

# Safe, Clean Water Program

Santa Clara River

Watershed Area Steering Committee (WASC)



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## Meeting Minutes:

Thursday, May 6, 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)  
Heather Merenda (Santa Clarita)  
Tom Cole (Santa Clarita)

Sandra Cattell (Santa Clarita Sierra Club)  
Darin Seegmiller\* (Santa Clarita)  
Dianne Erskine-Hellrigel (St. Francis Dam Disaster National Memorial Foundation)  
Mary Johnson (Agua Dulce Town Council)  
Mike Hennawy\* (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. CJ Caluag of the District called the meeting to order, asked for a roll call of WASC members, and with a majority present, quorum was established.

## 2. Approval of Meeting Minutes from April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021

The District uploaded a copy of the meeting minutes from the April 1<sup>st</sup> meeting, and Mr. Caluag asked the committee members for comments or revisions.

Mr. Julian Juarez motioned to approve the meeting minutes, with Ms. Dianne Erskine-Hellrigel seconding this motion. The Committee voted to approve the meeting minutes (Approved, See vote tracking sheet).

## 3. Committee Member and District Updates

Mr. Caluag asked if any Committee members had any updates to provide.

Ms. Sandra Cattell stated that there appears to still be difficulty with having access to maps which include blue-line streams, stated that targeted local hiring should be a priority, that she has previously requested the City's workforce unit to come to a WASC meeting, and would like to invite the LA-Orange County Building Trades to talk about project labor agreements. Mr. Jon Abelson of Stantec responded that the National Hydrology Database layers were added to the geographic information system (GIS) reference map that's hosted on the Safe, Clean Water (SCW) Portal, and Mr. Caluag responded that the fund Transfer Agreements (TA) have language which discuss the labor hiring requirements, which include L.A. County's local hiring policy. Mr. Tom Cole stated he would reach out to the City's workforce unit for this request.

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Ms. Erskine-Hellrigel shared that she gave Mr. Peter Massey and Mr. Blake Whittington of TreePeople, Inc. a tour of Santa Clarita and all the waterways, including San Francisquito Creek and Towsley Canyon.

Ms. Mary Johnson stated that she is finding the SCW Portal to be very busy, is having a hard time finding the SCR projects, and was wondering if anyone else is having this same issue. Mr. Caluag uploaded the SCW Portal on the screen to help demonstrate how to search for a project via the site filters.

Mr. Caluag provided the District updates, starting with the Call for Projects (CFP) Round 3 having a due date of July 31<sup>st</sup>, that CFP Info Sessions are expected in late May or early June, and that for any projects involving District facilities or infrastructure will require a District conceptual approval letter, with this request needing to be submitted to the District watershed managers by May 31<sup>st</sup>.

In regards to the Scientific Studies, Mr. Caluag stated that the Southern California Coastal Water Research Project's (SCCWRP) independent scientific analysis and review of the Regional Pathogen Study is now available and posted.

The SCW Reporting Module is now live, with the first quarterly report due on May 15<sup>th</sup>. The District in late April hosted two information sessions, and project developers should have attended to properly submit the quarterly reports.

Regarding the Watershed Coordinator (WC) selection process, Mr. Caluag stated that it appears that this Watershed Area's WC contract has been approved and that TreePeople, Inc. should be receiving the contract shortly for official signature. Mr. Mike Antos and Mr. Abelson of Stantec will continue their roles as regional coordinators with the WCs as each is onboarded.

Mr. Caluag stated that there are Nature-Based Solution interim guidelines that have been posted to the SCW website at the following link: <https://safecleanwaterla.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Interim-NBS-Programming-Guidelines-20210429.pdf>.

#### **4. Ex Parte Communication Disclosures**

Ms. Heather Merenda stated that she had a conversation with Ms. Cattell regarding a project unrelated to this WASC.

Ms. Erskine-Hellrigel stated that the TreePeople, Inc. tour also included Acton, in addition to Santa Clarita.

#### **5. Public Comment Period**

Mr. Caluag stated that a comment card was received from Ms. Sarai Jimenez. Ms. Jimenez of The Nature Conservancy (TNC) spoke on behalf of the OurWaterLA (OWLA) coalition and stated that OWLA recommends that no funding be allocated to the Regional Pathogen Study (Study), with OWLA's reasons included in their comment letter (attached to these meeting minutes). For the Via Princessa Technical Resources Program (TRP) project, OWLA recommends that the project increase biodiversity benefits, that all hardscape is made pervious, and that social media and public outreach include content that is culturally sensitive and diverse.

Ms. Jacqueline Ayer of the Acton Town Council (ATC) stated that for the Study, the ATC has no objection to the DNA evaluation portion of the study, but everything else is highly objectionable. The Study seeks to develop control measures that are tailored to various areas throughout the watershed, but without any

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communication or coordination with the communities and residents that will be forced to comply with the measures that they develop. This silent approach to developing control measures without the input of the regulated individuals is extremely troubling. Also, the modeling in this Study will be problematic. Like all models, it will find what it is told to find, and will give source inputs to the model, which will apportion a percentage of contamination responsibility to each source regardless of whether the source actually contributes anything. That is particularly alarming to the community of Acton and L.A. County is on the verge of approving a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for a campground in the SCR riverbed permitting more than 10,000 camping guests. The septic systems are more than 40 years old, and the tanks and leach fields are in the floodplain as are the recreational vehicle (RV) sewer connections, with none sealed as required by current water quality standards. The ATC has tried to get L.A. County and the L.A. Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Board) to rectify the situation, and at least require that the septic systems be removed from the floodplain and the RV connections be sealed, but these requests have fallen on deaf ears. We are concerned that the modeling and the monitoring that will be done in this Study will improperly allocate contamination to the residential septic systems in Acton without properly considering the effects of this and other sources. Ms. Ayer requested that the SCR WASC agenda add a standing agenda item for a WC report to update on activities since the previous meeting. Finally, Ms. Ayer asked that the SCR WASC agenda include a public comment period for each voting item.

Ms. Kristen Ruffell stated that when the public submits a public comment letter, how can the WASC members get a copy before the meeting instead of just having the letter shown on the screen. Mr. Caluag stated that the typical protocol has been to memorialize all public comments within the meeting minutes, but believes that in the future, public comments received by a certain day and time will be uploaded for the WASC members to have access before each meeting. Ms. Merenda seconded this request from Ms. Ruffell and stated that pertinent concerns can be discussed with project applicants in an appropriate manner. Ms. Johnson agreed with both Ms. Ruffell and Ms. Merenda and stated that she brought up this request last year. Ms. Cattell agreed with what everyone stated here and added that whenever this group has a discussion on any item, that there should be a public comment period after each item discussed.

## 6. Discussion Items:

### a) Residential RV issues

Mr. Caluag stated that the Residential RV item is a standing item requested by Ms. Ayer and allowed a discussion to proceed.

Ms. Ayer began the discussion by stating that the L.A. County Board of Supervisors (Board) recently approved the Residential RV program. In Acton, there are 10 to 12 parcels where multiple RVs are being used without being connected to a septic system, are not being afforded pumping services, which results in sewage entering the soils and/or local groundwaters. There is one particular location where this has been going on for decades, and L.A. County seems to have no ability to enforce this practice and have no legalized RVs to be stationed on residential parcels. Ms. Ayer believes this approval will make the sewage problem much worse than it already is at this time. Mr. Caluag briefly added that there was a motion to include the registration of the RVs parking on residential parcels.

Ms. Merenda recommended that this WASC invite the Regional Board and/or State Board to describe the septic system process for obtaining coverage under its Onsite Waste Treatment System (OWTS) permit, and also invite L.A. County Public Health to give a presentation to the group. Ms. Ayer agrees with Ms. Merenda's recommendation, as L.A. County Regional Planning did not address all of the issues raised, including the registration process of all RVs. Ms. Ayer added that she has not heard anything definitive from L.A. County on how this approved RV

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program will proceed and would like for the District to look into this and provide an update at the next WASC meeting.

Mr. Bruce Hamamoto stated that his staff contacted L.A. County Regional Planning to determine the lead contact for these efforts and were given the name, Mr. Richard Claghorn. L.A. County Regional Planning is well aware that they need to coordinate with the Regional Board on obtaining the OWTS waste discharge permit.

Ms. Cattell stated that these issues are very important given that this region is on septic systems and on water production wells. There is no water purveyor processing the potable water, and so the wells need to produce safe, clean water.

## **b) Summary of projects and studies submitted for Santa Clara River WASC for consideration ([SCW Portal](#))**

Mr. Caluag started this part of the meeting agenda with going over the Stormwater Investment Plan (SIP) criteria. The SIP process will be very similar to last year, and will abide by the SCW Program Ordinance and SIP criteria [i.e., not less than 85 percent of the Regional Program funds will be allocated to Infrastructure Program (IP) projects, not more than 10 percent to the Technical Resources Program (TRP), and not more than 5 percent to the Scientific Study (SS) Program]. This is all built into the SIP Planning Tool. Projects that help achieve compliance with the MS4 Permit shall be prioritized, and funding for projects that provide disadvantaged community (DAC) benefits shall not be less than 110 percent of the ratio of DAC population to the total WA population. Each municipality shall receive benefits in proportion to the funds generated within their jurisdiction after accounting for allocation for 110 percent to the DACs to the extent feasible and to be evaluated over a 5-year rolling period. Nature based solutions should be prioritized to the extent feasible.

Mr. Caluag then went over the general process on first having this WASC discuss the projects, having a public comment period, and ultimately voting. The WASC can first go over the Year 1 [Fiscal Year (FY) 20-21] earmarked funding allocations for the subsequent 5-year rolling period to see if any adjustments need to be made to those earmarked allocations without changing the total earmarked amount. After this, the group can proceed with an organic discussion period and ask questions to the new TRP and SS project proponents, and start populating the FY 21-22 SIP accordingly. The SIP Tool will present all of the recommendations made, and with a motion from a WASC member, the matter can proceed into a formal vote.

Regarding the SIP Tool, Mr. Caluag went over the SIP budget table showing what was approved for Year 1 and the earmarked amounts for subsequent years, illustrating the allocated amounts, remaining balances and percent allocated per FY. The WASC will need to consider future allocations for new IP, TRP and SS projects, as well as Operation & Maintenance funding requests.

Ms. Cattell stated that before we continue with funding projects from both last year and this current year, she requested that the WASC look into hiring locally and possibly have presentations from both Work Force and Ms. Holly Shroeder, and also have someone conduct a presentation on project labor agreements (PLA) so we have local hiring in place to benefit the communities, and requested that the WASC holds off on voting until this group knows whether we can require targeted local hiring. Mr. Caluag displayed a copy of the Regional fund TA and referenced that the TA includes a condition that the Funded Activity must apply L.A. County's local and targeted worker hiring policy. Ms. Cattell responded that if this is L.A. County's local targeted worker hiring policy, is the policy applied Countywide and/or does it apply to the City of Santa Clarita. Mr. Caluag stated that the TA also refers to a municipality's own local hiring, and Ms. Cattell asked if the City of Santa

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Clarita has its own local hiring policy. Mr. Darin Seegmiller stated that the City has policies that direct City projects to utilize local vendors as much as possible. Ms. Cattell stated that Mr. Seegmiller helped address this for the City, but asked the same question for L.A. County (i.e., would L.A. County be able to hire a firm from Long Beach to do work in the SCR WA?). Mr. Hamamoto stated that he does not know the answer to this inquiry and would need to get back on this. Mr. Hunt Braly requested that each WASC member receive a copy of the L.A. County local hiring policy to read and review it, stated that he believes that the local hiring policy is not the PLAs that Ms. Cattell is referring to, and concluded that he does not believe that it is the role of this WASC to impose or recommend labor standards and/or work agreements onto the City or L.A. County. Ms. Cattell responded that this is not about union, but rather that the issue is about hiring locally. Mr. Braly responded that labor standard agreements pertain to unions.

For projects submitted in FY 20-21, the project developers were invited to today's meeting to discuss any funding allocation changes they would like to request. Mr. Seegmiller spoke on behalf of the Newhall Park IP project and stated that City Council has approved the fund TA for Year 1 in the amount of \$1.8 million. In looking at the earmarked funds for Years 2 through 5, Mr. Seegmiller stated that the City recommends modifying the fund allocations by moving the Years 2 and 3 funding amounts of \$5 million and \$5.198 million, respectively, into Year 4 (FY 23-24) for a total of \$13,198,897. These changes resulted in no changes to the overall request, and in terms of the DAC ratios, the thresholds are still being met over a 5-year period. Ms. Ruffell asked if the DAC ratio is indeed a 5 year requirement versus an annual requirement, and Mr. Caluag stated that the SCW Program Ordinance does not specifically state whether it is an annual requirement or a 5-year requirement and that each WASC is approaching this differently – in the case of this WASC, there were no IPs submitted this year.

Ms. Cattell stated that the Newhall Park IP project is taking a large percentage of available funds in Year 4, which may result in not having sufficient funding for a project submitted next year in Year 3, and requested the funded projects to provide updates on community engagement activities. Mr. Caluag responded that the SIP Tool shows a 3 percent funding allocation in this current (FY 21-22) year and a 2 percent funding allocation next (FY 22-23) year, and that the 73 percent funding allocation shown in FY 23-24 reflects earmarked funding that was approved in last year's (FY 20-21) SIP programming, and Mr. Seegmiller added that the Year 1 (FY 20-21) \$1.8 million funds for Newhall Park will pay for both the design of the project and the public outreach activities, and finally these efforts are scheduled to commence in FY 21-22. Mr. Massey of TreePeople, Inc. added that its WC scope of services includes developing an outreach plan for existing projects that are in need of preliminary outreach efforts.

## **c) Southern California Coastal Water Research Project (SCCWRP) analyses for Scientific Studies**

Ms. Merenda stated that in reading the SCCWRP assessment and hearing some of the concerns shared by the public today, she proposed that the Pathogen Reduction Study only be funded through Task 2.1, which would focus on developing the procedures for the stakeholder process and once the stakeholder concerns are addressed, have the Study return for further consideration of funding in Years 2 and 3. Mr. Caluag asked if Ms. Merenda was proposing partial funding for this Study, and Ms. Merenda affirmed. Mr. Caluag stated that the applicant would need to verbally agree to partial funding, fill out the partial funding form and fulfill the scope without any changes to it, and then consider further funding at a later time. Mr. Rich Watson explained that the District stated at a previous meeting (Central Santa Monica Bay WASC) that this SS project must commit to the project's full funding within a 5-year period. Ms. Merenda stated that the WASC would need to approve this project and whether to allocate earmarked funding in future years, and Mr. Watson

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responded that within a rolling 5 year period, the WASC can shift funds around but not reduce the total funding amount. Mr. Caluag added that quarterly reporting will also play a part, with the WASCs needing to review the quarterly reports and so the WASC will have oversight on whether projects are delivering or not delivering, which can help each WASC decide where funding requests need to be adjusted or taken away. Mr. Watson stated that the total amount that this Study has requested over a 5-year period from this WASC is \$361,833, which is about 4.3 percent of the total 5-year request of \$8.46 million. Depending on how many WASCs approve this Study, Mr. Watson would need to coordinate with the approving WASCs and can adjust funding since the non-approving WASCs would not have this Study performed in its WA.

Mr. Hamamoto discussed the partial funding guidelines, which allows IP Projects to break its efforts into phases (design vs. construction) with the understanding that the project proponent would need to commit to the outstanding funding requested, but that SSs – in this case, the Gateway Management Water Authority – will not have other available funding to complete this Study as a partially funded project. Lastly, if this WASC only wants to approve Tasks 1 and 2 at this time, this Study would need to apply again in Round 3 with only these two tasks. Mr. Caluag stated this Study and all SSs would likely need to be fully funded or not funded at all. For clarification, Mr. Hamamoto stated that the Study at the Central Santa Monica Bay WASC meeting was not approved for funding at the last WASC meeting was instead deferred for further discussion and consideration at the next WASC meeting.

Ms. Cattell said Ms. Mary Johnson and herself have not read the Study as they did not know how to access the Study. But with today's demonstration by Mr. Caluag, they now know how to access and review the Study. However, in reading the SCCWRP assessment concerns, and hearing comments from Ms. Ayer and the letter from The Nature Conservancy, Ms. Cattell would like to table this Study until the next WASC meeting.

Mr. Tom Cole is curious on Ms. Sarai Jimenez' discussion earlier on the Stormwater Monitoring Coalition (SMC) project as a potential funding opportunity for this Study. Ms. Merenda stated that the SMC is a group of people that have collaborated mostly on toxicity issues rather than being a funding source. Mr. Watson agrees with Ms. Merenda's SMC assertion, and said he can check with both the SMC and SCCWRP. Ms. Merenda also said she would like to defer any decisions on this Study until the next meeting, and would like to hear Mr. Watson's response to the SCCWRP comments.

Mr. Watson stated that SCCWRP's assessment is an academic evaluation, and one thing to keep in mind is that this Study is a real-world tool that would be used to benefits MS4 permittees while achieving better water quality. The SCCWRP team appears to see value in the Study and approved the Study of meeting the goals of the Study with eliminating fecal contamination sources. SCCWRP's biggest concerns appear to be wanting more detail, but the Study team intentionally did not provide a lot of detail to provide an opportunity for meaningful engagement with a number of stakeholders, allowing a collaborative environment where a multitude of stakeholders would help develop the Study. One of the reasons this was done was the Study team was concerned that the potential for alienating certain stakeholders could occur. The assessment included a question about technical expertise in that the technical team has not been selected, but Mr. Watson responded that this was also intentionally done as there was a past L.A. River Copper Water Effects Ratio (WER) study done in which a similar approach was used. In the end, the details that the State Water Board will want for this Study will be created within the stakeholder committee when the development of the Task 2 and Task 3 work program proceeds. When Mr. Watson conducted this Study's presentation to this WASC, he suggested to the WASC to spend some time with reviewing the 23-page Study summary as it lays out the rationale for the various tasks.

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Ms. Johnson referred to Mr. Watson stating that he did not want to alienate stakeholders with a lack of certain project details and was wondering which stakeholders he was referring to, and Mr. Watson stated that in particular, the water quality non-governmental organizations (NGOs), technical experts and MS4 permittees will need to be involved with these efforts. Ms. Johnson was still wondering how a lack of details would alienate stakeholders, and Mr. Watson responded that in the past, a WER Study was done in which a monitoring program was shared and people disagreed with it and so the WER efforts were required to change the proposed monitoring efforts. For this Study, by leaving certain details out of the monitoring plan, we will have stakeholders involved with developing the full monitoring program.

Ms. Ayer stated that the stakes for the Acton/Agua Dulce community regarding this project cannot be overstated. The Acton/Agua Dulce community is the headwaters of the Santa Clara River watershed. Ms. Ayer appreciates that there has been some outreach for this Study, but the Acton/Agua Dulce community has continually asked that no sampling be done within our community if this Study gets approved for funding. This project appears to be an “all in” or nothing, and as proposed, would include monitoring in our communities. With no caveat in the proposal, we cannot support this Study as is. Mr. Watson said we can slightly modify the Study with Conditions of Approval, but Ms. Ayer has raised her concerns and does not believe that being a stakeholder will result in any assurance with the requested changes to the scope as currently proposed.

Ms. Cattell stated that it appears that we do need a Study to look at pathogens, but this WASC needs to see: 1) All the statements that Mr. Watson made must be put into a document that we can see, especially with regards to the summary and also addressing the concerns of the ATC; 2) Can the Study request be rewritten to include the comments that Mr. Watson made about allowing or not allowing certain things; and 3) Ms. Cattell would like the opportunity to read the entire Study with all these comments in mind, including the ones from The Nature Conservancy, and requests to defer this Study’s voting until the next WASC meeting. Regarding item request 2, Mr. Caluag stated that no changes can be made to the project scope and that the only option would be to withdraw this application and resubmit a new/revised scope for Round 3 consideration. Ms. Cattell asked for clarification on how Conditions of Approval can be stipulated if no changes are allowed, but Mr. Watson stated that the Study proposal cannot change but that Conditions of Approval can be included.

Mr. Hamamoto stated that he is familiar with the Copper WER study’s Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), also worked with SCCWRP on a Marina Del Rey Study, and worked with the Regional Board and developed TACs on both these efforts to ensure nothing was overlooked. For this Study, Mr. Watson confirmed that the Regional Board will be on the TAC.

Ms. Merenda would like to move that this WASC defer this funding item until the next WASC meeting, and would like to see a written response by Mr. Watson to the comments raised today. Also, Ms. Merenda would like to understand what conditions Measure W is allowed to put in the fund TAs for each project. Finally, Ms. Merenda wants to understand what the WASC’s role would be with oversight of the Study’s progression. Mr. Watson requested that this dialogue be summarized for him to respond accordingly.

Mr. Dirk Marks would like to see an analysis of what the consequences are of delaying this Study and having it go to a 3rd Round, including what the impacts are to this region.

Ms. Cattell also requested that Mr. Watson include in his comments addressing the specificity of the consequences – for example, I am on a septic system and let’s say the Study finds huge amounts of e.Coli in my neighborhood – will I then be assessed to do something about this e.Coli

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issue, where I take good care of my septic system but have neighbors that do not take care of their septic systems? One issue many may have with this Study is that generalizations will be made for neighborhoods and would be costly for people that are taking care of their systems, and so I request that Mr. Watson address these concerns.

**d) Santa Clara River (SCR) Project Prioritization and Selection Discussion for populating the Fiscal Year 2021-22 Stormwater Investment Plan ([SCW Portal](#))**

As noted below, the projects submitted this FY are the Via Princessa TRP and the Regional Pathogen SS.

- i) Infrastructure Program (IP)  
None
  
- ii) Technical Resources Program (TRP)
  - (1) [Via Princessa Park Project](#) – City of Santa Clarita
  - (2) Watershed Coordinator

Mr. Seegmiller asked if the WASC is able to approve the Newhall Park funding request modifications in the SIP and possibly approve the Via Princessa TRP in today's meeting, with the Study getting considered at the next WASC meeting. Mr. Caluag stated that the Study has to be reviewed more by the Committee and will require responses from Mr. Watson, and so we can table all SIP voting matters until the next meeting as there is not enough time remaining in today's meeting to take a formal vote. This said, the Committee should now discuss the Via Princessa TRP.

Mr. Caluag reminded the WASC that the TRP is aimed at providing Technical Assistance Teams (TATs) to projects needing help with developing and creating a Feasibility Study and ultimately to be submitted later in a Call for Projects.

Mr. Seegmiller, as the Via Princessa TRP proponent, stated that it is too early to forecast how this TRP might impact future SIP funding years and amounts. This said, the City is very excited about this project and believes the project has the potential to provide all of the benefits identified within the SCW Program. Our early analysis shows that this site has a potential to be a good project site to be scored and submitted to the WASC for funding consideration. Mr. Caluag clarified that for this year's particular SIP, this TRP would include a \$300,000 funding amount should the WASC vote in favor of SIP inclusion.

Ms. Cattell stated that it appears that the City already has a large amount of the funding allocated to its Newhall Park project, and with needing to consider that L.A. County's Hasley Canyon Park project also has obtained funding, and that this WASC will now need to consider the Via Princessa project at a future time, this WASC will potentially run low with this WA's funding allocations. Ms. Cattell is in favor of funding this TRP, but would also want to consider pairing down the funding for Newhall Park in order to fund projects in other places such as Acton and Agua Dulce. Mr. Seegmiller stated that the Newhall Park project was approved by the WASC last year, and it's the City's understanding that the project's total amount of funding cannot be changed, and that with regards to funding other projects throughout the WA, this program is more than just a



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five-year program and that there will be many years beyond the first five years where funding will be available for other projects in this WA.

Mr. Massey of TreePeople, Inc. asked for the timing and flow of the Feasibility Study, including what aspects of the plan are committed with the completion of the Feasibility Study and what impact could still be achieved from community input. Mr. Caluag stated the TRP is at its very early stages and would have a TAT assigned to it should it move forward with SIP inclusion. The TAT would meet with the City to meet the 19 Feasibility Study requirements, which includes stakeholder engagement and watershed coordinator collaboration.

- iii) Scientific Study (SS)
  - (1) [Regional Pathogen Reduction Study](#) – Gateway Water Management Authority

#### 7. Public Comment Period

Ms. Ayer stated that the community of Acton looks forward to working with Mr. Massey on exploring a Feasibility Study to address the terrible flooding issues in the Downtown area, and to hopefully develop a similar project as the Via Princessa TRP.

Mr. Watson encouraged people to think about the potential for other funding sources, including Caltrans which has previously funded stormwater projects and should have available funding soon, that we can expect a Statewide Water Bond measure soon.

#### 8. Voting Items

- a) **Approve the final Fiscal Year 2021-22 Stormwater Investment Plan funding recommendations for the SCR Watershed Area and approve submission to the Regional Oversight Committee for review**

As previously stated, the WASC will not be voting at today's meeting and will instead include the SIP programming and voting for the next WASC meeting scheduled on June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021.

#### 9. Items for Next Agenda

- a) **Approve the final Fiscal Year 2021-22 Stormwater Investment Plan funding recommendations for the SCR Watershed Area and approve submission to the Regional Oversight Committee for review**

As stated above, the WASC will attempt to program and vote on the SIP at the next WASC meeting.

Ms. Johnson reiterated the request to have a Watershed Coordinator report for the next WASC meeting.

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## 10. Adjournment

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

**Next meeting: Thursday, June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021 10:00AM -12:00PM**  
**Virtual Meeting – WebEx Events**

**SANTA CLARA RIVER WASC MEETING - MAY 6, 2021**

		Quorum Present				Voting Items	
Member Type	Organization	Member	Voting?	Alternate	Voting?	Approval of 04-01-21 Meeting Minutes	SCR SIP
Agency	District	Julian Juarez	x	Ramy Gindi		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		a	
Agency	Santa Clarita Recreation & Community Services	Janine Prado	x	Jennifer Del Toro		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				Frederick Andre Hollings			
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	Jason Gibbs		Darin Seegmiller	x	Y	
Municipal Members	Santa Clarita	Heather Merenda	x	Oliver Cramer		Y	
Municipal Members	Santa Clarita	Robert Newman		Mike Hennawy	x	Y	
Municipal Members	Santa Clarita	Tom Cole	x	David Peterson		Y	
Total Non-Vacant Seats		16			Yay (Y)	15	0
Total Voting Members Present		16			Nay (N)	0	0
Agency		5			Abstain (A)	1	0
Community Stakeholder		4			Total	16	0
Municipal Members		7				Approved	Not Approved

**Attendees**  
**Santa Clara River WASC Meeting**  
**May 6, 2021**

Lisa	Skutecki	Dirk	Marks
Mike	Hennawy	Lauro	Alvarado
Jud	Warren	Oliver	Cramer
Darin	Seegmiller	Justin	Jones - LACFCD
Mary	Johnson	Jerrid	Mckenna
Dianne	Hellrigel	Jacqueline	Ayer
Peter	Massey	janine	prado
Jon	Abelson (Stantec)	Sandra	Cattell
Hans	Tremmel	Julian	Juarez
Safe	Clean Water LA	Clarasophia	Gust
Heather	Merenda	Maritsa	DRA Inc.
CJ	Caluag - LACFCD	Allen	Ma - LA County Public Works
Jonathan	Lu	Tom	Cole
Josephine	Gutierrez	Kristen	Ruffell
Richard	Watson	Hunt	Braly
Steve	Cole	Sarai	Jimenez
Elisha	Back	Carlos	Moran
Larry	Tortuya - CWE	bruce	hamamoto



# Public Comment Form

Name:\* \_\_\_\_\_ Organization\*: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email\*: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone\*: \_\_\_\_\_  
Meeting: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

LA County Public Works may contact me for clarification about my comments  
\*Per Brown Act, completing this information is optional. At a minimum, please include an identifier so that you may be called upon to speak.

Phone participants and the public are encouraged to submit public comments (or a request to make a public comment) to [SafeCleanWaterLA@dpw.lacounty.gov](mailto:SafeCleanWaterLA@dpw.lacounty.gov). All public comments will become part of the official record.

Please complete this form and email to [SafeCleanWaterLA@dpw.lacounty.gov](mailto:SafeCleanWaterLA@dpw.lacounty.gov) by at least 5:00pm the day prior to the meeting with the following subject line: "Public Comment: [Watershed Area] [Meeting Date]" (ex. "Public Comment: USGR 4/8/20").

## Comments

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Date: May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021

To: Santa Clara WASC Committee Members  
cc: SCWP Staff, Watershed Coordinator

From: OWLA Core Team (Heal the Bay, LAANE, LA Waterkeeper, Nature for All, NRDC, Pacoima Beautiful, SCOPE, The Nature Conservancy and TreePeople)

RE: Input on Project Prioritization for SCWP SIP

OurWaterLA is a diverse coalition of community leaders and organizations from across Los Angeles County united to create a strong water future for Los Angeles. Our goal is to secure clean, safe, affordable and reliable water for drinking, recreation and commerce now and for the future. We have a deep commitment to ensuring that the trust of the voters in passing this measure is upheld and that projects which achieve the three Safe Clean Water Program objectives of water quality, water supply and community investments are prioritized. Your active participation on this body is appreciated and we are excited about the prospects of working together to achieve a better water future for our region.

As we have identified in previous letters to this body, this program is dynamic, and based on the first round of project reviews, interested stakeholders such as OWLA, committee members and staff recognize the need for improvements to program metrics. With contributions from various stakeholders we are optimistic that future rounds of program funding will yield projects that not only improve water quality and water supply, but also provide community investments that are developed with community participation from concept to implementation and operations. The priorities for OWLA have always been clear, community led project designs using nature based solutions. These types of designs will not only address MS4 permit issues, but will also result in projects that can meet the multiple priorities for our region including addressing climate change, providing healthy recreational opportunities and developing engagement tools so that water issues are more broadly understood and supported by our communities.

As has been reported by staff to the committee, there is currently an assessment being conducted to determine how DAC investments and "benefits" are attributed to DAC communities. The position of OWLA on this issue is very clear; projects must be located in DACs in order to be counted. We are expecting that the reports in development by the SCWP staff working with subject matter experts for Round 4 projects will provide us all with the metrics necessary to plan for and achieve our DAC investment goals. Until that time, we are urging all WASCs to use only the benchmark of projects located in a DAC to count toward the 110% threshold.

The task before you is to consider the prioritization of projects for funding in this round for the 2021-22 SIP. After careful review of the project submissions, **OWLA strongly recommends** that you approve only those projects that:

- clearly demonstrate they have a strong community engagement plan,
- include a significant community investment element and
- as, applicable, are located in a DAC.

With respect to the special studies presented to this WASC, our recommendation is as follows:

*Regional Pathogen Reduction Study – Gateway Water Management Authority:*

We recommend that no funding be allocated for the Regional Pathogen Reduction Study. We have serious concerns about the legitimacy of this proposed study as no scientific professionals were involved in the development of the study, which is required under the SCWP Scientific Studies Program when feasible. This proposal targets a specific source of a specific pollutant rather than providing multiple benefits and will potentially weaken water quality objectives rather than improving our water quality. This proposed study will not support many of the program goals. Additionally, there are other potential funding sources for a study like this including the Stormwater Monitoring Coalition, which already has a similar study in its 5-year plan.

Funding should instead be spent to invest in our communities with multi-benefit stormwater capture projects. Significant work has been done to better understand bacteriological pollution throughout southern California. We would encourage the WASC to invite scientific experts to present at a future WASC meeting about the work that has been done on bacteriological pollution, and what potential next steps should be taken to refine this work through legitimate scientific studies in the future.

For the Via Princessa Park Technical Resources project, the following are our recommendations to improve this project:

To increase bio-diversity benefits, the nature-based features of the dry creek and inclusion of native plants should cover one third of the project footprint. All hardscapes should be pervious.

If not already planned, we recommend that charrettes and social media should be in the prevalent languages of community members within the region. Content should be culturally sensitive and accessible to diverse audiences.

Thank you for your consideration of these recommendations. We look forward to continuing our engagement with this committee and the new watershed coordinators to ensure a better water future for the region.

Sincerely,

OurWaterLA Core Team