

# Safe, Clean Water Program

## Santa Clara River

### Watershed Area Steering Committee (WASC)

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#### **Meeting Minutes:**

Thursday, June 3, 2021  
10:00am – 12:00pm  
WebEx Meeting

#### **Attendees**

##### Committee Members Present:

Julian Juarez (District)	Dianne Erskine-Hellrigel (St. Francis Dam Disaster National Memorial Foundation)
Dirk Marks (Santa Clarita Valley Water Agency)	Bruce Hamamoto (LA County Public Works)
Steve Cole (Santa Clarita Valley Groundwater Sustainability Agency)	Jason Gibbs (Santa Clarita)
Kristen Ruffell (LA County - Sanitation)	Heather Merenda (Santa Clarita)
Janine Prado (Santa Clarita Recreation & Community Services)	Robert Newman (Santa Clarita)
Hunt Braly (Poole & Shaffery)	David Peterson* (Santa Clarita)
Mary Johnson (Agua Dulce Town Council)	
Sandra Cattell (Santa Clarita Sierra Club)	

##### Committee Members Not Present:

None

\*Committee Member Alternate

See attached sign-in sheet for full list of attendees

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

Mr. Jason Gibbs, Chair of the Santa Clara River WASC, called the meeting to order.

Mr. CJ Caluag of the District facilitated the roll call. All committee members made self-introductions, and a quorum was established.

#### **2. Approval of Meeting Minutes from May 6<sup>th</sup>, 2021**

The District uploaded a copy of the meeting minutes from the May 6<sup>th</sup> meeting, and Mr. Caluag asked the committee members for comments or revisions.

Ms. Sandra Cattell suggested revisions to the minutes clarifying her statements regarding Project Labor Agreements. Mr. Steve Cole motioned to approve the meeting minutes as amended, with Mr. Hunt Braly seconding the motion.

The Committee voted to approve the meeting minutes (Approved, See Vote Tracking Sheet).

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

Mr. Caluag provided the District updates noting: The Call for Projects (CFP) Round 3 deadline is July 31, 2021. The District held a CFP informational session on May 27, 2021 and will have an additional CFP session on June 3, 2021 at 3PM. There were minor updates made to the Project module and they will be discussed in the informational session webinars.

The SCR WASC Watershed Coordinator (WC), TreePeople Inc., is now onboarded. At this time, seven out of 12 WCs for the WASCs have been officially onboarded.

Municipal Program FY 21-22 Annual plans were due on 4/1/21. Cities must submit their Annual Plans to receive their annual portion of the Municipal program revenue. Cities are urged to submit their Annual Plans as soon as possible. The District intends to disburse the Municipal program revenue by August 2021.

The District announced that Interim Nature-based Solutions (NBS) and Disadvantaged Community (DAC) Programming Guidelines are now available on the SCW website under the Regional Program. These guidelines will provide NBS and DAC guidance to the WASCs when evaluating projects submitted for consideration in Round 3 and beyond.

#### **4. Watershed Coordinator Updates**

Mr. Peter Massey of TreePeople Inc. provided an overview of the role and tasks as the SCR Watershed Area (WA) WC. Mr. Massey discussed nine tasks that are included in the WC scope of work and the Strategic Outreach & Engagement Plan. Mr. Massey noted that TreePeople Inc. intends to report on the progress of their Strategic Outreach & Engagement Plan (Plan) at the July 1, 2021 WASC meeting, and will provide a draft Plan prior to the August 5, 2021 WASC meeting for discussion and approval. Mr. Massey mentioned that they have toured the WA with Ms. Dianne Erskine-Hellrigel and thanked the Acton Town Council and others.

Mr. Hunt Braly asked if TreePeople Inc. was a WC for any of the other WASCs. Mr. Massey responded that TreePeople, Inc. is a WC for just this WA but that they hold a seat on the Lower Los Angeles River WASC.

Mr. Bruce Hamamoto thanked TreePeople, Inc. for their community outreach efforts with the Hasley Canyon Park Project, including reaching out to interested stakeholders to attend the meeting. Additionally, there is a June 16<sup>th</sup> follow up meeting with the Castaic Town Council, in which TreePeople, Inc. will be invited to attend.

Ms. Heather Merenda asked about the type of coordination the WC will have with this WA's Enhanced Watershed Management Program (EWMP) and the Integrated Regional Water Management Program (IRWMP) efforts. Mr. Massey responded that they will review each of these efforts with the Outreach Plan and may need to follow-up separately.

Regarding Castaic Town Council, Mr. Braly requested that the WASC members be notified when there are meetings or presentations that affect the SCW program and encouraged the WC to attend the Castaic Town Council. Ms. Sandra Cattell agreed with Mr. Braly that WASC members should be invited to all community engagements.

Ms. Mary Johnson responded that Mr. Massey has attended the latest Agua Dulce Town Council meeting and that she met with him during his visit with the Acton Town Council.

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#### 5. Ex Parte Communication Disclosure

None.

#### 6. Public Comment Period

Mr. Caluag stated that the District's new protocol is that public comments submitted at or before 5 P.M. the day before a scheduled meeting will be posted on the SCW website, and all public comments will be memorialized with today's meeting minutes.

Ms. Sarai Jimenez of OurWaterLA submitted a public comment card.

Mr. Richard Watson, the project proponent of the Regional Pathogen Reduction Study, commented that he is available for questions.

Ms. Jaqueline Ayer of the Acton Town Council thanked Mr. Massey and Ms. Johnson for their tour visit of the Acton community.

#### 7. Discussion Items

a) Santa Clara River (SCR) Project Prioritization and Selection Discussion for populating the Fiscal Year 2021-22 Stormwater Investment Plan (SCW Portal)

Mr. Caluag brought up the Stormwater Investment Plan (SIP) Tool from the previous WASC meeting in which the two submitted projects (Via Princessa Park Technical Resources Program and the Regional Pathogen Reduction Special Study) were discussed. At today's meeting, these projects can be discussed further and each of the project applicants are available to answer any questions. Please note that at the last meeting, the Newhall Park Infrastructure Program project requested to delay funding from this current and the subsequent fiscal years (FY21-22 and FY22-23) and move that funding instead to FY23-24. Lastly, the SIP includes the WC funding throughout each FY.

i) Infrastructure Program (IP)

ii) Technical Resources Program (TRP)

(1) Via Princessa Park Project – City of Santa Clarita

(2) Watershed Coordinator

iii) Scientific Study (SS)

(1) Regional Pathogen Reduction Study – Gateway Water Management Authority

Mr. Watson stated that the Regional Pathogen Reduction Study (Study) has been reviewed by the Regional Board and that it is a much better project than last year's Study. Regarding the comment letter of opposition from OurWaterLA, Mr. Watson clarified that scientists have been involved in the Study. These Study efforts were commenced due to the belief that the regulated community cannot meet the wet-weather fecal indicator bacteria standards due to these standards including a number of other warm-blooded species that enter the storm drain system. Mr. Watson stated that they applied to eight of the nine Watershed Areas, including not applying with the North Santa Monica Bay (SMB). At this time, the South SMB WASC has approved the Study, while other WASCs have opposed.

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Mr. Watson responded to the SCCWRP scientific summary by noting that the project details were intentionally vague to allow for stakeholder input.

Ms. Ayer has expressed support of the DNA portion of the Study, but has concerns over the implications of modeling and monitoring for the Study. Ms. Ayer agreed with Mr. Hamamoto's suggestion to require the project proponent to coordinate with communities where monitoring will occur, but is concerned because the proposal will be considered without amendments. Ms. Ayer requested that the WASC not approve the project and suggested that the project proponent reach out to the effective community for input and amendments to the Study. Mr. Watson responded that they communicated with the community through these WASC meetings, that the proposed monitoring within urban areas is consistent with what is being done now for the City of Santa Clarita, and that representatives from Acton can be on the Study's stakeholder committee. Finally, Mr. Watson added that his team will need to do a better job of educating everyone on the importance of the Study.

Mr. Gibbs requested clarification if the WASC would have to continue to fund the Study if it goes beyond 5 years and if the Study is considered ineffective. The District replied that the project would be required to report on a quarterly basis and any changes or updates from the applicant can be reviewed by the WASC, which can then determine if they would want to continue funding the Study or not.

Ms. Cattell stated that the WASC brought up issues pertaining to the SCCWRP summary at the previous meeting, and recommended that the WASC not approve the Study and that Mr. Watson provide a plan in writing that addresses the concerns of the rural communities.

Ms. Johnson asked what components of the Study have changed from their first submittal. Mr. Watson responded that they incorporated feedback from the Regional Board indicating the Study would encourage the regulated community to not address the current pathogen/bacteria problem, so language was included to indicate that permittees would continue to address the pathogen/bacteria problems while the Study was taking place. Ms. Johnson expressed disappointment that feedback from rural communities was not included in the second submittal and recommended removing this Study from SIP consideration.

Mr. Braly asked for confirmation that the Study's focus is on the urban areas and not the rural areas, and Mr. Watson confirmed this to be the case. Mr. Braly asked why has it been problematic to add the rural community, and Mr. Watson responded that the rural areas have more infiltration and do not have the runoff that picks up the atmospheric deposition and other sources that would normally arrive at the receiving waters. Mr. Watson commented that emphasis from the Regional Board is on what gets into the receiving waters from highly urban watersheds.

Mr. Braly asked how the lack of support from other WASCs would affect the Study's economy of scale, and Mr. Watson responded that they could proceed with the Study with approval from just two or three WASCs and that they can develop a process to involve more Watershed Areas later. Mr. Watson stated they would not start monitoring right away and they would take time to educate other Watershed Areas to bring them onboard in the future. Mr. Braly asked for input from City representatives on their thoughts of the Study. Mr. Darin Seegmiller noted that the Study has the potential to be beneficial to the City and reduce the City's compliance obligation. Mr. Seegmiller commented from the City's perspective that there is concern over the Study's economy of scale. Mr. Watson

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responded that anyone not contributing to the Study will not have any monitoring done and/or benefit from the Study.

Ms. Ruffell commented in support of the Study, but is concerned that funding from the first and second years from South SMB and this WASC would be used to bring other WASCs onboard and not use the funding for the actual Study. Mr. Watson responded that some funding would be used to revise the Study and recoupe from the future WASCs that join the Study. Mr. Watson added that the Study's project proponents would use their own money and time to educate the remaining Watershed Areas. Ms. Ruffell commented that she would feel more comfortable if Mr. Watson could commit to any work needed to bring in other WASCs is not funded by this WASC or any other WASC that approves this Study for SIP funding. Mr. Watson replied that he believes that this is possible by only designing a monitoring program for the Watershed Areas that approve the Study for SIP funding and not use any of the funding to redo the application.

Similarly to Mr. Seegmiller, Mr. Hamamoto commented in support of the Study on behalf of the Municipalities. Municipalities are tasked to comply with the Water Board regulations, and believes that the task to comply is near impossible to achieve, specifically the wet-weather bacteria requirements in the EWMP and the Reasonable Assurance Analysis (RAA) are close to \$300 million for the City and almost \$200 million for L.A. County. Mr. Hamamoto added that this Study could relieve Municipalities of not needing to address bacteria that does not pose as great of a risk as the human pathogens do. In terms of economy of scale, Mr. Hamamoto understands Mr. Watson and that there are fixed costs attributed to these efforts.

Mr. Hamamoto acknowledged the concerns of the rural areas noting the project would need to engage and secure consent before monitoring in those areas, and while many have expressed concerns with not changing the Study, Mr. Hamamoto reminded everyone that the project's scope of work cannot be changed once it is submitted for SCW funding consideration. Mr. Hamamoto reminded the WASC that the Study's control is that funding must get approved every year, and that if the WASC is not satisfied with the progress of an approved project or this Study, it can elect to not continue funding that effort. Regarding OurWaterLA's opposition to the Study, Mr. Hamamoto confirmed that there is a \$400k bacteria study being conducted by the Stormwater Monitoring Coalition but that their scope is smaller in scope than this Study.

Mr. Dirk Marks expressed concern that the objective of the Study be met with the proposed budget and that the project would receive a loss of benefit if the budget is reduced, and suggested deferring the decision on the Study to allow for additional outreach in rural communities.

Mr. Braly asked why the Study's first year is only requesting approximately \$15k. Mr. Watson responded that the first year is low because it was divided proportionately between the eight WASCs and that most of the monitoring work will happen in years 2,3, and 4. Mr. Braly asked if there was enough funding to start the monitoring sooner for this Watershed Area. Mr. Watson replied that the monitoring could start in late 2022, but the SIP Tool appears to show available funding.

Mr. Braly made a motion to continue the discussion of the Study for the next meeting and that the project proponent return with a proposal for just this Watershed Area with a clear indication of when monitoring would start on confirmation of funding, and added to the motion a request for the project proponent to make a separate proposal for the rural areas.

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As the Chair, Mr. Gibbs requested this and all motions be held until we enter item 9 of today's agenda.

Ms. Johnson commented that between this Watershed Area and the South SMB, only 17 percent of the Study's budget would be covered, leaving 83 percent of the budget missing, and does not see how this Study can move forward with only 17 percent funding allocated. Ms. Cattell agreed with Ms. Johnson and restated a request for a written document delineating all the things to be included in the Study.

Ms. Erskine-Hellrigel expressed concern over funding this Study and asked how the Study differs from the testing that is already being conducted by the City, and noted that she has witnessed human fecal matter being discharged into the river and believes that the Acton and Agua Dulce rural areas should be included. Finally, Ms. Erskine-Hellrigel also asked if solutions to these problems would be included as a part of the Study.

Ms. Merenda stated that she has a map of the existing City monitoring locations, and commented that via an agreement with the District, there has been substantial water quality monitoring throughout the urbanized reaches of the Santa Clara River, and included an overview of the City's current monitoring program and commented that the Study could reduce some of the City costs by narrowing down the sources of contamination.

#### 8. Public Comment Period

Mr. Watson commented that the Study proposal cannot be altered, and pointed out that the Study is focused on human markers and to develop partnerships to find solutions. The District confirmed that the proposal changes cannot be made and that the options are to approve the Study as is, or have the Study not approved and have Mr. Watson's team resubmit for Round 3 consideration.

Ms. Ayer commented that the Study proposal does not impose limitations on sampling locations to just urbanized areas. To Ms. Erskine-Hellrigel's comments, Ms. Ayer stated that the community of Acton is not opposed to this Study because it does not want to get tagged, but rather that Acton opposes the Study because it will be incapable of distinguishing the true sources of the problem. To Ms. Merenda's statement, the only thing that matters is what is written on paper when it comes to enforcement. Ms. Ayer suggested that this WASC not approve the Study and that the applicant reapply with a new Study proposal and to incorporate all stated concerns.

#### 9. Voting Items

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

Mr. Braly made a motion to include the Via Princessa Project, Newhall Park Project, and the Watershed Coordinator in this current SIP for funding recommendation and to not include the Regional Pathogen Reduction Study at this time and to instead request a revised Study proposal for future consideration. Ms. Cattell seconded this motion.

Ms. Ruffell made a competing motion to Mr. Braly's motion as follows: Motion is to include the Via Princessa Park TRP project in this current SIP, and not include the Regional Pathogen Reduction



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Study in this current SIP. Mr. Braly accepts this competing motion, and Ms. Cattell agrees with this competing motion as well.

To clarify this motion, Mr. Caluag stated that this current SIP will include the Via Princessa Park TRP project, the Newhall Park Infiltration IP project, and the Watershed Coordinator TRP.

With no objections to this motion, the Committee voted to approve the current SIP (Approved, See Vote Tracking Sheet).

#### **10. Items for Next Agenda**

Mr. Caluag announced that the Regional Oversight Committee (ROC) will meet on June 29, 2021 to review the SCR SIP for approval. If approved, it would go to the Board of Supervisors, but if not approved, the SCR SIP would return to this WASC for review and revisions. Another update at the next SCR WASC meeting will be the Outreach and Engagement Plan updates from the WC. As a reminder, this Plan will need to be reviewed and approved by this WASC. Finally, the NBS and DAC interim guidance documents will continue to be discussed and integrated into the SCW Program.

Ms. Cattell requested a presentation on the benefits of hiring local and a discussion on Project Labor Agreements (PLAs), including a PLA representative. Mr. Gibbs asked for clarity on the role of the WASC regarding these requests, and Ms. Cattell said that this has been brought up at other WASCs and that this discussion is appropriate for a WASC to have. Mr. Braly commented that before we agendaize this issue, that the Committee members should first be provided PLA information. Mr. Braly did not agree to agendaize Ms. Cattell's requests because the WASC is not making decisions on PLAs or workforce hiring. Ms. Ruffell commented that she sits on 6 total WASCs and we have not had a PLA presentation on any of the WASCs that she sits on, and that the hiring process is outside the purview of the WASC. Ms. Cattell replied that a project's economic impact should be considered, and how much of the project benefit is going back to the community. Ms. Cattell added that it is not who we say they can hire, but rather that when scoring happens, that local hiring and PLAs should be reviewed. Mr. Gibbs asked if local hiring was a part of the scoring system. The District responded that it is not a part of scoring, but it is included in the fund Transfer Agreement. Mr. Gibbs agreed that this request should not be putting on the agenda, that the WASC should receive PLA information, and that hiring practices are outside the purview of the WASC. Ms. Cattell agreed with first receiving the PLA information requested by Mr. Braly.

#### **11. Adjournment**

Mr. Gibbs, with a first motion by Ms. Ruffell and a second motion by Mr. Julian Juarez, moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Gibbs thanked the WASC members and public for their time and participation and adjourned the meeting.

**Next meeting: Thursday, August 5<sup>th</sup>, 2021 10:00AM -12:00PM**  
**Virtual Meeting – WebEx Events**

**SANTA CLARA RIVER WASC MEETING - JUNE 3, 2021**

		Quorum Present				Voting Items				
Member Type	Organization	Member	Voting?	Alternate	Voting?	05-06-21 Meeting Minutes	SCR SIP			
Agency	District	Julian Juarez	x	Ramy Gindi		y	y			
Agency	Santa Clarita Valley Water Agency	Dirk Marks	x	Mike Alvord		y	y			
Agency	Santa Clarita Valley Groundwater Sustainability Agency	Steve Cole	x	Rick Viergutz		y	y			
Agency	LA County Sanitation Districts	Kristen Ruffell	x	Martha Tremblay		y	y			
Agency	Santa Clarita Recreation & Community Services	Janine Prado	x	Amy Seyerle		y	y			
Community Stakeholder	Poole & Shaffery	Hunt Braly	x			y	y			
Community Stakeholder	Agua Dulce Town Council	Mary Johnson	x			y	y			
Community Stakeholder	Santa Clarita Sierra Club	Sandra Cattell	x	Diane Trautman		y	y			
Community Stakeholder				Frederick Andre Hollings						
Community Stakeholder	St. Francis Dam Disaster National Memorial Foundation	Dianne Erskine-Hellrigel	x	Heidi Webber		y	y			
Municipal Members	LA County Public Works	Bruce Hamamoto	x	Allen Ma		y	y			
Municipal Members	LA County Public Works	Bruce Hamamoto	x	Allen Ma		y	y			
Municipal Members	LA County Public Works	Bruce Hamamoto	x	Allen Ma		y	y			
Municipal Members	Santa Clarita	Jason Gibbs	x	Darin Seegmiller		a	y			
Municipal Members	Santa Clarita	Heather Merenda	x	Oliver Cramer		y	y			
Municipal Members	Santa Clarita	Robert Newman	x	Mike Hennawy		a	a			
Municipal Members	Santa Clarita	Tom Cole		David Peterson	x	y	y			
Total Non-Vacant Seats		16			Yay (Y)	14	15	0	0	0
Total Voting Members Present		16			Nay (N)	0	0	0	0	0
Agency		5			Abstain (A)	2	1	0	0	0
Community Stakeholder		4			Total	16	16	0	0	0
Municipal Members		7				Approved	Approved	Not Approved	Not Approved	Not Approved



**Attendees**  
**Santa Clara River WASC Meeting**  
**June 3, 2021**

Diane	Trautman	Jon	Abelson
Hunt	Braly	Julian	Juarez
Jason	Gibbs	Richard	Watson
Heather	Merenda	Justin	Jones LACFCD
Mayra	Cabrera - LACFCD	Dirk	Marks
Annakaren	Ramirez	Jerrid	Mckenna
Bruce	Hamamoto	Jacqueline	Ayer
janine	prado	Peter	Massey
Darin	Seegmiller	Oliver	Cramer
Kamaali	Lama	Mary	Johnson
Maritsa	DRA INC.	Robert	Newman
Allen	Ma	CJ	Caluag - LACFCD
Laureen	Abustan	Amanda	Begley
Safe	Clean Water LA	Maia	Colyar
Sandra	Cattell	Josephine	Gutierrez
Kristen	Ruffell	Steve	Cole
Dianne	Hellrigel		

Select Watershed Area

Select Call for Projects

Funding Scenarios

Santa Clara River

FY21-22

6/3 - FINAL



MENU

LOGIN

# SCW Funding Summary

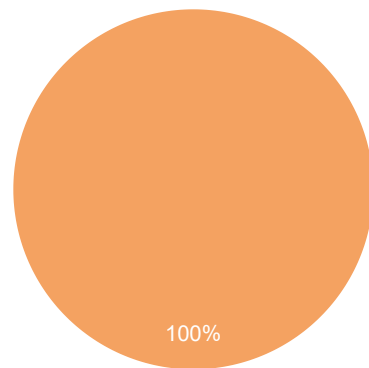
FY21-22 FY22-23 FY23-24 FY24-25 FY25-26 All 5-Year Infrastructure Projects Scientific Studies Technical Resources All DAC Non-DAC All

2 Total Projects 1 Filtered Projects Clear All

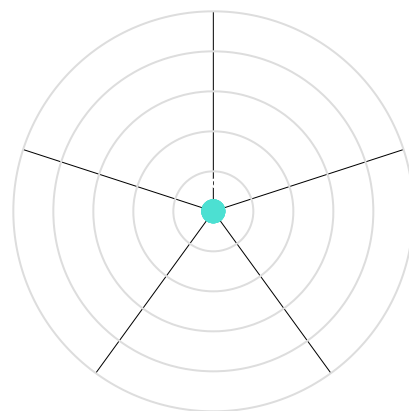
## Current Call for Projects

## All Projects to Date

FUNDING DISTRIBUTION

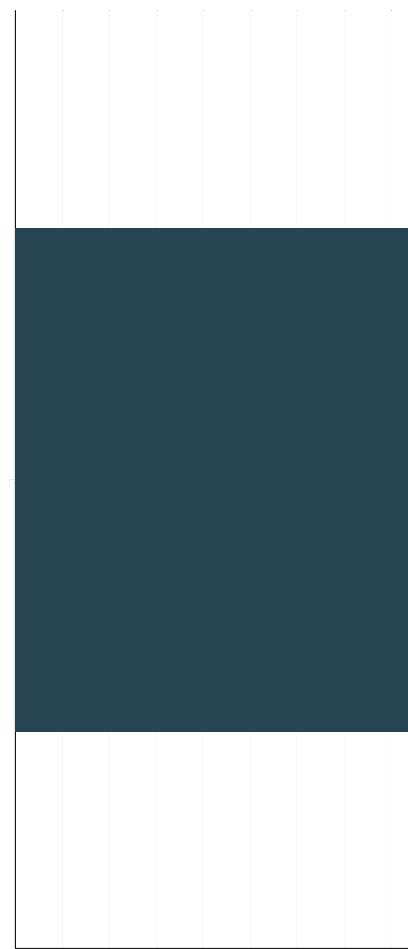


IP PROJECT SCORING



PROJECT FUNDING BY FISCAL YEAR (FY)

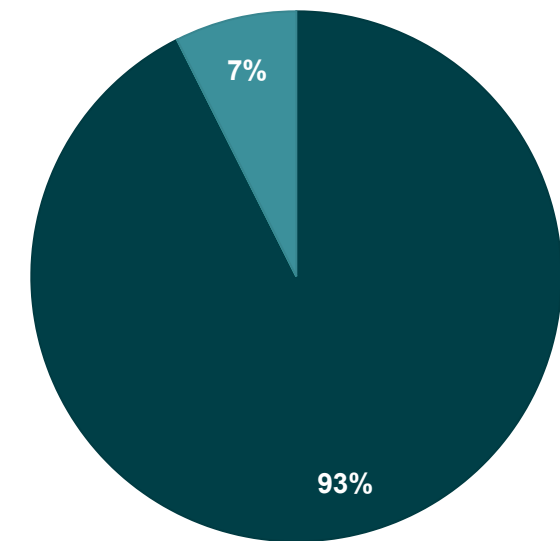
Stacked Grouped



DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITY (DAC) ALLOCATION

Required DAC Ratio	8%
Required Funding for DACs FY21-26 (110%)	\$ 1,425,503
Funding Allocated for DACs FY21-26	\$ 16,198,897

REGIONAL PROGRAM DISTRIBUTION



Infrastructure Projects (≥85%)    Scientific Studies (<5%)  
Technical Resources (<10%)

Select Watershed Area

Santa Clara River

Select Call for Projects

FY21-22

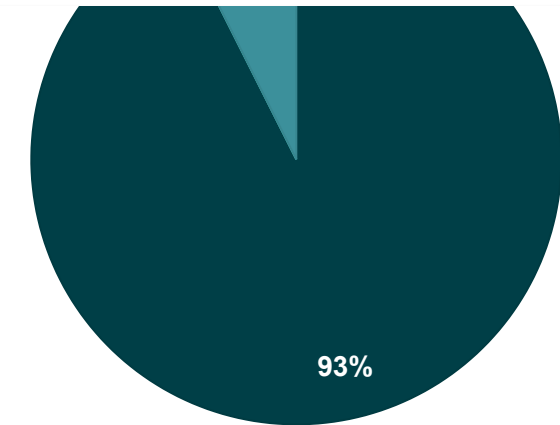
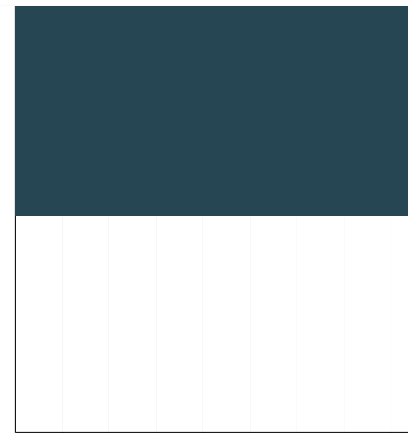
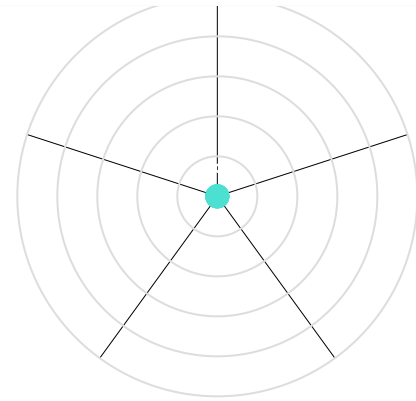
Funding Scenarios

6/3 - FINAL



MENU

LOGIN



Infrastructure Projects (≥85%)    Scientific Studies (<5%)  
Technical Resources (<10%)



## Stormwater Investment Plan Preview

	Budget			Projections		Future Funding	TOTAL
	FY21-22	FY22-23	FY23-24	FY24-25	FY25-26		
A. Anticipated Annual Regional Program Funds Collected	\$5.9M	\$5.9M	\$5.9M	\$5.9M	\$5.9M		\$29.4M
B. Anticipated Annual Regional Program Funds Available (A+D)	\$6.9M	\$12.3M	\$18M	\$10.5M	\$13.1M		
C. Total Allocated from Current FY	\$300k	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$300k
Total Allocated from Previous FYs	\$200k	\$200k	\$13.4M	\$3.2M	\$200k	\$0	\$17.2M
D. Remaining Balance/Rollover Funds (B-C)	\$1.1M	\$6.4M	\$12.1M	\$4.6M	\$7.3M	\$12.9M	
E. Percent Allocated (C/B)	7%	2%	74%	31%	2%		60%



# Pictures of Flooding in Acton via the Acton Town Council

Flooded intersection of Smith and Crown Valley just south and downstream of Park in Acton





Second view of intersection of Crown Valley and Smith looking north east in Acton



View of flood area from vehicle driving down Crown Valley at Escondido in Acton





Flooded intersection of Crown Valley and Escondido at the Acton Park



Intersection of Smith and Crown Valley during flash flood of August 2017





School bus on Crown Valley forced to drive near the middle of the road to avoid high flood areas



View from Escondido adjacent to Park looking at Crown Valley Road during flash flood of August 2017





View of flooded intersection of Smith and Crown Valley looking north toward the park located upstream



View of intersection of Crown Valley and Smith looking northeast





View toward Acton's Downtown Shopping Center along Crown Valley Road just south of park

