

# Safe, Clean Water Program

## Upper Los Angeles River

### Watershed Area Steering Committee (WASC)

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#### **Meeting Minutes:**

Thursday, March 12, 2020  
10:00am – 12:00pm  
LA County Public Works Headquarters, Conference Room C  
900 S Fremont Avenue, Alhambra, CA 91803

#### **Attendees:**

##### Committee Members Present:

Paul Lui (LA Dept. of Water and Power)  
Max Podemski\* (Los Angeles)  
Alfredo Magallanes (Los Angeles – Sanitation)  
Delon Kwan (LA Dept. of Water and Power)  
David Nahai (Lewis Brisbois Bisgaard & Smith)  
Veronica Padilla-Campos (Pacoima Beautiful)  
Chris Chew\* (Glendale)  
Teresa Villegas\* (Los Angeles)

Patrick DeChellis (La Canada Flintridge)  
Miguel Luna (Urban Semilla DakeLuna  
Consultants)  
Paul Alva (Los Angeles County Public Works)  
Gary Hildebrand (Los Angeles County Flood  
Control District)  
Ernesto Pantoja (Laborers Local 300)  
Kris Markarian (Pasadena)

##### Committee Members Not Present:

Jeff Camp (Los Angeles)  
John Luker (Santa Susana Mountain Park Association)  
Cathie Santo Domingo (LA Recreation & Parks)

\*Committee Member Alternate

See attached sign-in sheet for full list of attendees

### **1. Welcome and Introductions**

Mr. David Nahai, the Chair of the Upper Los Angeles River WASC, called the meeting to order.

All committee members made self-introductions and quorum was established.

### **2. Approval of Meeting Minutes from March 2, 2020**

The District provided a copy of the meeting minutes from the previous meeting. Mr. Nahai asked the committee members for comments or revisions, there were none. Mr. Miguel Luna made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from March 2, 2020. Mr. Paul Alva seconded the motion. Mr. Max Podemski and Mr. Chris Chew abstained as they did not attend the previous meeting. **The Committee voted to approve the meeting minutes from March 2, 2020 (unanimous).**

### **3. Committee Member and District Updates**

Mr. CJ Caluag announced that the Regional and Municipal Fund Transfer Agreement Templates are available for public review and can be found on the Safe, Clean Water (SCW) Program website (<https://safecleanwaterla.org/resources/public-review-transfer-agreement/>). He gave a brief overview of the agenda for the meeting: Discussion, rank, populate into the SIP tool. Idea to speak 1 minute about a project, with 3 minutes of discussion. He said that District staff had provided the following handouts: WASC review

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sheet blank, Overview of Scored Projects, Expenditure Projections, Scoring Rubric, and SIP Planning Tool Overview.

Mr. David Nahai read out loud a handful of questions that he prepared for the project applicants and suggested that the Committee consider these when considering a project.

Mr. Max Podemski introduced himself as the new alternate for Ackley Padilla from the City of Los Angeles.

#### **4. Public Comment Period**

No public comments.

#### **5. Discussion Items**

##### **a) Ex Parte Communications**

Mr. Alfredo Magallanes shared that he was at the Upper Los Angeles River Watershed Management Group meeting discussing some of the City of Los Angeles projects such as Echo Park Lake Rehabilitation Project.

Mr. Pat DeChellis and Mr. Chris Chew also shared that they attended the Upper Los Angeles River Watershed Management Group meeting.

##### **b) SIP Programming Guidelines**

Mr. Caluag read out loud the SIP Programming Guidelines document that the District staff distributed to the Committee. He also displayed the document on the screen. The Committee discussed notes on the handout and Mr. Caluag clarified.

Mr. Caluag reminded the Committee that that the only year the Committee is approving funding for projects is this round. The second year, for example, would be earmarked and the Committee will have to negotiate the second-year funding request during the next round.

Mr. Delon Kwan initiated a discussion on the funding available. With the funding available for ULAR WASC, the District is suggesting to earmark up to 50 percent of funds for the subsequent years.

Mr. Paul Lui asked if the Committee will vote on the amount of funds allocated for the watershed coordinators. District staff responded that according to the Safe, Clean Water Ordinance, ULAR WASC will have to allocate for three watershed coordinators. There will be a placeholder of \$200,000 for each watershed coordinator, but is subject to change based on the Request for Services.

Ms. Teresa Villegas expressed concern for projects that meet the Safe, Clean Water Program goals that may not get funded in the future because of the amount of funds the Committee decides to allocate this round. Mr. Nahai responded that while that may be true, the Committee is funding projects based on the project being delivered as proposed.

Mr. Gary Hildebrand asked how much obligation is placed on the Committee to earmark funds. Mr. Nahai said that he believes there is no legal obligation for the Committee to provide the earmarked

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funds. Although, he reminded the Committee that there will be quarterly reports from the project applicants and the Committee can make decisions based on those report for the future years.

The Committee discussed how they can re-distribute the total funding request for a multi-year project. Mr. Alva noted that future projects applicants may consider requesting funding for planning and design purposes initially and then rely on future year SIP allocations for construction because typically municipalities require funds for construction prior to bidding.

The Committee discussed the funds that are not spent and are rolled over to the following year. Mr. Mike Antos said that each year projects will be evaluated for the previous five years. For example, after the sixth year of funding projects, projects will be evaluated between years two through six.

Mr. Antos reminded the Committee that the SIP Programming Guidelines provides possible scenarios for funding.

#### **c) Ranking process and tool**

Mr. Caluag provided an overview of the Ranking Tool that can be used after the Committee members rank the projects and reminded them that the ranking is for discussion purposes only.

The Committee expressed concern on receiving input from Committee members that may not present in a meeting to rank projects. Mr. Antos reminded the group that the Ranking Tool is not a formal voting process and is a resource created and provided by District staff to help facilitate discussions. Committee members that are absent may still provide their project rankings to District staff. The Committee will have an official voting process at a future WASC meeting.

#### **d) Projects and studies**

##### **i. Disadvantaged Communities Benefit**

The Committee will discuss this agenda item at a future meeting.

### **6. Stormwater Investment Plan discussion and development**

#### **a) Rank and discuss Infrastructure Program projects and studies**

The following project applicants provided a 1-minute project summary highlight to the Committee on their submitted projects to the SCW Program.

##### Infrastructure Program (IP)

- Echo Park Lake Rehabilitation – project applicant answered questions on the benefit the project has to the community and clarified maintenance costs.
- Fernangeles Park Stormwater Capture Project – project applicant answered questions about leveraged funding, the cost-benefit ratio of water supply, and the overall score of the project.
- Franklin D. Roosevelt Park Regional Stormwater Capture Project – project applicant answered questions about why the project applicant is requesting funding for a project

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already going into construction, what the funds would be used for, and how this relates to MS4 compliance.

Ms. Kris Markarian requested that the Committee get a summary of how much acre-feet of water each project captures or treats.

- Active Transportation Rail to River Corridor Project – Segment A – Committee had no questions for the project applicant.
- City of San Fernando Regional Park Infiltration Project – project applicant answered questions regarding the project’s direct benefits to the community, reason for funding request, and potential funding requests for the subsequent years. Committee asked about the project’s construction timeline as well.
- Lankershim Boulevard Local Area Urban Flow Management Network Project – project applicant responded to the Committee’s questions regarding the project scope, funding request.
- Oro Vista Local Area Urban Flow Management Project – project applicant answered questions regarding the project’s direct benefits to the community and discussed why the City of Los Angeles is requesting a large percentage of funds for their project. The Committee further clarified that the City of LA is requesting large funding amounts for the Lankershim and Oro Vista projects.

Mr. Chew asked if the funding transfer agreement will speak to future years of the SIP. Mr. Matt Frary responded that the funding transfer agreement alludes to an addendum that would be included in future SIPs to authorize what was decided by the Committee and the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors.

- Rory M. Shaw Wetlands Park Project – project applicant responded to questions regarding the multi-benefit aspects of the project, why the pond is concrete lined and how much water is being infiltrated. Project applicant also answered questions about the funding request and timeline of completion of construction.
- Strathern Park North Stormwater Capture Project – Committee had no questions for the project applicant.
- Valley Village Park Stormwater – Committee had no questions for the project applicant.
- Walnut Park Pocket Park Project – project applicant responded to the Committee’s question regarding the water supply score for the project.

Mr. Hildebrand suggested that the Committee become familiar with the Scoring Committee’s methodology on scoring the water supply and water quality components. Mr. Caluag explained that there is a threshold for the volume of water a project provides to meet a cost-benefit ratio for scoring and reminded the Committee that the threshold can be found in the Regional Program Committee Handbook – Feasibility Study Guidelines.

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#### Technical Studies (TRP)

- Arroyo Seco Projects Parts 1 through 4 – project applicant answered a question regarding the project submittals to the SCW Program and explained that the project applicant did not clearly understand the submittal process and as such, failed to submit Parts 1 through 4 of the project as one submittal to the TRP.

#### Scientific Studies (SS)

- Regional Scientific Study to Support Protection of Human Health through Targeted Reduction of Bacteriological Pollution – the project applicant responded to questions regarding the other WASC's support for the study, the minimum number of WASCs' support required to complete the study, support from the City of Los Angeles, and how this study can work with other studies.
- Coordinated Safe Clean Watershed Plans – project applicant responded to how this study could be completed in line with the other studies and explained how the results of the study would return to the Regional Water Quality Control Board.
- Recalculation of Wet Weather Zinc Criterion – the Committee asked for clarification on what the study results will provide and how it ties to City efforts, and why the Committee would fund now if the Regional Board has not shown direct support.
- LRS Adaptation to Address the LA River Bacteria for the ULAR Watershed Management Group – Committee had no questions for the project applicant.
- PreSIP: A Platform for Watershed Science and Project Collaboration – project applicant answered some questions regarding the scope of the study, how the study complements Enhanced Watershed Management Program efforts, and how it would include multi-benefit aspects.

Mr. Nahai read out loud a communication from Ms. Susie Santilena from the City of Los Angeles Mayor's Office of City Services expressing concern for how projects are scored regarding water quality—they are scored based on percentage pollutants load reduction, regardless of how clean or dirty one watershed is compared to another. She requests that the Committee consider dollars per pollutants loads reduced, just like the Committee currently considers dollars per acre-foot of water supply.

#### **7. Break**

The Committee decided to not take a break.

#### **8. Voting Items**

##### **a) Assign percent allocation target**

The Committee will discuss this agenda item at a future meeting.

##### **b) Stormwater Investment Plan**

The Committee will discuss this agenda item at a future meeting.

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## 9. Items for next agenda

Mr. Nahai initiated a discussion on how to move forward with the SIP discussions. The Committee discussed that the project applicants will have the opportunity to provide another pitch at a future meeting with a few minutes of discussion after each pitch. Mr. Caluag discussed the tentative dates for future meetings.

Mr. Frary advised that for the next WASC Meeting the project proponents are prepared to speak to something they would want to clarify about their projects and for the Committee members to be prepared with questions for each project proponent.

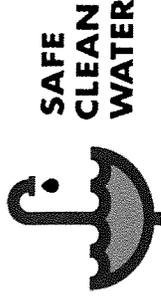
Mr. Antos reminded the Committee that a lot of the questions can be answered in the project submittals that are in the SCW Program website, allowing the questions being asked during the meetings as an extension of what has not already been provided. Mr. Frary added that being prepared will allow the Committee to make decisions more strategically on a regional-scale perspective.

## 10. Adjournment

Mr. Nahai reminded the Committee to sign in and announced the next meeting location, date and time. Mr. Nahai thanked the committee members and public for their time and participation and adjourned the meeting.

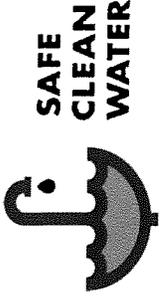
**Next Meeting Date and Times:  
Thursday, April 30, 2020, 2:00pm – 5:00pm  
Details TBD**

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



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



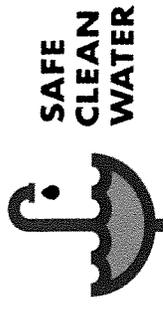
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PUBLIC SIGN-IN



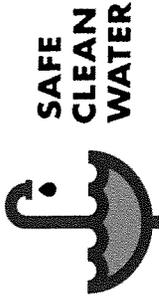
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\*Signing or completing this form is voluntary for members of the public

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PUBLIC SIGN-IN



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