

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



Tuesday, October 24, 2023
1:00 pm - 3:00 pm
Progress Park Auditorium/Plaza West
15500 Downey Ave, Paramount, CA 90723
WebEx Meeting

Committee Members Present:

Ernesto Rivera, LA County Flood Control District (Agency)
Madeline Chen, Central Basin (Agency)
Asha Kreiling, Water Replenishment District (Agency)
*Alysha Chan, LA County Sanitation Districts (Agency)
Stephen Scott, City of Long Beach Parks and Recreation (Agency)
Irene Lopez-Muro, Conservation Corps of Long Beach (Community)
*Arturo Gonzalez, Rivers and Mountains Conservancy (Community)
*Mary Hillermeier, TreePeople (Community)
*Dylan Porter, Port of Long Beach (Community)
Dan Mueller, Downey (Municipal)
Melissa You, Long Beach (Municipal), Vice-Chair
Adriana Figueroa, Paramount (Municipal)
Thuan Nguyen, Los Angeles County (Municipal)
Gladis Deras, South Gate (Municipal)
Tara Dales, SGA Marketing (Watershed Coordinator, non-voting member)

Committee Members Attending Remotely:

Julian Lee, Lynwood (Municipal)

Committee Members Not Present:

Erica Maceda, River in Action (Community)
Gina Nila, Commerce (Municipal)

*Committee Member Alternate

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

1. Welcome and Introductions

Melissa You, Vice-Chair of the Lower Los Angeles River (LLAR) Watershed Area Steering Committee (WASC), welcomed all Committee Members. District staff conducted a brief tutorial on WebEx and provided an overview of meeting guidelines and participation instructions for any participants joining online. District staff facilitated a roll call, Committee Members made self-introductions, and a quorum was established.

Member Julian Lee joined the meeting virtually with just cause under AB 2449.

2. Approval of Meeting Minutes from August 22, 2023

District staff presented the minutes from the previous meeting. Member Asha Kreiling motioned to approve the minutes with the modification that Member Madeline Chen expressed willingness to be Co-Chair rather than Vice-Chair. The motion was seconded by Member Dan Mueller. The Committee voted to approve the August 22, 2023 meeting minutes with the modification, with 11 votes in favor, 0 opposed, and 2 in abstention, and 2 members absent at the time of vote (approved, see vote tracking sheet).

3. Committee Member and District Updates

District staff provided an update, noting:

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



- The first term for WASC Community Stakeholder seats are up for reappointment for the next three-year term. The next step is for the Board of Supervisors (Board) to appoint WASC Community Stakeholder seats for the next term.
- On August 8, the Board approved all nine Stormwater Investment Plans (SIPs).
- Fiscal Year (FY) 2022-23 Q4 Regional Quarterly Reports (April-June) were due on August 15. FY23-24 Q1 (July-September) Reports are due November 15. Quarterly Reports must still be completed even if there was no activity done on the project or if the Transfer Agreement has not been executed for projects included in the current SIP.
- Municipal progress/expenditure reports are due on December 31. Municipal Annual Plans are due in April before the fiscal year, and the final report for the fiscal year is due at the end of December.
- Regional Infrastructure Program project developers and municipalities should update the Reporting Module, adding bid and award details for projects. This will allow the public to see estimated construction dates and potential future bid opportunities.
- The Project Modification Guidelines are finalized. The purpose of this document is to provide more specific guidance to WASCs, applicants, recipients, and other interested stakeholders when modifications to a project, project concept or study are proposed. The deadline to submit the Project Modification Request (PMR) form for the current fiscal year has been extended to November 30. In future years, the deadline will be October 30. The Project Modification Guidelines can be found in the Adaptive Management section in the Regional Program dropdown of the [SCW Program website](#). On October 19, the District hosted an information session. The recording, presentation, and frequently asked questions are posted on the [SCW Program website](#).
- FY23-24 Transfer Agreements and addendums will be distributed beginning the third week of October. An email will be sent with instructions on how to use the transfer agreement functionality now hosted within the Reporting Module. In the meantime, project developers should begin preparing supporting documents for upload (Scope of Work, Authorizations, CEQA documents). Please refer to the sample Transfer Agreement on the SCW Program website.
- On July 25, the Board approved a motion authored by Supervisor Horvath, “Accelerate Implementation of the SCW Program.” The three actions in the motion include 1) watershed planning, 2) simplified application process, 3) resources and staffing for dedicated adaptive management. The report back to the Board is currently being drafted in parallel with the Regional Oversight Committee’s (ROC) Biennial Report.
- The ROC is preparing the Biennial Report and has been meeting to discuss the draft report and initiate public comment period. The next ROC meetings are on October 26 and December 7, and all Committee Members are invited to attend to provide input. Meeting details can be found on the SCW Program website.
- The Metrics and Monitoring Study (MMS) hosted two project briefings on October 11 to share final updates, results of the study, and next steps. The information is posted on the [SCW Program website](#).
- Total Program Tax Collection 2022-23 is available on the SCW Program website, in the [Estimated Revenues webpage](#).

Ryanna Fossum (Stantec, Regional Coordination) noted that the Regional Coordination team drafted funding memos for all 21 Infrastructure Program (IP) projects submitted to the SCW Program for Round 5 ahead of SIP deliberations. The memos include an overview of the project, funding request, and two to three potential funding opportunities that align with the project. The goal of the memos is for project proponents to review leverage funding opportunities and for the WASC to make informed decisions when determining funding priorities, particularly with partial funding.

4. Watershed Coordinator Updates

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



Watershed Coordinator Tara Dales presented highlights from the LA Waterkeeper's SCW Program Research Showcase. Watershed Coordinator Dales additionally highlighted recent community engagement and outreach efforts and upcoming school tours. See slides available on the [SCW Program website](#).

Watershed Coordinator Dales emphasized the following:

- An overview of SCWP projects trends, which were discussed at the SCW Program Research Showcase were as follows:
 - Decreased number of funded IPs and increased number of design-only projects
 - Hardscape removal was not occurring as intended
 - There were not enough school projects
- Parque dos Rios received Technical Resource Program (TRP) funding but was halted for remediation. The project proponent, Watershed Conservation Authority, hopes to come back to the SCW Program after remediation.
- A school tour of the Northridge Middle School Greening & Stormwater Capture Project will be held on November 17 from 1:30 to 3:30pm. Event information can be found [here](#).

5. Public Comment Period

District staff compiled all public comment cards received by 5:00pm the day before the meeting. No comment cards were received before the meeting. There were no public comments.

6. Discussion Items

a) Ex Parte Communication Disclosure

There were no ex parte communication disclosures.

b) Selection of Chair, Vice-Chair, or Co-Chairs

District staff noted that Chair Gina Nila is no longer interested in serving as Chair of the LLAR WASC. Vice-Chair Melissa You is still interested in serving as Vice-Chair.

Member Adriana Figueroa reminded WASC members that, at the last meeting, Members from the Water Replenishment District and Central Basin expressed interested in being Co-Chairs.

Member Ernesto Rivera asked for the distinction between Chair, Vice-Chair, and Co-Chair. District staff shared that the Co-Chairs would share responsibility and that the Vice-Chair would step in if both were absent. Member Chen reiterated interest in being a Co-Chair.

The floor was opened for public comment. There were no raised hands or comments in the chat. Public comment was closed.

8. Voting Items

This agenda item was moved up before Agenda Item 6c.

a) Selection of Chair, Vice-Chair, or Co-Chairs

Member Figueroa motioned to select Member Asha Kreiling and Member Madeline Chen as Co-Chairs and Vice-Chair Melissa You as Vice-Chair. Member Mueller seconded the motion. The motion was passed with 15 votes in favor, 0 opposed, and 0 in abstention (approved, see vote tracking sheet).

6. Discussion Items (continued)

c) Infrastructure Project (IP) Presentation

- i. Lynwood City Park Stormwater Capture Project
Presented by John Hunter. Regional stormwater infiltration and treatment project that includes installation of a new permeable parking lot, soccer field, and ephemeral stream.

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



John Hunter (John L. Hunter and Associates) presented the Lynwood City Park Stormwater Capture Project on behalf of the City of Lynwood. The project was funded for design by the LLAR WASC in FY21-22. More information can be found in the presentation slides on the [SCW Program website](#).

Member Figueroa asked if Craftwater Engineering, Inc (Craftwater) is doing the design, noting that the firm had previously been involved with the project. Hunter confirmed this. Member Figueroa recommended utilizing Craftwater's lessons learned in the development of the project.

Member Arturo Gonzalez noted that the Rivers and Mountains Conservancy (RMC) worked on the initial feasibility study for this project which discovered the soil was not conducive to infiltration.

Upon inquiry, Hunter shared that the City of Lynwood is looking into the Park Renovation Funds State Grant. Member Julian Lee added that the City is applying to Caltrans' Clean California Local Grant for about \$5 million and is also seeking funding from Assembly Member Anthony Rendon for soccer field lighting. The City is actively seeking other funding sources.

Member Alysha Chan asked for clarification about the path of water. Member Chan asked if water reuse at the park was considered. Hunter replied that water reuse was examined but was not a cost-effective option. Member Figueroa agreed that this was found to be true on other projects.

Upon inquiry, Hunter clarified that community outreach was conducted in both English and Spanish. Member Kreiling asked if the project proponent has worked with East Yard Communities for Environmental Justice. Hunter was not certain of any involvement with the group.

Member Rivera asked if recirculation was considered within the system. Hunter clarified that the water can flow from vault to the stream back to vault in a continuous loop. The overflow from the vault will be sent to the storm drain.

Member Chen asked if potable or recycled water is currently being used on the fields. Member Lee confirmed that the park is currently using recycled water.

ii. **Scientific Study (SS) Presentation**

Identifying Best Practices for Maintaining Stormwater Drywell Capacity

Presented by Dr. Ali Sharbat. Track the infiltration capacity of recently installed drywells over a period of five years. Two drywell sites will be carefully selected from the LLAR watershed area to represent a range of factors, including: Drywell design & construction, Pre-treatment methods, Operations / maintenance practices, Drywell's basin size & annual runoff volume, Land use & traffic volumes, Soil types.

Ali Sharbat (California State Polytechnic University, Pomona (Cal Poly Pomona)) and Mehrad Kamalzare (Cal Poly Pomona) presented an overview of the proposed study. More information regarding on the SS can be found in the presentation slides on the [SCW Program website](#).

Member Kreiling asked if the SS will involve drywell installation. Kamalzare stated that existing drywells are preferred, but site selection is dependent on whether the watershed has any existing drywells that meet the site selection criteria. If no drywells meet the criteria, installation may be necessary.

The study team would install sensors, monitor the drywell, take samples, and test for contamination. A database of rain events and maintenance practices will be created to determine how the events and actions affected drywell capacity.

Watershed Coordinator Dales asked the District when the SS application will be reviewed by an independent reviewer. The District stated that the scientific studies should be sent to the reviewer before the end of the year and that the WASC will have results before SIP deliberation.

Watershed Coordinator Dales asked for more information on the project's outreach and engagement. Sharbat clarified that Cal Poly Pomona is used as a platform to teach and engage students that will be joining the workforce. Additionally, the project team has been scheduling workshops to open a dialogue

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



between academia and stakeholders. Kamalzare added that this task also includes sending students to conferences to present the work.

Vice-Chair You confirmed with District staff that the independent reviewer of SS will no longer be Southern California Coastal Water Research Project. District staff will share more information once the new independent reviewer is confirmed.

Upon inquiry, Kamalzare clarified that the study is specifically designed for each watershed, so SS funding may be approved separately, and the study will still move forward even if only one WASC approves.

Member Figueroa asked whether Cal Poly Pomona has the necessary workload capacity if every WASC approves the SS for funding. Kamalzare stated that the department has the largest program in the county, with over 1,500 students. Member Figueroa asked if the study's work will get diluted if there are not enough professors to oversee students. Sharbat clarified that faculty members will have sufficient support from the College of Engineering, which oversees graduate students.

Member Rivera asked if the study includes only two drywell sites per watershed. Sharbat clarified that the number of drywells is based on watershed size. The LLAR watershed will have two sites. Larger watersheds have five sites. Member Rivera noted that there are dozens of soil types throughout the county and asked if these soil types will be analyzed with additional lab work. Kamalzare confirmed, stating that Cal Poly Pomona has technical resources including geo-technical labs, computer labs, and other labs where all lab tests will be done in-house.

Member Mueller expressed interest in the study as the City of Downey is hesitant to install any drywells because of fouling. Member Mueller asked if the study team would request local infiltration and percolation rates. Sharbat stated that obtaining existing data is critical. If there is performance data or infiltration studies at any site, the study proponents will request it. Newly installed sites or sites that will be installed soon are preferred as the study proponents may be able to work with the infrastructures designers to get as much data as possible.

Member Mueller asked about the plan for existing wells, noting that municipalities may not have much data on the performance or degradation of existing wells. Kamalzare mentioned a previous study where smaller test wells were installed to determine the initial infiltration rates an existing drywell would have had if it was new. Kamalzare added that the proposed study would also include talking with operators of drywells about their maintenance procedures.

Member Thuan Nguyen requested clarification regarding the installation of new drywells and whether this would expand the SS scope. Sharbat noted that there are thousands of drywells that have been installed recently in California. Meeting the site selection criteria is the main driver of the study. This study could apply to infiltration galleries or other BMPs that meet the study's selection criteria if a drywell cannot be identified. The study proponents want to find a site where work could be done closely with the infrastructure project owners to determine best practices to maintain the stormwater infrastructure.

Member Nguyen noted that if there are plans to pivot to infiltration galleries then the proponents may need to modify their application. The District clarified that if the study does something that is not listed in the application, the project proponents would need fill out a Project Modification Request to change the scope. This would occur after the project is accepted into a SIP. If the modification is declared to be "inconsistent," the study would have to return to the WASC for approval.

Member Gladis Deras stated that the City of South Gate has installed three drywells in recent years and will install two more in the future, which may be good options for the study.

Member Mueller noted that the City of Downey has old drywells and is reluctant to add any new drywells because of the associated maintenance. Member Mueller shared an example of a packaged drywell that recommended quarterly cleanings. Kamalzare noted that manufacturers provided these recommendations based on experience. Study proponents will look at the maintenance data provided on the well to systematically assess O&M best practices that should be applied to the industry.

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



d) Regional Program Quarterly Report Summary FY22-23 Q3 and Q4.

District staff presented the FY22-23 Regional Quarterly Report Summary (Q3-Q4) which can be found on the [SCW Program website](#). Project developers were invited to the meeting to answer any questions posed by Committee Members.

Member Kreiling noted that the Urban Orchard Project “Funds Awarded to Date” and “Expenditures to Date” shown in the summary are unclear. Member Deras clarified that the total cost of the project is \$25 million, and the cost of construction is \$15 million. The SCWP funding is used for stormwater components; however, recreation and planting are still pending. The summary currently lists the “Funds Awarded to Date” as \$0.00, however member Deras noted that they have received two years of funding. The District will look into this issue and update the Quarterly Report Summary table as necessary. Member Deras added that, of the \$5.4 million in “Funding Projected,” about \$1 million will be used for first year operations and maintenance.

Member Figueroa requested information regarding activity concerns related to Spane Park. Member Figueroa noted that there were issues with the restrooms but was unaware of any other concerns at Spane Park. District staff clarified that the “Activity Concern” was input by the user on the SCW Reporting Portal. District staff will provide Member Figueroa with more information about the reported activity concerns.

Member Figueroa asked why the Gateway Area Pathfinding Analysis (GAP Analysis) is listed as “Not Started” for Q4. District staff clarified that there was a Phase 2 component of the SS which is included on page 2 of the Quarterly Report Summary and labeled “Complete.”

Member Mueller clarified that Apollo Park Stormwater Capture Project is listed as “Not Started,” which is due to an issue with uploading the project report onto the SCW Reporting Module. Member Mueller added that the transfer agreement for the initial year has been executed and the scope has been submitted to the District to be reviewed. Member Mueller noted that the project proponents intend to work on the RFP for the design over the next several months so design can begin during the next calendar year. The design would continue through the fiscal year and into the following fiscal year.

7. Public Comment Period

Mark Hall (Greater LA County Vector Control District) asked why the Lynwood City Park Stormwater Capture Project proponents are waiting until 60% design is complete before submitting a plan to the Vector Control District. Hall advised that the project proponents submit the plan as soon as possible to avoid any unnecessary changes or issues that may arise later.

9. Items for Next Agenda

Vice-Chair You suggested cancelling the meetings originally scheduled for Tuesday, November 28, 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm and Tuesday, December 26, 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm. The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, January 23, 1:00 pm – 3:00pm. Items on the next agenda will be distributed at a later date.

10. Adjournment

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

LLAR WASC - October 24, 2023

			Quorum Present			Voting Items	
Member Type	Position	Member	Voting/ Present?	Alternate	Voting/ Present?	Approve 08-22-2023 Meeting Minutes	Vote Chair, Vice-Chair, Co-Chair
Agency	District	Ernesto Rivera	x	Enrique Baul		y	y
Agency	Central Basin	Madeline Chen	x	Alex Rojas		y	y
Agency	Water Replenishment District	Asha Kreiling	x	Rob Beste		y	y
Agency	LA County Sanitation Districts	Dave Pierce		Alysha Chan	x	a	y
Agency	City of Long Beach Parks & Recreation	Stephen Scott	x	Nancy Villasenor		y	y
Community Stakeholder	Conservation Corps of Long Beach	Irene Lopez-Muro	x	Isabelle Campiformio		y	y
Community Stakeholder	Rivers & Mountains Conservancy	Mark Stanley		Arturo Gonzalez	x	y	y
Community Stakeholder	TreePeople	Manny Gonez		Mary Hillermeier	x	y	y
Community Stakeholder	Port of Long Beach	James Vernon		Dylan Porter	x		y
Community Stakeholder	River in Action	Erica Maceda					
Municipal Members	City of Commerce	Gina Nila*		Thomas Bekele			
Municipal Members	City of Downey	Dan Mueller	x			y	y
Municipal Members	City of Long Beach	Melissa You**	x	Cecilia Salazar		a	y
Municipal Members	City of Lynwood	Julian Lee	x	Pamela Torres		y	y
Municipal Members	City of Paramount	Adriana Figueroa	x	Sarah Ho			y
Municipal Members	County of Los Angeles	Thuan Nguyen	x	Fred Gonzalez		y	y
Municipal Members	City of South Gate	Gladis Deras	x			y	y
Watershed Coordinator Non-Voting Member	SGA Marketing	Tara Dales	x				
Total Non-Vacant Seats		17			Yes (Y)	11	15
Total Voting Members Present		15			No (N)	0	0
Agency		5			Abstain (A)	2	0
Community Stakeholder		4			Total	13	15
Municipal Members		6				Approved	Approved

Lower Los Angeles River
 Watershed Area Steering Committee Meeting
 COMMITTEE MEMBER AND ALTERNATE SIGN-IN



Member Name	Municipality/ Organization	Email Address		Signature
Ernesto Rivera	FCD	erivera@dpw.lacounty.gov	P	
Enrique Baul	FCD	ebaul@dpw.lacounty.gov	A	
Madeline Chen	Central Basin	madelinec@centralbasin.org	P	
Alex Rojas	Central Basin	alexr@centralbasin.org	A	
Asha Kreiling	Water Replenishment District	akreiling@wrđ.org	P	
Rob Beste	Water Replenishment District	rbeste@wrđ.org	A	
Dave Pierce	LA County Sanitation Districts	DPierce@lacsđ.org	P A	
Alysha Chan	LA County Sanitation Districts	alyschachan@lacsđ.org	A P	
Stephen Scott	City of Long Beach Parks & Recreation	stephen.scott@longbeach.gov	P	
Nancy Villasenor	City of Long Beach Parks & Recreation	nancy.villasenor@longbeach.gov	A	
Irene Lopez-Muro	Conservation Corps of Long Beach	ilopezmuro@cclb-corps.org	P	
Isabelle Campiformio	Conservation Corps of Long Beach	icampiformio@cclb-corps.org	A	
Mark Stanley	Rivers and Mountains Conservancy	mstanley@rmc.ca.gov	P	
Arturo Gonzalez	Rivers and Mountains Conservancy	agonzalez@rmc.ca.gov	A	
Manny Gonez	TreePeople	mgonez@treepeople.org	P	

Lower Los Angeles River
 Watershed Area Steering Committee Meeting
 COMMITTEE MEMBER AND ALTERNATE SIGN-IN



Member Name	Municipality/ Organization	Email Address		Signature
Mary Hillemeier	TreePeople	mhillemeier@treepeople.org	A	
James Vernon	Port of Long Beach	james.vernon@polb.com	P	
Dylan Porter	Port of Long Beach	dylan.porter@polb.com	A	
Erica Maceda	River in Action	ericamaceda@gmail.com	P	
Gina Nila	Commerce	ginan@ci.commerce.ca.us	P	
Thomas Bekele	Signal Hill	tbekele@cityofsignalhill.org	A	
Dan Mueller	Downey	dmueller@downeyca.org	P	
Delfino Consunji	Downey	dconsunji@downeyca.org	A	
Melissa You	Long Beach	Melissa.You@longbeach.gov	P	
Cecilia Salazar	Long Beach	cecilia.salazar@longbeach.gov	A	
Julian Lee	Lynwood	jlee@lynwood.ca.us	P	
Pamena Torres	Lynwood	ptorres@lynwood.ca.us	A	
Adriana Figueroa	Paramount	afigueroa@paramountcity.com	P	
Sarah Ho	Paramount	sho@paramountcity.com	A	
Thuan Nguyen	County of Los Angeles	thunguyen@dpw.lacounty.gov	P	

Lower Los Angeles River
 Watershed Area Steering Committee Meeting
 COMMITTEE MEMBER AND ALTERNATE SIGN-IN



Member Name	Municipality/ Organization	Email Address		Signature
Fred Gonzalez	County of Los Angeles	fgonzal@dpw.lacounty.gov	A	
Gladis Deras	South Gate	gderas@sogate.org	P	JD
Tara Dales	SGA Marketing	tdales@sgamarketing.com		TDALES

Lower Los Angeles River
Watershed Area Steering Committee Meeting
PUBLIC SIGN-IN



First Name	Last Name	Municipality/Organization	Email Address
MEHRAD	KAMALZARE	Cal Poly Pomona	mkamalzare@cpp.edu
Ali	Sharbat	Cal Poly Pomona	sharbat@cpp.edu
John	Hantee	JLHA	JHantee@JLHA.net
Ryanne	Fossum	Stanee	

*Signing or completing this form is voluntary for members of the public