

Safe, Clean Water Program

Lower Los Angeles River

Watershed Area Steering Committee (WASC)



Meeting Minutes:

Tuesday, April 28, 2020

1:00pm – 4:00pm

WebEx Video Conferencing

Attendees

Committee Members

Carolina Hernandez* (District)

Lyndsey Bloxom* (Water Replenishment District)

Kristen Ruffell (LA County – Sanitation)

Meredith Reynolds* (Long Beach Parks & Recreation)

James Vernon (Port of Long Beach)

Gladis Deras (South Gate)

Tammy Hierlihy (Central Basin)

Nick Jiles (Páo Strategies)

Manny Gonez* (TreePeople)

Melissa Bahmanpour (River in Action)

Dan Mueller (Downey)

Melissa You (Long Beach)

Chau Vu* (Bell Gardens)

Adriana Figueroa (Paramount)

Kelli Tunnicliff (Signal Hill)

Marybeth Vergara* (Rivers Mountains Conservancy)

Laura Ochoa (Lynwood)

Committee Members Not Present:

None

*Committee Member Alternate

See attached WebEx sheet for full list of attendees

1. Welcome and Introductions

Mr. James Vernon, the Chair of the Lower Los Angeles River WASC, called the meeting to order. As the official hosts of the WebEx meeting, Mr. CJ Caluag and Mr. Alvin Cruz of the District introduced themselves. Mr. Vernon asked the District for a roll-call of Committee members, and with a majority present, quorum was established.

Mr. Vernon then went over the various WebEx housekeeping items for both the Committee members and the general public's participation, and reminded participants that public comment cards can be sent to the Safe, Clean Water (SCW) email. Mr. Caluag referred to the WebEx Conferencing Guidelines document and displayed it on his screen to further illustrate the various functions available on the WebEx platform.

2. Approval of Meeting Minutes from March 10, 2020

The District uploaded a copy of the meeting minutes from the March 10th meeting on the SCW website. Mr. Vernon asked the committee members for comments or revisions.

With no comments or objections, the Chair asked for a motion and a seconding of the motion to approve the meeting minutes. Ms. Adriana Figueroa motioned to approve the meeting minutes as presented, with Ms. Lyndsey Bloxom seconding this motion. **With this, the March 10, 2020 meeting minutes stand as approved as stated by the chair.**

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3. Committee Member and District Updates

Mr. Vernon reminded participants to use the “raise hand” feature to be called upon for speaking during this meeting.

Mr. Caluag stated that the District would like to thank everyone for participating in today’s meeting and for the Committee’s continued contribution to the SCW program during this difficult time. The current SCW program has been shifted due to the pandemic. The District anticipates that each of the nine WASCs will be approving their respective Stormwater Investment Plans (SIP) by late May or early June. This would allow the nine SIPs to be brought before the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors (Board) for approval in August.

Mr. Caluag then gave a brief update on the fund transfer agreements (FTAs). The public comment period for FTAs ended on April 21st. Over 50 comment letters were received and SCW staff is currently working on addressing comments received. The FTAs are expected to go to the Board of Supervisors on June 2nd.

Mr. Caluag then gave a brief update on the Watershed Coordinator. The solicitation (Request for Statement of Qualifications) is anticipated to be out for public review in late May, with a pre-bid virtual meeting in June. Board approval is anticipated in September for the initial award of contracts.

4. Public Comment Period

Mr. Caluag reminded participants to use the “raise hand” feature to be called upon during this public comment period.

The District received two letters from Our Water LA, which will be included in the meeting minutes. Ms. Kim Orbe, who is with Nature4All and Our Water LA, stated she was happy to hear the two letters were received, stated that she is concerned with the public participation process due to having difficulty with navigating the SCW website, that the process for this program is very difficult to understand, and that agendas must be available before the actual meetings, that their two letters list projects that they both support and do not support, and that community members are funding these projects so they should have a voice with what projects are considered and selected.

5. Discussion and Voting Items:

Mr. Vernon reminded the audience that this part of the agenda will be the longest, and that members are asked to raise their hands and request a break should it be needed and necessary.

a) Ex Parte Communication Disclosures

Ms. Marybeth Vergara stated that the Rivers and Mountains Conservancy (RMC) also received the Nature4All / Our Water LA letter, and that the RMC is in agreement with various points raised in the letters.

b) Overview of the SIP Programming Guidelines

Mr. Caluag began this discussion by referring to the previously shared and discussed SIP Programming Guidelines, including a brief discussion for both the Infrastructure Projects and the Technical Resources Program, with Attachment A demonstrating the various potential funding scenarios.

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Previously, the District had suggested an 80 percent funding allocation for the SIP. However, the current COVID pandemic has introduced a lot of uncertainty. Also, it's important to note there was not a Watershed Coordinator during this process. This said, these funds will prove beneficial in the current economy, so these are circumstances that each Committee will need to take into account when designating a percent funding SIP allocation. If the Committee ultimately elects to move forward with a higher allocation near the initial 80 percent recommendation, a written justification will be required to accompany the requested percent allocation as it moves forward for approval consideration.

c) Overview on Ranking process and tools

At the last WASC meeting, the 13 present Committee members were asked to rank the projects. The District developed a ranking tool which was shown at the last WASC meeting. The District reached out to the other 4 Committee members that did not attend the March 10th meeting and added the rankings of two additional members for a total of 15 Committee members that ranked the 12 projects. The ranking results were entered into the ranking tool, with the latest results shown via the shared-screen feature on WebEx.

Ms. Carolina Hernandez asked for further elaboration on what each of the column titles in the ranking results mean, and Mr. Caluag explained that the left column was the total score each project received, the middle column is the program place for each project type (IP, TRP, SS), and the far right column was the overall (1 through 12) ranking.

Mr. Manny Gonez asked how the Committee can see the results from the two additional members that were not present at the March 10th meeting, and Mr. Caluag stated that those results can be shared.

Ms. Vergara asked if the RMC was given the opportunity to submit its rankings, and Mr. Caluag stated that the rankings were sent to both Mr. Stanley and Ms. Vergara recently with no response. The ranking sheet will be resent to the RMC for consideration.

Ms. Figueroa asked if the District can show which Committee members still need to cast their rankings. Mr. Caluag explained that out of the 17 Committee members, 15 have submitted their rankings. The remaining two Committee members that have not cast their rankings are the RMC and Central Basin. Central Basin is now represented on the Committee by Ms. Tammy Hierlihy, who explained that she has replaced Kevin Wattier who is no longer with Central Basin.

Ms. Orbe stated that Nature4All/Our Water LA supports the Salt Lake Park project, which is highly ranked, has leveraged funds, and provides disadvantaged community (D.A.C.) benefits. However, Nature4All/Our Water LA opposes the regional bacteria scientific study since the study does not support the goals of the SCW program. Funding should instead be spent on multi-benefit projects, and the scientific study should seek funding from other available sources.

As a reminder, the District reminded everyone that the ranking results are not a formal vote, but rather a tool for the WASC to utilize for further consideration at its discretion with developing the final SIP.

Mr. Caluag now referred the group to the SIP planning tool and demonstrated how projects can be selected and deselected for the LLAR watershed, which anticipates \$12.8 million for regional program funding per year. As a reminder, there were 12 submitted projects for consideration and the regional program must dedicate a minimum of 85 percent of the funds to the infrastructure projects, no more than 10 percent to the Technical Resources Program, and no more than five

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percent to the Scientific Studies. Please note that the \$12.8 million annual funding does not take into account any appeals, credits or other tax relief programs. The District will have a better idea of how the funding is looking in late May. The SIP planning tool has the ability to show how much funding is allocated each year, dependent on the available funding amounts per fiscal year including any unspent funding which gets carried over. Mr. Caluag ran various scenarios to show whether the group was below, at or above the \$12.8 million funding amount, and also demonstrated how selected projects would need to show it would receive its full funding.

d) [Voting Item] - Assign Percent allocation target

Mr. Vernon reminded the group that it is to set a percent amount allocation for the first year and subsequent years. For example, the District has, prior to the pandemic, initially suggested allocating up to 80 percent for the first year, and up to 50 percent in the subsequent years.

Before this discussion begins, Mr. Caluag suggested that percent allocation voting can take place after the discussion of projects. Mr. Vernon agreed with this and on behalf of the Committee, deferred item 5.d in the agenda and to instead first discuss item 5.e in the agenda.

e) Discussion of project rankings

Mr. Vernon reminded the group that for this discussion, the District can show projects or documents on the screen, and that everyone is to use the “raise-hand” feature before speaking.

Ms. Kelli Tunnicliff asked Ms. Bloxom to reiterate which infrastructure projects have high infiltration rates. Ms. Bloxom stated that there are three projects located within the Montebello Forebay – an area that we would anticipate is conducive for infiltration into drinking water aquifers: John Anson Park, Salt Lake Park, and Furman Park. Ms. Vergara stated that this information is very helpful, and asked if these three projects have a higher ranking due to each having a higher infiltration rate. Ms. Bloxom stated that while there is a lot of information to review for each application, her particular focus was on the total capacity of each project’s infiltration volume.

Ms. Bloxom requested the District to show the project rankings on the WebEx screen. Mr. Jiles stated that he missed the previous Committee meeting, but stated that the lens he is using to look at projects in light of the current pandemic is looking at ongoing operations, maintenance, and monitoring and what those projects mean in terms of either part-time or full-time jobs. There is water capture benefits with many of these projects, but Mr. Jiles would like to see projects that will create jobs and have a greater community focus and not just dig a hole in the ground.

Mr. Jiles asked if any projects will be getting resubmitted, or have any changes made to the submitted projects. Mr. Caluag stated that as a Committee, the projects must be considered as is and that these projects were already evaluated by the Scoring Committee. If the WASC decides to not program a particular project, the project can make modifications and resubmit.

Mr. Gonez expressed TreePeople’s strong support of Salt Lake Park and we have done a lot of work in Huntington Park. Speaking of local hiring component, Mr. Gonez agrees with Mr. Jiles. This project is ranked high in water quality and nature-based solutions, leverages local funds, serves a D.A.C., and has the potential for community engagement.

Ms. Hernandez appreciates the project rankings, and would like to see the top four ranked projects be put into the SIP planning tool to further the discussion. Mr. Caluag stated one idea is to have the Committee view various scenarios and when one particular scenario appears to work, have a

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Committee member propose a motion for an organic process. Ms. Tunncliff requested that the top five (highlighted in green in the SIP ranking tool) projects be included in the SIP programming tool, and Mr. Vernon requested that the top four IPs be combined with the TRP projects. Mr. Caluag uploaded the top 3 IPs and the top 4 TRPs on the SIP programming tool, which showed that the funding total is well beyond the funding allocation.

Mr. Jiles stated that at the March 10 meeting, he was more inclined to support the TRPs, but is now reconsidering this should funding be available in future years in support of IPs. Mr. Caluag stated that a little more than 80 percent of the SCW funds have been collected to date, taking into account that these totals have not processed any of the tax relief programs. As a result, there is some uncertainty that needs to be factored into future years, which includes the current pandemic and that there may be better projects in the future that require consideration as well.

Mr. Vernon asked City of Long Beach staff if the LB-MUST project was still willing to reallocate its funding request into future years to readjust totals in the SIP programming tool so that \$4 million is not being requested in Years 1 and 2. City of Long Beach staff was working its numbers to see if it could adjust its funding requests for the LB-MUST project.

Ms. Hernandez asked if the TRPs can be prioritized, and Mr. Caluag stated that this should not be an issue as the TRPs are not a significant funding request. Ms. Hernandez also asked for running a scenario on the SIP programming tool with the top two IPs and the top two TRPs.

Ms. Bloxom asked if any of the project applicants anticipate a shift in spending/focus where any of their projects would not be moving forward after all given the current pandemic and that many anticipated expenditures are being cut or reduced in various agencies. Mr. Vernon stated that there are no delays to the LB-MUST project as the City of Long Beach has the ability to front the necessary funds and be reimbursed by the SCW program. Ms. Figueroa stated that the Committee will need to explore funding the LB-MUST in future years, and the City of Long Beach understands this.

Ms. Chau Vu gave a brief update on the John Anson Ford Park Infiltration project. The project is in the top two and the cisterns are currently under construction. Ms. Vu requested that she needs to know now what the funding commitment is for consideration of additional cisterns. Mr. Vernon asked if this project could request less than \$10 million in the first year, and if so, what that amount would be. Ms. Vu stated that \$8 million in Year 1, and \$2 million in Year 2 would work. Mr. Jiles asked if the project will include a dedicated bike lane, or will the active transportation have any distinction between the bikers and walkers, and also asked how many trees will be added to the park. Ms. Vu stated that 60 trees will be added, and that a walking trail is being added that is not a designated bike trail.

f) Public Comment Period

As a reminder, the WASC will vote on the SIP submittal, but the actual commitment and agreement comes from the Board to formalize the actual funding transfer agreements. Mr. Mike Antos asked if the new guidance for the WASC from the District is to allocate 50 percent for Year 1, and Mr. Caluag stated that this was mentioned to the Chairs, but this is not the direction going forward. The District still recommends being more conservative with the SIP allocations this year, but not necessarily at 50 percent as recently recommended. In short, the WASC must consider all factors, including not having the watershed coordinator on board and the current economic climate given the pandemic. Should the WASC elect for a high percent allocation, a written justification will need to accompany the request.

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As requested, Mr. Caluag adjusted funding requests for John Anson (\$8 million in Year 1; \$2 million in Year 2) and for LB-MUST (shifted all funding requests down 2 fiscal years) in the SIP Programming Tool. With the top 3 IPs selected, and adding the 4 TRPs and the 1 SS, the percent allocations are moving closer to within realm, but still above the recommended targets. Mr. Vernon asked to remove the 1 SS and the 4 TRPs while leaving the top 3 IPs and the watershed coordinator, and the results look better, but the percent allocation in FY 22-23 is still high. Mr. Vernon asked for the top two IPs and the top two TRPs and the watershed coordinator, and the results all appear below the recommended targets.

Ms. Hernandez stated that for these exercises, the City of Long Beach's funding requests were moved and asked if the reallocation of funds be moved into Year 2 (FY 21-22) to reduce the percent allocation in Year 3 (FY 22-23). Mr. Vernon agreed and asked that \$4.3 million be reallocated evenly amongst Years 2 and 3 with reconsidering the top 4 IPs. The top 4 IPs scenario runs much higher than the recommended percent allocations, and the top 3 IPs results are better, but still require adjustments to get within the recommended allocations. Ms. Kristen Ruffell stated that the SIP Programming Tool has an error in Years 2 through 5 (row D). The error was corrected and helped adjust the figures favorably.

Ms. Tunncliff asked if the City of Long Beach's LB-MUST project can distribute one-third of its funding request over the last three years in the SIP. City of Long Beach staff did not respond to this inquiry.

Ms. Bloxom asked if the Salt Lake Park project funds could also be redistributed. Mr. Gerald Greene spoke on behalf of the project and stated that funds could potentially be redistributed, but that the Year 1 funding request need to remain in place. Ms. Bloxom stated that right now, the funding requests are showing \$2 million for Year 1, which appears to be feasible, but Year 2 is asking for \$8 million and Year 3 is asking for \$10 million and these totals may affect the percent funding allocation for future years. Mr. Caluag stated that in the past, the District was recommending 80 percent allocation in Year 1, with a 50 percent funding allocation for future years. Given the current pandemic, the District is recommending lower funding allocation threshold, but this is ultimately up to the Committee to vote and decide what are proper percent allocations each year. The Committee must keep in mind that if the requested percent allocations are too high, the Regional Oversight Committee (ROC) and/or the Board could deny the SIP approval and bring it back to this WASC for lower revised percent allocations. Mr. Vernon added that another reason to not fully allocate funding in Year 1 is because there is a call for more projects that will need to be considered, and suggests the Committee proceed in a conservative way to allow for the consideration of future projects.

Mr. Vernon asked for a scenario showing the top two IPs and the top two TRPs in the SIP Programming Tool. Ms. Ruffell expressed concerns with elevating the top two TRPs as there are other projects that ranked higher, and that if the top two TRPs are being considered before the higher ranked projects, that the Committee needs to vote on this before proceeding. Ms. Ruffell's recommendation is that if the Committee is going to consider lower ranked projects over higher ranked projects, the Committee must first vote before proceeding down this path. Mr. Vernon also agreed with Ms. Ruffell's recommendation. Mr. Caluag reminded the Committee that this particular voting item is not on the agenda and as a result, cannot be voted on at this time, but this voting item can be added to the next agenda. Mr. Antos asked for clarification on whether the projects considered by the Committee are embedded in the adoption of the SIP, and not necessarily require a vote for which projects are considered for inclusion in the SIP. Ms. Ruffell followed up that the Committee should not have an "up and down" vote, or have a different set of priorities that have already been established via the project rankings. Ms. Figueroa agreed with Ms. Ruffell's recommendations, noted that the City of Bell Gardens' project is ready to proceed with construction,

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and stated that other projects that are not “shovel-ready” need to include funding for design for further consideration.

Mr. Caluag demonstrated on the SIP Programming tool that by selecting the top four IPs and the watershed coordinator, the percent allocations are well above 100 percent. The Committee members have the option of making a motion to proceed with a certain combination of projects and conduct a roll-call of all voting members to debate or approve a combination of projects. Mr. Vernon stated that the Committee is still waiting to hear from the City of Long Beach on whether its funding requests can be pushed back to the later years, and that in comparing the two IPs and the watershed coordinator versus the three IPs and watershed coordinator scenarios, the only viable option at this time appears to be the two IPs and a watershed coordinator. This scenario appears to be fair to future applicants with not over-allocating future funds, while staying within reasonable percent allocations for Year 1 and future years.

Mr. Thuan Nguyen reminded the Committee that taking into account its nearly \$13 million annual SIP allocation, the percent generated by each agency in this WASC needs to be returned to each contributing agency over a five-year period.

Ms. Vu asked in terms of the SIP, what is the timeline looking like for approval. The District envisions having the final SIPs completed by the end of May, with transmittal for approval consideration by the Board in August.

Mr. Vernon believes the Committee will not be able to entertain item 5.g on the agenda today as the considered projects need to determine what funding amounts it can approve for each year with the five-year SIP. Unless there are further comments, Mr. Vernon moves to adjourn the meeting and welcomes a discussion on this motion.

Ms. Tunncliff previously asked if the City of Long Beach’s LB-MUST project can distribute one-third of its funding request over the last three years in the SIP, and if so, would this allow other projects to be considered for funding. LB-MUST appears to be taking up a large sum of the funds and prevents other projects from moving forward for further consideration. Mr. Vernon restated that this is why he motioned to adjourn the meeting as discussions cannot be constructive without the considered project applicants giving their input and approval for a reallocation of its funding requests. Ms. Tunncliff asked if the Committee can propose reallocated funding amounts to each project applicant and then have each project applicant approve or deny the proposed reallocations. Mr. Vernon indicated that this approach works.

Ms. Gladis Deras asked if the LB-MUST project has first year funds for construction, and Ms. Melissa You stated that the project is currently in construction, that funding for the project cannot be pushed back to future years in the SIP and is instead needed in the first three years of the SIP. Ms. You provided the reallocated funding requests as follows for the LB-MUST: \$1 million in FY 2020-21 (Year 1); \$5 million in FY 2021-22 (Year 2); and \$4.8 million in FY 2022-23 (Year 3). With these updates made to the SIP Programming tool, Mr. Caluag showed that the percent allocations appear reasonable each year when the top two IPs and the watershed coordinator are considered for funding. Under this scenario, Ms. Tunncliff stated that additional projects can now potentially be considered for Years 4 and 5.

Mr. Vernon invited project proponents for the IPs ranked number 3 (Salt Lake Park) and number 4 (Furman Park) to discuss if receiving funding in Years 4 and 5 of the SIP would be palatable for their respective projects. For Salt Lake Park, Mr. Greene spoke on behalf of the City of Huntington Park and indicated that Year 1 (FY 2020-21) will require design and permitting funding, with a potential for no construction in Year 2 (FY 2021-22), meaning no funding necessary in Year 2, and starting construction in Year 3 (FY 2022-23) which is when funding would be necessary. As such,

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\$8 million was moved to Year 3 (previously in Year 2) and \$10 million was moved to Year 4 (previously in Year 3) for Salt Lake Park. For Furman Park, Mr. John Hunter spoke on behalf of the City of Downey and indicated that the project team would like to get the design started as soon as possible should grants or other opportunities arise, meaning Year 1 (FY 2020-21) or Year 2 (FY 2021-22) for design funding, but the future project construction funding can be flexible with the necessary timelines. Ms. Tunncliff suggested moving the construction funds to Years 4 (FY 2023-24) and 5 (FY 2024-25), and while Mr. Hunter agreed with this proposal, he stated that this proposed shift in funding would need to be run by and approved by Mr. Dan Mueller from the City of Downey. Mr. Delfino Consunji of the City of Downey joined the meeting late and participated with adding that moving the funding to Years 4 and 5 works with the City of Downey. As such, the SIP Programming tool was updated with these revised funding allocations. Mr. Vernon stated that these latest results look in line with the pre-COVID percent allocation targets.

Mr. Antos reminded the Committee that the TRPs are not considered for funding under this current SIP programming scenario. Ms. Debbie Enos stated that as the project applicant for Parque Dos Rios Bioswale (TRP), this effort allows for community engagement and shaping of future projects in lieu of a watershed coordinator being on board, and supports TRP funding consideration during this current process. In running a new scenario with the top four IPs, the top two TRPs and the watershed coordinator, the revised funding allocations for each year are significantly above the recommended percent allocations, with the far right column showing close to a 90 percent allocation over the five year period.

Ms. Figueroa stated that she was recommending that only design funding be looked at for the top five IPs, and asked if this was possible. Mr. Vernon reminded that the SCW guidelines do not allow for partial funding.

Mr. Vernon reminded the Committee that voting item 5.d in the agenda (Assign Percent allocation target) was deferred to after a discussion of the projects (item 5.e in the agenda), and ask the Committee if it is ready to propose a percent allocation.

Ms. Hernandez stated that it would be beneficial if we received a quick recap of what project proponents we have heard from, and which projects modified their funding requests within the five-year period. The projects that have made funding adjustments are LB-MUST, John Anson Park, Salt Lake Park, and Furman Park. We have not heard from Spane Park.

With the revised funding allocations, Mr. Vernon asked to see the SIP Programming tool with just the top-two IPs and the watershed coordinator. The revised funding allocations for each year are significantly below the recommended percent allocations, with the far right column showing a 34 percent allocation over the five year period.

Mr. Caluag reminded the Committee that projects that are not considered for funding can remain in the consideration pool for future funding, or revise the project and resubmit by the July 31st deadline.

Ms. Tunncliff asked to see the SIP Programming tool with the top-three IPs and the watershed coordinator. The revised funding allocations for Years 1 and 3 are above the recommended percent allocations, with the far right column showing a 65 percent allocation over the five year period.

Mr. Greene proposed that the Salt Lake Park move its design and permitting funding request from Year 1 (FY 2020-21) to Year 2 (FY 2021-22), and that the City of Downey move its Year 1 funding request to Year 2 for the Furman Park project, with City of Downey staff concurring.

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Ms. Vergara asked for a status on the watershed coordinator, and Mr. Caluag restated that the release of the Statement of Qualifications and a pre-bid meeting will be occurring in May. There will be an interview process in August that will involve this Committee, and receive Board approval for the hiring of the watershed coordinator sometime in September.

Ms. Hernandez is pleased with today's process with hearing from project proponents and hear from each about their projects. I agree with Mr. Vernon on needing to be more conservative with percent allocations, and the Committee needs to balance consideration for the "shovel-ready" projects while leaving available funding for future projects submitted for further consideration.

Ms. Tunncliff stated that with the top-four IPs and the watershed coordinator, the percent allocation for Year 4 (FY 2023-24) is rather high. Mr. Vernon responded that all five year percent allocations are rather high given that there are four more rounds of project solicitations.

Mr. Jiles echoed the concern with needing to be conservative and would be more comfortable if percent allocations were more in the 50 to 60 range. Mr. Jiles asked to see the SIP Programming tool with the top IP, top TRP, and the watershed coordinator. The revised funding allocations for each year are significantly below the recommended percent allocations, with the far right column showing a 19 percent allocation over the five year period.

Mr. Vernon asked to see the SIP Programming tool with the top two IPs, and the watershed coordinator. The revised funding allocations for each year are below the recommended percent allocations, with the far right column showing a 34 percent allocation over the five year period. Mr. Vernon believes this is what should be considered for SIP percent allocations. Ms. Hernandez reiterated that a project that is not chosen does not mean that it cannot apply again in July, and we need to emphasize that we should not overcommit future funding.

Mr. Nguyen believes there are a lot of good IPs, but the funding allocation is approximately \$13 million and the top five IPs are requesting double the annual allocation, so his recommendation was that project applicants reduce funding amounts over more years to allow each agency to see its funding contribution returned.

Mr. Vernon asked Ms. Vu if her project was not approved this year, would her project be willing to resubmit and request less funding by building less infiltration modules to help reduce the percent allocations. Ms. Vu stated that the project is in construction now and that her order for additional infiltration modules would need to be placed now to complete the project now while the hole is dug and open.

Mr. Caluag asked if the Committee intends to not fund any TRPs. Mr. Gonez said he would prefer seeing the top three IPs, no TRPs, and the watershed coordinator. Ms. Vergara requested that a TRP be considered for funding this year.

Ms. Erica Maceda asked if the projects will help support local workforce. Mr. Caluag stated that the fund transfer agreements must follow the LA County labor code. Ms. Melissa Bahmanpour asked that projects state their plans for hiring local work or any form of local community benefits for hiring. The District requests that the project proponents be available at the next meeting to answer Ms. Maceda's question and any other questions that may arise.

Ms. Bloxom asked if the meeting minutes will include the shifting of funding allocations for various projects in different years ran on the SIP Programming tool. Mr. Caluag stated we can post the pre- and post-results with a "Draft" on each sheet for the benefit of the Committee.

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g) [Voting Item] – Confirm Final Stormwater Investment Plan (*if time permits*)

No vote on the final SIP was taken at this meeting.

6. Break

No break was taken by the group.

7. Items for the Next Agenda

Ms. Ruffell presented a motion to adjourn the meeting and put on the next agenda the following: vote to include or not include each of the 12 submitted projects in the SIP. This motion was seconded by a Committee member.

To adjourn the meeting, Mr. Caluag conducted a roll call and the following voted in favor of adjournment: Ms. Hernandez, Ms. Hierlihy, Ms. Bloxom, Ms. Ruffell, Mr. Vernon, Mr. Jiles,, Ms. Vergara, Mr. Gonez, Ms. Meredith Reynolds, Ms. Maceda, Ms. Vu, Mr. Consunji, Ms. You, Ms. Laura Ochoa, Ms. Figueroa, Ms. Tunncliff, and Ms. Deras.

8. Adjournment

Mr. Vernon thanked the District for the WebEx platform and the committee members and public for their time and participation and adjourned the meeting.

Next Meeting:

Tuesday, May 12, 2020

1:00pm – 3:00pm

WebEx Meeting – See SCW website for meeting details

Future Meetings:

Next meeting: Tuesday, May 26, 2020 (*if necessary*)

LOWER LOS ANGELES RIVER WASC MEETING - APRIL 28, 2020

		Quorum Present				Voting Items	
Member Type	Organization	Member	Voting?	Alternate	Voting?	Assign Percent Allocation Target	Adjorn
Agency	District	Dan Sharp		Carolina Hernandez	x		Y
Agency	Central Basin	Tammy Hierlihy	x	n/a			Y
Agency	Water Replenishment District	Diane Gatza		Lyndsey Bloxom	x		Y
Agency	LA County Sanitation Districts	Kristen Ruffell	x	Mike Sullivan			Y
Agency	Port of Long Beach	James Vernon	x	Dylan Porter			Y
Community Stakeholder	Páo Strategies						
Community Stakeholder	Conservation Corps of Long Beach	Nick Jiles	x	Kedrin Hopkins			Y
Community Stakeholder	Rivers & Mountains Conservancy	Mark Stanley		Marybeth Vergara	x		Y
Community Stakeholder	TreePeople	Cindy Montanez		Manny Gonez	x		Y
Community Stakeholder	City of Long Beach Parks & Recreation	Stephen Scott		Meredith Reynolds	x		Y
Community Stakeholder	River in Action	Melissa Bahmanpour	x	Erica Maceda			Y
Municipal Members	City of Commerce						
Municipal Members	City of Bell Gardens	Gina Nila		Chau Vu	x		Y
Municipal Members	City of Downey	Dan Mueller	x	Delfino Consunji	x		Y
Municipal Members	City of Long Beach	Melissa You	x	Alvin Papa			Y
Municipal Members	City of Lynwood	Laura Ochoa	x	Noe Martinez			Y
Municipal Members	City of Paramount	Adriana Figueroa	x	Sarah Ho			Y
Municipal Members	City of Signal Hill	Kelli Tunncliff	x	Cecil Looney			Y
Municipal Members	City of South Gate	Gladis Deras	x	Clint Herrera			Y
Total Non-Vacant Seats		17			Yay (Y)	0	17
Total Voting Members Present		18			Nay (N)	0	0
Agency		5			Abstain (A)	0	0
Community Stakeholder		5			Total	0	17
Municipal Members		8				Not Approved	Approved

Attendees

Lower Los Angeles River WASC Meeting - April 28, 2020

Julie Millett	mark.seits@hdrinc.com	Mike Sullivan
Tammy Hierlihy	Kristen Ruffell	CRobinson
christina	Lyndsey Bloxom	Jacqueline McMillen
Bryce Lee (JLHA)	gderas	Laura Ochoa
MFRARY	Donna Bloom-Crook	JAIME.SAYRE
Dan Mueller (P)	jason.fussel	James
Michelle Kim	Javier Yescas	Kevin Kim
Mackenzie	Gregor	Kast
Alvin Papa	Safe Clean Water LA	CJ Caluag - LACFCD
Ariella	ktunnicliff	GGreene
Dan Mueller	Oliver Galang	KALLEN
mgonez	eback	Melissa Bahmanpour
Mayra Cabrera	Thuan Nguyen (LA County)	Deborah Enos
Jonathan Abelson	Joe Venzon	porter
Marybeth Vergara	Mike Antos (Stantec)	Erica Maceda
Bryce Lee (JLHA)	Carolina T Hernandez	dconsunji
Meredith Reynolds	Chau Vu	Jacqueline McMillen
Richard Watson	Adriana Figueroa	john
Nicholas Jiles	Kim Orbe	Melissa You
Oliver Galang	eback	



DATE: March 10, 2020

TO: WASC Chair & Members
CC: LAC SCWP Staff

RE: **OurWaterLA Recommendations Concerning the Watershed Area Stormwater Investment Plan for 2019-2020**

OurWaterLA (OWLA) is a diverse coalition that has engaged communities, businesses, and organizations across Los Angeles County, building support to reinvent and reinvest in our water future using nature based infrastructure that provides community health benefits, environmental health benefits, and economic benefits. OWLA recommends that funding priority be given to the projects that best exemplify the goals of the Safe, Clean Water Program (SCWP), and that consideration should be given to reserving future funds for future exemplary projects.

FUNDING ALLOCATION FOR STORMWATER PROJECTS

The Stormwater Investment Plans (SIPs) must achieve the fourteen programmatic goals clearly laid out in the SCWP Implementation Ordinance (Attachment 1), including the goals to improve water quality and contribute to attainment of water-quality requirements, as well as multiple additional community investments such as prioritization of nature based solutions, community engagement, equity, and quality jobs. Our top issues are shown below in bullet point format and described more robustly in Attachment 1.

Nature Based Solutions

The prioritization of nature based solutions is a specific programmatic goal of the SCWP, and therefore must be reflected in the projects for the SIP.

Community Engagement

A plan for future community outreach is not sufficient for true community engagement in a project. Priority should be given to projects for which local community engagement, designed specifically for the proposed project, has already been initiated.

Equity

One of the most innovative aspects of the SCWP is the written requirements for the equitable distribution of community investments. When assessing the 110% benefit return on investments

for disadvantaged communities, it is important to clarify what type of benefits a project provides, and whether the proposed investments directly benefit the receiving community and verified by local community groups.

Quality Jobs

At a minimum, funding through the SCWP SIP must be contingent upon providing direct community investments, such as high quality local job and training opportunities.

We recommend that all of these programmatic goals be considered when selecting projects for full or partial funding for the 2019-2020 SIP, and that consideration be given to reserving future funds for future exemplary projects. One opportunity to reserve future funding is to fund projects in phases, to get projects through initial project development, such as project design.

FUNDING ALLOCATION FOR SCIENTIFIC STUDIES

There have also been proposals for funding through the SCWP Scientific Studies Program. The purpose of the Scientific Studies Program is to provide funding for scientific and technical activities, including, but not limited to, scientific studies, technical studies, monitoring, and modeling related to *stormwater and urban runoff capture and pollution reduction*.

OWLA recommends that no funding be allocated for the Regional Scientific Study to Support Protection of Human Health through Targeted Reduction of Bacteriological Pollution. We have serious concerns about the legitimacy of this proposed study. It has no hypothesis or clear methodology, and no scientific professionals were involved in the development of the study, as is required under the SCWP Scientific Studies Program when feasible.

This proposal is asking for nearly \$10 million region-wide over the next five years to target a specific source of a specific pollutant rather than providing multiple benefits, and to potentially weaken water quality objectives rather than improving our water quality. This proposed study will not support many of the program goals, listed in Attachment 1. Additionally, there are other potential funding sources for this study including the Stormwater Monitoring Coalition, which already has a similar study in its 5-year plan. **This nearly \$10 million should be spent to invest in our communities with multi-benefit stormwater capture projects.**

Further, for those WASCs considering the Wet Weather Zinc study, this proposal is asking for \$500K to potentially weaken water quality objectives, rather than improving our water quality. Funds should instead be spent on multi-benefit stormwater capture projects. The Safe, Clean Water Program is not the right funding source for this study because this study does not support many of the goals of the Safe, Clean Water Program or its Scientific Studies Program. There are other potential ways to achieve this type of recalculation, including working with the State Water Resources Control Board.

Thank you all for the considerable time and effort that you have contributed to the implementation of the Safe, Clean Water Program. We look forward to continuing our collaborative work with each of you, with the County of Los Angeles, and with our communities to most efficiently and effectively reinvest in our water future. Many of us, including WASC members, recognize that this is a complex process, and we would be remiss not to stop and strongly re-evaluate the context for making these critically important funding recommendations. OWLA core team members want to work with you to be part of the solution for meeting water quality standards by implementing multi-benefit projects. Thank you for your consideration of these recommendations.

Sincerely,

OWLA Core Team

ATTACHMENT 1

Safe, Clean Water Program Implementation Ordinance: Section 18.04 SCW Program Goals.

- A. Improve water quality and contribute to attainment of water-quality requirements.
- B. Increase drought preparedness by capturing more Stormwater and/or Urban Runoff to store, clean, reuse, and/or recharge groundwater basins.
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- D. Leverage other funding sources to maximize SCW Program Goals.
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- L. Implement an iterative planning and evaluation process to ensure adaptive management.
- M. Promote green jobs and career pathways.
- N. Ensure ongoing operations and maintenance for Projects.



DATE: April 24, 2020

TO: Watershed Area Steering Committees (WASC), Scoring and Regional Oversight Committee (ROC) Members
Los Angeles County Safe Clean Water Program Staff
Los Angeles County Board Public Works Deputies

RE: **OurWaterLA Recommendations - Watershed Area Stormwater Investment Plan for 2019-2020**

On March 10, 2020 OurWaterLA (OWLA) submitted a memo for distribution to the WASC committees specifying our recommendations for the Watershed Area Stormwater Investment Plans (SIP) under consideration by the WASCs prior to the Safer at Home order. However, only a few of the WASC groups had the opportunity to review the memo. Given our new reality and the conditions under which extremely important decisions will be considered by the WASCs we wish to summarize and update the points we believe are extremely important to ensure that the decision-making process is transparent and results in only the best projects being funded during these unprecedented times.

The following are the major issues that we believe are critically important for your consideration as you deliberate on the recommendations you will be making for this first round of funding recommendations. Given the vast number of issues you will have to consider we are providing “bullet” points but encourage all members to review our more in-depth recommendations provided in the attached March 10, 2020 memo (Attachment 3). OWLA recommends the following:

Best Practices for Public Participation

- Notify the public of all meetings and hearings at least 72 hours in advance. Information on public meeting times, topics, and how public comments will be received should be easy to find on the SCWP website home page and within the meeting agendas (*currently not the case*). This information, as well as any additional accompanying meeting materials, should be translated into at least Spanish and Mandarin.

- Ensure language access needs are met by providing interpretation during public meetings. For remote meetings, use teleconference lines or audio channels.
- Consider participation barriers for members of the public that may not have access to the internet or a computer. Provide adequate telephone options, with interpretation, for virtual meetings and receiving public comments. Having multiple avenues to engage in a given meeting will ensure more robust dialogue and input.
- Use best practices for public comment periods in virtual hearings and meetings. This includes giving ample time for the public to submit comments prior to a meeting through multiple avenues and live during a meeting.
- Provide links to all materials including presentations at least 72 hours prior to each meeting.

Project Funding Recommendations

- Fund projects that best exemplify the goals (Attachment 2) of the SCWP. The best projects out of the 53 that are eligible for funding are listed in Attachment 1.
- No funding for the Regional Scientific Study to Support Protection of Human Health through Targeted Reduction of Bacteriological Pollution. We have serious concerns about the legitimacy of this proposed study.
- Fund projects in phases to get projects through initial project development, such as project design in order to preserve funds for future years.
- Require that all Technical Resources allocations include the development and implementation of a Community Engagement Plan.

Community Engagement, Equity, Community Investments & DAC Benefits

- Require that all project funding recommendations include a sustained community engagement element with the assistance of local experienced NGOs from design through construction and operations and maintenance.
- Require that all projects which claim points for Community Investments submit letters from local community groups verifying that the project includes tangible community investments.
- Those projects which claim that jobs will provide direct community investments, such as high quality local job and training opportunities must include documentation as to how they will achieve this goal.

ATTACHMENT 1

Projects Recommended for Funding

Project Name	WASC	Notes
MacArthur Lake Rehabilitation Project	Central Santa Monica Bay	<u>SCORE: 70</u> A strong water quality improvement project that uses nature-based solutions and provides DAC benefits and some additional community investment benefits.
Monteith Park and View Park Green Alley Stormwater Improvements Project	Central Santa Monica Bay	<u>SCORE: 80</u> A strong nature-based water quality improvement project that provides DAC benefits and some additional community investment benefits.
Salt Lake Park Infiltration Cistern	Lower Los Angeles River	<u>SCORE: 76</u> A strong nature-based water quality improvement project that is leveraging funds to provide DAC benefits and some additional community investment benefits.
Hermosillo Park Regional Stormwater Project	Lower San Gabriel River	<u>SCORE: 84</u> A good water quality improvement project which will provide additional community investment benefits.
East Los Angeles Sustainable Median Stormwater Capture Project	Rio Hondo	<u>SCORE: 83</u> A good water quality improvement project that is leveraging funds and using nature-based solutions to provide significant water supply benefits, DAC benefits, and some additional community investment benefits.
Hasley Canyon Park Stormwater Improvements Project	Santa Clara	<u>SCORE: 63</u> A good water quality improvement project that is leveraging funds and using nature-based solutions to provide some additional community investment benefits.
Rory M. Shaw Wetlands Park Project	Upper Los Angeles River	<u>SCORE: 96</u> Strong water quality improvement project that is leveraging funds and using nature-based solutions to provide significant water supply benefits, DAC benefits, and some additional community investment benefits.
Strathern North Stormwater Capture Project	Upper Los Angeles River	<u>SCORE: 89</u> Good water quality, nature-based elements and community benefits project that would benefit DAC communities and had support letters from local groups.

Bassett High School Stormwater Capture Multi-Benefit Project	Upper San Gabriel River	<u>SCORE: 92</u> Strong water quality improvement project that leverages funds and uses nature-based solutions to provide some water supply benefits, DAC benefits, and some additional community investment benefits.
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Attachment 2

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Attachment 3
March 10, 2020 Letter from OWLA to WASCs



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TO: WASC Chair & Members
CC: LAC SCWP Staff

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