

Regional Oversight Committee

Meeting Minutes



Thursday, December 7, 2023

1:00pm – 4:00pm

LA County Public Works Headquarters, 1st Floor (Courtyard) Conference Room C

WebEx Meeting

Committee Members Present:

Maria Mehranian, Cordoba/Former LA Regional Water Quality Control Board Chair

Kristine Guerrero, League of Cities, Chair

Belinda Faustinos, Retired NGO & State Agency Executive, Vice-Chair

Elizabeth Crosson, Metropolitan Water District of Southern California

Lauren Ahkiam, LAANE

Charles Trevino, Upper San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District

Carl Blum, LA County Flood Control District (non-voting member)

Norma Camacho, LA Regional Water Quality Control Board Chair (non-voting member)

Committee Members Not Present:

Barbara Romero, City of Los Angeles

Diana Tang, Long Beach Water Department

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

1. Welcome and Introductions

Los Angeles County Flood Control District (District) staff 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. County Counsel representative Mark Yanai made an introduction.

Kristine Guerrero, Chair of the Regional Oversight Committee (ROC), welcomed Committee Members and called the meeting to order. Chair Guerrero announced that the meeting was being broadcast live in Spanish. Chair Guerrero announced that the purpose of this meeting is to approve the draft Biennial report and initiate the public comment period.

2. Approval of October 26, 2023 Meeting Minutes

District staff presented meeting minutes from the previous meeting. Vice-Chair Belinda Faustinos motioned to approve the meeting minutes, seconded by Member Charles Trevino. The Committee voted to approve the October 26, 2023 meeting minutes with five votes in favor and one vote in abstention (approved, see vote tracking sheet).

3. Committee Member and District Updates

Member Carl Blum relayed two updates on behalf of Public Works Director Mark Pestrella:

- On December 5, the Board of Supervisors (Board) adopted Los Angeles County's Water Plan. Supervisor Lindsey Horvath also introduced a complementary motion, "Implementation of the Los Angeles County Water Plan: A Shared, Regional Path Towards Water Resilience," that includes a 300,000 acre-feet per year (AFY) stormwater and urban runoff capture goal in an average year of rainfall and additional nature-based watershed management goals.
- Director Pestrella shared intentions to be active in discussing strategies and goals with the ROC, especially as new ROC members are seated in 2024.

District staff provided an update, noting:

- The Public Education and Community Engagement Grants Program agreement, which was approved by the Board earlier this year, has been executed. The District can now begin developing the program with the Water Foundation.

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- Reappointments to certain governance committee seats are still in progress or coming soon. This includes the five community stakeholder seats for all nine Watershed Area Steering Committees (WASCs), the Scoring Committee, and the ROC. The District is supporting the Supervisorial Districts to address those appointments and are expected to begin addressing reappointments next month. Appointments are expected to be made to minimize impacts on the current work cycles. The Board will be mindful of the Biennial Report's timely submission and will address appointments to the ROC after the final report has been approved.
- Fiscal Year (FY) 2023-2024 Transfer Agreements/Addendum distribution and FY2023-2024 Municipal Program allocation distributions are in progress.
- WASCs are meeting to review Scientific Studies (SS) and Technical Resources Program (TRP) projects. Meetings in the new year are expected to include the scored Round 5 Infrastructure Program (IP) projects, including those ongoing projects that submitted Project Modification Request (PMR) forms by the November 30 deadline.

Upon inquiry, District staff clarified that the preferred deadline to submit interest forms for ROC appointments is December 31.

4. Ex Parte Communications Disclosures

Chair Guerrero, Vice-Chair Faustinos, and Member Elizabeth Crosson disclosed separate meetings with Our Water LA (OWLA) to discuss the draft Biennial Report and a ROC workplan for 2024.

5. Public Comment Period

District staff compiled all public comment cards received by 5:00pm the day before the meeting, loaded them to the SCWP website, and displayed them on-screen. Participants on the Spanish translation line and call-in users were also invited to provide public comment.

District staff received three public comment cards beforehand and posted these on the SCW Program website. Comment cards received during the meeting will be added to meeting minutes and posted online after the meeting.

Maggie Gardner (OWLA) thanked the ROC for their leadership thus far and shared a comment letter from OWLA. Gardner voiced a few recommendations from the letter, including:

1. Immediately roll out Community Engagement, Education, and Workforce Development programs.
2. Ensure engagement and consultation with local Tribes and consider adding a tribal seat to the Committee. The County should also engage Watershed Coordinators to ensure local tribal consultation on projects that may be located on ancestral tribal lands.
3. Identify resource needs, including leveraging targets to meet those goals through cost-share partnerships.

Gardner noted that OWLA would have liked to see the ROC set community engagement standards, goals for hardscape removal, updated definitions for nature-based solutions, and recommendations related to school greening in the Biennial Report

Ray Tahir (TECS Environmental) provided a public comment. Tahir claimed that the existing ex-parte communication disclosure requirement is not required under the Brown Act, claiming that the Committee topics are not adjudicative matters. Tahir also requested that public comment periods within the SCW Program be extended to at least three minutes, noting similar programs that have longer comment periods than the SCW Program's. Tahir also claimed that in the Upper San Gabriel River watershed, stormwater capture projects cannot be proposed since the only possible capture is diversion from spreading grounds, which Tahir claimed would raise an issue under the California Environmental Quality Act.

Annelisa Moe (Heal the Bay) shared that Committee Members recently received the Vision 2045 Report. The Vision 2045 Report is a coordinated effort between the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), Heal the Bay, and LA Waterkeeper that identifies numeric targets and watershed specific priorities, including a 300,000 AFY stormwater capture goal, which is in line with Supervisor Horvath's recent motion from December 5. The report includes goals to comply with all total maximum daily load (TMDL) targets by

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2038, and a 50% pollutant load reduction by 2030. The Vision 2045 Report also features recommendations for the SCW Program to have a scientific advisory committee to work through water quality goals and oversee the Scientific Study portion of the SCW Program. Moe noted that recommendations also include creating more opportunities for community-driven projects and equitable access to the SCW Program in general, a numeric target for hardscape removal of 12,000 acres, and to create finance and policy goals. Moe encourages the ROC to adopt these goals through the Biennial Report process.

Bruce Reznik (LA Waterkeeper) provided public comment and expressed general support of the ROC's efforts in developing the Biennial Report. Reznik commented that the Biennial Report is currently "a plan to plan" and urged the ROC to dedicate time to set meetings to work on implementing the recommendations, to make tactical changes to criteria and metrics and set a broad vision. Reznik encouraged the ROC to create metrics down to the watershed level and work on strategic watershed planning, working with the different WASCs, Watershed Coordinators, and experts within each region, even to the level of identifying specific projects or types of projects.

Member Trevino clarified with County Counsel that ex-parte communication disclosures are intended to facilitate group discussions by establishing transparency and fairness. County Counsel explained that if a Committee Member received information outside the presence of other Committee Members, the ex-parte communication disclosures are a mechanism to share that outside information with other members to preserve the integrity of the decision-making process.

6. Discussion of revised biennial SCWP Progress Report

District staff presented the revised SCWP Progress Report. The [Draft Biennial Report](#) can be found on the SCW Program website.

Chair Guerrero summarized the actions taken since the first draft of the Biennial Report. At the last meeting, the ROC discussed the first draft of the report to include Member Blum's suggestions. A working group was formed and met to finalize the draft report presented. The working group included Member Blum, Member Norma Camacho, Member Lauren Ahkiam, and Vice-Chair Faustinos. Chair Guerrero thanked everyone who has been submitting comments and following the Biennial Report process.

Member Blum gave a presentation on the latest version of the draft Biennial Progress Report. Presentation slides are available on the [SCW Program website](#).

Member Blum shared that while the disadvantaged community benefits, nature-based solutions issues, and community engagement recommendations were not explicitly stated in last meeting's motion, they were not intended to be omitted, so these topics are included in the report. Member Blum highlighted noteworthy revisions, including restructuring the report and moving detailed information to appendices. Member Blum also shared key observations and findings from the Biennial Report and explained each of the specific recommendations. Member Blum commented that the Program has successfully launched and now needs to take a proactive approach toward achieving Program goals. Member Blum expressed that the Program needs more resources, measurable targets, plans and timelines, and collaboration with other existing programs to meet those goals.

Chair Guerrero shared that the goal of this ROC meeting is to adopt the report for public review and initiate a 30-day review process. This timeline would give District staff enough time to consolidate comments for the ROC to review by the next meeting and send to the Board in the first Quarter of 2024. Chair Guerrero expressed support in moving forward with the 30-day review process and noted that there was no significantly new information included, and the Biennial Report draft has been streamlined.

Member Trevino emphasized the importance of establishing water resiliency to overcome natural disasters. Member Trevino applauded the County's intent to move away from relying on imported water and underlined the importance of coordinating with other regional and municipal programs and water districts. Member Trevino motioned to approve the report and initiate a public review period, seconded by Vice-Chair Faustinos. Prior to moving on to Item 7, Chair Guerrero acknowledged the motion and the second, and asked if there was further discussion.

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Member Crosson acknowledged the Vision 2045 Report, which sets water quality and supply targets, and makes meaningful suggestions on community engagement, equity, and financial planning. Member Crosson suggested the ROC use the report as a foundation for setting strategic planning and measurable goals. Member Camacho agreed and recommended that each Committee Member carefully review the Vision 2045 Report so when the ROC reconvenes after submitting the Biennial Report, the ROC will be ready to incorporate specific metrics for the Program.

Member Mehranian mentioned that when developing implementation procedures for Biennial Report recommendations, it will be important to distinguish responsibilities, timelines, and financing.

Vice-Chair Faustinos expressed interest in seeing the SCW Program look for cost-share partnerships with other agencies, such as Infrastructure LA. Vice-Chair Faustinos reiterated the importance of getting input from District staff on what recommendations can be implemented in the short term without additional clearances. Vice-Chair Faustinos voiced that making incremental improvements will help the ROC not lose sight of the watershed planning effort as a whole.

Member Ahkiam asked District staff what the process looks like after the Biennial Report is finalized, noting that the ROC should evaluate the Metrics and Monitoring Study (MMS) results, the Vision 2045 Report, and the hardscape removal goals.

Member Ahkiam also asked District staff if there is a possibility of presenting the Biennial Report verbally to the Board to provide additional updates from the SCW Program, such as the Education and Workforce Development programs or highlighting case studies of specific projects. Member Ahkiam also responded to Chair Guerrero's suggestion of a 30-day public review period and suggested extending to a 45-day review period to be more reasonable to public comment given the upcoming holiday season.

Several Committee Members agreed that the ROC should develop a workplan to ensure the Committee makes progress on implementing the Biennial Report's recommendations. Chair Guerrero mentioned that part of this workplan should include meeting more frequently in 2024 and a more consistent meeting schedule. In response to Member Ahkiam's suggestion, Chair Guerrero voiced that the 30-day review period is necessary to prevent delaying the next ROC meeting.

The Committee clarified with District staff that during the transmittal of the Biennial Report, Committee Members can indicate interest to the Board in presenting an update. Member Ahkiam expressed interest in developing a presentation in order to highlight SCW Program progress. District staff explained that the Board regularly receives updates from District staff on the SCW Program and is interested in the Program's progress. Member Blum also noted that Director Pestrella provides regular updates to the Board. Chair Guerrero expressed availability in making a public comment at the Board's meeting if a presentation is not feasible.

7. Voting Items

- Approve the draft biennial SCWP Progress Report and initiate public review period

Member Trevino motioned to approve the draft biennial SCWP Progress Report and initiate a 30-day public review period of draft report, seconded by Vice-Chair Faustinos. The Committee voted to approve the draft biennial SCWP Progress Report and initiate a 30-day public review period, with 6 votes in favor (approved, see vote tracking sheet).

Member Crosson clarified with District staff that the end of the 30-day public review period would fall around January 8 and that the next scheduled ROC meeting is January 31. District staff explained that the existing proposed schedule would allow District staff to compile and send comments from the public review period to Committee Members by January 18. The Committee would then be able to address comments and suggest edits during the January 31 meeting. District staff emphasized that Committee Members would not be able to hold discussions related to addressing public comments prior to the January 31 meeting to comply with the Brown Act. District staff mentioned that an additional meeting on February 15 has been

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scheduled in case Committee Members decide that significant edits are required to address public review comments.

Once the Biennial Report is approved, ROC appointments and reappointments will be initiated by the Board. District staff shared plans to discuss potential topics for ROC meetings in 2024 with the ROC Chair and Vice-Chair.

8. Items for Next Agenda

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday January 31, 2024 from 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm. Items for the next meeting include

- Final review of public comments and consider approval of biennial SCWP Progress Report
- Discuss 2024 Priorities, Topics, and Schedule

Vice-Chair Faustinos and Chair Guerrero noted that a presentation from the authors of the Vision 2045 Report would be useful in early 2024. District staff will work on scheduling this and will follow up with the Committee.

Member Blum noted that the ROC needs to prioritize the recommendations being made, considering the resource and time constraints that exist. Member Blum noted that Director Pestrella has committed to meeting with the ROC in 2024 to discuss strategic planning.

9. Meeting Adjourned

Chair Guerrero thanked ROC members and the public and adjourned the meeting in honor and memory of local leader Lisa Ann Rapp.


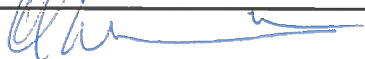





Regional Oversight Committee - December 7th - 2023

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Quorum Present				
Member Type	Member	Present?	Approval of the October 26, 2023 Meeting Minutes	Approve the draft biennial SCWP Progress Report and initiate a 30-day public review period of draft report
Voting Member	Maria Mehranian	x	a	y
Voting Member	Barbara Romero			
Voting Member	Diana Tang			
Voting Member	Kristine Guerrero	x	y	y
Voting Member	Belinda Faustinos	x	y	y
Voting Member	Elizabeth Crosson	x	y	y
Voting Member	Lauren Ahkiam	x	y	y
Voting Member	Charles Trevino	x	y	y
Voting Member	(VACANT)			
Non-Voting Member	Carl Blum	x		
Non-Voting Member	Norma Camacho	x		
Total Non-Vacant Seats	8	Yay (Y)	5	6
Total Voting Members Present	6	Nay (N)	0	0
		Abstain (A)	1	0
		Total	6	6
			Approved	Approved

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COMMITTEE MEMBER SIGN-IN



Member Name	Municipality/ Organization	Email Address	Signature
Voting Members			
Barbara Romero	City of Los Angeles		
Belinda Faustinos	Nature For All		
Charles Trevino	Upper San Gabriel Valley MWD		
Diana Tang	City of Long Beach		
Elizabeth Crosson	Metropolitan Water District		
Elva Yanez	Prevention Institute		
Kristine Guerrero	League of Cities		
Lauren Ahkiam	LAANE		
Maria Mehranian	Cordoba / Former RWQCB Chair		
Non-Voting Members			
Carl Blum	Flood Control District		
Norma Camacho	LA Regional Water Quality Control Board Chair		

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PUBLIC SIGN-IN



First Name	Last Name	Municipality/Organization	Email Address
Juan	Diaz Carreras	Black + Veatch	
Maggie	Gardner	DWLA	
Raina	Dwivedi	CNRG	
Rosa	Riz	Pacoma Beautiful.	
Rox	Rivas	Pacoma Beautiful	
Annelisa	Moe	Heal the Bay	
	*Personal contact information redacted to protect privacy.		

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PUBLIC SIGN-IN



First Name	Last Name	Municipality/Organization	Email Address
Bruce	Reznick	LAW	
Michael	Scodaro	City of LA - LASAN	

Virtual Attendees
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390000	Julie Millett
Aimee Zhao	Katherine Pease
Alonso	LACFCD - Jose Castro
Amanda Begley, TreePeople	Larry Tran - LACFCD
Anthony Barreras	Lisa Beutler
Ava Farriday	Luis Perez
Brenda Ponton	Luis Perez SCWP
C.J. Caluag	Marisela Velasquez
Caitlin Gray	Mark Nguyen
Call-in User_2	Megan Kung
Call-in User_3	Mei-Lin
Call-in User_4	Melania Gaboyan - LACFCD
Carlos Moran- ULAR Watershed Coordinator	Melanie Hu - LACFCD
CB	Melina Watts
Christine McLeod	Michael Lewis
D. Dolor	michelle
Daniel C	Mikaela Randolph
Daniel C. ES>EN<ES	Mike Antos
Deborah Bloome	Mossavi, Conor
Devon Provo	Nancy Shrodes she/her
Don C. Moss	Omar Gomez
Drew Ready CWH	Paige Bistromowitz
Emily Ng	Ramy Gindi
Ernie Rivera	Richard Watson
geraldine trivedi	Room C Monitor 1
Ghina Yamout	Ryanna Fossum, Regional Coordination
james cortes	Safe Clean Water LA
janet L	Sara
Jason Casanova, CWH	SCWP ROC
Jeannette	Serena Zhu
Jenny Chau	Thom Epps
Jenny Newman	Tiffany Wong
Jeremy McGranahan SGA	Uriel Cobian
Johanna Chang	Veronica
Joyce Amaro	Veronica A Carrillo
Julie Allen LASAN	Vivian Zamorano