

# Upper Los Angeles River

## Watershed Area Steering Committee (WASC)

### Meeting Minutes

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Wednesday, March 4, 2026

1:00pm - 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), Vice Chair  
Cathie Santo Domingo, Los Angeles Recreation & Parks (Agency)  
Ernesto Pantoja, Laborers Local 300 (Community)  
\*Julia Lindner, Tataviam Land Conservancy (Community)  
Jill Sohm, University of Southern California (Community)  
Edith de Guzman, University of California, Los Angeles (Community)  
Veronica Padilla-Campos, Pacoima Beautiful (Community)  
Marc David, City of Glendale (Municipal)  
\*Anteneh Tesfaye, City of South Pasadena (Municipal)  
Teresa Villegas, City of Los Angeles (Municipal)  
Karo Torossian, City of Los Angeles (Municipal), Chair  
Rafael Prieto, City of Los Angeles (Municipal)  
Thuan Nguyen, Los Angeles County (Municipal)  
Dawn Petschauer, City of Pasadena (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 Member Alternate

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

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

Karo Torossian, 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-language interpreter is 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 February 4, 2026**

Public Works staff presented the meeting minutes from February 4, 2026. Vice Chair Ida Meisami-Fard motioned to approve the February 4 meeting minutes, seconded by Member Ernesto Pantoja. The WASC voted to approve the meeting minutes with 8 votes in favor, 3 votes in abstention, 0 votes opposed, and 6 absent at the time of voting (approved, see vote tracking sheet).

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

There were no ex parte communication disclosures.

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#### 4) Committee Member and Program Updates

Public Works staff provided updates, noting:

- Mid-Year Reports are due February 15, 2026, for Project and Scientific Study (SS) developers.
- The Regional Oversight Committee (ROC) met in January and opened the 30-day Public Comment Period for the Draft Biennial Progress Report. The Public Comment Period ended on February 14. The next ROC meeting is scheduled for March 11 to discuss the final Biennial Report and vote to approve for submission to the Board of Supervisors.
- The Quarter 3 (Q3) 2026 Funding Report has been posted to the Safe, Clean Water (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.
- Public Works staff highlighted the importance of transparent and fair communication regarding SCW Program duties and encouraged WASC Members to avoid using their position on the WASC to advocate for Project applicants from their home organizations.
- To keep up with SCW 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. Implementation updates may also be viewed on the SCW Program website under the [News and Updates tab](#).

Public Works' SCW Program Strategic Advancement Team staff provided an update, noting:

- The Initial Watershed Plans and Online Planning Tool were released and are available on the [SCW Program website](#).
- A Watershed Planning Developer Information Session will be held virtually on March 18 and will include information on aligning Project applications with the Initial Watershed Plans.
- The Community Strengths and Needs Assessment (CSNA) Survey has received 1,300 new responses, including 372 in the ULAR Watershed Area.
- Public Works staff are available to answer questions at [watershedplanning@pw.lacounty.gov](mailto:watershedplanning@pw.lacounty.gov).

#### 5) Watershed Coordinator Updates

Watershed Coordinator Adi Liberman summarized Environmental Outreach Strategies' activities in February, including attending the groundbreaking event for the North Sepulveda Pedestrian Island Project and presenting on the SCW Program to the Resource Conservation District of Santa Monica Mountains. Watershed Coordinator Liberman also toured a site for a potential Technical Resources Program (TRP) concept in Calabasas with former Calabasas Mayor Dennis Washburn. Lastly, Watershed Coordinator Liberman coordinated with staff from U.S. Congresswoman Luz Rivas' office to learn more about the Community Project Funding process. Watershed Coordinator Liberman shared that submissions opened in late February and are due on March 6.

Watershed Coordinator Kristina Kreter shared that Council for Watershed Health supported potential Project applicants, including Pacoima Beautiful and Sylmar Hang Gliding Association, to prepare for the Fiscal Year (FY) 2027-2028 (FY27-28) Call for Projects. Council for Watershed Health is also collaborating with Environmental Outreach Strategies to prepare a Strategic Outreach and Engagement Plan, which will be shared with WASC once completed.

Watershed Coordinator Alonso Garcia shared that in February, Council for Watershed Health attended a stormwater education event hosted by Black Women for Wellness and an event at Compton Creek hosted

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by Willowbrook Inclusion Network. Watershed Coordinator Garcia summarized future outreach events that Council for Watershed Health plans to attend, including a tour of Bowtie Demonstration Project, an Earth Day event with Friends of the Los Angeles River, and a tour of the Active Transportation Rail to River Corridor Project.

#### **6) Public Comment**

Clara Solis (Save San Pascual Park) noted that a report prepared for the Arroyo Seco-San Rafael Treatment Wetlands Project may not have reflected previously submitted public comments. Solis also expressed concerns over the Project's environmental review and encouraged WASC Members to review the public comment submitted by Los Angeles City Council Member Ysabel Jurado.

Rebecca Latta (Altadena Green) expressed support for the La Cañada Flintridge Country Club Dry Weather Diversion Project. Latta noted that Project benefits include increased stormwater collection and treatment and improved native habitat.

Maggie Gardner (Our Water LA) shared that Our Water LA reviewed all Infrastructure Program (IP) and SS Program applications to the ULAR WASC and recommended funding the Characterizing and Optimizing the Water Quality Benefits of In-Channel Vegetation SS and Climate Resistance and Resiliency: An Adaptive Framework for Stormwater Risk Management SS.

Benjamin Harris (Los Angeles Waterkeeper) expressed support for the Assessment and Treatment of Contaminants of Emerging Concern SS. Harris highlighted that the SS would increase understanding of how forever chemicals are introduced to the Los Angeles River.

Win Cowger (Moore Institute for Plastic Pollution Research) shared that Lower Los Angeles River (LLAR) WASC decided to fund the A Holistic Assessment of Trash in Watersheds SS in the LLAR FY26-27 Stormwater Investment Plan (SIP).

#### **7) Presentations and Discussion Items**

##### **a) Regional Program FY 24-25 Annual Report Summary**

Elyssa Lawrence (HDR) presented a summary of the SCW Regional Program FY24-25 Annual Reports submitted by Project Developers and SS Developers in the ULAR Watershed Area. Presentation slides are available on the [SCW Program website](#).

Member Thuan Nguyen suggested that future Annual Reports include information on when each project initially applied to the SCW Program. Member Nguyen expressed that this information could help WASC Members track a project's progress and decide how to direct funding in future SIPs.

Member Jill Sohm observed that many projects in the ULAR Watershed Area were delayed in the CEQA process and suggested that the SCW Program support Project Developers through the CEQA process.

Member Dawn Petschauer suggested that the Project Developer of the Walnut Park Pocket Park Project be invited to a future WASC meeting to share lessons learned from the Project's completion.

Chair Torossian shared that Public Works staff reached out to continuing Project Developers to investigate whether any Projects could delay funding requests to future fiscal years. Chair Torossian noted that the City of Los Angeles volunteered to delay funding requests for several continuing Projects last year.

Chair Torossian acknowledged the public comment letter provided by Los Angeles City Councilmember Jurado, which is available on the [SCW Program website](#). Chair Torossian emphasized the importance of involving the wider community in a project's outreach plan.

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Upon inquiry, Public Works staff shared that the SCW Program team is in the process of collecting unspent funds from the cancelled Metro Orange Line A Water Infiltration and Quality Project. The Project Developer returned \$6 million to the ULAR WASC that can be programmed in the FY26-27 SIP, and it is anticipated that another estimated \$4 million will be returned next year for programming in the FY27-28 SIP.

#### **b) Disadvantaged Community Benefits and Community Support Presentation**

Watershed Coordinators Kreter, Liberman and Garcia presented an overview of SCW Program Disadvantaged Community programming requirements in the ULAR Watershed Area. Presentation slides are available on the [SCW Program website](#).

Upon inquiry, Watershed Coordinator Kreter clarified that it is up to the WASC to decide whether a project outside of a Disadvantaged Community can claim Disadvantaged Community Benefits.

Upon inquiry, Member Anteneh Tesfaye clarified that the Arroyo Park Infiltration Gallery Project is not claiming Disadvantaged Community Benefits.

Upon inquiry, Watershed Coordinator Kreter shared that project-specific analysis of community priorities and concerns are based on survey results from within a 5-mile radius of the project location.

Upon inquiry, Watershed Coordinator Garcia explained that the “good, better, best” designation of community engagement and support was based on the SCW Program 2025 Interim Guidance.

#### **c) Project Prioritization and Selection Discussion for Populating the Fiscal Year 2026-27 Stormwater Investment Plan**

Public Works staff provided a tutorial on the SIP Tool and reviewed several possible funding scenarios. The SIP Tool is available on the [SCW Program website](#).

Upon inquiry, Aksel Palacios (City of Los Angeles, Project Developer) shared that approximately half of the additional funding request made in the Project Modification Request (PMR) for the Watts Civic Center Serenity Greenway Project is for permitting fees and increased construction costs due to inflation. Palacios confirmed that the Project could begin construction before receiving the additional requested funding. The WASC discussed approving a reduced funding request for the Watts Civic Center Serenity Greenway PMR, making the PMR’s initial proposed funding request of \$778,127 to \$700,000.

Member Ernesto Rivera inquired why the Project applicant of the Arroyo Park Infiltration Gallery Project requested funding for only one year. Member Tesfaye clarified that the requested funds are for design only. Jon Abelson (Stantec, Project applicant) clarified that the design and environmental review phase of the Project is expected to take two years. The WASC discussed splitting the funding request for the Arroyo Park Infiltration Gallery Project across two years.

Upon inquiry, Public Works staff clarified that the SCW Program limits a WASC to allocating up to 5% of available funding to Scientific Studies and up to 10% of available funding to Technical Resources Program concepts based on the 5-year funding distribution. Public Works staff confirmed that even if the ULAR WASC decided to fund all Scientific Studies that applied in the FY26-27 Call for Projects, the WASC would still be below the 5% threshold for Scientific Studies.

The WASC discussed Scientific Study applications. Members Edith de Guzman, Sohm and Petschauer expressed support for the Stormwater Best Management Practices (BMP) Operations and Maintenance (O&M) Needs Assessment, Guidance Document, and Implementation Materials SS. Members Sohm, Rivera and de Guzman expressed support for the Characterizing and Optimizing the Water Quality Benefits of In-Channel Vegetation SS. Member de Guzman expressed support for the Climate Resistance and Resiliency: An Adaptive Framework for Stormwater Risk Management SS.

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Member Nguyen questioned whether the A Holistic Assessment of Trash in Watersheds SS would duplicate existing efforts and noted that there is existing guidance on trash capture BMPs.

The WASC discussed similarities between the Assessment and Treatment of Contaminants of Emerging Concern (CECs) SS and the Regional CECs and Pollutant EMCs in Stormwater Assessment SS. The WASC recommended that the Project applicants for these two SSs collaborate on a single CEC study and resubmit in the FY27-28 Call for Projects.

Public Works staff clarified that LLAR WASC did not fund the Assessment and Treatment of CECs SS in the LLAR FY26-27 SIP.

The WASC discussed the TRP concept application. Members Petschauer, Sohm and Watershed Coordinator Liberman expressed support for the La Cañada TRP concept.

Chair Torossian clarified that the Arroyo Park Infiltration Gallery Project is distinct from the Arroyo Seco-San Rafael Treatment Wetlands Project and shared that the WASC did not discuss funding for the Arroyo Seco-San Rafael Treatment Wetlands Project during this meeting.

#### 8) Public Comment

Clara Solis (Save San Pascual Park) commented that over 1,400 individuals have signed a petition to oppose the Arroyo Seco-San Rafael Treatment Wetlands Project. Solis expressed opposition to the Project's impacts on San Pascual Park.

Sanjay Mohanty (UCLA) commented on the importance of studying CECs. Mohanty commented that if CECs are not addressed in stormwater, CECs may reach groundwater aquifers and impact drinking water quality.

Win Cowger (Moore Institute for Plastic Pollution Research) commented that community surveys such as the CSNA have found that trash pollution is a top priority in Disadvantaged Communities. Cowger noted that the A Holistic Assessment of Trash in Watersheds SS is the only Scientific Study application in the ULAR Watershed Area focused on trash pollution.

#### 9) Voting Items

- a) **Approve the final Fiscal Year 2026-27 Stormwater Investment Plan funding recommendations for the Upper Los Angeles River Watershed Area and approve submission to the Regional Oversight Committee for review**

Chair Torossian motioned to recommend the final FY26-27 SIP for the ULAR Watershed Area, including Watershed Coordinators, and funding for continuing projects, and approve submission to the ROC to review the funding scenario "3 IP PMRs (Green Street Demonstration Project on Main Street; Rory M. Shaw Wetlands Park Project and Watts Civic Center Serenity Greenway reduced to \$700k); 3 new IP Projects (Franklin D. Roosevelt Park Regional Stormwater Capture Project; Calles Verdes at Workman Street and Arroyo Park Infiltration Gallery removing Disadvantaged Community Benefit and deferring \$500k), and 3 new SS (Characterizing and Optimizing the Water Quality Benefits of In-Channel Vegetation; Stormwater BMP O&M Needs Assessment, Guidance Document, and Implementation Materials; and Climate Resistance and Resiliency: An Adaptive Management Framework for Stormwater Risk Management), seconded by Member Pantoja

Member Petschauer motioned to amend the original motion to add the La Cañada Flintridge Country Club Dry Weather Diversion Project to the funding scenario, seconded by Member Sohm. The WASC voted on the amendment to the original motion with 8 votes in favor, 0 votes in abstention, 8 votes opposed, and 1 absent at the time of voting (approved, see vote tracking sheet). As described by the Safe, Clean Water Program WASC Operating Guidelines, Member Rivera, as the Flood Control District representative, cast

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the tie breaking vote in favor of the amendment to the original motion. The amendment to the original motion was approved.

The WASC voted to approve the amended motion with 13 votes in favor, 0 votes in abstention, 3 votes opposed, and 1 absent at the time of voting (approved, see vote tracking sheet).

#### **10) Items for Next Agenda**

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 6 from 1:30pm to 4:00pm at Public Works Headquarters. Items on the next agenda include:

- a) Strategic Outreach and Engagement Plan (SOEP)
- b) Priorities for FY27-28 Call for Projects

#### **11) Adjournment**

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

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 COMMITTEE MEMBER AND ALTERNATE SIGN-IN



Member Name	Municipality/ Organization	Member Type	Role	Signature
Adi Liberman	Environmental Outreach Strategies	Watershed Coordinator (Non-Voting Member)		<i>Adi Liberman</i>
Alonso Garcia	Council for Watershed Health	Watershed Coordinator (Non-Voting Member)		<i>Alonso Garcia</i>
Anteneh Tesfaye	City of South Pasadena	Municipal	Alternate	<i>Anteneh Tesfaye</i>
Art Castro	Los Angeles Department of Water and Power	Agency	Primary	<i>Art Castro</i>
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	<i>C Santo Domingo</i>
Conor Mossavi	Los Angeles Department of Water and Power	Agency	Alternate	
Curtis Castle	City of Calabasas	Municipal	Alternate	
Dawn Petschauer	Pasadena	Municipal	Primary	<i>Dawn Petschauer</i>
Edith de Guzman	University of California, Los Angeles	Community Stakeholder	Primary	<i>Edith de Guzman</i>

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 COMMITTEE MEMBER AND ALTERNATE SIGN-IN



Member Name	Municipality/ Organization	Member Type	Role	Signature
Ernesto Pantoja	Laborers Local 300	Community Stakeholder	Primary	<i>[Signature]</i>
Ernesto Rivera	LA County Flood Control District	Agency	Primary	<i>[Signature]</i>
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	<i>[Signature]</i>
Jason Casanova	Council for Watershed Health	Watershed Coordinator (Non-Voting Member)		
Jill Sohm	University of Southern California	Community Stakeholder	Primary	<i>[Signature]</i>
John Huynh	Los Angeles Department of Water and Power	Agency	Primary	<i>[Signature]</i>
Julia Lindner	Tataviam Land Conservancy	Community Stakeholder	Alternate	
Kara Plourde	Los Angeles County	Municipal	Alternate	
Karo Torossian	City of Los Angeles	Municipal	Primary	<i>[Signature]</i>
Kevin Ho	LA Sanitation and Environment	Agency	Alternate	<i>[Signature]</i>

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 COMMITTEE MEMBER AND ALTERNATE SIGN-IN



Member Name	Municipality/ Organization	Member Type	Role	Signature
Kristina Kreter	Council for Watershed Health	Watershed Coordinator (Non-Voting Member)		<i>[Signature]</i>
Marc David	City of Glendale	Municipal	Primary	<i>[Signature]</i>
Michael Vartanians	City of South Pasadena	Municipal	Primary	
Miguel Luna	Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians	Community Stakeholder	Primary	
Rafael Prieto	City of Los Angeles	Municipal	Primary	<i>[Signature]</i>
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	<i>[Signature]</i>
Veronica Padilla- Campos	Pacoima Beautiful	Community Stakeholder	Primary	<i>[Signature]</i>

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Member Name	Municipality/ Organization	Member Type	Role	Signature
Virginia Wei	City of Los Angeles	Municipal	Alternate	

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 PUBLIC SIGN-IN



First Name	Last Name	Municipality/Organization	Email Address
Pamela	Dreyfuss	La Cañada Flintridge <sup>(Country Club)</sup>	pamela.dreyfuss@lcfcountryclub.com
Julia	Lindner	Totaviam Land Conservancy	juliadlindner@gmail.com
Carling	Monder	USC	monder@usc.edu
Ryan	ONU	LACPCD	ryan@dpr.lacounty.gov
Aksel	Palacios	City of Los Angeles CPIS	aksel.palacios@lacity.org
Brianna	Datti	Craftwater	brianna.datti@craftwater.com
Cameron	Castillo	Fusco	CCastillo@fusco.com
Alex	Robinson	USC	alexander.robinson@usc.edu
MITUL	LUHAR	USC	luhar@usc.edu
Rebecca	Latta	Arborist/consultant	rlattaconsulting@gmail.com
Greg Jaquez		MNS Engineers	gjaquez@mnsengineers.com

\*Signing or completing this form is voluntary for members of the public

WebEx Webinar Attendees  
Upper Los Angeles River WASC Meeting - March 4, 2026

Aghakhani, Ryan  
 Alexandro Garcia  
 Ali Sharbat (Cal Poly Pomona)  
 Angelo  
 Angineh Shahnazarian  
 Anh Ta  
 Anthony Barreras  
 Anthony Nercessian  
 Aric M  
 Ben Harris (LA Waterkeeper)  
 Ben O'Neal  
 Brad Wardynski  
 Brenda Ponton  
 CV  
 Call-in User\_1  
 Cara Campbell (LADWP)  
 Carlos Aldape (LASAN)  
 Conor Mossavi

Craig Doberstein  
 Dan Angelescu  
 Daniel Apt  
 Dylan Ahearn (Herrera)  
 Elyssa Lawrence  
 Gabriel Z  
 Grey Crisanto  
 Jaime Godinez - LADWP  
 Jennifer Amarant (EOS)  
 Jenny Chau  
 John Mendoza  
 Jon Abelson  
 Jon Ball  
 JonPaul Sarro  
 Joyann Sofio  
 Katie - Contech  
 Katie Harrel (CWE)  
 Kelsey Jessup

Kevin Te  
 Kristina  
 Latoya Waters - Alhambra  
 Linet Khechatoorian  
 Maggie  
 Michael Affeldt  
 Michael Ku  
 Mike Antos (Reg Coord)  
 Mike S  
 Nan Jia - CWE  
 Peter Tonthat  
 Rebecca Dugopolski, Herrera  
 Ricardo Acosta  
 Rowan (Stillwater Sci)  
 Ryan Aghakhani  
 SCWP Staff - Larry Tran  
 SCWP Staff - Wayne Lee  
 Spanish Interpreter-Alejandra

Teresa Villegas  
 Tim Brown, HEC  
 Timothy Lim  
 ULAR AV  
 ULAR WASC - Presenter  
 Victoria Curto (Black & Veatch)  
 Victoria Friesen  
 Win Cowger  
 Johanna  
 Michael Scaduto  
 Valeria