

Safe, Clean Water Program

Upper San Gabriel River

Watershed Area Steering Committee (WASC)



Meeting Minutes:

Thursday, September 23, 2021
1:00pm - 3:00pm
WebEx Meeting

Attendees

Committee Members Present:

Julian Juarez (LA County Flood Control District)
Kelly Gardner (Main San Gabriel Basin)
Kristen Ruffell (LA County Sanitation Districts)
Sean Woods (LA County Parks & Recreation)
Bob Huff (Former CA State Senator)
Drew Ready (Council for Watershed Health)
Miguel Luna (Urban Semillas), Vice Chair
David Diaz (Active SGV)

John Beshay (Baldwin Park)
Kevin Kearney* (Duarte)
Alison Sweet (Glendora), Chair
Joshua Nelson (Industry)
Joseph Venzon* (Los Angeles County)
Julie Carver (Pomona)
Alfredo Camacho (Day One), Watershed
Coordinator, non-voting member

Committee Members Not Present:

Tom Love (Upper San Gabriel Valley Water District)
Debbie Enos (Watershed Conservation Authority)
Lisa O'Brien (La Verne)

*Committee Member Alternate

See attached sign-in sheet for full list of attendees

1. Welcome and Introductions

Alison Sweet, Chair of the Upper San Gabriel River (USGR) WASC, welcomed Committee Members and called the meeting to order.

District Staff facilitated the roll call of Committee Members. A quorum was established.

2. Approval of Meeting Minutes from August 26, 2021

District Staff provided meeting minutes from the previous meeting. Chair Sweet asked the WASC for comments or revisions. There were none. Member John Beshay made a motion to approve the August 26, 2021 meeting minutes. Vice-Chair Miguel Luna seconded the motion. The WASC voted to approve the meeting minutes. (Approved, see Vote Tracker sheet).

3. Committee Member and District Updates

There were no Committee Member updates.

District Staff provided the District update, noting:

- The Regional Oversight Committee submitted the 2021 Stormwater Investment Plans to Board of Supervisors for approval. All 9 Stormwater Investment Plans (SIPs) were reviewed and approved at the Board meeting on September 15.

Safe, Clean Water Program

Upper San Gabriel River

Watershed Area Steering Committee (WASC)



- Infrastructure Program submittals to the USGR watershed area are scheduled for review at the Scoring Committee on November 16
- Regional Program project proponents are required to submit quarterly and annual reports. Quarterly reports were due August 15 from current projects.
- Public Works has approved watershed coordinator (WC) contracts and today the WASC will consider the Stakeholder Outreach and Engagement Plan (SOEP) for approval.
- As part of the municipal program, each municipality must report Fiscal Year 21-22 Annual Plan by April 1 to receive annual payment, which will be disbursed October 2021, and comply with documentation from prior year (including transfer agreement).

4. Watershed Coordinator Updates

Coordinator Alfredo Camacho provided the coordinator update, noting:

- The SOEP was presented last month for comments and is in the process of getting approved.
- The Lower LA River Coordinators developed an introductory presentation for the community.
- Coordinator Camacho received a Technical Resource Program (TRP) presentation from the Lower LA River watershed coordinator and will customize it to fit the USGR watershed and present to different constituencies.
- Coordinator Camacho has been connecting with organizations to engage college students, local businesses, and local environmental groups.
- Coordinator Camacho is developing a community outreach material for public events.
- Coordinators are developing a curriculum for parents, community leaders to empower public to speak up for water issues, along with a watershed education program in Pomona and El Monte, aiming to train high school students on the watershed.

Member Kristen Ruffell asked Coordinator Camacho to provide coordinated view of projects that were approved, their funding status, and projects with potential funding shortfalls. Member Ruffell also asked for a presentation on other bonds and funding sources for projects that are short on funding. Coordinator Camacho noted the use of SIP tools to track project funding and the development of a project graphic for the community education purposes, and will speak with Mike Antos (Stantec) to arrange the presentation.

Coordinator Camacho clarified that WCs are available to take any questions related to the Safe, Clean Water Program. District staff referred to the website for coordinator contact information.

Member Drew Ready asked for video recordings of commission or city council presentation and whether there was outreach to school districts. Coordinator Camacho responded that the presentations were introductory and the recordings will be shared, if available. Coordinators are reaching out to school districts, to provide parents and students with info on watersheds and to encourage involvement in advocacy and training programs with the Safe, Clean Water Program (SCWP).

Member David Diaz referred to <https://www.redesign.la/> website for an excel sheet that tracks funding opportunities.

5. Ex Parte Communication Disclosures

Safe, Clean Water Program

Upper San Gabriel River

Watershed Area Steering Committee (WASC)



Member Joshua Nelson shared about a meeting with Member Bob Huff to get caught up on what happened at the prior WASC meeting.

6. Public Comment Period

District staff conducted a brief tutorial on WebEx and on how to participate during the public comment period.

Richard Watson commented on the Regional Pathogen Reduction Study that was approved by USGR last year. Watson remind the committee that the scientific study is a 5-year study. There were recent revisions since the last presentation, including increasing funding requests due to addition of Santa Monica Bay. Attachments were included to clarify the focus on urbanized areas and the monitoring site locations. The revisions addressed comments from academic reviewers.

7. Presentation and Discussion Items:

A) Watershed Coordinator Final Strategic Outreach and Engagement Plan

Presentation by Coordinator Camacho, who emphasized that the SOEP will be updated annually and outlines the work for 1 year; other accountability measures include monthly updates and monthly and quarterly reports.

Member Huff asked for revisions to the SOEP, noting that the coordinator's plans did not account for all elected officials and some municipalities and unincorporated communities in the watershed area. Member Huff also expressed a desire to see a focus on strategies to engage with Asian-American populations, which are prominent in the watershed area. Member Huff continued by suggesting that elected leaders and city managers will want to know when the watershed coordinator is conducting outreach to the communities they represent, so building relationships and keepings lines of communications open for those notifications should be a strategy. Coordinator Camacho noted the elected officials will be addressed; requested Member Huff to email edits that need to be made. Will be reaching out to City Council to make introductions and other cities not represented in the WASCs to develop relations with them.

Member Ruffell asked for clarification from Member Huff if the proposed changes needed to be made before the Plan is adopted. Member Huff shared instead that the Plan could be adopted with the proposed changes with the on-record comments.

Member Ready reiterated Member Huff's recommendations and suggested collaborating with community-based organizations (CBOs), non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and municipalities throughout the region. Not all municipal separate storm sewer system (MS4) compliance projects were listed in the Watershed Management Plans, particularly smaller projects, and NGOs & CBOs might be interested in those projects. Member Ready encouraged the coordinator to build relations with municipalities and counties.

B) Scientific Studies Program Presentations

i) Community Garden Stormwater Capture Investigation

Presentation by Diana Campos Jimenez and Juan Diaz-Carreras. Community gardens can function as stormwater capture facilities. This study has a primary objective of studying community garden sites for their ability to capture stormwater and provide water quality benefits, while engaging with the community

Safe, Clean Water Program

Upper San Gabriel River

Watershed Area Steering Committee (WASC)



who use the garden. The study is submitted to seven of the nine watershed areas to be replicated across locations in each watershed area.

Vice-Chair Luna congratulated the presenters for the linking of food, water, community and thanked them for the presentation.

Member Ready noted water quality challenges and wondered how feasible is infiltrating water in community gardens. Diaz-Carreras responded that the sites are already infiltrating stormwater runoff, infiltration depends on site characteristics and the study will evaluate this question in site-specific ways.

Member Ruffell asked about land ownership for community gardens. Diaz-Carreras said there is variety in ownership, including but not limited to CalTrans, cities, and school sites.

ii) **Maximizing Impact of Minimum Control Measures (MCMs)**

Presentation by Chad Helmle and Brianna Datti. The study is focused on developing tools to quantitatively estimate the effectiveness of MCMs and recommend implementation strategies for optimization for the Upper Los Angeles River, Rio Hondo, and Upper San Gabriel River watersheds.

Member Ruffell asked about collaboration with the Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Board) and whether they provided support to the study. Datti noted that the Regional Board expressed interest to be integrated with the study but have not secured a support letter. Member Ruffell noted a support letter from the Regional Board would help the WASC with its decision-making.

Chair Sweet commented on the difficulty in tracking effectiveness of MCMs. Datti noted that the biggest challenge is due to lack of data. Helmle noted there has been improvement in Reasonable Assurance Assessments (RAA) thanks to increase in data availability and improvement of models.

Member Ready asked the presenters to address the concern that this study may show that MCMs would be justified for SCWP Regional Program funding, as opposed to multi-benefit projects that also provide community investments and allow Nature Based Solutions to be prioritized.

Helmle responded that MCMs are allowable within the municipal program funding, and the study is likely to help MCMs to be better targeted. Helmle noted that the Regional Board will be contacted regarding a letter of support.

8. Public Comment Period

No public comment.

9. Voting Items

a) Approve the Upper San Gabriel River Strategic Outreach and Engagement Plan

Member Ruffell made a motion to approve the SOEP with Member Huff's revisions, seconded by Member Gardner. The WASC voted to approve the USGR SOEP with Member Huff's revisions (See Vote Tracker sheet).

Chair Sweet asked when the revisions will be made. Coordinator Camacho will share the revised plan to the District Staff by September 24, 2021 so that it can be loaded onto the website.

Safe, Clean Water Program

Upper San Gabriel River Watershed Area Steering Committee (WASC)



10. Items for Next Agenda

Next meeting will be Thursday, October 28. Three presentations are scheduled.

Chair Sweet and District staff asked to change the date of meetings to the 3rd Thursdays starting November to account for upcoming conflicts with holidays. Members Ready, Julie Carver, and Kelly Gardner noted existing meetings that conflict with the time change. Antos suggested a temporary change which Member Ruffell echoed. Chair Sweet asked members to arrange for alternates to attend the upcoming meetings.

Member Ruffell asked to add to the agenda an overview of projects and their funding status, to be delivered by the watershed coordinator. Antos offered support from the regional coordination team so that all coordinators can supply similar updates for their respective WASCs.

Vice-Chair Luna asked to learn more about how the twelve coordinators are working together. Antos suggested this information can be part of the watershed coordinator's monthly update. Vice-Chair Luna asked to add to agenda – presentation on how to learn about coordinator's effort to collaborate with other coordinators.

12. Adjournment

Chair Sweet thanked WASC members and the public for their attendance and participation and adjourned the meeting.

USGR WASC - September 23, 2021

		Quorum Present				Voting Items (see meeting minutes for additional details)	
Member Type	Position	Member	Voting/ Present?	Alternate	Voting/ Present?	Approve Meeting Minutes 8/26/2021	Motion to approve SOEP with Bob Huff's Revisions
Agency	FCD	Julian Juarez	X	Ramy Gindi		Y	Y
Agency	Upper San Gabriel District	Tom Love		Patty Cortez			
Agency	Main San Gabriel Basin	Kelly Gardner	X	Tony Zampiello		Y	Y
Agency	Sanitation Districts	Kristen Ruffell	X	Christopher Lapaz		A	Y
Agency	Los Angeles County Parks and Recreation	Sean Woods	X	Clement Lau			Y
Community Stakeholder	Huff Strategies	Bob Huff	X			Y	Y
Community Stakeholder	Council for Watershed Health	Drew Ready	X	Jason Casanova		Y	Y
Community Stakeholder	Watershed Conservation Authority	Debbie Enos		Jane Tsong			
Community Stakeholder	Urban Semillas	Miguel Luna	X			Y	Y
Community Stakeholder	Active SGV	David Diaz	X	Wesley Reutimann		Y	Y
Municipal	Baldwin Park	John Beshay	X	Sam Gutierrez		Y	Y
Municipal	Duarte	Amanda Hamilton		Kevin Kearney	X	Y	Y
Municipal	Glendora	Alison Sweet	X	Sharon Gallant		Y	Y
Municipal	Industry	Joshua Nelson	X	John Di Mario		A	Y
Municipal	Los Angeles County	Fernando Villaluna		Joseph Venzon	X	A	Y
Municipal	Pomona	Julie Carver	X	Fabian Aoun		Y	Y
Municipal	La Verne	Lisa O'Brien		Shari Garwick			
Non-Voting	Watershed Coordinator	Alfredo Camacho	X				
Total Non-Vacant Seats		17			Yay (Y)	10	14
Total Voting Members Present		14			Nay (N)	0	0
Agency		4			Abstain (A)	3	0
Community Stakeholder		4			Total	13	14
Municipal		6				Approved	Approved

Attendance

USGR WASC - September 23, 2021

Alfredo Camacho	Julian Juarez
Alison Sweet	Julie Carver
Bob Huff	Kam Cheema
Brad Wardynski	Kelly GARDNER
Brianna Datti	Kevin Kearney
Carlos Moran	Kevin Kim - LACFCD
Chad Helmle	Kristen Ruffell
Chris Lapaz	Larry Tran - LACFCD
Darin Son (Notetaker)	Lauro Alvarado
David Diaz	Mark Hall
Diana Campos-Jimenez	Michael Drennan
Donna Tran	miguel luna
Drew Ready	Mike Antos
Elizabeth Ruedas	Paul Glenn (GHD)
Enrique Baul	Paul Senker
Fabian Aoun	Phil Reidy Geosyntec
Jason Casanova	Richard Watson
Joe Venzon - LA County	Ryan Kearns - CWE
John Beshay	Sean Woods
Johnathan Perisho	Sharon Gallant
Joshua Nelson	Stephanie Tong - LACFCD
Juan Diaz-Carreras	