

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



Thursday, January 27, 2022
1:00pm - 3:00pm
WebEx Meeting

Committee Members Present:

Julian Juarez, LA County Flood Control District (Agency)
Tom Love, Upper San Gabriel Valley Water District (Agency)
*Christopher Lapaz, LA County Sanitation Districts (Agency)
Sean Woods, LA County Parks & Recreation (Agency)
Bob Huff, Former CA State Senator (Community)
Drew Ready, Council for Watershed Health (Community)
Johnathan Perisho, Watershed Conservation Authority (Community)
Miguel Luna, Urban Semillas (Community), Vice Chair
David Diaz, Active SGV (Community)
John Beshay, Baldwin Park (Municipal)
*Kevin Kearney, Bradbury (Municipal)
Alison Sweet, Glendora (Municipal), Chair
Joshua Nelson, Industry (Municipal)
Fernando Villaluna, Los Angeles County (Municipal)
Julie Carver, Pomona (Municipal)
Lisa O'Brien, La Verne (Municipal)
Alfredo Camacho, Day One (Watershed Coordinator, non-voting member)

*Committee Member Alternate

Committee Members Not Present:

Kelly Gardner, Main San Gabriel Basin (Agency)

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. Chair Sweet invited Vice Chair Miguel Luna to lead today's meeting.

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

2. Approval of Meeting Minutes from October 28, 2021

District Staff presented the meeting minutes from the previous meeting. Motion to approve the October 28, 2021 meeting minutes by Member Tom Love, seconded by Member Julian Juarez. 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 an update, noting:

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- On January 11, 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 has sent an email to members of the WASC. They asked that members respond if they have not done so already.
- The District sent a request for proposal to a consultant to develop a Feasibility Study for the Technical Resource Program project concept approved in the Round 2 Stormwater Investment Plan.
- Under the Municipal Program, Annual Plans are due April 1 to the Safe, Clean Water Program (SCWP). 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

a) Watershed Coordinator Quarterly Report

Watershed Coordinator Alfredo Camacho presented an update on the Quarterly Report (refer to Watershed Coordinator Update).

Member Bob Huff asked if the Watershed Coordinator is representing any other organization other than SCWP when conducting community outreach. Watershed Coordinator Camacho responded that when they host pop-ups, they are strictly representing SCWP, but when working with another program, primarily Bassett Avocado Heights Advanced Energy Community, the Day One staff represent both SCWP and Day One. Member Huff requested that there be clearer branding for the SCWP as the public is not aware of the program. Watershed Coordinator Camacho shared that the District is in the process of providing SCWP-branded materials to each Watershed Coordinator.

Member Drew Ready asked for more information on how the Watershed Coordinator will be connecting community-based organizations (CBOs) to cities. Watershed Coordinator Camacho will work with CBOs to organically identify community-driven projects to build relationships, be available as a resource, and connect them with their respective cities.

Member Johnathan Perisho asked how many projects have been successfully developed through community engagement. Watershed Coordinator Camacho responded that there are currently none and the focus has been on conducting outreach and engagement. Next steps include using project boards to identify projects that community members want. In Quarter 3, they will determine where the projects will go.

Vice Chair Luna asked whether Watershed Coordinator Camacho met with elected public officials or their staff. Watershed Coordinator Camacho clarified that they mostly met with staff of most elected officials listed in the presentation but did meet with some elected officials themselves.

5. Ex Parte Communication Disclosures

There were no ex parte communication disclosures.

6. Public Comment Period

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Jonathon Gorski (Student from University of California – Los Angeles) asked what kind of practices are best for community engagement, based on the Watershed Coordinator’s last quarter of work. Watershed Coordinator Camacho responded that joining established meetings to talk to residents, using visuals and incentives, using branding, and being able to speak multiple languages have been helpful. Having a wide range of activities has also been helpful while conducting events at parks. The Watershed Coordinator has experienced success when partnering with other organizations to host events as well. Watershed Coordinator Camacho has leveraged Day One’s established partners.

7. Presentation and Discussion Items

a) Regional Program Quarterly Reporting Summary

i. Quarter 3 (January – March 2021) and Quarter 4 (April – June 2021)

The District presented a summary of the Quarterly Reports, noting that projects that had been modified may warrant an update from project proponents. (Refer to Regional Program Quarterly Report Summary FY20-21 Q3 and Q4).

Infrastructure Project – Garvey Avenue Grade Separation Drainage Improvement Project

Ed Suher (CASC) spoke on behalf of Lee Torres (City of El Monte City engineer and project proponent). The project has been delayed in part due to on-site road conditions which have worsened with recent rains. The City plans to add road improvements. The pump system at the underpass failed last year, so the City elected to upgrade the pump system as well. Given the increased scope, the City of El Monte has applied for funding outside of the SCWP. In addition to street improvements, the City of El Monte will be installing landscape modifications, new signage, LED streetlights, ADA improvements, and a Class 2 bike lane. The City of El Monte is exploring Proposition 68 funding and has a receipt for their CEQA documentation.

Member Joshua Nelson asked when project construction is projected to take place. Suher responded that there is a schedule that they can provide to the WASC. (See attached schedule provided after the meeting). Member Nelson noted that the requested amount of SCWP funding hasn’t changed and asked the District if there are any conditions regarding disbursed funds. The District replied that funds should be used within five years of being disbursed. Suher responded that construction is still projected to start in January 2023.

Infrastructure Project - Wingate Park Regional EWMP Project

Sharon Gallant (City of Covina) presented changes to the project scope. In the first report for the 30% design, they planned to use an impervious structure for the parking lot as the project’s nature-based solution. The project proponents have since discovered that this is not feasible due to the slope and have decided to collect, treat and infiltrate the water in the parking lot instead. Katie Harrel (CWE) added that the capture area is the same and the project will make use of the treatment unit. From a cost-benefit perspective, the project proponent found it was more effective to use treatment rather than design for a pervious structure.

Harrel also noted that the City of Covina just finished the CEQA process, but additional studies have been requested. Environmental studies currently underway that will end this year and allow the project to proceed to construction, so there will be a few months delay in construction, as noted in the modification.

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Member David Diaz asked whether the funding requested is still for design. Harrel clarified that the funding earmarked to the project is slated for both design and construction, but the project has not received funds for construction yet. They will use construction funding in the third year.

Harrel noted that the project's scope change is something the project received points for in one of the categories in the nature-based solution. Member Diaz asked the District for information about what would happen if modifications to a project resulted in changes that, if the project application be scored again, would score under the point threshold. District staff replied that they will answer this question at a later meeting.

District staff asked whether the seven million dollars requested for fiscal year 22-23 will be used for design. Harrel responded that the funds will be used for construction. Gallant added that CEQA has been completed and will be reviewed by the District before funds are awarded for construction. Mitigated Negative Declaration has been approved and published.

Member Diaz asked whether the project proponents engaged the community for the 30% design and what that engagement looked like. Gallant responded that they are currently at the 90% design stage. The project has held several community events, including a pop-up event at the park with 30 people in attendance and a virtual event with 20 people in attendance. Once the full design is complete, there are plans to conduct another round of engagement to get community buy-in.

Member Diaz asked if the project includes a workforce development agreement. Gallant responded that when putting the project up for bid, they will include workforce development in the bid specifications.

b) Review Preliminary Ranking of Projects

The District introduced and shared the ranking tool and the preliminary rankings, clarifying that the rankings are for discussion purposes only.

c) Upper San Gabriel River (USGR) Project Prioritization and Selection Discussion for populating the Fiscal Year 2022-23 Stormwater Investment Plan

i) Infrastructure Program (IP)

- (1) Glendora Avenue Green Streets - City of Glendora
- (2) Pelota Park - East San Gabriel Valley Watershed Management Group
- (3) Marchant Park - East San Gabriel Valley Watershed Management Group

ii) Scientific Studies (SS)

- (1) Maximizing Impact of Minimum Control Measures - San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments
- (2) Community Garden Stormwater Capture Investigation - Los Angeles Community Garden Council

District staff discussed the process for developing the Stormwater Investment Plan (SIP). The Southern California Coastal Water Research Project (SCCWRP) scientific study reviews are expected in February or March. The WASC will not be voting on a SIP until the SCCWRP evaluations are complete, as they will inform the decisions to develop the SIP scenarios. The WASC will discuss and agree on the scenarios to use in the SIP and vote to approve and send the SIP to the Regional Oversight Committee (ROC). The ROC will review the SIP and provide any comments. The WASC will review those comments and return the updated SIP to the ROC, which will vote to approve and send it to the Board of Supervisors. Approval from the Board is expected

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by the end of June. The District asked the WASC to use the resources available, including the SIP Tool, SCWP Project Portal, dashboard, and digital library. Using the preliminary ranking of the projects, District staff initiated a discussion about the merits of the projects and how the projects were ranked, preliminarily. District staff pointed out that of the 17 WASC members, 13 responses were received.

Vice Chair Luna asked the WASC if the preliminary ranking is representative of their views or whether they disagree on any rankings.

District staff noted that the WASC should reserve funds to account for any unforeseen project modifications.

Member Diaz asked if the funding requested for the Pelota and Marchant Park projects is for design or construction. District Staff responded that, for both projects, funding will be for design in Fiscal Year (FY) 22-23. The Glendora Avenue Green Streets project is asking for planning and design funding.

Member Perisho noted that the USGR WASC has allocated more funding than other WASCs but hasn't conducted as much community engagement. Member Perisho also expressed concerns about having many infiltration chamber projects across the watershed area and emphasized importance of data needed to support efficacy.

Member Fernando Villaluna requested a breakdown of the above-grade and below-grade amenities included in the \$10 million construction cost for Pelota Park. Member Villaluna also asked why the design is twice as much as the other projects. Jonathan Abelson (Stantec, consultant to the East San Gabriel Valley Watershed Management Group) responded that the project prioritized community investment and water quality benefits, so costs may be more expensive per acre foot than other projects. The project will fix local flooding for schools and provide other community benefits by diverting water from the local channel for infiltration. Abelson emphasized the importance of looking at the SCWP holistically and not just cost per acre foot of water, since there are other added community benefits. Abelson will follow up on the construction cost breakdown with the District who will forward it to the WASC for their review. This should be available in the cost estimate section of the project application.

The District staff recommended checking with the project proponents of the Lone Hill and Fairplex projects in progress, as they have been awarded funds for design. Abelson responded that design funding has not been received for the Fairplex Stormwater Capture Project and the project proponent does not anticipate coming back for construction funding within the next year. A specific plan for the Fairplex is under development and the project proponent is working to integrate their project into the specific plan to maintain SCWP benefits.

Lauren Marshall (City of San Dimas) shared that in regard to the Lone Hill Park Project, the City of San Dimas discussed the transfer agreement and schedule with the District in January and had asked the District for any comments. Marshall noted that the start for construction is contingent upon funding and that a Request for Proposal (RFP) for design has not been released yet, but the anticipated schedule would be within the designated time for the transfer agreement.

Based on input from the project proponents, District staff decided to delay construction funding for the Lone Hill Park Project and the Fairplex Project on the SIP planning tool by one year to FY23-24 in the "assuming construction costs" scenario for planning purposes.

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Vice Chair Luna asked whether the Fairplex Project proponent has requested funding. The District clarified that they are in the process of developing the transfer agreement with the project proponent.

Referring back to Member Villaluna's question on Pelota Park, Abelson presented the construction cost breakdown. \$3 million in construction funding will go toward site restoration and improvement and the other \$7 million will go toward water quality enhancements and construction expenditures.

Member Villaluna requested clarification about how much of the \$7 million would go toward the infiltration gallery versus addressing local flooding issues. Abelson replied that the site restoration component would include solutions for local flooding, and that the \$7 million also includes contingencies and ancillary costs. Abelson referred to pages 173 and 174 of the project application for the construction cost breakdown.

Member Ready asked whether the park project applicants sought to leverage other funds, such as Measure A, Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM), or SCW Municipal Funds. Abelson responded that the project will be seeking design funding solely through the SCWP, as that funding will kick-start the design phase. Once design is developed, project proponents will start to seek other funding sources, such as Proposition 68 and Proposition 1, to cover the significantly higher construction costs.

Vice Chair Luna said the WASC will share the Southern California Water Dialogue workshop on state and federal funding sources to help projects seek funds. Vice Chair Luna also referred to the watershed coordinator to aid project proponents finding funding sources.

Member Sean Woods shared that they participate in the WHAM task force, and they are looking for multi-benefit projects that can be funded through WHAM. Estolano Advisors is managing the WHAM effort and Member Woods recommends reaching out to them.

Member Lisa O'Brien noted that the City of La Verne received Member Diaz's list of recommended funding sources to leverage, but none made sense for their projects. The Member also noted that seeking funding does cost money and municipal funds are spent in other ways.

Member Nelson asked if there will be more information added to the report for the Glendora Avenue Green Streets Project. Curt Roth (DRP Engineering) responded that the project is currently at the feasibility level and anticipates initiating design in the next phase. Roth noted there will be a future effort to identify additional funding sources.

Member Love noted that the East San Gabriel Valley Watershed Management Group (ESGVWVG) is submitting two projects and asked the WASC if they prefer one over the other. Abelson clarified that the projects have been submitted separately and each has its own merit; the projects should receive equal consideration.

Member Villaluna requested clarification about whether the \$7 million construction cost proposed in the application of the Glendora Avenue Green Streets Project includes leveraged funding. Roth responded that the \$7 million represents the total construction cost and does not include leveraged funding. Roth commented that the project will be aggressive in trying to leverage for funding. Additionally, an analysis was conducted for various infiltration rates and found that the lowest cost under the scenario is the one they expect, so the dollar per acre-foot will be efficient. Roth will update the WASC if the construction cost differs from \$7 million.

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Member Nelson noted that the letter from ESGVWMG was a helpful addition to the Pelota Park and Marchant Park Project applications.

Vice-Chair Luna asked whether the WASC could expect to see the results of the SCCWRP reviews of the scientific studies before the next meeting. District replied that they expect the review to be finished on a rolling basis, from February to March. Member Nelson asserted that it would not make sense for the WASC to convene before the SCCWRP evaluations are complete.

Member Ready asked Stantec when they plan to seek construction funding for the Fairplex Project. Abelson responded that the specific plan for the Fairplex is anticipated to be completed in 2022. Design is expected to be completed by end of 2023 and the project proponent will seek construction funding for FY24-25. District staff noted that it may be useful to add a placeholder for construction of the Fairplex Project; Member Julie Carver countered that a specific value is not available. Two funding scenarios were created, one for “all projects considered” and one for “assuming construction costs”.

Member Ready suggested verifying the scenarios with project applicants based on the modifications that may cause delays. Vice Chair Luna suggested only hearing from project applicants who need to announce delays due to the meeting’s time constraints.

District staff commented that the WASC only reviewed Year 1 projects today. Round 2 projects’ quarterly reports are still being summarized by the District.

8. Public Comment Period

Member O’Brien noted that a public comment card was received but delayed presenting the card until the next WASC meeting.

Curt Roth (DRP Engineering) shared information in the chat, regarding costs of the Glendora Avenue Green Streets Project. Geotechnical results showed an infiltration rate toward the higher end of the project’s original assumptions. As such, it is anticipated that construction costs will be reduced from \$7.8MM to \$5.2MM.

9. Voting Items

There were no voting items.

10. Items for Next Agenda

The next meeting will take place on February 24, 2022. See the SCWP website for details. Items for the next agenda include:

- Continue SIP deliberations
- Review SCCWRP’s evaluation of the Scientific Studies

Member Ready asked for clarification on how nature-based solutions are scored for the next meeting. Vice Chair Luna requested that WASC members review the projects and the SIP prior to the next meeting.

11. Adjournment

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

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		Quorum Present				Voting Items (see meeting minutes for additional details)
Member Type	Position	Member	Voting/ Present?	Alternate	Voting/ Present?	Approve 10/28 Meeting Minutes
Agency	FCD	Julian Juarez	X	Ramy Gindi		Y
Agency	Upper San Gabriel District	Tom Love	X	Patty Cortez		Y
Agency	Main San Gabriel Basin	Kelly Gardner		Tony Zampello		
Agency	Sanitation Districts	Kristen Ruffell		Christopher Lapaz	X	Y
Agency	Los Angeles County Parks and Recreation	Sean Woods	X	Clement Lau		Y
Community Stakeholder	Huff Strategies	Bob Huff	X			Y
Community Stakeholder	Council for Watershed Health	Drew Ready	X	Jason Casanova		Y
Community Stakeholder	Watershed Conservation Authority	Johnathan Perisho	X	Jane Tsong		A
Community Stakeholder	Urban Semillas	Miguel Luna	X	David Marquez		Y
Community Stakeholder	Active SGV	David Diaz	X	Wesley Reutimann		Y
Municipal	Baldwin Park	John Beshay	X	Sam Gutierrez		Y
Municipal	Duarte	Amanda Hamilton		Kevin Kearney	X	A
Municipal	Glendora	Alison Sweet	X	Sharon Gallant		Y
Municipal	Industry	Joshua Nelson	X	John Di Mario		A
Municipal	Los Angeles County	Fernando Villaluna	X	Joseph Venzon		Y
Municipal	Pomona	Julie Carver	X	Fabian Aoun		Y
Municipal	La Verne	Lisa O'Brien	X	Shari Garwick		Y
Non-Voting	Watershed Coordinator	Alfredo Camacho	X			N/A
Total Non-Vacant Seats		17			Yay (Y)	13
Total Voting Members Present		16			Nay (N)	0
Agency		4			Abstain (A)	3
Community Stakeholder		5			Total	16
Municipal		7				Approved

Attendance
USGR WASC - January 27, 2022

Alexander LACFCD	Jonathan Abelson
Alfredo Camacho	JONATHON GORSKI
Alison Sweet	Joshua Nelson
Andrea Ampig	Juan Diaz-Carreras
Andrew Kim	Julian Juarez
Belen Bernal	Julie Carver
Bob Huff	Justin Jones
Brianna Datti	Katie Harrel
Brianne Logasa	Kevin Kearney
Britney Hydar	Lauren Marshall
Chris Lapaz	Lauro Alvarado
Curt Roth	Lisa O'Brien
Darin Son (Notetaker)	Lonnie Chung
David Diaz	Mahliya Purificacion (UCLA)
David Marquez	Maritza Crisantos
Diana Campos-Jimenez	Mathew Hudson
Donna Tran	Melanie Morita
Drew Ready (CWH)	Miguel Luna
Ed Othmer	Oliver Galang (Craftwater)
Ed Suher, CASC	Paul Senker
Elizabeth Ruedas	Richard Watson
Fernando Villaluna	Ryan Kearns - CWE
James Cramsie	Sean Woods
Jason Casanova	Serena Zhu
Jennifer Aborida	Sharon Gallant
Joe Venzon - LA County	Tom Love
John Beshay	Tori Klug (Regional Coord)
Johnathan Perisho	

From: [Ed Suher](#)
To: [DPW-SafeCleanWaterLA](#); [Stephanie Tong](#); [Melanie Morita](#)
Subject: Garvey Avenue Grade Separation Drainage Improvement Project Schedule Update
Date: Thursday, January 27, 2022 2:09:12 PM

CAUTION: External Email. Proceed Responsibly.

Hi Stephanie and Melanie:

Below is the schedule update Lee Torres (City of El Monte Project Developer) provided me for the Garvey Avenue project.

Task	Start Date	Completion Date
Task 1: Finalize Design and Award Contractor	On Going	November 2022
100% PS&Es	On-Going	August 2022
File Notice of Determination (CEQA compliance)	-	December 2021
Go out to bid and award construction contract	September 2022	November 2022
Task 2: Construction	January 2023	March 2024
Pre-construction meeting	-	January 2023
Mobilization	March 2023	April 2023
Construction activities	April 2023	March 2024
Close out	March 2024	May 2024

Thanks,

Ed
CASC Engineering
(for City of El Monte)

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