

Introduction to Rio Hondo Watershed Area Strategic Outreach and Engagement Plan (SOEP)



Rio Hondo WASC Watershed Coordinator Team



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Strategic Outreach and Engagement Plan

- The Strategic Outreach and Engagement Plan (SOEP) is part of Watershed Coordinators' Scope of Work
- SCWP's Regional Coordination Consultant provided a template to encourage consistency.
- SOEPs are to be developed in the first 12 weeks after Notice to Proceed.
- SOEPs are to include clear Vision of Success and include methods for evaluating success.

Purpose of the Strategic Outreach and Engagement Plan

- Broadly engage communities
- Coordinate funding opportunities
- Identify and educate stakeholders
- Help support development of project concepts
- Develop relationships with residents and businesses
- Create more involvement in the SCWP and the WASC.

Safe, Clean Water for Los Angeles County Residents

Water is Scarce in LA County

We live in a water-scarce area. Los Angeles County residents rely heavily on imported water from the Sierra Mountains, the Central Valley and other states. Climate change is causing extreme weather conditions, and the five-year drought severely impacted communities across the County.

Over 130 Billion Gallons of Water Lost

Rain that falls on LA County flows through our region's rivers, creeks and streams. It replenishes groundwater, an important source of local drinking water.

However, because so much of our region is paved over, too much precious rainfall is lost to the ocean before we can capture it for use. When we experience heavy rains, our existing system captures only a fraction of rainfall. LA County lost over 107 billion gallons of water during last year's storms — enough to meet the needs of more than 2.5 million people for an entire year.

Pollutants and Toxins Threaten Public Health, Our Water Resources and the Environment

Stormwater picks up chemicals and toxins as it flows through streets and other developed areas to our rivers and creeks and into the ocean, threatening public health and marine life. That's why beach closures follow nearly every heavy rain.

Thousands of marine animals have washed up sick or dead along Southern California's shoreline over the last ten years. Each year, stormwater carries more than three million tons of trash from our streets — enough to fill Dodger Stadium — into our local beaches.

LA County has relied on the US EPA, and State and Federal Clean Water Act, to ensure strong water quality standards. However, they provide only minimal funding, and it is critically important that we take local action to improve water resources for LA County residents.

Our Solution: Safe, Clean Water Program

The good news is there are smart, modern solutions to help address these problems. We can use science, technology and nature-based solutions to protect public health and our environment and to maximize a clean, locally-controlled water supply:

- Capture more rainfall to store, clean and re-use
- Protect local lakes, rivers, streams, beaches and the ocean from contamination
- Improve communities' protection against extreme weather patterns and climate change while adding natural areas, shade and green space to enjoy

The County and Los Angeles County Flood Control District are reaching out to stakeholders throughout our local communities to get input about how to create a Safe, Clean Water Program to achieve these goals and ensure safe, clean water resources for Los Angeles County residents.

Public input is important to us. For more information, please contact: info@SafeCleanWaterLA.org, and for more information, visit: www.SafeCleanWaterLA.org.

Watershed Coordinator Work Plan Tasks

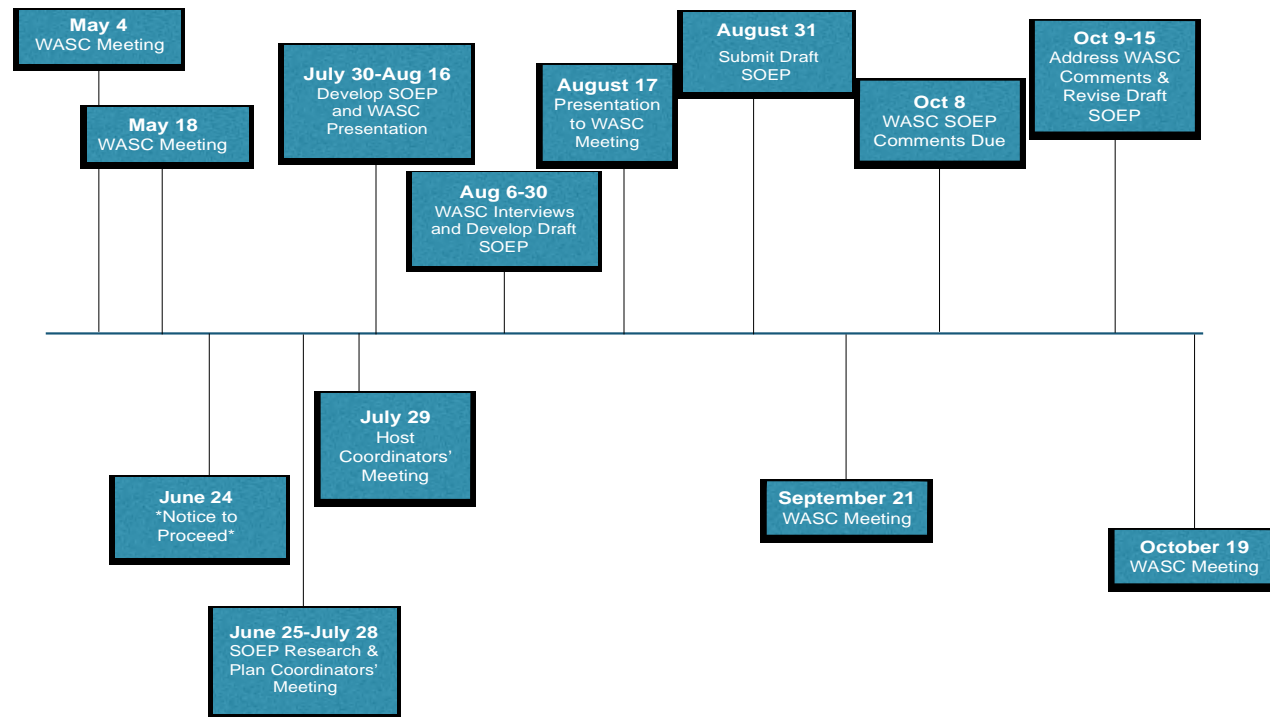
- Task 1: Facilitate Community Engagement in SCWP
- Task 2: Identify and Develop Project Concepts
- Task 3: Work with Technical Assistance Teams
- Task 4: Facilitate Identification and Representation of Community Priorities
- Task 5: Integrate Priorities Through Partnerships and Extensive Networks
- Task 6: Cost Share Partners
- Task 7: Leverage Funding
- Task 8: Local Stakeholder Education
- Task 9: Watershed Coordinator Collaboration

WASC Member Interviews

Member Type	Member	Affiliation	Interview Status
Agency	Julian Juarez	LA County FCD	Completed
Agency	Tom Love (Chair)	Upper SGV Municipal Water District	Completed
Agency	Kelly Gardner	Main San Gabriel Basin Watermaster	TBD
Agency	Brent Maue	City of Pasadena Public Works	Completed
Agency	Kristen Ruffell	Sanitation Districts	Completed
Community Stakeholder	Mark Hall	Greater LA County Vector Control District	Completed
Community Stakeholder	Daniel Rossman	The Wilderness Society	Completed
Community Stakeholder	Thomas Wong	SGV Municipal Water District	Completed
Community Stakeholder	Vacant	NA	NA
Community Stakeholder	Vacant	NA	NA
Municipal	James Carlson	City of Sierra Madre	TBD
Municipal	Gloria Crudginton	City of Monrovia	Completed
Municipal	David Dolphin	City of Alhambra	Completed
Municipal	Vanessa Hevener	City of Arcadia	Completed
Municipal	Frank Lopez	City of Monterey Park	Completed
Municipal	Kris Markarian	City of Pasadena	Scheduled
Municipal	Fernando Villaluna	LA County Public Works	Completed

SOEP Timeline

2021 Rio Hondo Watershed Coordination - SOEP Timeline



Recommended SOEP Table of Contents



Cascade Park, Courtesy of City of Monterey Park.

1. Watershed Area Description
2. Interested Party Mapping
3. Vision for Success & Evaluation Criteria
4. Strategies
5. Identification of Collaborative Efforts

Key Points from WASC Member Interviews

Community concerns centered around:

- Regulations,
- Equity,
- Climate adaptation/climate change impacts,
- Water availability,
- Surface water quality,
- Transparency,
- Public engagement

Early hopes noted for the Safe, Clean Water Program and/or Measure W were:

- Improved water quality
- Assured source of funding for projects and programs for MS4 compliance
- Solving multiple problems at the same time
- Opportunity to improve water infrastructure
- Stormwater capture as water supply augmentation
- One initiative that could help demonstrate why water is important

Key Points from WASC Member Interviews

(Continued)

Key hopes for the Watershed Coordinator program included:

- Fostering collaborative projects between Cities and non-municipal groups,
- Helping develop projects for communities that don't have resources to build a strong application,
- Providing coordination for better regional projects,
- Bringing people to the table and bringing ideas to the Cities,
- Serving as key liaison with the community,
- Providing an overview of everything going on in the watershed & region
- Communicating and educating people on how the watershed concept benefits everyone,
- Coordination of regional projects
- Being a resource to assistant applicants with projects to achieve MS4 compliance

Progress with Interested Party Mapping

- Key categories include CBOs and NGOs, City Council Districts, City and County Departments, school districts, educational institutions, Councils of Governments, Water Purveyors and other agencies, and local Native American tribes.
- We have identified some of the key CBO/NGOs that are active in the Rio Hondo Watershed Area as:
 - API Forward Movement
 - Active SGV
 - Amigos de los Rios
 - Communities for a Better Environment
 - Council for Watershed Health
 - Day One El Monte
 - El Monte Promise Foundation
 - LA Waterkeeper
 - Our Water LA
 - SGV Civic Alliance
 - San Gabriel and Lower LA Rivers & Mountains Conservancy
 - San Gabriel Valley Conservation Corps
 - Sierra Club San Gabriel Valley Task Force
 - Social Justice Learning Institute
 - TreePeople

Potential Community Events

- Summer event programming has largely ended.
- With the status of COVID-19 safety concerns in LA County, very few in-person events appear to be currently planned for the remainder of the calendar year. The Watershed Team will be looking toward events that will hopefully be able to be proceed during the early months of 2022.
- We will be monitoring SGV news and are on email lists for cities and community groups to try to stay aware of the status of planned events.
 - We welcome any suggestions, as things evolve.

Identification of Collaborative Efforts



Source: Montebello Parks Master Plan and Facilities Needs Assessment

- Monthly virtual meetings with Watershed Coordinators of adjacent WASCs – Lower LAR, Lower SGR, Upper SGR, and Upper LAR.
- Monthly virtual meetings of all 12 Watershed Coordinators and Stantec (Coordinator of Watershed Coordination efforts)
- Meet with Cities and others to discuss existing work that has been done to identify community priorities and needs.

Initial Near-Term Strategies

- Meet with municipalities to expand list of active organizations and individuals, as well as potential Year 4 Project Proposals
- Meet with non-municipal organizations that previously submitted project proposals re: potential Year 4 project proposals.
- Meet with proponents of Year 4 proposals to better understand projects and recommend 4-5 page Executive Summary to help WASC members understand projects and develop questions for project proponents.
- Expand list of planned special events scheduled between September 15, 2021 and June 30, 2022 and plan outreach activities in conjunction with NGOs active in the Watershed Area.
- Consult with SCWP staff working on public education and work force development concerning educational event opportunities

Next Steps

- *Submit Draft SOEP – 31 August target*
- *September 24, 2021 - WASC Meeting Review of SOEP*
- *October 8, 2021 – Deadline for SOEP Comments*
- *October 15, 2021 – Response to SOEP Comments*
- *October 19, 2021 – WASC Meeting Review of Revised SOEP*

Questions and Discussion

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Monrovia Canyon Park, Photo Courtesy City of Monrovia

