

Safe, Clean Water Program

Santa Clara River

Watershed Area Steering Committee (WASC)



Meeting Minutes:

Thursday, November 7, 2019

2:00pm - 4:00pm

The Activities Center

20880 Centre Pointe Parkway, Santa Clarita, CA 91350

Attendees

Committee Members

Kristen Ruffell (Los Angeles – Sanitation)

Jason Gibbs (GP Strategies)

Janine Prado (Santa Clarita Recreation & Community Services)

Darren Hernandez (Santa Clarita)

Hunt Braly (Poole & Shaffery)

Paul Alva (LA County Public Works)

Julian Juarez (District)

Rick Viergutz* (Santa Clarita Valley Water District)

Heather Merenda (Santa Clarita)

Robert Newman (Santa Clarita)

Tom Cole (Santa Clarita)

Sandra Cattell (Santa Clarita Sierra Club)

*Committee Member Alternate

See attached sign-in sheet for full list of attendees

1. Welcome and Introductions

Mr. Frary of the Los Angeles County Flood Control District (District) welcomed the committee members and members of the public, shared his excitement for this next phase of implementation, and thanked everyone for their dedication to the Safe, Clean Water Program (Program) and regional resilience.

All committee members made self-introductions and shared one reason the Program was important to them. Members of the public introduced themselves as well.

2. Discussion of Safe, Clean Water Program Goals, Schedule and Timeline

Mr. Frary provided a summary of the Program, including the goals, core themes, funding distribution, governance, and timeline. Mr. Frary emphasized the unique responsibility and opportunity before the committee as well as the importance of thinking regionally, inclusively, and collaboratively in order to best steward public funds. Mr. Frary also provided a brief overview of the Santa Clara River Watershed Area and reviewed the requests made to-date of the WASC members to ensure all members were up to date on communications, requests, and next steps. He committed District staff to the committee to support all efforts going forward.

3. WASCs Roles and Responsibilities

Mr. Rahimi reviewed the roles and responsibilities of the WASC, according to the WASC Operating Guidelines, which include but are not limited to the development of Stormwater Investment Plans, quarterly Progress/Expenditure Reports, and Watershed Area Regional Program Progress Reports.

4. Selection of Chair (Voting Item)

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Mr. Frary asked committee members to vote, with a show of hands, whether they would like to elect both a Chair and Vice Chair for the committee. Mr. Braly disagreed to the default voting process and motioned to have two separate votes - first vote would be for the Chair and a separate 2nd vote would be for the Vice Chair once a Chair was chosen. This motion was seconded and hand voted in favor.

Nominees for the position of Chair were Tom Cole (Santa Clarita), Julian Juarez (District), and Jason Gibbs (GP Strategies). They all accepted their nominations.

All three nominees provided a short justification for why they should be considered for this role. Following the remarks by all three nominees, Mr. Braly asked the three nominees if they lived within the watershed area. Both Mr. Cole and Mr. Gibbs replied they live within the area and Mr. Juarez stated he lived outside the watershed. The committee members then proceeded to vote via paper ballots for the Chair position.

Mr. Cole (5 Votes) and Mr. Juarez (5 Votes) received the same number of votes for the Chair position. Another vote via paper ballot was issued to break the tie for Chair. In the second round of voting, Mr. Cole (7 votes) and Mr. Juarez (7 votes) tied again for the chair. A motion to have Co-chairs and a Vice Chair was brought forward and seconded. The hand vote resulted in a tie, and therefore the motion was not carried. Another motion was brought forward to defer selection of Chair and Vice Chair until the next meeting. The motion was seconded, and hand voted unanimously.

Mr. Braly asked why one person attending the meeting can have three votes. Mr. Frary reviewed the 17 WASC member seats, the methodology for establishing municipal representatives, the unique situation with few municipalities within this watershed, and the resulting scenario where one person can represent (and vote on behalf of) multiple municipal seats.

5. Selection of Next Meeting Location (Voting Item)

Mr. Frary noted that a series of future meeting dates, times, and venue have been arranged by the District as a resource to ensure the committee has time and space to develop the first Stormwater Investment Plan. Details can be changed any point later on (provided Brown Act requirements are met) and will be coordinated by the Chair(s) and District staff as applicable. Mr. Frary indicated the hand vote was to simply determine whether to hold the current location (and by extension, pencil in the tentative dates/times) or to request the new Chair organize a new location.

The venue offered was:

Location: Santa Clarita Valley Water Agency Boardroom
27234 Bouquet Canyon, Santa Clarita, CA 91350

The committee hand voted (13 votes to 1 vote) was in favor to keep location indicated below.

6. Break

Committee members decided to not take a break and continue with the agenda items.

7. Call for Projects for FY 20-21 and FY 21-22

Mr. Frary provided an overview of the open Call for Projects which began on October 15, 2019 and has two upcoming deadlines. The deadline for projects to be considered for funding in Fiscal Year 20-21 is December 15, 2019, and the deadline for projects to be considered for funding in Fiscal Year 21-22 is July

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31, 2020. Mr. Frary explained that projects can be submitted via an online module, which will generate a project summary sheet for submittal to the District. More information about the Call for Projects and how to apply can be found at www.SafeCleanWaterLA.org and in the most recent Program update email. Mr. Frary requested that all members share the Call for Projects information with their contacts.

8. Public Comment / Open Discussion

Ms. Cattell indicated that the City of Santa Clarita already has a stormwater fee. She asked if those projects that already started or projects that have not started but are being looked at are eligible for funding. Mr. Frary noted that both can be eligible for funding, and other funding sources can and should be leveraged with Safe, Clean Water Program funding.

Ms. Merenda wanted clarification on her understanding that the District/Safe, Clean Water Program would hire and bring a “bullpen” to bring concepts into feasibility studies. Mr. Frary noted that, the District intends to develop feasibility studies in-house, but also has as-needed consultants available if the volume and expertise cannot be met by in-house staff.

Mr. Gibbs asked for clarification on the threshold percentages set in the Regional Program. Mr. Frary noted that up to 10% of the annual budget can be used for the Technical Resources Program, which includes feasibility studies and watershed coordinators.

Ms. Ruffell asked if there are no infrastructure projects proposed for the first year, can that funding be rolled into next year and still only propose feasibility studies for the first year. Mr. Frary noted that it is a default requirement that 85% of the funds in any Stormwater Investment Plan be dedicated for the Infrastructure Program, but we’ll get further confirmation from counsel.

Ms. Cattell asked if fund sharing was allowed. Mr. Frary reiterated that leveraging of funds is not only allowed, but encouraged. Mr. Frary noted that the Infrastructure Program Project Scoring Criteria offered points for leveraging funds. Ms. Cattell had a follow up question wanting clarification regarding the 60-point threshold versus the highest score. Mr. Frary noted that once a project passes the 60-point threshold it is up to the committee to recommend the project versus simply choosing the highest score. It is anticipated that there will be a variety of other factors for consideration in each watershed area.

Mr. Gibbs asked if the committee could see submitted projects on the online module. Mr. Frary noted that it is possible. Any interested member simply needs to set up the account with the same email the District has on file and then log in to see projects that were submitted.

Ms. Ruffel inquired, on behalf of a member of the public, about the tax relief options and how the public can get access. Mr. Frary noted the Low-Income Senior-Owned Exemption is available to those who meet the minimum age and income requirements. Mr. Frary also mentioned the Credit Program is available for those property owners who installed stormwater improvements. There is also an online appeal tool that residents can use to draw what they believe to be their impermeable area and submit online. Mr. Frary also noted there will soon be a general income-based tax reduction for individuals that meet the income requirements. All these tax relief options are ready and available online at www.SafeCleanWaterLA.org. Approved reductions, exemptions, and credits will be applied to the current tax year the next.

Ms. Merenda expressed her concern about the meeting on December 12 if the Call for Projects deadline is on December 15. Mr. Frary noted the WASC meetings scheduled in December were not meant to be after the Call for Projects deadline. Instead, the WASC meetings scheduled in December would be utilized to facilitate discussions about watershed-specific context and priorities as a backdrop to prepare the committee for the WASC meetings scheduled in January when more data and information about projects becomes available for consideration.

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Mr. Viergutz asked for clarification on the deadline submission of projects and the applicable fiscal year. Mr. Frary noted projects submitted after the December 15 deadline, but before the July 31, 2020 deadline, will be considered for the second fiscal year, FY 21-22.

Mr. Frary opened the public comment period.

Ms. Ganguly (The Nature Conservancy) noted that they own 19-20 miles of the Santa Clara River and actively manage and restore it. Ms. Ganguly understands the river and has invested a lot over the past 20+ years. They wanted to inform the committee and stakeholders that they are a resource and would love to work with this committee going forward.

9. Meeting Adjourned

Mr. Frary thanked the committee members and public for their time and participation and adjourned the meeting.

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Member Name	Municipality/ Organization	Email Address		Signature
Oliver Cramer	Santa Clarita	ocramer@santa-clarita.com	A	
Mike Hennawy	Santa Clarita	mhennawy@santa-clarita.com	A	
David Peterson	Santa Clarita	Dpeterson@santa-clarita.com	A	
Darren Hernandez	Santa Clarita	dhernandez@santa-clarita.com	P	
Heather Merenda	Santa Clarita	HMERENDA@santa-clarita.com	P	
Robert Newman	Santa Clarita	rnewman@santa-clarita.com	P	
Tom Cole	Santa Clarita	tcole@santa-clarita.com	P	
Wayne Crawford	Santa Clarita Concrete	waynesc@social.rr.com	P	
Diane Trautman	Santa Clarita Sierra Club	d.trautman@icloud.com	A	
Rick Viergutz	Santa Clarita Valley Water Agency	rviergutz@scvwa.org	A	
Dirk Marks	Santa Clarita Valley Water Agency	dmarks@scvwa.org	P	
Sandra Cattell	Sierra Club	sumcatt@yahoo.com	P	
Dianne Erskine-Hellrigel	St. Francis Dam Disaster National Memorial Foundation	zuliebear@aol.com	P	

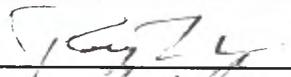
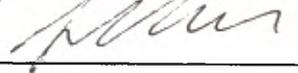
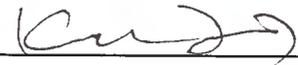
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Member Name	Municipality/ Organization	Email Address		Signature
Frederick Andre Hollings	CA Department of Tax and Fee Administration	fahollings1@gmail.com	A	
Janine Prado	City of Santa Clarita Recreation & Community Services	JPRADO@santa-clarita.com	P	
Heidi Webber	Community Hiking Club	hwebber50@gmail.com	A	
Carolina Hernandez	FCD	CHERNANDEZ@dpw.lacounty.gov	A	
Julian Juarez	FCD	JJUAREZ@dpw.lacounty.gov	P	
Jason Gibbs	GP Strategies	jgibbs@gpstrategies.com	P	
Steve Cole	GSA for the Santa Clara River Valley	scole@scvwa.org	P	
Mark Lombos	Los Angeles County	MLOMBOS@dpw.lacounty.gov	A	
Bruce Hamamoto	Los Angeles County	BHAMAMO@dpw.lacounty.gov	A	
Paul Alva	Los Angeles County	PALVA@dpw.lacounty.gov	P	
Hunt Braly	Poole & Shaffery	hbraly@pooleshaffery.com	P	
Martha Tremblay	Sanitation Districts	mtremblay@lacsdsd.org	A	
Kristen Ruffell	Sanitation Districts	kruffell@lacsdsd.org	P	
Tyler Pledger	Santa Clarita	tpledger@santa-clarita.com	A	
Darin Seegmiller	Santa Clarita	Dseegmiller@santa-clarita.com	A	

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Member Name	Municipality/ Organization	Email Address	Signature
Roy Thun	GHD	roy.thun@ghd.com	
Allen Me <small>(non-member)</small>	County	anna.edm@lacounty.gov	
Krista McDermid	ZADNATURE	krista.zadnaturewater.com	
Jason Gibby	GP Strategies	Jgibby@GPStrategies.com	

