

Watershed Coordinator Quarterly Report A Project of Safe, Clean Water L.A.

Watershed: North Santa Monica Bay
Watershed Coordinator: Melina Watts
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October 1, 2022 – December 31, 2022

Submitted: January 11, 2022

A. Summary of Activities

*Provide a high-level summary of activities completed this quarter and progress made toward completion of the annual scope of work.
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Required elements of the Quarterly report to achieve in this summary are:

- *Strategies used to integrate priorities for the community, municipalities, the watershed area, and the region*

In the North Santa Monica Bay Watershed, the watershed coordinator program has focused on,

- high level public outreach and education,
- connecting with stakeholders and community members to elicit great water projects and
- working collaboratively to make progress towards funding community's dream water projects.

- *Document the extent of partnerships and networks you have engaged.*

Cities, agencies, and community members' interest in finding opportunities to store rainwater via cisterns is a priority. Thus, coordinator reached out to multiple stakeholders to discuss the viability of building underground cisterns and collaborating on writing and managing a multi-city multi-agency Measure W application. Not one entity is available to take on such a heavy responsibility; thus coordinator continues to explore options for how to structure a collaborative project with Accelerated Resilience LA (ARLA), Las Virgenes Municipal Water District (LVMWD) and interested stakeholders. Can we set up a scenario where a city, an agency, possibly the COG or a JPA manages a consultant who manages a large watershed grant? Stay tuned.

ARLA has brought together an array of expert people and entities to develop a feasibility analysis of extensive use of cisterns in the LVMWD footprint along with regions in the Upper San Gabriel River Watershed and Long Beach, Coordinator has been supportive of this effort and met many new partners through this process. Conversely, coordinator introduced ARLA to Clark Stevens, RCDSMM, and they brought him in as part of their consulting team. Coordinator shared with ARLA that staff scientists at DWR asked her for a document assessing real costs for suburban cisterns so that DWR would have tools to consider creating a grant that could fund suburban cisterns to start to provide genuinely local water supply in Southern California; this dovetails nicely into the idea Craig Jones, LVMWD has been urging which is to build a budget template that would allow homeowners to consider the likely pricetag of a cistern on their property relative to size and utility.

Coordinator continues to work with long-term partnerships and networks including all NSMB WASC stakeholders and related regional community leaders such as Center for Watershed Health, L.A. Waterkeepers, Heal the Bay, schools, and school districts such as SMMUSD and LAUSD. Coordinated attended both the Malibou Lake Centennial and the Agoura Hills 40th Anniversary Celebration. While putting together the three-day event for the Nature Based Solutions Success Stories events in November, range of partners increased to include thought leaders such as author Erica Gies, poet Nadine Salas, creek restoration experts such as Anne Riley and Jessica Hall and the whole team at Santa Barbara Creeks Division. Working with ARLA has led to working with partners such as the Nature Conservancy, The River Project, One Water Econ, Urban Water Group and many cistern vendors. Mike Garcia at Enviroscap L.A., Jamiah Hargins, Crop Swap L.A. and Environmental Charter School leaders, Alison Diaz, school founder, Tashanda Giles, phenomenal environmental educator .and Danielle Marquez, parent volunteer, are part of the extended circle of Watts' outside-of-NSMB watershed water-focal partners.

Coordinator suggested to the Watershed Coordinators' Schools' Committee that we ask for a direct meeting with Leslie Friedman Johnson to discuss how Measure W can best address education / outreach program development, as well as answering earlier related surveys sent out by STANTEC. Along those lines, shared Madelyn Glickfeld's suggestion that we

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fund outreach to Gardeners / Landscape Managers to increase water conservation / improve water quality, mirroring past work by City of Malibu and LVMWD in this space.

- *Document your effort to engage a broad set of conventional and unconventional stakeholders*
 - Reaching out to and interviewing Erica Gies, author of *Water Always Wins*, appeared in [Valley News](#), [Happy Eco News](#); Multiple people in watershed now reading *Water Always Wins* by Erica Gies
 - Invited a diverse set of excellent speakers to Nature Based Solutions Success Stories events, including Cameron Benson, ED, and Dr. Jill Murray, chief scientist, Santa Barbara Creeks, Ann Riley who has written key books on creek restoration and teaches at UC Berkeley, Jessica Hall, whose use of ecological history in presentations changes how people see hydrology and Latinx poet Nadine Salas in order to inspire attendees to think about what best case scenario Nature Based Solutions can be.
 - Developing friendships with Mike Garcia at Enviroscope L.A., Jamiah Hargins, Crop Swap L.A. has helped me to expand my thinking outside the borders of the NSMB watershed and to re-see all parts of our community here.
 - Continuing to work with ARLA is critical to forward momentum in terms of creating sources of affordable local water supply for the NSMB watershed.
 - Chatted about drainage tiles with Todd Marcus at Starbucks in Malibu; seems more like a (problematic) solution used in the Midwest in agriculture rather than something that would fit the NSMB watershed.
 - Inspired by Miguel Luna, MWD Board of Directors, working on open space acquisition project ideas
 - At request of Los Angeles County Department of Public Works, began to develop potential nature-based solutions project list for NSMB region.
 - Attended part of OWLA Broader Coalition Meeting (it was the day before conference coordinator was running)
 - Attended Safe Clean Water Program Metrics & Monitoring Study - Public Workshop – evening
 - Published about events in local city calendars, in One Topanga, and shared with LAT writer
 - Called or direct messaged folks like Susan Nissman, Mike Pestrella, David Nahai, Meena Westford, Elizabeth Crosson etc. Kian Shulman shared invites on her (very popular) Facebook pages for PoisonFreeMalibu etc.
 - Hope Sexton who manages Malibu Creek Watershed TMDLs at L.A. Regional Water Quality Board, came and attended the Calabasas and Agoura Hills Creek Restoration site tours.
 - Sent invites out to newsletter readers
 - Shared public outreach records to Allen Ma and Alberto Grajeda, Mulholland project
 - Talked creek restoration with Tessa Charnofsky, 11/30
 - Helped coordinate first ever North Santa Monica Bay Watershed Prize, which was won by Alex Farassati See: [Daily Valley News](#).
 - Attended MAR talks coordinated by Orit Kalman from California State University Sacramento featuring Rajendra Singh a water conservationist and environmentalist from Rajasthan in India.
 - Set up follow up zoom meeting on creek restoration as tool for wq improvement with Dr. Jill Murray and landscape architect Jessica Hall; looking to connect them with other interested colleagues
 - Met with Dave Pedersen, LVMWD, to discuss Community Priorities
 - Tracking potential outreach event at development in Calabasas that includes cisterns per Roxanne Hughes
 - Looking to support composting project in Topanga
- *Required elements detailed below that you should mention here:*
 - *Any of the four required engagement meetings you held during the quarter*
 - *Nature Based Solutions Success Stories Conference*
 - *Nature Based Solutions Success Stories Site Visits to Calabasas and Agoura Hills*
 - *Nature Based Solutions Success Stories Site Visits to Santa Barbara*
 - *Either of the two required educational events you held during the quarter*
 - *Nature Based Solutions Success Stories Conference*
 - *Nature Based Solutions Success Stories Site Visits to Calabasas and Agoura Hills*
 - *Nature Based Solutions Success Stories Site Visits to Santa Barbara*
 - *Highlights or summary of types of meetings you attended held by others*
 - *Attended watershed coordinator meetings*
 - *Attended talks by grantors*
 - *Attended Las Virgenes-Malibu Council of Government Meetings*

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- *Attended Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission meeting and presented*
- *Summary of cost-share partner relationship development*
 - Asked T.J. Moon for advice on Bipartisan Infrastructure Application(s) from Los Angeles County
 - Maintained close ties with LVMWD, WBMWD, LAUSD, Waterworks District #29 and local cities as potential grant recipients
 - Reached out to staff at Wildlife Conservation and California Southern Coastal Conservancy about Calabasas Las Virgenes Creek Restoration Phase III project
 - Wrote first draft of MWD Conservation Innovation Grant that was submitted by LAUSD to fund small cisterns at Topanga Elementary School
- *Summary of leverage funding pursuits*
 - Wrote first draft of MWD Conservation Innovation Grant that was submitted by LAUSD to fund small cisterns at Topanga Elementary School; outcome TBD
 - Asked if City of Calabasas could / should submit Las Virgenes Creek Restoration Phase III to California Southern Coastal Conservancy; told that it would not fit as a restoration project (too far inland) but could fit as a trails project; may help with an application for that later on
 - Set up talk (had to reschedule until January) with Wildlife Conservation Board and City of Calabasas; we are optimistic about this opportunity but will need to get asked to write full application
 - California Watershed Network provided \$300 for Nature Based Solutions Success Stories event
 - The majority of the speakers provided time in kind, including Santa Barbara Creeks Division team
 - Gus Meza stated that inclusion of 6 cisterns in NSMB IRWM application inspired by conversations with coordinator
 - Shared insights on \$500 million in available funding from Megan Cooper of the California Coastal Commission with State Parks

8. Local Stakeholder Education

Coordinator hosted a trio of events in November,

- Eventbrite for Agenda for [Nature Based Solutions Success Stories Conference](#), registered: 103
- Eventbrite for [Nature Based Solutions Success Stories: Site Visits to Calabasas and Agoura Hills](#), registered: 9 (more attended)
- Eventbrite for [Nature Based Solutions Success Stories, Site Visits to Santa Barbara](#), registered: 9

Coordinator wrote a series of articles and interviews to encourage local news readers to attend these events,

See:

- On Erica Gies, [Valley News](#),
- On Erica Gies, [Happy Eco News](#)
- On Alex Farassati, : [Daily Valley News](#)
On Jessica Hall, [Happy Eco News](#)

9. Watershed Coordinator Collaboration

- Attended monthly Watershed Coordinator events
- Joined Mikaela Randolph, Nancy Shrodes and Michelle Struthers in giving talk on watershed coordinator / Measure W programs to Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission. Ms. Randolph organized the talk and made sure each of us had slides to share so as to give SMBRC a sense of the geographic and personal scope of the program.
- Attended Central + South Santa Monica Watershed Tour; elected to see South Santa Monica Watershed sites during second half of tour

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B. Engagement Meetings Held or Attended

Use the table below for high-level summary of all engagement events held or attended. Flag for events held and attach attendance records and materials provided. Add an attachment number here and on the attachment to correlate. Add rows when needed.

	Meeting or Event	Date	Summary of Meeting or Event	Stakeholders Engaged	Held or Attended?	Attachments #
Ex.	<i>GLAC IRWM Leadership Meeting</i>	<i>7/4/21</i>	<i>Quarterly business meeting</i>	<i>GLAC Leadership</i>	<i>Attended</i>	
1.	Malibou Lake Centennial	10/1/2022			Attended	
2.	Planning for Nature Based Solutions Success Stories Site Tour	10/11/2022	Planning site visit with Santa Barbara Creeks Division	Santa Barbara Creeks Division	Held	
3.	ARLA /Madelyn Glickfeld	10/15/2022	Cisterns Conversation		Attended	
4.	LAUSD Lisa Williams + Watts	10/17/2022	Prep: MWD Grant cistern application	LAUSD, Topanga Elementary School	Held	
5.	25 Year anniversary: Center for Watershed Health	10/18/2022	Center for Watershed Health Dinner	Center for Watershed Health + guests	Attended	
6.	Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission	10/20/2022	Watershed Coordinator Presentation	Led by Mikaela Randolph with Nancy Schroder, Michelle Struthers, Me	Presented + Attended	
7.	LAUSD Grant planning conversation	10/21/2022	LAUSD MWD cistern grant application	Lisa Williams, Christos Chrysiliou, Ruben Valenzuela, me	Attended	
8.	Nadine Salas and MSW	10/22/2022	Water Poetry conversation		Held	
9.	Agoura Hills 40 th Anniversary	10/24/2022	City Councilmembers, Community, Senator Pavley etc.		Attended	
10.	Interview with Alex Farassati	10/26/2022	For Daily Valley News article	Alex Farassati, City of Calabasas	Held	
11.	Monthly Watershed Coordinator meeting	10/26/2022	For collaboration	Stantec, L.A. County, Watershed coordinators	Attended	
12.	California Watershed Network	10/28/2022	Watershed convo; planning event		Attended	
13.	WLV, Calabasas, AH + me	10/28/2022	Watershed convo	Jessica Forte, Roxanne Hughes, Tatiana H., Madelyn Glickfeld	Attended	
14.	LVMWD Craig Jones	10/31/2022	Grants opportunities	Craig Jones	Attended	

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15.	Heal the Bay	11/1/2022	Support for Nature Based Solutions event	Ava Ferriday	Held	
16.	LAUSD Greening Event	11/10/2022	Discussing rules for partnership on green schools	Big event	Attended in part; reviewed presentation	
17.	NSMB WASC	11/10/2022			Attended	B-17 Presentation to NSMB WASC on November 10, 2022
18.	Bipartisan Infrastructure Law: Better Together	11/14/2022	Federal opportunities led by L.A. County		Attended	
19.	Heal the Bay	11/14/2022	Support for Nature Based Solutions event	Ava Farriday	Held	
20.	Nature Based Solutions Success Stories: Conference	11/17/2022	See agenda	109 people registered	held	B-20, Agenda for Nature Based Solutions Success Stories
21.	Nature Based Solutions Success Stories: Site Visits to Agoura Hills and Calabasas	11/18/2022	See agenda	Approximately 15 people attended	held	B-21 Site Visits to Calabasas and Agoura Hills Photo C and AH
22.	Nature Based Solutions Success Stories: Conference	11/18/2022	See agenda	Approximately 10 people attended	held	B-22 Site Visit to Santa Barbara Creeks
23.	Wonderwomen Event (First Responders Locally)	11/20/2022			Attended	
24.	SCWP Schools and Stormwater Group	11/29/2022			Attended	
25.	South Santa Monica Bay Watershed Tour	12/3/2022	Learned about projects in Central and South Santa Monica Bay		Attended	
26.	MAR Lunch	12/17/2022			Attended	
27.	Watershed Conversation	12/8/2022		Dr. Jill Murray, Jessica Hall, MSW		
28.	NSMB WASC	12/8/2022			Attended	B-28-A, Presentation to NSMB WASC; B-28-B, Presentation on Nature Based Solutions Project Ideas
29.	Planning January watershed Coordinator Meeting	12/16/2022		Carlos Moran, Mike Antos, Tori Klug, Ryanna		
30.	California Coastal Conservancy + City of	12/29/2022	Discussed funding opportunities	Megan Cooper + Alba Lemus	Held	

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	Calabasas and Las Virgenes Creek Restoration Phase III				
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C. Potential Cost-Share Partners Contacted

Provide a list of potential cost-share partners contacted for projects within and adjacent to the Watershed Area. Attach relevant materials. Add an attachment number here and on the attachment to correlate. Add rows when needed.

	Potential Partner Name	Date First Contacted	Project name / type	Nature of potential partnership	Attachments #
Ex	County of Ventura	7/4/21	Malibu Creek Watershed Awesomeness Project	MOU for project that crosses county boundary	C-1

D. Leveraged / Outside Funding Pursued

Share all outside funding opportunities pursued and the status or outcome of the pursuit. Attach relevant materials. Add an attachment number here and on the attachment to correlate. Add rows when needed.

	Potential Outside Funding Source	Status or Outcome of the Pursuit	Attachments #
Ex	USEPA EJ Small Grants	Grant co-written with Pacoima Beautiful, submitted June 30, 2021, expect to hear by August 12, 2021.	D-1
1.	ARLA; RCDSMM;	Discussed co-writing multiple grants; recommended inclusion of Clark Stevens, RCDSMM as participant in cistern study, RCDSMM received contract	
2.	LAUSD, MWD, Topanga Elementary School	Suggested LAUSD write MWD Conservation Innovation grant for 50K for Topanga Elementary School Cistern Project	Submitted 12/15/2022
3.	ARLA, RCDSMM, WBMWD, LVMWD to explore Urban Drought DWR application	Explored multiple avenues to fund collaborative DWR Urban Drought application; without willing applicant, not possible	
4.	Calabasas and California State Coastal Conservancy	Introduced two parties to discuss funding Las Virgenes Creek Restoration Phase III, may work later on for a trail project, not for now	
5.	Set January call with Wildlife Conservation Board + City of Calabasas	Will discuss Las Virgenes Creek Restoration Phase III: spoiler alert, they're interested and in January Watts will write a draft LOI	
6.	Reached out to MRCA, NPS and State Parks re WCB + California State Coastal Conservancy	No responses; MRCA has grant writers winning these awards without watershed coordinator's assistance	
7.	California Watershed Network	Funding for author's honorarium (\$300) for Erica Gies for Nature Based Solutions Success Stories, received and paid	

E. Detailed Progress Report

Provide an update on the amount of effort expended for each Task this quarter and note percentage complete:

Task #	Task	Total Task Level of Effort (from workplan)	LOE this quarter	Accumulated LOE to-date (from monthly reports)
Ex.				
1	Facilitate Community Engagement	15%	15%	15%
2	Identify and Develop Project Concepts	15%	15%	12%
3	Work with Technical Assistance Teams	0%	10%	6%

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4	Facilitate Identification and Representation of Community Priorities	10%	10%	10%
5	Integrate Priorities through Partnerships and Extensive Networks	10%	10%	15%
6	Cost-share Partners	15%	10%	15%
7	Leverage Funding	15%	10%	11%
8	Local Stakeholder Education	10%	10%	9%
9	Watershed Coordinator Collaboration	10%	10%	7%
	Overall	100%	100%	100%

F. Engagement efforts benefitting Disadvantaged Communities

Summarize activities undertaken which have benefitted members of disadvantaged communities. Distinguish between targeted efforts and ones that could benefit all communities.

Connecting with community leaders who live and work in DAC communities inspires me to do more and better with the low-income community members who live and work in the NSMB watershed. These include Environmental Charter School founder Alison Diaz, teacher Tashanda Giles and parent Danielle Marquez, with whom I have been connecting over at the in the South Santa Monica Bay Watershed and Mike Garcia at Enviroscope, who is deeply inspiring.

I'm very appreciative of watershed coordinator Carlos Moran's experience in working with the unhoused community and looking forward to learning more during the upcoming January watershed coordinator's meeting.

G. Scheduling concerns or issues

Discuss any scheduling concerns and issues encountered that may delay completion of the program or project. Describe any anticipated schedule or budget modifications.

Program is staying schedule as planned.

Coordinator plans to set up a schedule for education / outreach events in 2023 as soon as possible in January or February at our next NSMB WASC meeting based on a stakeholder-driven discussion.

Based on feedback from Dave Pedersen and other stakeholders, looks like we will be trying to merge the idea of a State of The Watershed event with a WaterTalks approach (which emphasizes bringing in local elected officials and staff for learning) and, if it is feasible, will be doing a public outreach event modeled after the very popular CicLAvia program centering on the Pure Water Project as a venue and idea around which to communicate goals and opportunities of the Safe, Clean Water L.A. program.

H. Expected activities next quarter

Summarize expected activities in the next quarter, include dates if know for outreach or education events being held.

Working on obtaining dates for our two big education / outreach projects for 2023.

In theory could be State of the Watershed/WaterTalks event in late summer, an event inspired by CicLAvia that would showcase the Pure Water Project could happen in the fall.

Planning on collaborating with City of Calabasas on letter of intent for Wildlife Conservation Board grants. As of this week, they have the first draft in their hands. Stay tuned.

Hoping that Dave Pedersen can inspire the Las Virgenes Malibu Council of Governments to agree to hire a consultant to write and manage a Measure W collaborative application on January 17, 2022. I'll be there on Zoom with morning coffee and my fingers crossed.

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Upcoming Events: Will be setting dates at next NSMB WASC meeting. Hope to send out newsletter.

Funding Applications: LAUSD submitted MWD Conservation Innovation grant for about \$50,000 on December 15, 2022.

Looking forward to supporting City of Calabasas in preparing Wildlife Conservation Board application for Las Virgenes Creek Restoration Phase III project.

\$300 donation from California Watershed Network spent on honorarium for Erica Gies, *Water Always Wins* author.

Significant in-kind donations via time from staff from project participants in Nature Based Solutions Success Stories.

LVMWD contributes physical award for first annual Watershed Award given to Alex Farassati, City of Calabasas.

Attachments:

B-17 Presentation to NSMB WASC on November 10, 2022
B-20, Agenda for Nature Based Solutions Success Stories
B-21 Site Visits to Calabasas and Agoura Hills Photo C and AH
B-22 Site Visit to Santa Barbara Creeks
B-28-A, Presentation to NSMB WASC
B-28-B, Presentation on Nature Based Solutions Project Ideas

Links:

Want to see the Nature Based Solutions Success Stories conference? Go to: [Nature Based Solutions Success Stories](#), Passcode: +2=UFLcZ.

Eventbrite for Agenda for [Nature Based Solutions Success Stories Conference](#), registered: 103

Eventbrite for [Nature Based Solutions Success Stories: Site Visits to Calabasas and Agoura Hills](#), registered: 9 (more attended)

Eventbrite for [Nature Based Solutions Success Stories, Site Visits to Santa Barbara](#), registered: 9

Articles:

On Erica Gies, [Valley News](#),

On Erica Gies, [Happy Eco News](#)

On Alex Farassati, : [Daily Valley News](#)

On Jessica Hall, [Happy Eco News](#)