

# Santa Clara River Watershed Area Steering Committee (WASC) Meeting Minutes

---



Thursday, January 15, 2026  
1:00pm - 3:00pm  
Santa Clarita City Hall  
Carl Boyer Room  
23920 Valencia Blvd. Valencia, CA 91355  
WebEx Meeting

## Committee Members Present:

\*Alynn Sun, Los Angeles County Flood Control District (Agency)  
Ali Elhassan, Santa Clarita Valley Water Agency (Agency)  
\*Rick Viergutz, Santa Clarita Valley Groundwater Sustainability Agency (Agency)  
Francisco Guerrero, LA County Sanitation Districts (Agency)  
Mayor Laurene Weste, City of Santa Clarita Recreation/ Open Space (Agency)  
Mary Johnson, Agua Dulce Town Council (Community)  
Sandra Cattell, Sierra Club (Community), Vice Chair  
\*Mitchell van Bekkum, Evolve Business Strategies (Community)  
Dianne Erskine-Hellrigel, St. Francis Dam Disaster National Memorial Foundation (Community)  
\*Paul Choy, Los Angeles County Department of Public Works (Municipal)  
Darin Seegmiller, City of Santa Clarita (Municipal), Chair  
Amanda Begley, TreePeople (Watershed Coordinator, non-voting member)  
  
\*Committee Member Alternate

## Committee Members Not Present:

Hunt Braly, Poole and Shaffery (Community)

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

---

## **1. Welcome and Introductions**

Darin Seegmiller, Chair of the Santa Clara River (SCR) Watershed Area Steering Committee (WASC), welcomed Committee Members and called the meeting to order. Los Angeles County Public Works (Public Works) staff gave a brief WebEx tutorial. Public Works staff facilitated the roll call of Committee Members, and a quorum was established.

## **2. Approval of Meeting Minutes from October 16, 2025**

Public Works staff presented the previous meeting minutes. Vice Chair Sandra Cattell motioned to approve the meeting minutes from October 16, 2025. The motion was seconded by Member Dianne Erskine-Hellrigel. The Committee voted to approve the October 16, 2025 meeting minutes, with 12 votes in favor, 3 votes in abstention, 0 votes opposed, and 1 absent at the time of the vote (approved, see vote tracking sheet).

## **3. Ex Parte Communication Disclosures**

There were no ex parte communications disclosures.

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

Chair Seegmiller shared that there will be a groundbreaking ceremony for the Via Princessa Park Project on Thursday, January 22 at 9:00 AM. Chair Seegmiller noted that this Project was one of the first Projects funded by the SCR WASC and the SCW Program.

# Santa Clara River Watershed Area Steering Committee (WASC) Meeting Minutes

---



Public Works staff shared an update:

- The Regional Oversight Committee met on January 14, 2026 and approved the Draft Biennial Progress Report for a 30-day Public Comment Period. The Draft Biennial Progress Report can be found on the Safe, Clean Water (SCW) Program [Adaptive Management webpage](#).
- The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors (Board) approved the Fiscal Year (FY) 2025-2026 Stormwater Investment Plans (SIPs) on November 4, 2025.
- As part of the SCW Program Administration, Completeness Checks are conducted to ensure applications are submitted properly and that Projects are eligible for funds. Three Scientific Study applications were deemed ineligible to receive funds from the Scientific Studies Program.
- The Scoring Committee met six times between September and December 2025 to score Projects. Three Infrastructure Program applications did not pass the Scoring threshold.
- Public Works staff are reviewing Project Modification Requests (PMRs) and noted that if Projects are deemed inconsistent with the WASC's SIP, the PMR will be presented to the WASC for consideration. Staff noted that no PMRs were deemed inconsistent in the SCR Watershed Area.
- Public Works staff reminded the Committee that the WASC and Regional Program remain committed to a transparent and fair process and emphasized the inclusion of *ex parte* disclosures on each agenda. Staff added that Committee Members should avoid using their position as WASC members to advocate for applications from their home entities.
- Implementation Updates are available in the [News and Updates webpage](#) on the SCW Program website.

Ryanna Fossum (Stantec, Regional Coordination) distributed SIP Deliberation Workbooks to the Committee Members. The Workbooks include Project information and overviews, guiding prompts, and space for Members to take notes and track questions when receiving applicant presentations.

## 5. Discussion Items

### a) **Workforce Development Presentation by Jolene Guerrero, Deputy Director at Los Angeles County Public Works**

Jolene Guerrero, Deputy Director of Water Resources at Los Angeles County Department of Public Works, presented on the Public Works Workforce Development Program being co-developed with the Los Angeles County Department of Economic Opportunity. Presentation slides are available on the [SCW Program website](#). Guerrero pointed to [Los Angeles County Flood Control District Code Ch.16.05.B.6.b](#), which describes the District Program and its ability to administer workforce development and job trainings. This effort is in progress.

Vice Chair Cattell asked Guerrero and Public Works staff if there is an opportunity to make sure local people are hired on local Projects. Guerrero noted that Public Works can work directly with Vice Chair Cattell to identify expertise gaps in a municipality and potential paths forward.

Chair Seegmiller shared that there is a growing need for staff specifically trained for Operations and Maintenance (O&M) as new stormwater infrastructure is built within the City of Santa Clarita. Chair Seegmiller expressed eagerness to see the development of a certification program and/or workforce training that is specific to stormwater infrastructure. Chair Seegmiller added that at the Regional Oversight Committee Meeting on January 14, Public Works noted that District Program funds can be programmed for O&M training programs and encouraged the WASC to consider funding the maintenance of infrastructure to ensure Projects' longevity.

#### i. **Public Comment Period**

Public Works noted that [six public comment cards](#) were submitted online.

# Santa Clara River Watershed Area Steering Committee (WASC) Meeting Minutes

---



Public Works called on the raised hands in the WebEx Webinar. Five of the six commenters who submitted comment cards online shared their comments verbally in the meeting.

Jessica Rivas, City of Pasadena, commented that the SCW Program should address the gap between O&M needs and workforce training and ability, noting that the gap poses a threat to the Program and region. Rivas added that there is an urgent need to increase the accessibility and availability of green jobs and local workforce training. Rivas shared support for the Workforce Development Scientific Study by the City of Pasadena, which the District deemed ineligible, and shared that the City of Pasadena has committed approximately \$500,000 to workforce development.

Dawn Petschauer, City of Pasadena, shared that the City's Workforce Development Scientific Study was presented at the Central Santa Monica Bay WASC before being deemed ineligible. Petschauer commented that the best place for this Study would be the Scientific Studies Program. Petschauer shared that the Study is ready to be deployed as soon as possible, noting that the timeline contrasts with the County Workforce Development Program's longer timeline. Petschauer urged the Committee to allow the Study to be presented at the WASCs.

Sherreeta White, City of Pasadena, expressed support for the City of Pasadena's proposed Workforce Development Study. White added that O&M and workforce development directly affect the success of stormwater infrastructure and impact the capacity for stormwater capture. White highlighted the connection between the proposed Study and applied science.

Kaitie Evers, Center for Watershed Protection, shared support for the City of Pasadena's proposed Workforce Development Study. Evers emphasized the role of O&M in delivering the full benefits of SCW Program Projects, as well as the potential of stormwater infrastructure investment to create jobs. Evers emphasized the strong relationship between the Center for Watershed Protection and the City of Pasadena in their Southern California-specific landscape certification program.

Jeff Khun, City of Pasadena, shared support for the City of Pasadena's proposed Workforce Development Study. Khun added that the failure of stormwater infrastructure is often due to lack of training and specialized knowledge, rather than neglect by Cities. Khun added that the City of Pasadena is committed to advancing workforce development and has dedicated local funds to continue the work already being done to advance the green stormwater workforce.

John Mendoza, City of Pomona resident, shared support for the acceleration of workforce development and project labor agreements in the SCW Program. Mendoza added that having deadlines is important to move things forward.

The Public Comment period was closed. Fossum noted that Public Works is developing guidance about the Scientific Studies Program to help applicants understand what will be required of studies going forward.

## **b) Infrastructure Program (IP) Presentation ([SCW Portal](#))**

### **i. Jake Kuredjian Park Stormwater Improvements Project**

#### **Presentation by Los Angeles County Public Works**

Jacqueline Stone (Los Angeles County Public Works) presented on the Jake Kuredjian Park Stormwater Improvements Project. The proposed Project would improve regional water quality and accomplish groundwater recharge at Jake Kuredjian Park in the Stevenson Ranch community. Presentation slides are available on the [SCW Program Website](#).

# Santa Clara River Watershed Area Steering Committee (WASC) Meeting Minutes

---



Vice Chair Cattell asked if the Project had compared cost savings from combining the project with the Pico Canyon Park Stormwater Improvements Project Concept. Chris Carandang (Paradigm) shared that they could provide a cost estimate in the future.

Member Ali Elhassan asked if the cost presented included contingency planning. Carandang confirmed that 30% of projected costs are dedicated to contingency.

Member Mary Johnson asked why some hardscape areas cannot be removed in the Project, noting that 20% of the impervious area is planned to be removed. Carandang clarified that the parking lot has a rain garden with some walking paths in the park. Carandang elevated that the stormwater from walkways will run off into nearby open space. Carandang added that the paved walkways were intended to increase Project cost-effectiveness, while highlighting that if natural walkways are a priority for the WASC, implementation options and projected costs can be considered in the design phase of the Project.

## 1. Public Comment Period

Melina Watts, North Santa Monica Bay Watershed Coordinator, asked where the water that is pumped out of the Jake Kuredjian Park Stormwater Improvements Project will go.

Chair Seegmiller requested that the applicants address Watts's question at the next SCR WASC meeting.

### c) Scientific Studies (SS) Presentations ([SCW Portal](#))

#### i. A Holistic Assessment of Trash in Watersheds

Dr. Win Cowger, Executive Director of the Moore Institute for Plastic Pollution Research, presented A Holistic Assessment of Trash in Watersheds Scientific Study (SS). The Moore Institute for Plastic Pollution Research (MIPPR) will measure roadside trash loading, harmonize existing public datasets, and develop watershed-scale models to evaluate the effectiveness of best management practices (BMPs). The proposed 4-year plan is estimated to cost \$366,000 per WASC. Presentation slides are available on the [SCW Program Website](#).

Committee Member Erskine-Hellrigel emphasized the importance of trash cleanup to protect condors, explaining that condors ingest broken glass and other debris and often die as a result. Member Erskine-Hellrigel described cleanup efforts conducted with organized crews, noting that on the first day they collected 491 pounds of broken glass, and on the second day they collected another 400 pounds. Cowger affirmed that there remains a significant amount of work to be done to address trash management in Los Angeles County.

Vice Chair Cattell questioned whether the County and City have a clear understanding of where trash is accumulating, how much there is, and how effective current cleanup efforts are, suggesting that rather than conducting additional studies, it might be more beneficial to use funds to hire cleanup crews.

Member Rick Viergutz asked the applicant how the proposed Study's cleanup model functions over time and whether it accurately captures temporal changes. The applicant responded that time-based modeling for trash is difficult because of the complexity involved, particularly with trash that flows down waterways. The applicant explained that trash data is especially hard to collect during flashy storms.

Committee Member Mayor Laurene Weste asked whether the tracking of road dust includes brake dust, which can enter the water system and is a pollutant of concern in the SCR Watershed Area. In response, Cowger clarified that this Study does not include road dust analysis, but the team plans to coordinate with a separate road dust study funded by the SCW Program.

# Santa Clara River Watershed Area Steering Committee (WASC) Meeting Minutes

---



Member Mayor Weste asked whether identifying the location of origin and types of trash found on roadways could be used to reduce trash at the source, emphasizing the importance of prevention, not just cleanup. The applicant agreed, stating that while the technical knowledge of how to clean up trash already exists, legislative action is needed to prevent trash from being generated and improperly discarded in the first place.

Member Johnson shared illegal dumping occurs daily in some of the SCR Watershed's rural areas. Member Johnson acknowledged that Public Works is currently doing the best it can when reports are submitted. In response, the applicant noted that the Study can incorporate a plan to track illegal dumping and coordinate on study locations. However, both the presenter and the Committee acknowledged that illegal dumping will persist as long as trash continues to be produced and waste fees remain high.

## **1. Public Comment Period**

There were no public comments.

## **ii. Benefits of Restoration and Land Preservation as Nature-Based Solutions to Water Quality and Water Supply**

Jason Casanova (Council for Watershed Health) and Jeff Parsons (Herrera) presented the Benefits of Restoration and Land Preservation as Nature-Based Solutions to Water Quality and Water Supply Scientific Study. The Study plans to review and assess the scientific basis for determining the water quality and water supply benefits of creek restoration and/or preservation, perform field monitoring to quantify these benefits locally, and look at restoration opportunity areas in the Santa Clara River watershed. Presentation slides are available on the [SCW Program Website](#).

Vice Chair Cattell thanked the presenters for addressing the invasive *Arundo donax*. Casanova noted that TreePeople is working on a study to understand the water use of *Arundo donax* and looks forward to potentially incorporating their findings into this Study.

Chair Seegmiller added that a SCW Program goal is to mitigate the effects of impervious development throughout the County. Chair Seegmiller expressed interest in understanding how SCW Program funds can be used for open space purchases, conservation, and preservation. Chair Seegmiller asked Public Works to address that topic at a future WASC meeting.

City gives views on clean up on trash. Talks about reach out for awareness on trash. County and watershed board gives reactions and thoughts regarding the study. States that they need to look more into it.

## **1. Public Comment Period**

There were no public comments.

## **6. General Public Comment Period**

There were no public comments.

## **7. Voting Items**

There were no voting items.

## **8. Items for Next Agenda**

The following draft agenda items were shared for the next meeting:

- a) Regional Program FY24-25 Annual Report Summary

# Santa Clara River Watershed Area Steering Committee (WASC) Meeting Minutes

---



- b) FY26-27 Scientific Studies Peer Review Summary
- c) Santa Clara River Project Prioritization and Selection Discussion for populating the Fiscal Year 2026-2027 Stormwater Investment Plan
- d) Discussion of Invasive Species

Public Works staff requested a one-hour extension of the next meeting to facilitate SIP Deliberations.

Upon inquiry, Fossum noted that SS Peer Reviews are not presented at a meeting but rather compiled as a summary and provided to the WASC in advance. SS applicants are invited to the meeting to answer clarifying questions.

Watershed Coordinator Begley shared that Watershed Coordinator updates will be provided at a later SCR WASC meeting.

## **9. Adjournment**

Chair Seegmiller thanked the WASC and members of the public and adjourned the meeting.

Next Meeting: Thursday, February 19, 2026  
1:00 pm - 3:00 pm  
See [SCW website](#) for meeting details

**SANTA CLARA RIVER WASC MEETING - JANUARY 15, 2025**

			Quorum Present			Voting Items (see meeting minutes for additional details)
Member Type	Position	Member	Voting/ Present?	Alternate	Voting/ Present?	Approve 10/16/2025 Meeting Minutes
Agency	District	Julian Juarez		Alynn Sun	x	y
Agency	Santa Clarita Valley Water Agency	Ali Elhassan	not present at time of vote	Najwa Pitois		
Agency	Santa Clarita Valley Groundwater Sustainability Agency	Steve Cole		Rick Viergutz	x	a
Agency	LA County Sanitation Districts	Francisco Guerrero	x	Christopher Lapaz		y
Agency	City of Santa Clarita Recreation/Open Space	Laurene Weste, Mayor	x	Michael Villegas		a
Community Stakeholder	Poole & Shaffery	Hunt Braly				
Community Stakeholder	Agua Dulce Town Council	Mary Johnson	x			a
Community Stakeholder	Santa Clarita Sierra Club	Sandra Cattell**	x	Diane Trautman		y
Community Stakeholder	Evolve Business Strategies	Ivan Volschenk		Mitchell van Bekkum	x	y
Community Stakeholder	St. Francis Dam Disaster National Memorial Foundation	Dianne Erskine-Hellrigel	x	Heidi Webber		y
Municipal Members	LA County Public Works	Bruce Hamamoto		Paul Choy	x	y
Municipal Members	LA County Public Works	Bruce Hamamoto		Paul Choy	x	y
Municipal Members	LA County Public Works	Bruce Hamamoto		Paul Choy	x	y
Municipal Members	City of Santa Clarita	Darin Seegmiller*	x	Oliver Cramer		y
Municipal Members	City of Santa Clarita	Darin Seegmiller*	x	Oliver Cramer		y
Municipal Members	City of Santa Clarita	Darin Seegmiller*	x	Haley Lawton		y
Municipal Members	City of Santa Clarita	Darin Seegmiller*	x	Haley Lawton		y
Watershed Coordinator Non-Voting Member	TreePeople, Inc.	Amanda Begley	x	Eric Wilson		
Total Non-Vacant Seats		17			Yes (Y)	12
Total Voting Members Present		15			No (N)	0
Agency		4			Abstain (A)	3
Community Stakeholder		4			Total	15
Municipal Members		7				Approved

**Webex Attendees**  
**Santa Clara River WASC Meeting**  
**January 15, 2026**

Angela	John Mendoza	Jolene Guerrero	SCW Staff - Larry Tran
Call-in User_1	Eric Wilson, TreePeople	Julian Juarez	SCW Staff - Timothy Lim
Cesar Ramirez	Erum Razzak	Kaitie Evers	Sherreeta White-MASH
Chris Carandang	Hazel Vaquero	Kristina	Jessica Rivas
Claire Barr (LACPW)	JGutierrez	SCW Staff - Anthony Barreras	SCR AV
Clark (Herrera)	Jeff Khun	Dawn Petschauer, Stormwater Program Administrator	
Daria Antonova   LACDPW	Jenny Chau	Ryanna Fossum (Regional Coordination)	



Santa Clara River  
 Watershed Area Steering Committee Meeting  
 COMMITTEE MEMBER AND ALTERNATE SIGN-IN

Member Name	Municipality/ Organization	Email Address	Signature
Ali Elhassan	Santa Clarita Valley Water Agency		
Alynn Sun	FCD		
Amanda Begley (non-voting)	TreePeople		
Bruce Hamamoto	LA County Public Works		
Christopher Lapaz	LA County Sanitation Districts		
Darin Seegmiller	Santa Clarita		
Diane Trautman	Santa Clarita Sierra Club		
Dianne Erskine-Hellrigel	St. Francis Dam Disaster National Memorial Foundation		
Eric Wilson (non-voting)	TreePeople		
Francisco Guerrero	LA County Sanitation Districts		
Haley Lawton	Santa Clarita		
Heidi Webber	St. Francis Dam Disaster National Memorial Foundation		
Hunt Braly	Poole & Shaffery		
Ivan Volschenk	Evolve Business Strategies		
Julian Juarez	FCD		

Santa Clara River  
 Watershed Area Steering Committee Meeting  
 COMMITTEE MEMBER AND ALTERNATE SIGN-IN



Member Name	Municipality/ Organization	Email Address	Signature
Laurene Weste, Mayor	Santa Clarita	[REDACTED]	
Mary Johnson	Agua Dulce Town Council	[REDACTED]	<i>Mary Johnson</i>
Michael Villegas	City of Santa Clarita Recreation/Open Space	[REDACTED]	
Mitchell Van Bekkum	Evolve Business Strategies	[REDACTED]	<i>MVB</i>
Najwa Pitois	Santa Clarita Valley Water Agency	[REDACTED]	
Oliver Cramer	Santa Clarita	[REDACTED]	
Paul Choy	LA County Public Works	[REDACTED]	<i>Paul Choy</i>
Rick Viergutz	Santa Clarita Valley GSA	[REDACTED]	
Sandra Cattell	Santa Clarita Sierra Club	[REDACTED]	<i>Sandra Cattell</i>
Steve Cole	Santa Clarita Valley GSA	[REDACTED]	

Santa Clara River  
 Watershed Area Steering Committee Meeting  
 PUBLIC SIGN-IN



First Name	Last Name	Municipality/Organization	Email Address
Amanda	Begley	Tree People	
Darin	Seegmiller	City of SC	
<del>MARY</del>	<del>JOHNSON</del>	<del>Agua Dulce TC</del>	
RICK	VERGUTZ	SCV GSA	
Diego	Carrizo	LACPW	
Jacqueline	Stone	LACPW	
Lawrence Weste City Santa Clara			
Ali	Elhasan	SCUWA	
Melina	Watts	Consultant	
Jeff	Parsons	Herrera	
Jason	Casanova	CWIT	
Craig	Dobson	Herrera	