

# Lower San Gabriel River Watershed Area Steering Committee (WASC) Meeting Minutes



Tuesday, Oct. 12, 2021  
10:00am – 12:30pm  
WebEx Meeting

## Attendees

### Committee Members Present:

Julian Juarez (LA County Flood Control District)  
\*Esther Rojas (Water Replenishment District)  
\*Quynh Tran (LA County Sanitation Districts)  
\*Nancy Villasenor (City of Long Beach Parks and Recreation)  
Dan Knapp (Conservation Corps of Long Beach)  
\*Joseph Gonzalez (Rivers and Mountains Conservancy)  
Gabrielle Weeks (Long Beach Coalition for a Safe Environment)  
Adam Galia (Resident)  
Mike O'Grady (Cerritos)  
Delfino Consunji (Downey)  
\*Konya Vivanti (Lakewood), Vice-Chair  
Melissa You (Long Beach), Chair  
Bernie Iniguez (Bellflower)  
Noe Negrete (Santa Fe Springs)  
Vicki Smith (Whittier)  
Kekoa Anderson, OhanaVets (Watershed Coordinator, non-voting member)

### Committee Members Not Present:

Alex Rojas (Central Basin)

\*Committee Member Alternate

See attached sign-in sheet for full list of attendees

## 1. Welcome and Introductions

Melissa You, Chair of the Lower San Gabriel River WASC, welcomed Committee Members and called the meeting to order.

The District conducted a brief tutorial on WebEx and facilitated the roll call of Committee Members. All Committee Members made self-introductions and a quorum was established.

## 2. Approval of Meeting Minutes from September 14, 2021

The District provided meeting minutes from the previous meeting.

Member Consunji made a motion to approve the meeting minutes. Member Galia seconded. The committee voted to approve the September 14, 2021 meeting minutes (Approved, see Vote Tracker sheet).

## 3. Committee Member and District Updates

Member Galia provided an update that on September 17, Supervisor Hahn sent a press release about projects in the 4<sup>th</sup> Supervisorial District that received Safe, Clean Water Program funding (see [link](#)).

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District Staff provided update:

- The District is initiating a transfer agreement process for projects that were approved for funding in Fiscal Year 2021-2022 SIPs. Project applicants should create an account on the SCW portal if they haven't done so already.
- The deadline for Round 3 Call for projects was July 31. For LSGR, there were 7 Infrastructure Program, 5 Scientific Studies, 0 Technical Resources Program submittals. For today's meeting, there will be 2 presentations for Scientific Studies and 1 presentation for an Infrastructure Program project.
- The Scoring Committee has started to score Infrastructure Program projects. All 7 Infrastructure Program project applications for LSGR are scheduled for review on November 2.
- Regional Program project proponents are required to submit quarterly and annual reports. The District provided comments for the proponents so they can resubmit their quarterly reports. The quarterly reports that District has received will be summarized in a table for WASC review.
- As part of the Municipal Program, each municipality must submit the Fiscal Year 21-22 Annual Plan by April 1 to receive annual payment, which will be dispersed later this month (October 2021).
- Continuing teleconference meetings. The WASC meetings operate under the Brown Act. Due to the COVID-19 emergency, Governor Newsom signed an executive order to suspend some Brown Act teleconference requirements for public meetings. The Executive Order expired on September 30, but AB 361 was passed in September, which continues suspension of some Brown Act teleconference requirements. Under the lead of the LA County Board of Supervisors, the WASC meetings will continue with teleconference until further notice.

Member Galia asked if the community or WASC needs to vote to continue teleconference. District Staff responded that the WASCs are Board of Supervisors created committees, the WASC meetings will follow the lead of Board of Supervisors. The Board of Supervisors will vote every 30 days on whether teleconference will continue.

#### **4. Watershed Coordinator Updates**

Watershed Coordinator Anderson provided updates on Watershed Coordinator Active Tasks with a presentation.

- Currently collaborating with neighboring watershed coordinators
- Will host the first workshop with identified stakeholders on October 26, 2021, using the stakeholder identification done in the SOEP
- Provided a table of 9 SCWP funded projects in the LSGR Watershed Area.
- Upcoming tasks include identifying funded projects, working with technical assistance teams, stakeholder and community outreach engagement events and local stakeholder education

Member Galia asked if Tracy Gleason was a District staff member or Coordinator team member. Coordinator Anderson noted that Tracy Gleason is lead for project development on the Coordinator team and has worked with Gateway Water Management Authority.

Member Gonzalez expressed concern about lack of TRP applications and asked if coordinators had been holding one-on-one meetings with project applicants. Coordinator Anderson noted that they have not been having one-on-one meetings; they have been focusing on SOEP approval and upcoming workshops and recently attended a meeting for a Lakewood project.

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Member Gonzalez mentioned that there were 2 potential projects that haven't submitted an application. Grace Kast of the watershed coordination team mentioned that the watershed coordination team has not been contacted by proponents of the 2 projects nor the Lakewood project.

Member Gonzalez asked if there was contact with other projects that were not funded the last round to help update their applications. Coordinator Anderson mentioned that identifying these projects is part of their project development efforts.

Member Galia asked when the next deadline for project applications is. The District responded that they are tentatively due by July 31, 2022. Member Galia noted that the projects that have not submitted applications will have another opportunity to apply and encouraged the coordinators to work with applicants to ensure that applications are submitted.

Kast provided the agenda and presentation for the upcoming virtual stakeholder workshop and requested WASC members to submit any stakeholders who may be interested in the workshop.

Chair You requested for workshop meeting invites to be dispersed to WASC committee soon.

Member Galia asked if there are strict deadlines for technical assistance teams to develop feasibility studies to ensure that the project will be submitted for Infrastructure Program funding in a timely manner. The District staff noted that there are no strict deadlines for technical assistance teams and that the deadlines depend on the complexity of the projects and whether the 19 feasibility study requirements were met, as there is no guarantee that the project will be feasible. Over the past year, the District had hired consultants to work on feasibility studies, who usually provide an expected schedule. Member Galia thanked the District and the Coordinators for the clarification.

## 5. Ex Parte Communication Disclosures

Member Galia disclosed a conversation with Grace Kast of the watershed coordination team about the virtual stakeholder workshop presentation.

## 6. Public Comment Period

Deborah Deets (City of Los Angeles) commented on the Gaffey Nature Center Project, that it is a rare project that allows for stormwater capture and storage and has benefits to other nature-based projects. Deets expressed hope that the project will be supported as it will bring a lot of community benefits and information to us all.

Thomas Comassipaioa (Public Member) commented on the Gaffey Nature Center Project, that it will provide a wide range of water supply benefits and requested the WASC support the project.

## 7. Discussion Items:

### a) Presentations for Scientific Studies Program

#### i. Gateway Area Pathfinding Analysis – Phase II - Gateway Water Management Authority

Presentation by Brad Wardynski, Craftwater Engineering (see Attached: Resources). Scales up methods tested in Phase 1 to find and analyze longer-term, project-by-project, watershed-scale pathways to Safe, Clean Water.

Member Galia asked how the project will be used by municipalities. Wardynski responded that

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the project will be serving as supplemental data to help municipalities decide on projects that can help improve water quality as well as balance water supply and community needs. The municipalities will have no commitments to move forward with the projects.

Member Negrete would like to see an overlapping schedule of projects for phase 1 and phase 2. In response to Member Negrete, Wardynski clarified that the total project cost is \$460k and the amount requested from the LSGR is \$230k.

## ii. **Community-Centered Optimization of Nature-Based BMPs Starting with the Gaffey Nature Center Facility – SEITec**

Presentation by Dr. Shahriar Eftekhazadeh (see Attached: Resources). This study will use the Gaffey Nature Center as a laboratory to develop optimization guidelines for nature-based BMPs in LA County.

Member Knapp thanked Dr. Eftekhazadeh and asked where the plants for the project will be sourced. Dr. Eftekhazadeh responded that the project will use existing California varieties of plants; LASAN is responsible for sourcing the varieties of plants. The research will also investigate local sources.

Member Knapp expressed support for the project and asked whether the project partnered with local community organizations. Dr. Eftekhazadeh notes that LASAN is reaching out to local organizations and referred to Deborah Deets, who is working on the project as the landscape architect. Deets mentioned that the City has been working on the project for 20 years and have identified local strains that could be used for BMPs.

Member Gonzalez asked who will be implementing the sampling and monitoring work, and whether the project has considered partnering with local universities and organizations. Dr. Eftekhazadeh responded that SEITec not be staffing the project internally. The project will involve as many educational facilities as possible and use the funds to pay for their services. LASAN has taken the lead on reaching out to organizations. Deets shared about LASAN's continued collaboration with academics.

Member Negrete asked if the five projects located in the study are located in the LSGR Watershed Area. Deets mentioned that the projects were identified for the presentation and are outside of the LSGR Watershed Area, but other projects can be identified within the LSGR Watershed Area as well.

## b) **Presentation for Infrastructure Program**

### i. **Stormwater Treatment and Reuse System (STAR System) Hacienda Park – City of La Habra Heights**

Presentation by Christopher Rochfort. The project aims to capture, infiltrate, or treat and store stormwater runoff from Hacienda Park and nearby catchment for beneficial reuse.

Rochfort noted that the project is a resubmittal; the previous application was successful with the Scoring Committee, but the WASC requested for 25% co-contribution, which was addressed in the resubmittal. Cost has been reduced from \$859k to \$644k due to co-contribution from circular economy industries.

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Member Consunji asked whether it would be possible for local funds to go into monitoring, as it would be easier for SIP programming. Rochfort noted that the possibility can be considered and is open to suggestions on how to apportion the budget.

Rochfort noted that the committee has mentioned the project is very small compared to other projects. They put in a small project that is above the threshold to use as demonstration for communities in other watershed areas to follow.

Member Gonzalez asked for clarification on whether the STAR system included infiltration, or if the water all flows to the trench. Rochfort noted that it is a combination, there is a trenching system with biofilter cartridges, also there is biofiltration present in the rain garden and parking lot cartridges.

## **8. Public Comment Period**

Jacquelyn Badejo supports the Gaffey Project and is looking forward to the community benefits it will provide.

Richard Watson expressed his interest in the STAR system Hacienda Park project. Watson was impressed by the life expectancy of the cartridges and also noted that Regional Program projects are supposed to range in various sizes and that the Hacienda Project fits the range well.

Deborah Deets would like to collaborate with Christopher Rochfort after the meeting.

## **9. Voting Items**

a) None

## **10. Items for Next Agenda**

a) Presentations for Infrastructure Program

District Staff mentioned that there are six projects remaining: three projects will be presented per meeting for November and December.

## **11. Adjournment**

Chair You thanked WASC members and the public for their attendance and participation and adjourned the meeting at 11:47 a.m.

**Next Meeting:**  
Tuesday, November 9, 2021  
10:00AM – 12:00PM  
See SCW website for meeting details

**LSGR WASC - October 12, 2021**

		Quorum Present				Voting Items
Member Type	Position	Member	Voting/ Present?	Alternate	Voting/ Present?	Approve 9-14-2021 Meeting Minutes
Agency	FCD	Julian Juarez	x	Ramy Gindi		y
Agency	Central Basin	Alex Rojas		Jeremy Melendez		
Agency	Water Replenishment District	Rob Beste		Esther Rojas	x	y
Agency	Sanitation Districts	Kristen Ruffell		Quynh Tran	x	y
Agency	City of Long Beach Parks and Recreation	Stephen Scott		Nancy Villaseñor	x	y
Community Stakeholder	Conservation Corps of Long Beach	Dan Knapp	x	Irene Lopez-Muro		y
Community Stakeholder	Resident	Adam Galia	x	Thalia Campos		y
Community Stakeholder	Rivers Mountains Conservancy	Mark Stanley		Joseph Gonzalez	x	y
Community Stakeholder	Long Beach Coalition for a Safe Environment	Gabrielle Weeks	x			
Community Stakeholder						
Municipal Members	Cerritos	Mike O'Grady	x			y
Municipal Members	Downey	Delfino Consunji	x	Dan Mueller		y
Municipal Members	Lakewood	Lisa Ann Rapp		Konya Vivanti	x	y
Municipal Members	Long Beach	Melissa You	x	Wataru Kumagai		y
Municipal Members	City of Bellflower	Bernie Iniguez	x	Glen Kau		y
Municipal Members	Santa Fe Springs	Noe Negrete	x	Marlin Munoz		y
Municipal Members	Whittier	Vicki Smith	x	Kyle Cason		y
Watershed Coordinator Non-Voting Member	OhanaVets	Kekoa Anderson	x	Grace Kast	x	NA
Total Non-Vacant Seats		16			Yes (Y)	14
Total Voting Members Present		15			No (N)	0
Agency		4			Abstain (A)	0
Community Stakeholder		4			Total	14
Municipal Members		7				Approved

## Attendance

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Gabrielle	Lonnie Chung
Adam Galia	Mark Hall GLACVCD
Alexander LACFCD	Melanie Morita - SCW
Bernie Iniguez	Melissa You
Brad Wardynski	Michelle Kim
Bryce Lee	Mike O'Grady
Cecilia Salazar	Nancy Villasenor
Christopher Rochfort	Noe Negrete
Connie Adera	Oliver Galang, Craftwater DVBE
Dan Knapp	Quynh Tran
Darin Son (Note Taker 1)	Richard Watson
deborah deets	Robert Beste
delfino consunji	Robert Gomez
Donna Tran	Ryan Edgley
Elizabeth Lambe	Shahriar Eftekharzadeh
Esther Rojas	Stephanie Tong - LACFCD
Grace Kast	Tori Klug
I EC	Traci Gleason
Joseph Gonzalez	Trevor Davis
Julian Juarez	Vicki Smith
Kala Anderson	Wataru Kumagai
Kekoa Anderson	Yoshi Andersen
Konya Vivanti	