

# Upper Los Angeles River Watershed Area Steering Committee (WASC) Meeting Minutes



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Thursday, January 20, 2022  
2:00pm - 4:00pm  
WebEx Meeting

## Committee Members Present:

Genevieve Osmena, LA County Flood Control District (Agency)  
\*Art Castro, LA Department of Water and Power (Agency)  
\*John Huynh, LA Department of Water and Power (Agency)  
Alfredo Magallanes, LA Sanitation & Environment (Agency)  
Cathie Santo Domingo, LA Recreation & Parks (Agency)  
Ernesto Pantoja, Laborers Local 300 (Community)  
Miguel Luna, Urban Semillas (Community)  
John Luker, Santa Susana Mountain Park Association (Community)  
Max Liles, NBCUniversal, Inc. (Community)  
Veronica Padilla-Campos, Pacoima Beautiful (Community)  
Yazdan Emrani, Glendale (Municipal)  
Patrick DeChellis, La Cañada Flintridge (Municipal)  
Teresa Villegas, Los Angeles (Municipal), Chair  
\*Rafael Prieto, Los Angeles (Municipal)  
\*TJ Moon, Los Angeles County (Municipal)  
Kris Markarian, Pasadena (Municipal)  
Adi Liberman, Environmental Outreach Strategies (Watershed Coordinator, non-voting member)  
Clarasophia Gust, Council for Watershed Health (Watershed Coordinator, non-voting member)  
Carlos Moran, Council for Watershed Health (Watershed Coordinator, non-voting member)

\*Committee Member Alternate

## Committee Members Not Present:

Max Podemski, Los Angeles (Municipal), Vice Chair

See attached sign-in sheet for full list of attendees.

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## **1. Welcome and Introductions**

Teresa Villegas, Chair of the Upper Los Angeles River (ULAR) 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. District staff also provided a Spanish translation of the tutorial.

## **2. Approval of Meeting Minutes from January 5, 2022**

The District presented the meeting minutes from the previous meeting. Motion to approve the meeting minutes, by Member Miguel Luna. Member Yazdan Emrani seconded the motion. The committee voted to approve the January 5, 2022 meeting minutes (approved, see vote tracking sheet).

## **3. Committee Member and District Updates**

There were no committee member updates.

# Upper Los Angeles River Watershed Area Steering Committee (WASC) Meeting Minutes



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District staff provided an update:

- On January 11, 2022, the Board of Supervisors voted to continue meeting virtually, acting under the authority of Assembly Bill 361 which authorizes public committees to meet without complying with all the teleconferencing requirements of the Brown Act when the situation warrants it. The Board is reviewing every 30 days and will act to cover all the commissions and committees under their authority.
- The District is continuing to process transfer agreements for Addendums for Year 1 Call for Projects and initial Transfer Agreements for Year 2 Call for Projects.
- The Stormwater Investment Planning (SIP) tool data has been updated for WASC review. Please review the live beta version and provide feedback as needed.
- Under the Municipal Program, Annual Plans are due April 1<sup>st</sup> to the Safe, Clean Water Program. Annual Plans are required to receive the Municipal Program revenue.
- Claims for the [Low-Income Senior-Owned Special Parcel Tax Exemption](#) and [general income-based tax reduction](#) are due May 1, 2022. More information can be found on the [Safe, Clean Water Program website](#).

## 4. Watershed Coordinator Updates

Watershed Coordinators Clarasophia Gust, Adi Liberman, and Carlos Moran provided a presentation (refer to Watershed Coordinator Presentation).

The Watershed Coordinators will be touring Los Angeles County's Stormwater Capture Projects on February 17<sup>th</sup> to meet with local stakeholders and community-based organizations (CBOs). Chair Villegas asked who is invited to the February 17<sup>th</sup> tour. Watershed Coordinator Moran responded that the tour will be facilitated by LA County and is a public education and outreach event with a targeted audience of nonprofits and CBOs. The tour will introduce local organizations to what is possible and to show how the SCWP can bring benefits to their communities.

Chair Villegas asked for clarification about Watershed Coordinator Gust's involvement with the Arroyo Seco Projects. Watershed Coordinator Gust responded that the project proponents prepared a stakeholder list and conducted community outreach workshops. More community outreach workshops will be held if the project receives funding from the SCWP.

Member Luna suggested the February 17<sup>th</sup> tour include discussion of what works and what does not work for SCWP projects.

Member TJ Moon added that the February 17<sup>th</sup> tour will include a tour for Franklin D. Roosevelt Park Regional Stormwater Capture Project, which was funded in Round 1 and is complete, and the second for Magic Johnson Capture Project, which was funded before SCWP. The County is attempting to keep the tour small due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but invited members to reach out to Member Moon if interested in participating.

Chair Villegas asked the Watershed Coordinators to work with the LASAN team to coordinate tours of the SCWP-funded stormwater projects.

## 5. Ex Parte Communication Disclosures

There were no ex parte communication disclosures.

## 6. Public Comment Period

# Upper Los Angeles River Watershed Area Steering Committee (WASC) Meeting Minutes



District staff will compile public comment cards received, include them in the meeting minutes, and upload them to the SCWP website.

Manuel Aguilar (LADWP) introduced themselves as part of the LADWP Water Rights and Water Management Group in charge of managing water rights for the City of Los Angeles. Aguilar raised an objection to the Scoring Committee's comment on the North Hollywood Stormwater Capture Project because the project has not been abandoned by LADWP; they are seeking funding from other sources. The project is the same project that LADWP submitted for project funding in Round 2, which was not approved by the WASC. To divert stormwater, water rights are needed which are retained by the City. The consultant (SEITec) that submitted the project application for this round used documents prepared by LADWP without receiving authorization from LADWP to use them. Aguilar asked the WASC to reconsider LADWP's Round 2 request for funding if they consider SEITec's North Hollywood Stormwater Capture Project.

Michael Scaduto (Active Principal Engineer overseeing City of Los Angeles's SCW Program Implementation Division) informed the committee on the City of Los Angeles's process for acknowledging and supporting projects, including those that originate from the City. Within the City of Los Angeles, the Mayor's Office and City Councils established the Administrative Oversight Committee, which is tasked with the approval of projects within the City, including those submitted for Regional Program consideration, and providing letters of support, in line with the County's guidance outlined in Chapter 18.07 of the SCWP Implementation Ordinance. Scaduto requested that the County and Scoring Committee fully vets the project through the City's process. The City has seen projects reach the WASC without the City's support, causing confusion for the WASC. There are two projects that has raised the City's concerns – the North Hollywood Park Stormwater Capture Project and the Community-Centered Optimization of Nature-Based BMPs Starting with the Gaffey Nature Center Facility Scientific Study, as they did not follow the City's process. The City will not be supporting the two projects, and the applicant does not have approval to access the parcel.

## 7. Presentations and Discussion Items:

### a) Infrastructure Program (IP) Presentations

#### i. La Crescenta Green Improvement Project

*Presentation by Kevin Chang (LA County). La Crescenta-Montrose green improvement to capture stormwater and urban runoff, retrofit parkways with bioswales, increase local tree canopy, repair roadways, and reconstruct curb ramps to current ADA standards.*

Chair Villegas asked where the funding for the feasibility study came from. Chang clarified that it came from LA County's regular operating budget.

Member Veronica Padilla-Campos asked for clarification on the funding sources. Chang clarified that the unincorporated areas within the watershed would provide match funding of \$1.5 million per year, resulting in \$3 million total since the applicant is requesting \$1.5 million in SCWP funding.

Member Padilla-Campos asked about the make-up of Crescenta Valley's Town Council. Chang responded that the members are locally elected residents of the community.

#### ii. Winery Canyon Channel and Descanso Gardens Stormwater Capture and Reuse Project

# Upper Los Angeles River Watershed Area Steering Committee (WASC) Meeting Minutes



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*Presentation by Mike Rudd (Geosyntec Consultants), Juliann Rooke (Descanso Gardens), and Ruth Segal (RIOS). Multi-benefit project employing creative solutions to improve sustainable operations and water quality for multiple stakeholders.*

Member Padilla-Campos expressed concern that disadvantaged communities may not be able to access Descanso Gardens, sharing her personal experience of paying full price at Pacoima Beautiful. The Member asked the project proponents to ensure Descanso Gardens are made accessible to disadvantaged communities. Rooke replied that Descanso Gardens do not collect charges from educational organizations, in an effort to make the Gardens accessible. Rooke suggested reaching out to Descanso Gardens to arrange organizational visits.

Member Patrick DeChellis noted that the City of La Cañada Flintridge strongly supports the project and that they have partnered with Descanso Gardens and the County on this project.

Watershed Coordinator Liberman asked for information about the source of the zinc contamination. Rudd responded that zinc is the primary pollutant of concern in the ULAR EWMP and it may be coming from brake dust.

## **8. Public Comment Period**

Clement Lau (Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation) expressed support for the Winery Canyon Channel and Descanso Gardens Stormwater Capture and Reuse Project. The Department of Parks and Recreation has been working with the Guild and the community and Lau believes that the project is visionary and comprehensive. The project advances Los Angeles County's sustainability goals and addresses key objectives from the master plan, including reducing imported water, capturing and reusing water, and advancing ecological health.

District staff clarified that the deadline for submitting public comment cards is in reference to presenting cards at the current meeting. Public comment cards submitted after the deadline will be presented at the next meeting.

## **9. Voting Items**

There were no voting items.

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

The next meeting will take place on Wednesday, February 2, 2022, from 2:00pm - 4:00pm.

### **a) Presentations for Infrastructure Program (2)**

District staff clarified that the two projects to be presented on February 2 will be the last before the WASC works on the SIP tool. In March, the WASC will be voting on the renewal of the Watershed Coordinator, reviewing quarterly reports, and working on the SIP tool.

Chair Villegas reminded the WASC that the SIP tool is available on the SCWP website and should be reviewed to develop questions for projects. District staff will invite project proponents to address projects that the WASC has questions on.

# Upper Los Angeles River Watershed Area Steering Committee (WASC) Meeting Minutes

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District staff anticipates holding WASC meetings once per month on the first Wednesday of the month, but when a second meeting is needed, they will be held on the third Thursday of the month. These secondary meetings have been scheduled as placeholders in the WASC calendar.

## **11. Adjournment**

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

## Upper Los Angeles River - January 20, 2022

		Quorum Present				Voting Items
Member Type	Position	Member	Voting/ Present?	Alternate	Voting/ Present?	Approve 1-5-2022 Meeting Minutes
Agency	FCD	Genevieve Osmena	x	Ramy Gindi		y
Agency	Water Agency	Delon Kwan		Art Castro	x	y
Agency	Groundwater / Water Agency 2	Paul Liu		John Huynh	x	y
Agency	Sanitation	Alfredo Magallanes	x	Michael Scaduto		y
Agency	Open Space	Cathie Santo Domingo	x	Javier Solis		y
Community Stakeholder	At Large	Ernesto Pantoja	x	Sergio Rascon		a
Community Stakeholder	At Large	Miguel Luna	x	Yvette Lopez-Ledesma		y
Community Stakeholder	Environment	John Luker		Wendi Gladstone	x	a
Community Stakeholder	Business	Max Liles	x			y
Community Stakeholder	EJ	Veronica Padilla-Campos	x	Felipe Escobar		y
Municipal Members	Glendale	Yazdan Emrani	x	Edward Hitti		y
Municipal Members	La Canada Flintridge	Patrick DeChellis	x	Maged El-Rabaa		y
Municipal Members	Los Angeles	Teresa Villegas	x	Barbara Romero		y
Municipal Members	Los Angeles	Max Podemski		Ackley Padilla		
Municipal Members	Los Angeles	Christine Peters		Rafael Prieto	x	a
Municipal Members	Los Angeles County	Mark Lombos		TJ Moon	x	y
Municipal Members	Pasadena	Kris Markarian	x	Brent Maue		a
Watershed Coordinator Non-Voting Member	Environmental Outreach Strategies	Adi Liberman	x			
Watershed Coordinator Non-Voting Member	Council for Watershed Health	Clarasophia Gust	x			
Watershed Coordinator Non-Voting Member	Council for Watershed Health	Carlos Moran	x			
<b>Total Non-Vacant Seats</b>		17			Yes (Y)	12
<b>Total Voting Members Present</b>		16			No (N)	0
Agency		5			Abstain (A)	4
Community Stakeholder		5			Total	16
Municipal Members		6				Approved

## Attendees

### Upper Los Angeles River WASC Meeting - January 20, 2022

CJ Caluag - LACFCD	Francisco Promesa BH	kris Markarian	Yaz Emrani
Mike Antos (Regional Coord)	Pablo Forni	Clement Lau	Lorena Matos
Susie Sanitlena	Patrick DeChellis	MARISOL IBARRA	Ryan Edgley
Thuan Nguyen	Sheila Brice	Mark Hall	Jason Casanova
Maggie Gardner	Art Castro	John luker	Darin Son (notetaker)
William OBraitis	Sarai Bhaga	Emi Yoshimura	Andrew Kim
Kevin Chang	Mayra Martinez	Phuoc Le	Alynn Sun
Somer Sherwood-White	Michael Scaduto	Manuel Aguilar	Sean Woods
TJ Moon	Wendi Gladstone	brett perry	Juliann Rooke
Lauro Alvarado	Conor Mossavi	Teresa Villegas	Ernesto Pantoja
Carlos Moran	Jessica Quach	Jonathan Guerrero	Michelle Zhang
Elizabeth Gallo	Melanie Tory	Jennifer Amarant	Maged ElRabaa
Rafael Prieto	Brianne Logasa	Justin Jones LACFCD	Wendy Dinh
Veronica Padilla	Donald Voss	Alfredo Magallanes	Miguel Luna
Ryan Jackson	Clarasophia Gust	Cathie Santo Domingo	Genevieve Osmena
Jeannette Hernandez	Ruth Siegel	Paul Senker	john huynh
Maria Ramirez	Pamela Dreyfuss	Mike Rudd	Adi Liberman
Christine McLeod	John Robinson	shahram kharaghani	Horacio Urias
Amanda Zeidner	Max Liles	Shant Oganesian	