

Safe, Clean Water Program

Santa Clara River

Watershed Area Steering Committee (WASC)



Meeting Minutes:

Thursday, February 4, 2021

10:00am – 12:00pm

WebEx Meeting

Attendees

Committee Members Present:

Kristen Ruffell (LA County - Sanitation)
Janine Prado (Santa Clarita Recreation & Community Services)
Bruce Hamamoto (LA County Public Works)
Julian Juarez (District)
Steve Cole (Santa Clarita Valley Groundwater Sustainability Agency)
Darin Seegmiller (Santa Clarita)
Heather Merenda (Santa Clarita)
Tom Cole (Santa Clarita)
Sandra Cattell (Santa Clarita Sierra Club)

Jason Gibbs (GP Strategies)
Dianne Erskine-Hellrigel (St. Francis Dam Disaster National Memorial Foundation)
Jennifer Del Toro (Santa Clarita Recreation & Community Services)
Mary Johnson (Agua Dulce Town Council)
Robert Newman (Santa Clarita)
Hunt Braly (Poole & Shaffery)
Dirk Marks (Santa Clarita Valley Water Agency)

Committee Members Not Present:

None

*Committee Member Alternate

See attached sign-in sheet for full list of attendees

1. Welcome and Introductions

Mr. Jason Gibbs, Vice-Chair of the Santa Clara River WASC, called the meeting to order.

Mr. Justin Jones of the District asked for a roll call of WASC members, and with a majority present, quorum was established.

2. Approval of Meeting Minutes from January 7th, 2021

The District uploaded a copy of the meeting minutes from the January 7th meeting, and Mr. Gibbs asked the committee members for comments or revisions.

Ms. Kristen Ruffell motioned to approve the meeting minutes, with Mr. Bruce Hamamoto seconding this motion. The Committee voted to approve the meeting minutes (Approved, See vote tracking sheet).

3. Committee Member and District Updates

Mr. Gibbs asked if any Committee members had any updates to provide. Ms. Sandra Cattell commented that it would be advantageous to invite someone from Economic Development to discuss any locally labor-sourced projects from the Safe, Clean Water Program (SCWP) and the economic benefits to the City of Santa Clarita at a future SCR WASC meeting.

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Mr. Jones provided the District updates, starting with the fund Transfer Agreements (TA). Municipalities were requested to submit their TAs, Resolutions and Annual Plans, with 80 of the 86 Municipal TAs have been submitted to the District. Regarding Regional TAs, project developers were requested to submit their executed Transfer Agreements, Resolutions, Authorizations, Scopes of Work, and its California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), if applicable, to the District as soon as possible.

The District noted that the Scoring Committee (SC) completed all the scoring of projects and that the SCWP portal website is being updated to reflect this information. Of the 62 projects scored, only 3 projects scored below the Threshold Score of 60 points. Mr. Gibbs asked if any of the 3 projects are in this Watershed Area, and Mr. Alvin Cruz of the District confirmed that none of the 3 projects are in this Watershed Area.

Ms. Ruffell stated that the link that leads to the SCWP project scoring was missing on today's Meeting Agenda, but Mr. Cruz clarified that this Watershed Area submitted no Infrastructure Program (IP) projects, and as a result, this Watershed Area had no projects scored for this round of SCWP funding.

With regards to the Scientific Study Independent Review Panel, the District will work with the Southern California Coastal Water Research Project (SCCWRP) to provide an independent scientific analysis and review of every scientific study submission in year 2. SCCWRP will prepare standard scientific summaries of each scientific study that are expected to be distributed to each WASC Committee by April 2021. SCCWRP will be hiring a panel of 10 technical experts to provide an unbiased analysis. Ms. Heather Merenda asked for clarification on the role of the SCCWRP, such as whether it will be a subcommittee or a full governance Board, and how utilizing SCCWRP was decided (i.e., what criteria). The District responded that they were onboarded to review scientific studies for SCWP and provide scientific summaries. Mr. Gibbs asked how SCCWRP is being funded, and the District answered that these efforts are not coming out of the SCWP Regional Program funding.

Regarding Phase 2 of the Watershed Coordinator selection process, Mr. Jones stated that the 12 Watershed Coordinators (WCs) have been selected for 9 WASCs. Onboarding is anticipated to begin March 2021 with a kick-off meeting April 2021. The 12 WCs will be non-voting members of the WASCs, will provide regional input and context of the SCWP, and will provide a link between the WASCs and the local non-governmental organizations.

The District noted that there are tax reduction and credit programs available for Low-income and Senior property owners. Low-income owners and Seniors may apply for a reduction or an exemption of the special SCWP parcel tax subject to eligibility requirements. Very Low-income and extremely low-income owners may be eligible for a SCWP parcel tax reduction. There is also a credit program available for storm water improvements. There is more information on the tax reduction and credit program on the SCWP website found at <https://safecleanwaterla.org/resources/tools/>.

Finally, the District noted that Mr. Darren Hernandez resigned from this WASC effective February 3rd, 2021. Los Angeles County Supervisorial District 5 will be appointing the next business community WASC member, and the City of Santa Clarita will go through a process to appoint a replacement for Mr. Hernandez. The District anticipates conducting a vote for the new Chair and Vice Chair at the next WASC meeting.

4. Public Comment Period

There were no public comments provided during this part of the meeting agenda.

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5. Discussion Items:

a) Ex Parte Communication Disclosure

There were no Ex Parte communication disclosures provided.

b) Summary of projects and studies submitted for Santa Clara River WASC for consideration (SCW Program Portal)

A total of 4 projects were submitted for Round 2 consideration. One TRP study for Via Princessa and 3 scientific study projects: Regional Pathogen Reduction Study, Comprehensive County-wide Monitoring for the Safe Clean Water Program, and Using Watershed Science to Build Consensus around Balanced Watershed Projects. Please note that the 2 remaining scientific study projects have officially withdrawn.

c) Presentations for Technical Resources Program

i) Via Princessa Park

Presented by Mr. Oliver Cramer, City of Santa Clarita

Ms. Ruffell requested clarification on whether the City or the District would receive the funding to complete this Technical Resources Program's (TRP) work. Mr. Cramer initially responded that the City is looking for the TRP funding to complete the work. District staff stated that the TRP funding would stay with the District to complete the TRP efforts in developing Feasibility Studies.

Ms. Cattell commented in support of the great potential for infiltration, and suggested the use of more Nature-Based Solutions such as adding a small stream bed and a pond/tree area for preliminary pollution reduction and to attract wildlife. Mr. Cramer commented that the City will explore Nature-Based Solutions. Mr. Seegmiller agreed with Ms. Cattell's vision of the project and confirmed that they are exploring options to add more Nature-Based Solutions. Regarding TRP funding, Mr. Seegmiller stated the City would like to talk to the District to find out which agency would receive the TRP funding, with the intent of doing what is best for this Program.

Mr. Dirk Marks asked if the study would investigate the feasibility of utilizing the facility as a means for recharge with water purveyor sources to have "double duty" as it pertains to water supply recharge and infiltration. Mr. Cramer stated he was unsure if this TRP effort would explore groundwater recharge, but mentioned that the City has had prior discussions with the Santa Clarita Water District about runoff capture and infiltration.

Mr. Steve Cole encouraged the City to investigate how to incorporate water recharge now into the TRP efforts, and asked if it is the District's policy that the District and not the project proponent contracts the feasibility analysis. Mr. Cruz stated that a further discussion on the TRP funding should be had, but mentioned that the District is in the process of awarding the Round 1 approved TRPs in the other WASCs and has involved the project proponents.

Ms. Ruffell stated that in the other WASCs that she sits on, she has developed the understanding that the District only does the 19 Feasibility Study requirements for each approved TRP and get it to a point where the TRP could prepare an application for the

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Infrastructure Program. Ms. Ruffell asked for more information from the District on the formal process for the level of stakeholder involvement, such as the suggestion from Mr. Marks and Mr. Steve Cole stating that this TRP should consider “double duty.” Ms. Cattell noted that the infiltration of excess water from the water agency should be included in this study as mentioned by Ms. Ruffell and Mr. Steve Cole.

Mr. Hamamoto asked about the size and ownership of the Via Princesa site. Mr. Cramer answered that the City is the current owner of the site and estimates that the site is approximately 5 acres.

d) Presentations for Scientific Studies

i) Regional Pathogen Reduction Study

Presented by Mr. Richard Watson of Richard Watson & Associates, Inc. (RWA)

Ms. Dianne Erskine-Hellrigel stated she had worked up in Inyio near Mammoth and discovered that the lakes had fecal contamination due to dog waste, and asked if L.A. County would be willing to give grants to local non-profits to perform regular lake cleanup efforts. Mr. Watson commented that municipalities have done a lot to assist with dog waste, and mentioned that the intent of this special study is to focus more on the human pathogens, which are the biggest form of human illness to swimmers, surfers, and other users. Ms. Erskine-Hellrigel also referred to the homeless problems, with Mr. Watson concurring and stating that the special study would focus on how much of an effect the homeless populations are having.

Ms. Merenda asked if these efforts were a DNA/RNA study in addition to being a source identification study on pathogens, and asked if RWA was coordinating with SCCWRP. Mr. Watson stated that SCCWRP is coordinating the studies on these topics and will not be using their own staff, and that this special study will be evaluating RNA and DNA markers, with false readings occurring frequently in reclaimed water.

Ms. Mary Johnson asked why the North Santa Monica Bay (NSMB) watershed area was not included for funding consideration for this special study. Mr. Watson stated that the NSMB WASC objected to spend money on regional studies and they are doing their own coastal study at this time, but they are welcomed to be involved and a part of this study.

6. Public Comment Period

Mr. Peter Massey of TreePeople, Inc., which is the selected Watershed Coordinator (WC) for this WASC, asked about the level of community engagement in the TRP process regarding the Via Princesa project. Mr. Cramer stated that the funding at this point is just for technical analysis of the project site and to determine if infiltration is viable, where if determined to be viable, public engagement would need to occur in the future.

Ms. Cattell stated that she would like L.A. County to work with the Agua Dulce community and TreePeople, Inc. on developing a similar TRP project as the Via Princesa project presented earlier today. Mr. Hamamoto stated that L.A. County staff would be happy to sit with TreePeople, Inc. and Agua Dulce/Acton to explore identifying a similar project as Via Princesa.

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7. Voting Items

There were no voting items on today's Meeting Agenda.

8. Items for Next Agenda

- a) Vote for Chair and Vice Chair
- b) WASC discussion with Tree People, Inc. (WC) for future projects.

9. Adjournment

Mr. Gibbs thanked the WASC members and the public for their time and participation and adjourned the meeting.

Next meeting: Thursday, March 4, 2021 10:00AM -12:00PM
Virtual Meeting – WebEx Events

SANTA CLARA RIVER WASC MEETING - FEBRUARY 4, 2021

		Quorum Present				Voting Items	
Member Type	Organization	Member	Voting?	Alternate	Voting?	01-07-21 Meeting Minutes	
Agency	District	Julian Juarez	x	Carolina Hernandez		y	
Agency	Santa Clarita Valley Water Agency	Dirk Marks	x	Mike Alvord		y	
Agency	Santa Clarita Valley Groundwater Sustainability Agency	Steve Cole	x	Rick Viergutz		y	
Agency	LA County Sanitation Districts	Kristen Ruffell	x	Martha Tremblay		y	
Agency	Santa Clarita Recreation & Community Services	Janine Prado		Jennifer Del Toro	x	y	
Community Stakeholder	Poole & Shaffery	Hunt Braly	x			y	
Community Stakeholder	Agua Dulce Town Council	Mary Johnson	x			y	
Community Stakeholder	Santa Clarita Sierra Club	Sandra Cattell	x	Diane Trautman		y	
Community Stakeholder	GP Strategies	Jason Gibbs	x	Frederick Andre Hollings		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	x	Allen Ma		y	
Municipal Members	LA County Public Works	Bruce Hamamoto	x	Allen Ma		y	
Municipal Members	LA County Public Works	Bruce Hamamoto	x	Allen Ma		y	
Municipal Members	Santa Clarita	Darren Hernandez		Darin Seegmiller	x	y	
Municipal Members	Santa Clarita	Heather Merenda	x	Oliver Cramer		y	
Municipal Members	Santa Clarita	Robert Newman	x	Mike Hennawy		y	
Municipal Members	Santa Clarita	Tom Cole	x	David Peterson		abstain	
Total Non-Vacant Seats		17			Yay (Y)	16	0
Total Voting Members Present		17			Nay (N)	0	0
Agency		5			Abstain (A)	0	0
Community Stakeholder		5			Total	16	0
Municipal Members		7				Approved	Not Approved

Attendees
Santa Clara River WASC Meeting
February 4, 2021

Hans	Tremmel	Bruce	Hamamoto
Sandra	Cattell	Justin	Jones - LACFCD
Mary	Johnson	Dirk	Marks
Dianne	Hellrigel	Safe	Clean Water LA
Jerrid	Mckenna	Heather	Merenda
Robert	Newman	Allen	Ma
katie	m	Richard	Watson
Jud	Warren	Elisha	Back
Steve	Cole	Josie	Gutierrez
Jason	Gibbs	Tom	Cole
Blake	Whittington	Maritsa	DRA Inc.
Kristen	Ruffell	F.	Flintstone
Hunt	Braly	Diane	Trautman
Mayra	Cabrera - LACFCD	Julian	Juarez
Darin	Seegmiller	Jennifer	Del Toro
Kayla	Kilgo - CWE	Jon	(Stantec)
Oliver	Cramer	Carlos	Moran
Peter	Massey	Sarai	Jimenez
Jonathan	Lu		

An aerial photograph of Santa Clarita, California, showing the city's grid street pattern, buildings, and green spaces. The city is situated along a coastline with a prominent bay area. The image is partially obscured by a dark teal overlay on the left side where the text is located.

Via Princessa Park

Funding Program (TRP)

Oliver Cramer, Project Coordinator

City of Santa Clarita



Project Overview

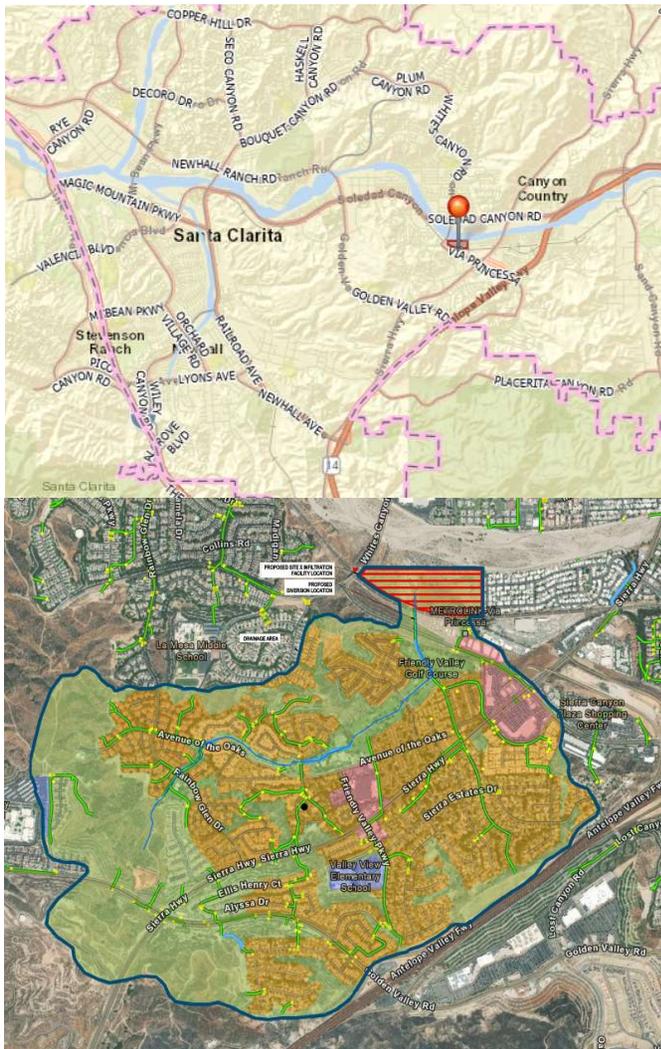
Now a vacant, city-owned parcel, Via Princessa Park is envisioned with a below-ground storm water capture system directly adjacent to the River.

- Primary Objective is improving Water Quality and Enhancing Groundwater
- Secondary Objective is to provide a new recreation opportunity
- Current Project Status: In Concept
- \$300,000 in Technical Resources funding
 - For Studies and Design





Project Location



- Santa Clara River Watershed
- Canyon Country area
- 998 acre Capture Area



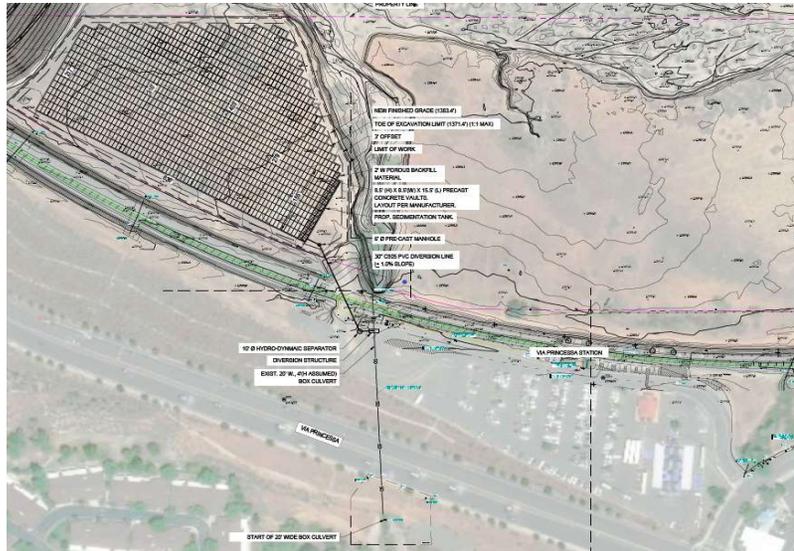


Project Overview

- A conceptual new park envisioned in Canyon Country
- New recreation opportunities for a Disadvantaged Community (DAC) directly adjacent
- Improves Water Quality in Reach 7 of the river
- Captures pollutants from the entire drainage area
- Replenishes local groundwater
- Reduces risk of flooding downstream



Project Details



Below ground, an infiltration system:

- Existing concrete channel from drainage area funnels storm water
- Up to 35.9 acre feet capacity for capture and infiltration
- hydrodynamic separator pretreatment



Above ground, a new park (concept):

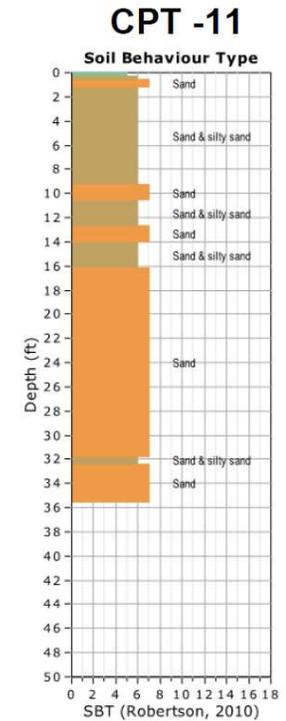
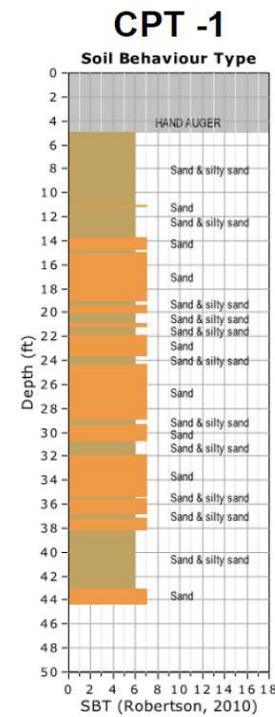
- Multipurpose fields
- Shade trees
- Dry-creek bed drainage feature



Project Details



- Cone penetration testing completed
 - Excellent sandy-soil for infiltration
- Desktop review of groundwater
 - Groundwater is high only in very wet years
- Phase 1 Environmental
 - No issues
- Railroad Authority
 - Railroad crossing issues





Cost & Schedule

Phase	Description	Cost	Completion Date
Technical Resources	Design	\$150,000	6/30/22
	Hydrology	\$100,000	3/30/22
	Nature Based Solutions	\$50,000	6/30/22
TOTAL		\$300,000	



Funding Request

Year	SCW Funding Requested	Phase	Efforts during Phase and Year
1	Technical Resources	Design	
2	Technical Resources	Hydrology	
3	Technical Resources	Nature-based solution	
4			
5			
TOTAL		\$300,000	



Questions?



Overview of Pathogen Reduction Study

Presented by Richard Watson, Richard Watson & Associates, Inc. (RWA)

Project Lead: Gateway Water Management Authority

Presentation to the Santa Clara River WASC

04 February 2021

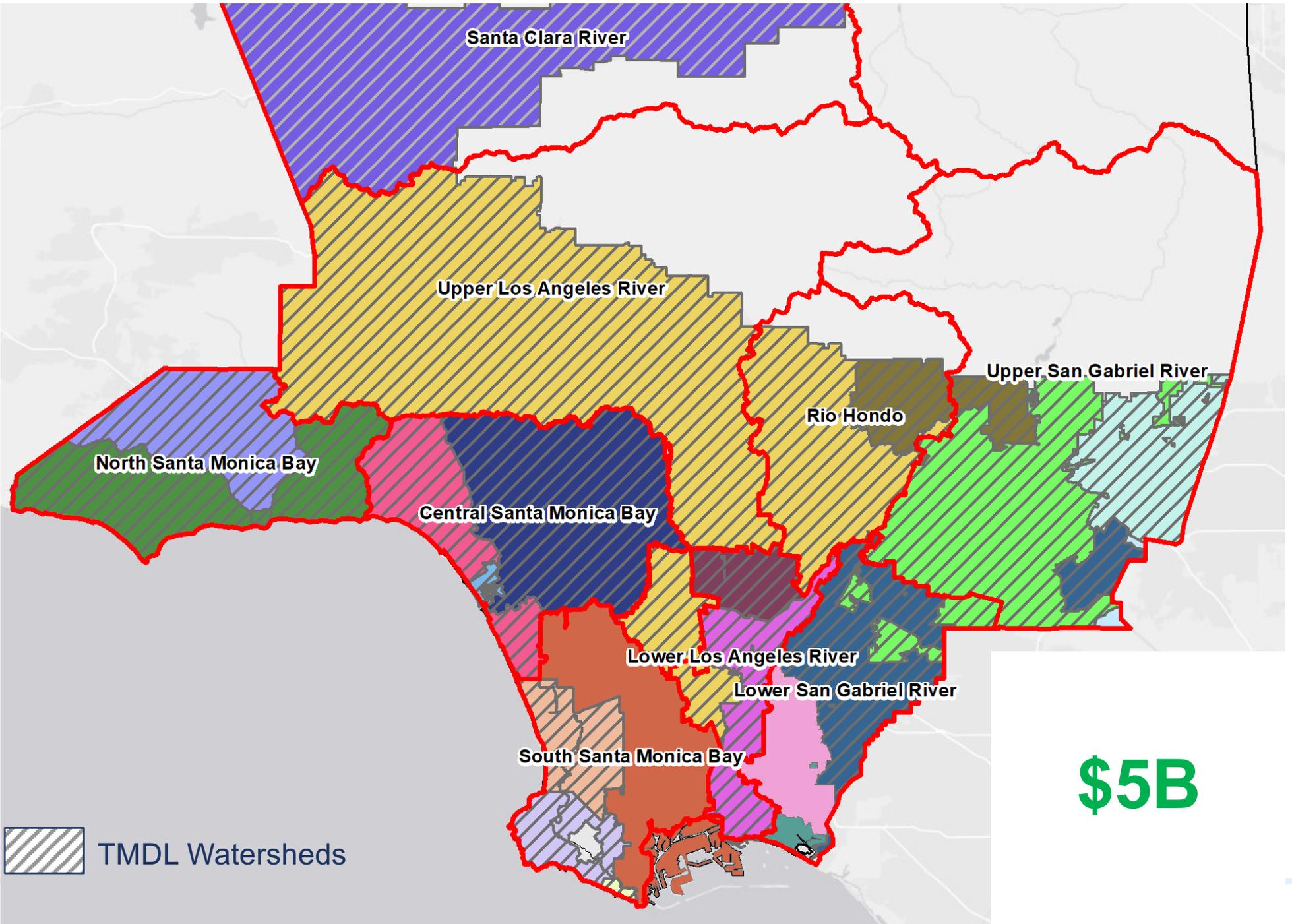
Summary of Study

- This Study aims to use the latest available science to measure water-borne pathogens across watersheds. It will help identify key sources of human health risk, and develop cost-effective protective strategies
- USEPA and academia agree not all sources of bacteria are equally risky, but we do not have the information we need to focus limited resources on the riskiest sources first.
- Objectives of Study
 - Leverage recent USEPA, academic, and stakeholder driven research
 - Produce strategies for incorporation into Program Plans
 - Support informed decisions that help us protect more people sooner

Study Overview

- Nexus to Stormwater and Urban Runoff Capture and Pollution Reduction
 - Study will facilitate improved targeting of pathogen sources and water to capture and/or treat
 - Study could reduce need to capture stormwater for bacteria compliance purposes while improving the protection of human health
 - Study may lead to partnering with various parties, such as wastewater agencies and homeless services agencies, to address human sources of pathogens.

Study Location



Scientific Study Details

Problem Statement:

- Waterborne pathogens represent the most significant potential threat to the health of people recreating in and around the ocean and inland waters of Los Angeles County.
- Current standards are based on FIB (fecal indicator bacteria), which are used as proxies for pathogens.
 - FIB are ubiquitous; a vast network of structural control measures would need to be implemented to provide adequate control – projected cost over \$5 billion.
 - USEPA and academia agree that human sources of pathogens pose the greatest risk
 - Unless high-risk sources are targeted, water capture projects may receive large FIB loads, but miss the highest risk human sources.

(Continued)

Scientific Study Details (Continued)

Expected Outcomes

- Completion of a needed regional study in LA County to identify the sources of pathogens and the most effective BMPs to address them. Studies have been completed elsewhere identifying human sources of pathogens as the highest driver of risk to human health.
- The latest science will be used to support the reduction of human pathogens and protect human health.
- Combined with scientific advancements, the results will provide an opportunity to improve the current bacteria strategy using source-specific indicators, improved viral detection methods, and risk modeling frameworks.
- The study results will facilitate meaningful, appropriate, productive actions by Permittees that will effectively reduce human health risks.

Scientific Study Details (Continued)

Methodology:

- Study work plan will be developed through a stakeholder-led process with the input of technical experts, including academics.
 - Stakeholder engagement is at the forefront of the study to ensure that diverse viewpoints are incorporated.

- Study will collect samples from beaches and waterbodies. Samples will be analyzed for traditional bacterial indicators, viruses, and human markers during wet and dry weather.
 - Identify areas with highest risk to support a focus on those areas
 - Identify the sources causing the highest risk to focus on those sources

- Study will assess control measure effectiveness and efficiency
 - Identify the best BMPs to address the sources
 - Support planning, applying municipal funds, requests for SCWP funding, and actions by other parties

Scientific Study Details (Continued)

■ *Regional collaboration efforts:*

- Small Group Initiated Discussions and built a scope for a Safe, Clean Water Regional Program project
- Presented Approach to E/WMP Groups
- Discussed with proponents of watershed-specific studies
- Discussed with Regional Board staff

■ Revised study to address concerns

- Clearly focused on human pathogens
- Clarified that study is a component of overall strategy to protect human health
- Clarified that implementation continues during the study
- Recognized that we do not need to wait until the end of the study to take action
- Reduced first year cost of study

Cost & Schedule

Phase	Description	Cost	Schedule
Task 1	Stakeholder Process	\$484,000	7/21 – 6/26
Task 2	Health Risk Assessment	\$5,816,208	7/21 – 9/25
Task 3	Risk Management	\$1,702,100	4/22 – 3/26
Task 4	Application of Study Findings	\$484,000	1/25 – 6/26
TOTAL		\$8,486,308	

Funding Request

WASC	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
CSMB	\$45,659	\$333,041	\$322,298	\$319,612	\$53,716
LLAR	\$32,801	\$239,256	\$231,539	\$229,609	\$38,590
LSGR	\$42,810	\$312,259	\$302,186	\$299,668	\$50,364
NSMB	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
RH	\$29,477	\$215,011	\$208,075	\$206,341	\$34,679
SCR	\$15,378	\$112,168	\$108,550	\$107,645	\$18,092
SSMB	\$47,156	\$343,964	\$332,869	\$330,095	\$55,478
ULAR	\$98,952	\$721,766	\$698,483	\$692,663	\$116,414
USGR	\$48,435	\$353,290	\$341,893	\$339,044	\$56,982
TOTAL	\$360,668	\$2,630,755	\$2,545,893	\$2,524,677	\$424,315

Summary of Benefits

- By developing a better understanding of pathogens present in the region's watersheds, the relative risk to human health they pose, and the effectiveness of various control measures, new or adapted BMPs can be established that improve water quality and reduce human health risks at our beaches and inland waterbodies.
- Short-term: results could be used to protect people from health risks that aren't currently known.
- Long-term: results will enable the targeted placement of BMPs in locations where they can maximize the prevention or treatment of key sources of human pathogens.

Questions and Thank You

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