

Lower Los Angeles River

Watershed Area Steering Committee (WASC)

Meeting Minutes



Tuesday, October 28, 2025

1:00pm – 3:00pm

East Rancho Dominguez Library

4420 East Rose Street

East Rancho Dominguez, CA 90221

WebEx Meeting

Committee Members Present:

Ernesto Rivera, Flood Control District (Agency)

Madeline Chen, Central Basin (Agency)

Asha Kreiling, Water Replenishment District (Agency)

*Alysha Chan, Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts (Agency)

Danielle Lewis, City of Long Beach Parks and Recreation (Agency)

*Maria Madrigal, Conservation Corps of Long Beach (Community)

*Arturo Gonzalez, Rivers and Mountains Conservancy (Community)

Manny Gómez, TreePeople (Community), Co-Chair

*Dylan Porter, Port of Long Beach (Community)

Candice Dickens-Russell, Friends of the Los Angeles River (Community)

Dan Mueller, Downey (Municipal)

Alexa Reasoner, Long Beach (Municipal)

Freddie Agyin, Vernon (Municipal)

Adriana Figueroa, Paramount (Municipal)

*Fred Gonzalez, Los Angeles County (Municipal)

Gladis Deras, South Gate (Municipal)

Tara Dales, SGA (Watershed Coordinator, non-voting member)

Committee Members Not Present:

Konya Vivanti, Lakewood (Municipal)

*Committee Member Alternate

List of Committee Members

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

1) Welcome and Introductions

Manny Gómez, Co-Chair of the Lower Los Angeles River (LLAR) Watershed Area Steering Committee (WASC), welcomed all Committee Members and called the meeting to order. Los Angeles County Public Works (Public Works) staff facilitated a roll call, conducted a brief tutorial on WebEx, and provided an overview of meeting guidelines and participation instructions for any participants joining online. A quorum was established.

2) Approval of Meeting Minutes from August 26, 2025

Public Works staff presented the minutes from the previous meeting. Member Asha Kreiling motioned to approve the minutes, with the correction of Co-Chair Joseph Venzon's last name, seconded by Member Arturo Gonzalez. The Committee voted to approve the August 26, 2025 LLAR WASC meeting minutes with 12 votes in favor, 0 opposed, 4 in abstention, and 0 absent at the time of vote (approved, see vote tracking sheet).

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3) Committee Member and Program Updates

Public Works staff provided an update on various SCW Program activities:

- The Call for Projects deadline for consideration in the Fiscal Year 2026-2027 (FY26-27) Call for Projects deadline was July 31. 29 Infrastructure Program (IP) Projects, 7 Technical Resources Program (TRP) Project Concepts, and 12 unique Scientific Study (SS) applications were submitted Program wide. The LLAR WASC received four SS applications for FY26-27.
- Public works staff are conducting completeness checks of all Project Applications. Feasibility studies for IP Projects that are deemed complete will be scored by the Scoring Committee.
- The Scoring Committee began scoring projects on September 15. The Scoring Committee will continue scoring projects at meetings on October 20, October 27, November 10, and December 1, 2025. If projects need to be rescored by the Scoring Committee, they will meet again in December or January. Projects that score above the threshold score will be sent to the WASC for consideration in the Stormwater Investment Plan (SIP).
- The deadline to submit a Project Modification Request (PMR) for consideration in the FY26-27 SIP is October 31. The SCW Program is transitioning from the current PMR form to an online, direct submittal through the Reporting Module. This change will streamline integration with the SIP Tool and other modules. To access the PMR form for a project, navigate to the Reporting Module, select the appropriate project, and then click on the new tile labeled “Project Modification Request.” More information can be found in the Guidelines for Project Modifications section on the [Adaptive Management webpage](#).
- The Regional Oversight Committee (ROC) meeting took place on October 8, at 1:00pm. During the meeting, the ROC discussed the 2025 Draft SCW Program Biennial Progress Report and reviewed the Initial Watershed Planning (IWP) public comments.
- The November ROC meeting has been canceled, and a SS Symposium is scheduled for November 12 at 1:00pm. The latest science in stormwater best management practice (BMP) treatment technology will be showcased. The Symposium will also include a panel discussion regarding the future of stormwater sciences within the framework of the SS Program.
- The annual disbursements for FY24-25 have been completed for municipalities that met all eligibility requirements. A total of 77 cities received over \$95 million collectively in local return.
- The Public Education and Community Engagement Grants Program received an overwhelming response, with a high volume of strong and competitive applications. A total of \$8.5 million of grant funding has been allocated across 52 approved projects, and proposed grant activities have begun. Detailed information about funded projects from all three rounds is available on [The Water Foundation's website](#).
- The SCW Program's Landcover Survey was updated for FY25-26. This Landcover Survey provides the aerial imagery used to calculate parcels' Safe Clean Water Tax. A parcel's impermeable area may have changed although the tax rate of 2.5 cents per square foot of impermeable area has not. \$10 million in additional annual revenue is expected as a result of the update. Each parcel's new impermeable area is anticipated to remain in effect until the next update in approximately three years or until revised per appeal.
- To keep up with Regional, Municipal, District Programs as they are shared, please subscribe to receive email notifications. These newsletters are designed to help community members stay informed and engaged. Implementation updates are also available in the News and Updates section of the [SCW Program website](#).

4) Public Comment Period

Jesse de la Cruz (Urbano Strategies) provided a public comment and shared information about Urbano Strategies' mission to promote authentic engagement and outreach while empowering residents to be involved in public processes. De la Cruz noted that Urbano Strategies has worked on community gardens, pocket parks, and is a recipient of the SCW Program Public Education and Community Engagement Grants

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Program, in partnership with East Side of the River. The Grant Program has funded the Community Watershed Guardians Program (hereafter referenced as Watershed Academy), which is an academy dedicated to building power, planning with the community, sharing disadvantaged community resident assessments, and engaging high school students. De La Cruz urged the WASC to adopt a more specific, people-centered lens for funding opportunities to make reinvestments across the community.

Yesenia Rosales (Community member) provided public comment in Spanish and shared experiences as a participant of the Community Watershed Academy and urged the WASC to consider supporting the program and similar educational courses. Rosales highlighted the impact the Watershed Academy has had on investing in communities, and empowering families and youth to advocate for healthier communities.

Amanda Valle (Community member, Urban farmer) provided a public comment in Spanish and shared experiences as a participant of the Watershed Academy. Valle shared that, through the Watershed Academy, they were able to learn about connection between water and food and understand the importance of stormwater. Valle shared that they now understand the intersection of farming and the importance of water conservation and stormwater capture. The Watershed Academy helped build community capacity and trained community members on how to advocate for water quality in their own communities. Valle urged the Committee to invest in transformative programs, such as the Watershed Academy.

Cesar Montez (Community member) provided public comment about the Watershed Academy, led by East Side of the River and Urbano Strategies, and shared how the Academy helped provide green workforce development opportunities through hands-on learning and skill development. Montez commented that the SCW Program should show support for the Watershed Academy and invest in these neighborhoods.

Joanna Escobedo (Community member, Lynwood) provided a public comment about the importance of Urbano Strategies' and East Side of the River's work. Escobedo urged the Committee to consider, listen, and invest in youth, who have the energy and right to design the own communities they live in. Escobedo commented that the Watershed Academy provided the knowledge and confidence for students to build a better future and requested the WASC to invest in the youth and support the program.

The Committee requested in-person meeting translations at future WASC meetings and a translated summary of public comments made in Spanish during today's meeting. Public Works staff noted that in-person translation services typically need to be requested prior to the meeting. Public Works staff will request written comments from individuals who provided public comment so comments may be translated and recorded. Public Works has requested in-person translation services for this WASC moving forward.

5) Presentation and Discussion Items

a) Ex Parte Communications Disclosure

There were no ex parte communications disclosures.

b) Watershed Coordinator Update

This Agenda Item was added during the meeting. Watershed Coordinator Tara Dales provided a summary of Watershed Coordinator activities. Presentation slides are available on the [SCW Program website](#).

Watershed Coordinator Dales also shared that other team members from S. Groner Associates will be temporarily supporting the Watershed Coordinator role in the upcoming months.

Upon inquiry, the Committee clarified with Watershed Coordinator Dales that tabling events have bilingual materials and a Spanish-speaking team member is present.

Upon inquiry, Member A. Gonzalez, who is also the Director of East Side of the River, explained to the WASC that East Side of the River is a collective of artists that focus on environmental justice, Indigenous

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ceremony, and developing community leaders. Member A. Gonzalez explained that East Side of the River has been working with Urbano Strategies on projects that help community members channel positive energy, as well as promote engagement with public institutions.

Member Kreiling expressed satisfaction with the specific metrics described by Watershed Coordinator Dales and the amount of public participation at the meeting today.

c) Watershed Planning Phase 4 Engagement

Public Works' Watershed Planning staff provided an overview of Watershed Planning efforts. Presentation slides are available on the [SCW program website](#).

Watershed Coordinator Dales confirmed with Watershed Planning staff that the Watershed Planning Tool contains geospatial information and that SS Applicants could utilize the Tool to discern regional priorities. It was clarified that SS Applicants will not be required to prove alignment with Watershed Plans, as required for IP Applicants with the addition of the 20th Feasibility Study Guidelines requirement.

Member Kreiling inquired how WASCs could use the Watershed Planning Tool to consider community-derived needs when evaluating projects and confirmed with Public Works staff that the Watershed Planning Tool displays the CSNA survey results mapped geographically. Watershed Planning staff explained that the CSNA survey results are not meant to replace a project's engagement activities, but that Project Applicants can augment the CSNA survey data with project-specific outreach activities.

Hayat Rasul (Stantec, Watershed Planning) asked the WASC how future project applications could use the Watershed Plans for the next Call for Projects, referencing the addition of the 20th Feasibility Study Guideline requirement to demonstrate alignment with Watershed Plans.

Member Kreiling commented that the requirement would allow the WASC to be more strategic in addressing gaps in the Watershed Area. Committee Members raised concerns that additional requirements for project applications may make it more difficult for potential applicants. Watershed Planning staff explained that the WASC would still evaluate projects holistically and Watershed Plans are just one of the tools to be used during SIP deliberation. Project applications will need to pass the Scoring threshold and self-certify alignment with Watershed Plans before coming to the WASCs. Public Works staff confirmed more guidance will be available by the next Call for Projects. Upon inquiry, Public Works staff confirmed that the Scoring Committee is not evaluating projects against Watershed Plans in the scoring of this year's projects.

Co-Chair Gomez commented on the need for projects to be more creative and collaborative, suggesting that early collaborative work between agencies, school districts, and other organizations would increase the quality of projects in the SCW Program. Co-Chair Gomez highlighted other efforts across the County, such as the County Water Plan Nature-Based Solutions Task Force, that is complementary with SCW Program efforts. Watershed Planning staff noted that development of metrics and indicators from Task Force recommendations is underway. Rasul noted that prioritizing multi-benefit projects is shared by both community members and the WASC.

Member Ernesto Rivera commented that the Watershed Planning Tool could shape projects during the conceptual stage, noting that funding limitations of WASCs may encourage more collaboration in developing SS topics. Watershed Planning staff noted that the Watershed Planning Tool would help Project Applicants understand project elements that are prioritized in the SCW Program versus other funding sources. Upon inquiry, Committee Members commented that the Watershed Planning Tools would help the WASC be more strategic in evaluating projects given tighter budgets.

Watershed Planning staff provided an overview of the public comments received for LLAR Initial Watershed Plans.

6) Public Comment Period

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There were no public comments. Public Works staff noted that Spanish interpretation services will be included at future meetings.

7) Voting Items

There were no voting items.

8) Items for Next Agenda

The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for November 25, 2025 from 1:00pm to 3:00pm. See the [SCW Program website](#) for meeting details.

9) Adjournment

Co-Chair Gonez thanked WASC Members, Public Works staff, and the public for their attendance and participation and adjourned the meeting.

		Quorum Present				Voting Items
Member Type	Position	Member	Voting/ Present?	Alternate	Voting/ Present?	Approve August 26, 2025 Meeting Minutes (with correction of Mr. Venzon's name)
Agency	District	Ernesto Rivera	x	Enrique Baul		y
Agency	Central Basin	Madeline Chen	x	Braden Yu		y
Agency	Water Replenishment District	Asha Kreiling	x	Jenn Swart		y
Agency	LA County Sanitation Districts	Shannon Bishop		Alysha Chan	x	a
Agency	City of Long Beach Parks & Recreation	Danielle Lewis	x	Todd Leland		y
Community Stakeholder	Conservation Corps of Long Beach	Isabelle Campiformio		Maria Madrigal	x	y
Community Stakeholder	Rivers & Mountains Conservancy	Mark Stanley		Arturo Gonzalez	x	y
Community Stakeholder	TreePeople	Manny Gómez*	x	Mary Hillemeier		y
Community Stakeholder	Port of Long Beach	James Vernon		Dylan Porter	x	a
Community Stakeholder	Friends of the Los Angeles River	Candice Dickens-Russell	x	Ryan Mayeda		a
Municipal Members	City of Lakewood	Konya Vivanti				
Municipal Members	City of Downey	Dan Mueller	x	Matt Robertson		y
Municipal Members	City of Long Beach	Alexa Reasoner	x	Wataru Kumagai		y
Municipal Members	City of Vernon	Freddie Agvin	x			y
Municipal Members	City of Paramount	Adriana Figueroa	x	Michelle Tse		a
Municipal Members	County of Los Angeles	Joseph Venzon*		Fred Gonzalez	x	y
Municipal Members	City of South Gate	Gladis Deras	x			y
Watershed Coordinator Non-Voting Member	SGA Marketing	Tara Dales	x			
Total Non-Vacant Seats		17			Yes (Y)	12
Total Voting Members Present		16			No (N)	0
Agency		5			Abstain (A)	4
Community Stakeholder		5			Total	16
Municipal Members		6			Approved	

Attendees
Lower Los Angeles River WASC Meeting
October 28, 2025

Andrew Kim	Jose Luis Escajeda	SCW Staff - Larry Tran
Aric M	Katelynn Webb, WSP	SCW WP - Jason Jade Pepito
Brenda Rojas	LLAR AV	Serena Zhu
Carlos Rodriguez	Luis Perez	Vanessa Thulsiraj
Clayton Heard	Michelle Kim JLHA	
David	SCW Staff - Anthony Barreras	
Emily Ng Regional Coordination	SCW Staff - Jose Castro	