

Safe, Clean Water Program

Lower Los Angeles River
Watershed Area Steering Committee (WASC)



Meeting Minutes:

Tuesday, September 28, 2021
1:00pm - 3:00pm
WebEx Meeting

Attendees

Committee Members Present:

Esterno Rivera (District)
Alex Rojas (Central Basin)
Rob Beste (Water Replenishment District)
Kristen Ruffell (LA County Sanitation Districts)
Stephen Scott (Long Beach Parks & Recreation)
Kedrin Hopkins (Conservation Corps of Long Beach)
Joe Gonzalez (Rivers & Mountain Conservancy)

Dylan Porter* (Port of Long Beach)
Manny Gonez* (TreePeople)
Erica Maceda* (River in Action)
Melissa You (Long Beach)
Laura Ochoa (Lynwood)
Adriana Figueroa (Paramount)
Gladis Deras (South Gate)
Tara Dales (SGA Marketing)

Committee Members Not Present:

Gina Nila (Commerce)
Dan Mueller (Downey)
Cecil Looney (Signal Hill)

*Committee Member Alternate

See attached sign-in sheet for full list of attendees

1. Welcome and Introductions

Melissa You, Vice Chair of the Lower Los Angeles River WASC, welcomed members and called the meeting to order.

District staff conducted the roll call and with a majority present, quorum was established. The District provided an overview of the WebEx functions and housekeeping items.

2. Approval of Meeting Minutes from August 24, 2021

The District displayed a copy of the meeting minutes from the August 24, 2021 meeting. Vice Chair You asked for a motion to approve the August 24, 2021 meeting minutes.

Member Figueroa motioned to approve the meeting minutes, with Member Rojas seconding the motion. The Committee voted to approve the meeting minutes from August 24, 2021. (Approved, see Vote Tracker sheet)

3. Committee Member and District Updates

District Staff provided the District update, noting:

- The Regional Oversight Committee submitted the 2021 Stormwater Investment Plans to Board of Supervisors for approval. All 9 SIPs were reviewed and approved at the Board meeting on September 15.
- Infrastructure program submittals to the LLAR watershed area are scheduled for review at the Scoring Committee on November 16

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- Regional program project proponents are required to submit quarterly and annual reports. Quarterly reports were due August 15 from current projects and will be shared with the WASC in a summarized report.
- As part of the municipal program, each municipality must report 21-22 Annual Plan by April 1 to receive annual payment, which will be dispersed October 2021. Must also comply with documentation from prior year (including transfer agreement).
- There are vacancies on this WASC – email the District for more information.
- During the COVID emergency the Governor signed an Executive Order that has allowed bodies like this WASC to hold meetings without having to follow all of the Brown Act rules about teleconference meetings. Recently passed legislation permits a Brown Act governing body to maintain this alternative if there is a continuing need. It is not certain, but it is possible that starting in October, the LLAR WASC will need to vote each month to waive some of the provisions of the Brown Act related to teleconference meetings.

4. Watershed Coordinator Updates

Watershed Coordinator Tara Dales provided the coordinator update, noting:

- The organization recently held the End of Summer LA River Festival and tabled at an outdoor music festival
- Dales has met with organizers about education and outreach efforts
- Finalized three presentations about Safe Clean Water, each with a different focus. Have presented one for the City of Paramount.
- All twelve of the Watershed Coordinators are coordinating efforts among different regions.

Member Ruffell requested from Watershed Coordinator at the next meeting a summary of projects approved by the WASC and an explanation of potential future funding needs associated with those projects. This request is being made by multiple WASCs, and Regional Coordination

5. Ex Parte Communication Disclosures

None

6. Public Comment Period

None

7. Discussion Items:

- a) Scientific Studies (SS) Presentation ([SCW Portal](#))
 - i. Microplastics in LA County Stormwater
Presented by Dr. Andrew Gray, Assistant Professor of Watershed Hydrology at the University of California Riverside. This study proposes to monitor and model microplastics in the stormflow of 4 stream channels in partnership with Los Angeles County Public Works. The study would coordinate with local stakeholders to gather data.

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Member Ruffell asked what the makeup of the stake holder and technical advisory committee is. Dr Gray responded that they have not composed the stakeholder and technical advisory committee for this study.

Member Gonzales inquired if students would partake in the study. Dr. Gray explained that the lab includes graduate and undergraduate students. Member Gonzales asked how much of the budget would go towards indirect costs and how many meetings would be included. Dr. Gray did not have the overhead number on hand. Most budget would go towards personnel effort, a lot would go to travel, and some would go towards meetings (which would start remote and eventually be in person). Would aim for meetings with LACPW every month and stakeholder/advisory meetings every quarter. Plan would be to have broader outreach with webinars and eventually move towards in person events once or twice a year.

Member Gonzales asked how optimized monitoring would be funded. Dr. Gray noted that additional funding will be needed from other groups eventually. Ongoing monitoring may or not be needed depending on the microplastic risk found by the study.

Member Figueroa asked if a report would be prepared annually. Dr Grey said the plan is to have a final report at the end, but he would be glad to produce interim reports.

ii. Regional Pathogen Reduction Study

Presented by Rich Watson of Richard Watson & Associates, who is also the lead consultant to the Los Cerritos Channel Watershed Group. This Study aims to use the latest available science to measure water-borne pathogens across watersheds and seeks funding from eight of the nine WASCs.

Member Gonzales asked if nature-based solutions will be prioritized. Watson said they will better understand the solutions to be implemented after studying the data. Can't guarantee they will be nature-based solutions.

Member Figueroa asked, if other watershed groups don't fund it, will overhead be divided among those that participate, thus increasing the cost? Watson said if a WASC does not fund the study, water-borne pathogens in that area will not be studied. There might be a small overhead increase, but Watson doubts it. Member Figueroa asked for additional information on the human health risk assessment. Watson responded that a consultant team will be selected to carry it out. Member Figueroa asked if the regional board would need to conduct an additional human health risk assessment? Watson said they would not.

iii. Community Garden Stormwater Capture Investigation Presented by Diana Campos and Michael Drennan of Los Angeles Community Garden Council. This study will investigate opportunities to use community gardens as stormwater capture facilities.

Member Ruffell expressed concerns that a large stormwater project like this would put the community garden out of reach for members who rely on it for food security – the project would not provide water for irrigation of food crops because it would require treatment prior to use. Member Ruffell was also concerned about the cost of the project. It is backwards from how something like this is typically done – typically, the City would find an open parcel of land and request use. Drennan responded that the basic idea is, if there is open space that is available, it is worth studying. Project proponents would work with local gardens to understand if the

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project is viable or disruptive. Not necessarily proposing to use captured water at the site. But maybe there is an opportunity to demonstrate to agencies that the water is of benefit to the overall water supply.

Member Figueroa asked if the report would include an engineering analysis of the stormwater needs and connections on site. Would the work with the City to obtain and communicate such information? Drennan explained that an initial desktop analysis would use GIS to locate storm drains and local tributaries. More technical details would be provided for the three most viable sites.

Member Gonzales asked what watersheds would be used. Drennan said three sites would be used within the watershed of each WASC providing funding. Member Gonzales expressed concern about conflicting land easements, utility easements, and ownership. Drennan said that the project would eliminate sites that are not viable.

Mike Antos (Stantec) asked if data might be used for future projects. The idea of the scientific study program is to benefit future decision making. Antos said the project might help future stormwater projects consider including new community gardens as a community investment benefit.

8. Public Comment Period

No public comment.

9. Voting Items

None.

10. Items for Next Agenda

- a) Presentations from FY22-23 Scientific Studies (SS) Applicants ([SCW Portal](#))
- b) Information from the watershed coordinator about future funding needs from projects previously supported by the WASC, likely as part of the Watershed Coordinator Update.

12. Adjournment

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

Next Meeting

Tuesday, October 26, 2021

1:00pm-3:00pm

See SCW website for meeting details.

LLAR WASC - September 28, 2021

		Quorum Present				Voting Items (see meeting minutes for additional details)
Member Type	Position	Member	Voting/ Present?	Alternate	Voting/ Present?	Approve 8-24-2021 Meeting Minutes
Agency	District	Ernesto Rivera	x	Ramy Gindi		a
Agency	Central Basin	Alex Rojas	x	Jeremy Melendez		y
Agency	Water Replenishment District	Rob Beste	x	Esther Rojas		a
Agency	LA County Sanitation Districts	Kristen Ruffell	x	Ariel Carmichael		a
Agency	City of Long Beach Parks & Recreation	Stephen Scott	x			a
Community Stakeholder	Conservation Corps of Long Beach	Kedrin Hopkins	x			
Community Stakeholder	Rivers & Mountains Conservancy	Mark Stanley		Joe Gonzalez	x	y
Community Stakeholder	TreePeople	Cindy Montanez		Manny Gonez	x	y
Community Stakeholder	Port of Long Beach	James Vernon		Dylan Porter	x	y
Community Stakeholder	River in Action	Melissa Bahmanpour		Erica Maceda	x	y
Municipal Members	City of Commerce					
Municipal Members	City of Bell Gardens	Gina Nila				
Municipal Members	City of Downey	Dan Mueller		Delfino Consunji		
Municipal Members	City of Long Beach	Melissa You	x	Cecilia Salazar		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			Cecil Looney		
Municipal Members	City of South Gate	Gladis Deras	x	Clint Herrera		
Watershed Coordinator						
Non-Voting Member	SGA Marketing	Tara Dales	x			
Total Non-Vacant Seats		16			Yes (Y)	8
Total Voting Members Present		14			No (N)	0
Agency		5			Abstain (A)	4
Community Stakeholder		5			Total	12
Municipal Members		4				Approved

Attendees
Lower Los Angeles River WASC Meeting
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Adriana Figueroa	Gladis Deras	Mike Antos
Alex Rojas	I EC	Paola Dela Cruz-Perez
Amanda Begley	Irene Garcia	Paola (she.her.ella)
Andrew Gray	Joseph Gonzalez	Ramy Gindi
Brittany D. Rivas	Justin Jones - LACFCD	Richard Watson
Bryce Lee	Kedrin Hopkins	Robert Beste
Cecilia Salazar	Kristen Ruffell	Safe Clean Water LA
Cindy Donis	Larry Tortuya - CWE	Tara Dales Watershed Coordinator
CJ Caluag - LACFCD	laura ochoa lynwood	Tasia Kieffer
Diana Campos-Jimenez	Lauro Alvarado	Uriel Cobian LACFCD
Dylan Porter	Manny Gonez	Wataru Kumagai
Emily Ramos	Marcela Benavides	Yvana H
Erica Maceda	Mark Hall-GLACVCD	Stephen
Ernesto Rivera	Mayra Cabrera	
Esther Rojas	MELISSA YOU	
Fiona McHenry-Crutchfield	Michael Drennan	
Fred Gonzalez	Michelle Kim	