Networks with educational tours and project concept development in Compton Creek Watershed, The Nature Conservancy with community engagement for the Bowtie Demonstration Project, and TreePeople with outreach and engagement in the ULAR Watershed Area. The Watershed Coordinators are preparing a SCW Program 101 Workshop for all Public Education and Community Engagement grant recipients.

Watershed Coordinator Kristina Kreter provided an update on the Arroyo Seco-San Rafael Treatment Wetlands project, which the WASC received public comment on during the previous WASC meeting. Watershed Coordinator Kreter summarized the SCW Program's involvement in the project, including funding awards and community engagement conducted by Watershed Coordinators.

Member Petschauer clarified that the Arroyo Seco-San Rafael Treatment Wetlands project is developed in partnership with the cities of Pasadena, South Pasadena, and Los Angeles, and shared that the project team hosted a stakeholder meeting in August to clarify project scope with community members. Upon inquiry, Member Petschauer explained that the project team assessed all trees within the engineering design and recommended several native trees for removal and replacement in conjunction with applicable municipal requirements. However, Member Petschauer noted that most of the trees recommended for removal are invasive species.

7) Public Comment Period

Claire Robinson (Amigos de los Rios) commented that Amigos de los Rios has encountered challenges in the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) process for the Jackson Elementary School Campus Greening and Stormwater Quality Improvement Project. Because the project has components both inside the school property and land outside the school property in Los Angeles County jurisdiction, the project tried to do CEQA for the inside and outside components separately. Robinson asked the WASC for assistance in the CEQA process.

8) Presentations and Discussion Items

a) LRS Adaption to Address the LA River Bacteria TMDL for the ULAR Watershed Management Group Update

Chair Villegas introduced Brianna Datti (Craftwater) and Mackenzie Bolger (San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments (SGVCOG)) to present findings from Load Reduction Strategy (LRS) Adaptation to Address the LA River Bacterial TMDL for the ULAR Watershed Management Group SS, which was funded in FY20-21. The SS developed a procedure to prioritize and investigate catchment areas in the ULAR Watershed Area that are at-risk of pollution from human waste sources. Presentation slides are available on the [SCW Program website](#).

Upon inquiry, Datti expressed that while water quality regulations rely on fecal indicator bacteria, using additional indicators, such as HF183 (human marker), are critical to understanding public health risks of

Upper Los Angeles River

Watershed Area Steering Committee (WASC)

Meeting Minutes



human waste sources. Datti explained that the Study's adaptation plan identified new technologies for tracking human waste sources, but the study utilized the established method of measuring HF183 in field investigations.

Upon inquiry, Datti clarified that the seven investigations in this SS were conducted during dry weather, and shared that the public can access the Scientific Study results through the Study's [StoryMap](#).

Datti clarified that the desktop analysis portion of the Study identified sites that could benefit from maintenance.

Member Petschauer commented that this Study could help WASCs determine impactful locations for future projects.

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

Melanie Rivera (HDR, Regional Coordination) presented an overview of the Regional Program FY24-25 Mid-Year Report, including reporting requirements, WASC funding overview, and project accomplishments. Presentation slides are available on the [SCW Program website](#).

The WASC discussed how the SCW Program could support projects in navigating the CEQA process. Member Thuan Nguyen shared that Los Angeles County is working with Amigos de los Rios to resolve CEQA challenges for the Jackson Elementary School Campus Greening and Stormwater Quality Improvement Project. Member Nguyen noted that community-based organizations (CBOs) which implement a project on behalf of a municipality often face similar CEQA challenges because the CBO cannot act as lead agency. Chair Villegas suggested that the SCW Program prepare a CEQA guidance document for CBOs. Vice-Chair Torossian encouraged Amigos de los Rios to consider phasing the Jackson Elementary School Campus Greening and Stormwater Quality Improvement Project to continue progressing the project where possible while CEQA is in progress.

The WASC discussed challenges with funding long-term operations and maintenance (O&M) activities for projects that are developed by CBOs but have components located in a municipality. Chair Villegas noted that projects can apply for O&M funding from the SCW Program, and Mike Antos (Stantec, Regional Coordination) commented that Watershed Coordinators can help CBOs and municipalities coordinate on O&M requirements.

Upon inquiry, Public Works staff clarified that projects receiving Construction Funds must have CEQA completed before SCW funds are disbursed.

c) Summary of Submitted Projects, Concepts, and Scientific Studies for FY26-27

Watershed Coordinators Kreter, Garcia, and Adi Liberman presented a summary of submitted projects, project concepts, and Scientific Studies (SS) from the Round 7 (FY26-27) Call for Projects. Presentation slides are available on the [SCW Program website](#).

Upon inquiry, Public Works staff explained that the WASC will decide whether to send an IP project to the Scoring Committee. If the Scoring Committee determines that an IP project meets the 60-point minimum score threshold, the WASC can consider including the IP project in the FY26-27 SIP. If an IP project does not meet the minimum score, the Project Developer could resubmit the project as a TRP.

Vice-Chair Torossian questioned whether the Project Lead of the La Cañada Flintridge Country Club Dry Weather Diversion TRP project has the water rights to capture and reuse water on their property. Watershed Coordinator Kristina Kreter commented that this question could be addressed during the TRP project.

d) Review of Committee Roles and Responsibilities

Upper Los Angeles River

Watershed Area Steering Committee (WASC)

Meeting Minutes



Antos presented an overview of WASC roles and responsibilities, including the typical process for projects applying for Regional Program funding, programming the SIP, and Watershed Planning. Presentation slides are available on the [SCW Program website](#).

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

Chair Villegas encouraged other WASC members to consider serving as Chair. The WASC discussed interest in the open positions of Chair and Vice-Chair.

Public Works staff clarified that SCW Program staff are in the process of filling two open Municipality seats in the ULAR WASC. The WASC discussed parity in representation of all regions within the ULAR Watershed Area on the WASC.

9) Public Comment Period

Latoya Waters (City of Alhambra) expressed support for Member Petschauer to serve as Chair or Vice-Chair of the ULAR WASC.

10) Voting Items

Member Petschauer motioned to approve Karo Torossian as Chair and Dawn Petschauer as Vice-Chair, seconded by Member Michael Vartanians. Member Cathie Santo-Domingo made a substitute motion to approve Karo Torossian as Chair and Ida Meisami-Fard as Vice-Chair, seconded by Member John Huynh. The Committee voted to approve the substitute motion with 10 votes in favor, 0 votes in abstention, 5 opposed, and 0 absent at the time of vote (approved, see vote tracking sheet).

Member Jill Sohm motioned to send all completed IP projects to the Scoring Committee, seconded by Member Nguyen. The Committee voted to approve the motion with 15 votes in favor, 0 votes in abstention, 0 opposed, and 0 absent at the time of vote (approved, see vote tracking sheet).

11) Items for Next Agenda

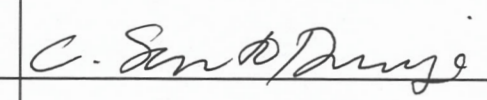
The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for Wednesday November 6, 2025 from 1:30pm to 4:00pm at Public Works Headquarters. Items on the next agenda include Watershed Planning Phase 4 Engagement and two Scientific Study application presentations.

12) Adjournment

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

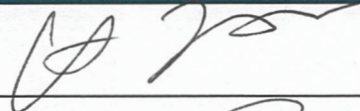
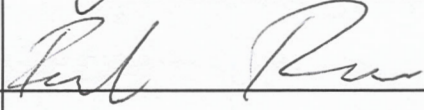
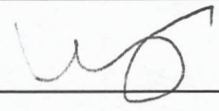
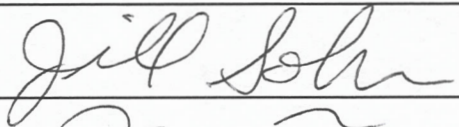
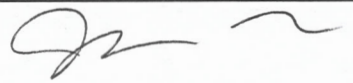
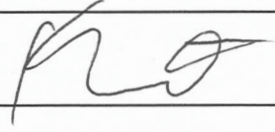
Upper Los Angeles River
Watershed Area Steering Committee Meeting
COMMITTEE MEMBER AND ALTERNATE SIGN-IN



Member Name	Municipality/ Organization	Member Type	Role	Signature
Adi Liberman	Environmental Outreach Strategies	Watershed Coordinator (Non-Voting Member)		
Alonso Garcia	Council for Watershed Health	Watershed Coordinator (Non-Voting Member)		
Anteneh Tesfaye	City of South Pasadena	Municipal	Alternate	
Arlene Guzman	Environmental Outreach Strategies	Watershed Coordinator (Non-Voting Member)		
Art Castro	Los Angeles Department of Water and Power	Agency	Primary	
Blayne Sutton-Wills	City of Los Angeles	Municipal	Alternate	
Brent Maue	City of Pasadena	Municipal	Alternate	
Cara Campbell	Los Angeles Department of Water and Power	Agency	Alternate	
Cathie Santo Domingo	Los Angeles Recreation & Parks	Agency	Primary	
Conor Mossavi	Los Angeles Department of Water and Power	Agency	Alternate	
Dawn Petschauer	Pasadena	Municipal	Alternate	
Edith de Guzman	University of California, Los Angeles	Community Stakeholder	Primary	

Upper Los Angeles River
Watershed Area Steering Committee Meeting
COMMITTEE MEMBER AND ALTERNATE SIGN-IN



Member Name	Municipality/ Organization	Member Type	Role	Signature
Ernesto Pantoja	Laborers Local 300	Community Stakeholder	Primary	
Ernesto Rivera	LA County Flood Control District	Agency	Primary	
Gary Lam	Los Angeles Recreation & Parks	Agency	Alternate	
Gregory Pierce	University of California, Los Angeles	Community Stakeholder	Alternate	
Ida Meisami-Fard	LA Sanitation and Environment	Agency	Primary	
Jason Casanova	Council for Watershed Health	Watershed Coordinator (Non-Voting Member)		
Jill Sohm	University of Southern California	Community Stakeholder	Primary	
John Huynh	Los Angeles Department of Water and Power	Agency	Primary	
Kara Plourde	Los Angeles County	Municipal	Alternate	
Karo Torossian	City of Los Angeles	Municipal	Primary	
Kevin Ho	LA Sanitation and Environment	Agency	Alternate	
Kristina Kreter	Council for Watershed Health	Watershed Coordinator (Non-Voting Member)		

Upper Los Angeles River
Watershed Area Steering Committee Meeting
COMMITTEE MEMBER AND ALTERNATE SIGN-IN



Member Name	Municipality/ Organization	Member Type	Role	Signature
Michael Vartanians	City of South Pasadena	Municipal	Primary	
Miguel Luna	Urban Semillas	Community Stakeholder	Primary	
Rafael Prieto	City of Los Angeles	Municipal	Primary	
Roxy Rivas	Pacoima Beautiful	Community Stakeholder	Alternate	
Satenig Marjanian	LA County Flood Control District	Agency	Alternate	
Scott Applebaum	University of Southern California	Community Stakeholder	Alternate	
Sergio Rascon	Laborers Local 300	Community Stakeholder	Alternate	
Teresa Villegas	City of Los Angeles	Municipal	Primary	
Thuan Nguyen	Los Angeles County	Municipal	Primary	
Virginia Wei	City of Los Angeles	Municipal	Alternate	
Veronica Padilla-Campos	Pacoima Beautiful	Community Stakeholder	Primary	

Upper Los Angeles River
Watershed Area Steering Committee Meeting
PUBLIC SIGN-IN



First Name	Last Name	Municipality/Organization	Email Address
Michael	Vartanian	South Pasadena	mvartanians@southpasadenaca.gov
Peter	Tonthat	LADWP	peter.tonthat@ladwp.com
Jaime	Godinez	LADWP	Jaime.godinez@ladwp.com
Valeria	Mena	CWH	Vmena@watershedhealth.org
Karo	TOROSSIAN	City of LA	
Brianna	Datti	Craftwater	brianna.datti@craftwater.com
Oliver	Galang	Craftwater	oliver.galang@craftwater.com
Michael	Scaduro	City of LA-LASAM	michael.Scaduro@lary.org

WebEx Webinar Attendees

Upper Los Angeles River WASC Meeting - September 3, 2025

Ali Sharbat Cal Poly	Conor Mossavi	Kevin Ho	Sophia Catalan
Alonso Garcia	Craig Doberstein	Kiley	Spanish Interpreter-Alejandra
Angineh Shahnazarian	Dr. Mehrad Kamalzare - CPP	Larry Tran - SCWP Staff	Stacy Luell
Anh Ta	Drew Ready CWH	Latoya Waters - Alhambra	Susie Santilena
Anthony Barreras -SCWP Staff	Elva Yanez	Linnet Khechatoorian	Theodore Von Bitner
Antonino Monterrosa	Jaime Godinez	Lusine Shrivastava	Thomas Le
Aric M	Jason Casanova, CWH	Mackenzie Bolger - SGVCOG	Thomas Sarkisyan BSS
Brian Ahn	Jennifer Amarant	Marc	ULAR WASC Committee
Brian Chuong LACPW	Johanna Chang	Melanie Rivera	Valeria
Call-in User_2	JonPaul Sarro SCW WP	Michael Ku	Vicki Friesen
Cameron	Jose Castro - LACPW	Miller Zou	Victor Cortes
Carlos Rodriguez	Joyann Sofio	Randy Dreyfuss	Virginia Wei
Chris Lee	Kara Plourde	Ricardo M. Acosta StreetsLA	Vivien Cao
Christopher Vong	Kelsey Jessup	Roberto Perez	Wayne Lee - SCWP Staff
			monitor
			pamela dreyfuss
			ryanong
			valeria