

# Safe, Clean Water Program

## Upper Los Angeles River

### Watershed Area Steering Committee (WASC)

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#### **Meeting Minutes:**

Wednesday, May 5, 2021

2:00pm - 4:00pm

WebEx Meeting

#### **Attendees**

##### Committee Members Present:

Genevieve Osmena (Los Angeles County Flood Control District)

Art Castro\* (LA Dept of Water and Power)

Paul Lui (LA Dept. of Water and Power)

Alfredo Magallanes (Los Angeles - Sanitation)

Cathie Santo Domingo (LA Recreation & Parks)

Ernesto Pantoja (Laborers Local 300)

Miguel Luna (Urban Semillas)

John Luker (Santa Susana Mountain Park Association)

Veronica Padilla-Campos (Pacoima Beautiful)

Yazdan Emrani (Glendale)

Patrick DeChellis (La Cañada Flintridge)

Teresa Villegas (Los Angeles)

Max Podemski (Los Angeles)

Rafael Prieto (Los Angeles)

Paul Alva (Los Angeles)

Kris Markarian (Pasadena)

##### Committee Members Not Present:

Jacob Lipa (Lipa Consulting)

\*Committee Member Alternate

See attached sign-in sheet for full list of attendees

#### **1. Welcome and Introductions**

Teresa Villegas, Chair of the Upper Los Angeles River WASC, welcomed Committee Members and called the meeting to order.

CJ Caluag (District) facilitated the roll call of Committee Members. All committee members made self-introductions and a quorum was established.

#### **2. Approval of Meeting Minutes from April 7<sup>th</sup>, 2021**

The District provided a copy of the meeting minutes from the previous meeting. Yazdan Emrani motioned to approve the minutes. Genevieve Osmena seconded the motion. The District asked the committee members for comments or revisions. None noted. The Committee voted to approve the April 7<sup>th</sup>, 2021 meeting minutes. (Approved, see vote tracking sheet).

#### **3. Committee Member and District Updates**

Veronica Padilla asked if a Spanish translator was present the District indicated that there are no current translation services available for the entire meeting. Currently, there are translator services for Public Comment cards and that it is encouraged that individuals that speak Spanish to have a translator for the meeting. Rafael Prieto and Teresa Villegas supported the same sentiment. Teresa Villegas offered to draft a formal letter for this. Miguel Luna added that residents that speak other languages than English voted for Measure W and that the committee would like to have a more in-depth response from the District during the next meeting regarding the efforts for this matter.

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The District provided the District updates, noting: Call for Projects deadline is July 31, 2021 and that the District will host two informational sessions scheduled tentatively for end of May and early June. Links for this will be posted on the website. Project applicants are encouraged to contact their watershed area managers for conceptual approval letters by the end of May. This includes any projects that may involve District infrastructure. Scientific studies from SCCWRP have been posted on the website. Reporting module is live on the website. Quarterly reports from project proponents that were issued first-year funds are due May 15<sup>th</sup>. There were reporting module informational sessions conducted last week and will be posted on the website. Six (6) WC contracts have been executed. The WCs for ULAR are in progress due to pending insurance documentation. Mike Antos with Stantec will continue in the role of the Regional Coordinator and facilitate WC onboarding.

Teresa Villegas asked if the WC insurance requirements will delay matters. District responded that the delay will not delay matters. Mike Antos noted that nonprofits go through a couple of extra steps with their insurance companies to obtain the required documents, hence the current delay.

#### **4. Ex Parte Communications**

Teresa Villegas noted to have met with City of Los Angeles colleagues to review projects under WASC consideration.

Miguel Luna noted that as a consultant with LADWP on two projects being considered in the SIP, he will abstain from participating in the SIP process and any conversations that have influence over the projects.

#### **5. Public Comment Period**

Paola Machan (Mujeres de la Tierra) expressed support for the Lincoln Park Neighborhood Green Network Project (LASD).

Jackie Keene (LA City Council District Two) reemphasized Councilman Paul Krekorian's support for the Stormwater Capture Park Projects at North Hollywood Recreational Center and at Valley Plaza Park (LADWP).

Karina Andrade (East LA Remarkable Citizens Association) expressed support for the Lincoln Park Neighborhood Green Street Network (LASD).

Denise Villamil (Alma Family Services) expressed support for the Lincoln Park Neighborhood Green Street Network Project (LASD).

Melinda Ramos, Senior Managing Director with USC's Community and Local Government Partnerships, expressed support for Lincoln Park Neighborhood Green Street Network (LASD).

Paola Bassignana, Planning Director for District 7 and on behalf of Councilwoman Rodriguez, expressed support for David M. Gonzales Recreation Center Stormwater Capture Project (LADWP) in Pacoima.

Jose Rodriguez, Deputy District Director for LA City Councilmember Gil Cedillo, expressed support for the Lincoln Park Neighborhood Green Street Network Project (LASD).

Matilda Reyes expressed support for David M. Gonzales Recreation Center Stormwater Capture Project (LADWP) in Pacoima. She also expressed support for the request to provide language translation for these meetings.

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Charles Nelson expressed support for David M. Gonzales Recreation Center Stormwater Capture Project (LADWP) in Pacoima.

Juan Salas (Pacoima Resident) expressed support for David M. Gonzales Recreation Center Stormwater Capture Project (LADWP) in Pacoima.

#### 6. Discussion Items

##### a) Summary of Scientific Studies from the Southern California Coastal Water Research Project (SCCWRP)

Teresa Villegas asked if there were any questions regarding the following four projects: Evaluation of Filtration Testing Methods for Design Stormwater Drywell Systems (CSU Pomona - \$554,000); The Fire Effects Study in the Upper LA River Watershed Management Area (SGVCOG - \$805,000 over 3 years); The LAUSD Living Schoolyard Program Pilot Study (TreePeople - \$943,000); and The Regional Pathogen Reductions Study (Gateway Water Management Authority - \$8.4M over 5 years). The District suggested tabling 6a item and discussing the Scientific Studies under 6c, as indicated. No one had questions.

##### b) Review Preliminary Ranking of Projects

The District mentioned that the point system is for the ranking of projects and is not indicative of votes, but merely a tool to gauge members' feelings on respective projects, to help populate the SIP. The District provided background on the ranking of the projects: if a project was ranked 1, it received 16 points out of the 16 projects; if a project was ranked 16, it received 1 point out of the 16 projects.

Teresa Villegas asked if based on the votes, it appears that the David M. Gonzales Center Stormwater Capture Project (LADWP) project received the highest votes from the Committee's ranking sheets. The District indicated that in a sense, it did, but he would use the word "rankings" instead of "votes." Most of the committee members ranked the David M. Gonzales Center Stormwater Capture Project (LADWP) as their number one choice.

##### c) Upper Los Angeles River (ULAR) Project Prioritization and Selection Discussion for populating the Fiscal Year 2021-22 Stormwater Investment Plan ([SCW Portal](#) & [ULAR Scoring Rubric](#))

The District provided an overview of the SIP and the SIP tool. The District referred to the Safe, Clean Water Program Implementation Ordinance Chapter 18.07, Regional Program Implementation, section B.2: Not less than 85% of budget shall be allocated to Infrastructure Program activities, not more than 10% shall be allocated to Technical Resources Program activities, and not more than 5% shall be allocated to Scientific Studies Program. Projects that assist in achieving compliance with a MS4 Permit shall be prioritized. Disadvantaged Community (DAC) shall not be less than 110% of the DAC ratios. Each municipality shall receive benefits in proportion to the funds generated within their jurisdiction – this is benefits received, not investment received. The District is working on a map to display where the projects are currently located and how large they are, regarding funding request to measure the benefits received. A spectrum of projects types and sizes shall be implemented throughout the region, to the extent feasible.

The District explained a scenario for the SIP voting process: The first step was to review the first year SIP, Project developers were sent an email requesting any changes and the District did not receive any changes; Then, the WASC can have an organic discussion on the second year projects. The District noted that the project proponents and applicants were invited to answer any last questions and concerns. And finally, to come up with project scenarios and populate the SIP. The District explained that if the SIP includes all projects that were submitted, the SIP would be over allocated. The plan is to turn on/off the current projects in the SIP tool.

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Teresa Villegas asked for clarification on the amounts allocated for Round 1 that amount that carried over to Round 2. The District indicated that there was a total of \$33.5M allocated from the previous fiscal year. That the left-over amount was \$11.3M. When adding the estimated amount, it resulted in \$16.3M, which placed them at 67% allocation without any of the new projects submitted.

Teresa Villegas for clarification if the \$11.3 million were from last year and the \$16.3 million for this year. The District clarified that the \$16.3 million is the amount available.

Paul Liu proposed that the Committee only look at the top 3 to 5 projects without calling them top scored or top ranked to see how they look like in the SIP. The District populated the projects in the SIP tool: David M. Gonzales Center Stormwater Capture Project (LADWP); Westmont - Vermont Avenue Green Improvement Project (LACPW); Valley Plaza Park Stormwater Capture Project (LADWP); Altadena Lake Avenue Green Improvement Project (LACPW); and Broadway-Manchester Multi-Model Green Streets Project (LADWP)

Teresa Villegas asked if entering the top 5 IP projects meant that they allowed \$13.5M in funding. The District indicated that \$13.5 million is what is left over.

Veronica Padilla commented on the lack of schools being prioritized. She asked the Committee to consider allocating funds for schools in the budget, such as Victory Elementary School (LAUSD), which she ranked highly for. Veronica Padilla asked to provide a SIP scenario with Victory Elementary School (LAUSD).

Genevieve Osmena requested to include both projects submitted to the Technical Resources Program into the SIP Tool.

Alfredo Magallanes commented that the Lincoln Park Neighborhood Green Street Network (LASD) project is the only one in the list that addresses TMDL fully and should therefore be factored into the SIP.

The District displayed in the SIP tool a repopulated chart with the top 5 projects, Victory Elementary School (LAUSD) and Lincoln Park Neighborhood Green Street Network Project (LASD), which resulted in \$9.6 million left for funding without having yet factored in the Scientific Studies and Technical Resources funding allocations.

Teresa Villegas asked if the funding request for Altadena Lake Avenue Green Improvement Project (LACPW) was just for Planning and Design and if they were planning to return with a greater amount of funding. TJ Moon, speaking on behalf of the County, indicated that they do intend to return and request construction funds. However, they do plan to match that funding with their Municipal funds. Furthermore, they are only going to ask within their 5-year reconciliation amount of \$3 million a year.

Paul Liu asked Peter Tonthat (LADWP) to explain LADWP's distribution of numbers and if the water that goes into the ground water basin will only benefit the citizens of Los Angeles or other pumps within, such as the Cities of Burbank, Glendale, and San Fernando. Regarding the first question, Peter Tonthat (LADWP) responded that the project team had asked executive management if they could stretch out construction efforts to beyond the scheduled 5 years, thus reducing the annual funding request in order to remain within the annual allocation of the SIP. This resulted in requesting up to 8 years of funding, causing the first two years of funding request to be below the \$1 million mark. Regarding the second question, the projects will replenish the San Fernando water basin. Burbank and Glendale will also benefit from water replenishment because they pump from the same groundwater basin.

Teresa Villegas asked the amount of funding upfront being requested and, the amounts for each year thereafter, and if funds are being divided over the next five years equally, given that the total asked amount is \$92M. She also noted that the project is heavy on water supply and asked if there are any water quality benefits. Peter Tonthat (LADWP) answered that for the first year 2021, DWP is asking for \$1.8M. For 2022-

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23, DWP is asking around \$2.7M. Followed by \$7.4M the third year, \$10.1M the fourth year, \$14.7M the fifth year, and the remaining future years would be about \$55.4M. He also noted that the project addresses Community Benefits.

Teresa Villegas asked if LADWP would commit to placing infrastructure projects on the federal or state level during years 4 and 5. Peter Tonthat (LADWP) responded that they would consider the suggestion and would discuss it with executive management.

Rafael Prieto asked if DWP can consider increasing their match, even slightly. Peter Tonthat (LADWP) responded that they could consider, however; that it would require the Board's approval since most of their Stormwater projects have been approved for 50% match.

Kris Markarian drew attention to a high priority and TMDL project; Arroyo Seco-San Rafael Treatment Wetlands. The District added the project to the SIP tool.

Ernesto Pantoja asked if there was a representative for the LA Pierce College Northeast Campus Stormwater Capture & Use and Biofiltration (LACCD) to clarify the funding request of \$500K for the first year and \$5M for the second year. He suggested that the \$5M be distributed over a few years rather than the lump sum of \$5M. Daniel Apt responded that it can be distributed over a couple of years. Daniel Apt also added that they did not receive any communication associated with providing additional information, causing their project score to drop by 19 points, potentially affecting the viability of the project. The District noted that the project passed the threshold, so there wouldn't be a need to provide additional information at this point. However, the Committee can take this into consideration when they make their project selection. Ernesto Pantoja asked for the Los Angeles Pierce College Northeast Campus Stormwater Capture & Use and Biofiltration (LACCD) to be added into the SIP.

Alfredo Magallanes asked Scott Kindred and Ali Sharbat from the Cal Poly Drywell System Study; if funding were to be provided, will students be involved without having to hire any outside consultants? Ali Sharbat indicated that students would be engaged in the project.

Alfredo Magallanes asked to see how the Evaluation of Infiltration Testing Methods for Design of Stormwater Drywell Systems (California State Polytechnic University, Pomona) will look like in the SIP. Teresa Villegas agreed.

Art Castro asked for the North Hollywood High School Comprehensive Modernization Project (LAUSD) project to be added in the SIP, noting that the yield is 2,000-acre feet per year of water supply, which roughly translates to 6,000 households' worth of water supply. He asked the Committee to consider the value of the project, which in this case is water for around 250,000 homes in its 40-year lifespan. It has tangibles for the community, but it has huge benefits to the City of LA and the region. It will reduce the reliance on MWD water. It is critical for the water supply portfolio.

Kris Markarian asked Katie Ward, representative for the Fire Effects Study in the ULAR Watershed Management Area (SGVCOG), if the total funding request was \$1M. Teresa Villegas commented that she has noted the amount to be \$805,000 over three years. Around \$264,000 a year.

Dawn Petschauer commented that the Fire Effects Study in the ULAR Watershed Management Area directly addresses the wildfire that the communities have been (and continue to be) plagued with at an increasing rate. She also commented on the importance to prove if zinc loading is being exacerbated by these fires because it may have huge implications on the number of projects that need to be inputted into the Region. She also noted that they continue to receive calls in support for the study not just from stakeholders in the Region, but also from many in the State; they have interest from the Rio Hondo cities,

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San Gabriel Cities, and Cal Fire. The District asked for clarification on the fiscal breakdown. Matt said the \$619,850 is the ULAR portion.

#### **7. Public Comment Period**

Christos Chrysiliou (LAUSD) commented that students should be taught the principles of capturing and infiltrating water at school sites so that they become better climate change activists.

Blake Whittington (TreePeople Inc.) expressed support for the LAUSD Living Schoolyards Program Pilot Study (TreePeople).

Richard Watson (Pathogen Reduction Study) commented on the possible scheduling conflict he has for the next meeting. He would like to be able to give a brief explanation on the importance of the Pathogen Reduction Study in terms of its impact on future investment in infrastructure projects. He also would like to explain the comments made by the three academic reviewers. The District suggested that Richard Watson submit a public comment card for the next meeting or speak at the beginning or second period of the meeting.

Mirna Romero expressed her support for the Lincoln Park Neighborhood Green Network project.

#### **8. Voting Items**

No voting today

#### **9. Items for Next Agenda**

a) Validate DAC Benefit for Fiscal Year 2021-22 ULAR IP Projects (if needed) during the Thursday, May 20, 2021 meeting

b) Approve the final Fiscal Year 2021-22 Stormwater Investment Plan funding recommendations for the ULAR Watershed Area and approve submission to the Regional Oversight Committee for review

#### **10. Adjournment**

Teresa Villegas thanked WASC members and the public and adjourned the meeting.

**Upper Los Angeles River  
May 5, 2021**

Upper Los Angeles River May 5, 2021					
	Quorum Present				Voting Items
Member Type		Voting?	Alternate	Voting?	Meeting Minutes
Agency	Genevieve Osmena	x	Ramy Gindi		y
Agency	Delon Kwan		Art Castro	x	y
Agency	Paul Liu	x	John Huynh		y
Agency	Alfredo Magallanes	x	Michael Scaduto		y
Agency	Cathie Santo Domingo	x	Javier Solis		y
Community Stakeholder	Ernesto Pantoja	x	Sergio Rascon		y
Community Stakeholder	Miguel Luna	x	Yvette Lopez-Ledesma		y
Community Stakeholder	John Luker	x	Wendi Gladstone		y
Community Stakeholder	Jacob Lipa				
Community Stakeholder	Veronica Padilla-Campos	x	Felipe Escobar		y
Municipal Members	Yazdan Emrani	x	Edward Hitti		y
Municipal Members	Patrick DeChellis	x			y
Municipal Members	Teresa Villegas	x	Barbara Romero		y
Municipal Members	Max Podemski	x	Ackley Padilla		y
Municipal Members	Rafael Prieto	x			y
Municipal Members	Paul Alva	x	TJ Moon		y
Municipal Members	Kris Markarian	x			y
Total Non-Vacant Seats	17			Yay (Y)	16
Total Voting Members Present	16			Nay (N)	0
Agency	5			Abstain (A)	0
Community Stakeholder	4			Total	16
Municipal Members	7				Approved

## Attendees

### Upper Los Angeles River WASC Meeting - May 5, 2021

Safe Clean Water LA	Eileen Alduenda	Jud Warren	Luis Garcia
Sheila Brice	Tracey Chavira	Matt Romero	Paul Alva
Brian	Manny Gonez	Ernesto Pantoja	Brianna Datti
TJ Moon	Oliver Galang, Craftwater DVBE	Melanie Rivera	Cindy Ortiz
Gus Orozco	Heather Repenning	Amy Meenan	Matt Rich
Yvana Hrovat	Carlos Moran	cathie Santo Domingo	Peter Tonthat
Roberto Perez	Michael Scaduto	Jose Rodriguez	Katie Ward
Nayiri Vartanian	Jae	Sarai Bhaga	Melissa Levitt
Hans Tremmel	Aiyla Balakumar	Brenda Stevens	Denise Villamil
Julia Hawkinson	Kris Markarian	Limor Horowitz	Teresa Villegas
Gustavo Orozco	Vik Bapna - CWE	Stephen Walker	Shahriar Eftekhazadeh
jqm	Taraneh Nik-Khah	Mara Luevano	Shahid Abbas
Dennis & Trinh Ortega	Dominick Ortiz	Haris Harouny	Art Castro
Scott Kindred	Gregor Patsch	Veronica Padilla	MARIA JIMENEZ-TORRES
Pauline Nguyen	Paola Bassignana	Michelle Kim	Jazmin Hurtado
Ali Sharbat	John Gulliver	Karen Lee	john huynh
Paola Machan	ilene Ramirez	Clarasophia Gust	Susie Santilena
Cindy Montanez	Jason Casanova	Carmen Andrade	Patrick DeChellis
Miguel Luna	Joe Venzon - LA County	Mehrad Kamalzare	Lauro Alvarado
Robert Vega	Blake Whittington	Rafael Prieto	Jon Ball
SEA- Mirna Romero	Jackie Keene - Council District 2	Joyce Amaro	Thuan Nguyen
Lorena Matos	Jim Rasmus	Melinda Ramos-Alatorre	Matilda Reyes
Kirk Allen	Mike Rudd	Mitra Nehorai	Johanna Chang
Susana Carmona	Kevin Chang	Conor Mossavi	Mohammed Baig
wendy dinh	Brad Parks	Curtis Fang	Genevieve Osmena
brett perry	Ana Tabuena-Ruddy	Pamela Ku	Maritsa DRA INC.
Cal Poly-Ali Sharbat	Tara Liampetchakul (LAUSD)	Ariel Whitson	Daniel Apt
Scott Singletary	max podemski	Alynn Sun	Kelsey Reed
Yaz Emrani	Wendi gladstone	Jalaine Verdiner	De HB-D



**Committee Member Rankings (Non-Voting Item, used to get a sense of what projects the committee is considering)**

		Rankings	
Program	Project Name	Score	Program Place
IP	David M. Gonzales Recreation Center Stor	180	1
IP	Westmont - Vermont Avenue Green Improvem	154	2
IP	Valley Plaza Park Stormwater Capture Pro	151	3
IP	Altadena - Lake Avenue Green Improvement	142	4
IP	Broadway-Manchester Multi-Modal Green St	139	5
IP	Arroyo Seco-San Rafael Treatment Wetland	127	6
IP	Altadena Mariposa Green Street Demonstra	123	7
IP	North Hollywood Park Stormwater Capture	111	8
IP	Lincoln Park Neighborhood Green Street N	102	9
IP	Metro Orange Line a Water Infiltration a	85	10
IP	Los Angeles Pierce College Northeast Cam	78	11
IP	Victory ES - DROPS	66	12
IP	North Hollywood High School	52	13
IP	Thomas Jefferson High School Comprehensi	52	13
IP	Northridge Middle School	28	15
IP	Woodlake ES - LID Project	20	16

Program	Project Name	Score	Program Place
TRP	McCambridge Park Stormwater Capture Mult	21	1
TRP	South Pasadena Huntington Drive Regional	16	2

Program	Project Name	Score	Program Place
SS	Evaluation of infiltration testing metho	37	1
SS	Fire Effects Study in the ULAR Watershed	26	2
SS	LAUSD Living Schoolyards Program Pilot S	24	3
SS	Regional Pathogen Reduction Study	15	4



# Public Comment Form

Name:\* \_\_\_\_\_ Organization\*: \_\_\_\_\_

Email\*: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone\*: \_\_\_\_\_

Meeting: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

- LA County Public Works may contact me for clarification about my comments
- \*Per Brown Act, completing this information is optional. At a minimum, please include an identifier so that you may be called upon to speak.

Phone participants and the public are encouraged to submit public comments (or a request to make a public comment) to [SafeCleanWaterLA@dpw.lacounty.gov](mailto:SafeCleanWaterLA@dpw.lacounty.gov). All public comments will become part of the official record.

Please complete this form and email to [SafeCleanWaterLA@dpw.lacounty.gov](mailto:SafeCleanWaterLA@dpw.lacounty.gov) by at least 5:00pm the day prior to the meeting with the following subject line: "Public Comment: [Watershed Area] [Meeting Date]" (ex. "Public Comment: USGR 4/8/20").

## Comments

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Name:\* \_\_\_\_\_

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## Comments

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## Comments

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