Upper Los Angeles River
Watershed Area Steering Committee (WASC)
Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, October 5, 2022
2:00pm - 4:00pm
WebEx Meeting

Committee Members Present:
Genevieve Osmena, LA County Flood Control District (Agency)
Art Castro*, LA Department of Water and Power (Agency)
John Huynh*, LA Department of Water and Power (Agency)
Ida Meisami-Fard, LA Sanitation & Environment (Agency)
Cathie Santo Domingo, LA Recreation & Parks (Agency)
Ernesto Pantoja, Laborers Local 300 (Community)
John Luker, Santa Susana Mountain Park Association (Community)
Veronica Padilla-Campos, Pacoima Beautiful (Community)
Max Liles, NBCUniversal, Inc. (Community)
Yazdan Emrani, Glendale (Municipal)
Patrick DeChellis, La Cañada Flintridge (Municipal)
Teresa Villegas, Los Angeles (Municipal), Chair
Christine Peters, Los Angeles (Municipal)
Mark Lombos, Los Angeles County (Municipal)
Kenneth Jones, San Fernando (Municipal)
Adi Liberman, Environmental Outreach Strategies (Watershed Coordinator, non-voting member)
Carlos Moran, Council for Watershed Health (Watershed Coordinator, non-voting member)

*Committee Member Alternate

Committee Members Not Present:
Miguel Luna, Urban Semillas (Community)
Max Podemski, Los Angeles (Municipal), Vice-Chair
Clarasophia Gust, Council for Watershed Health (Watershed Coordinator, non-voting member)

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

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1. Welcome and Introductions

District staff provided a brief WebEx tutorial in both English and Spanish and announced that the meeting was being broadcast live in Spanish. Staff also provided direction on submitting and sharing public comments.

Chair Villegas of the Upper Los Angeles River (ULAR) Watershed Area Steering Committee (WASC), welcomed Committee Members and called the meeting to order. District staff facilitated the roll call of Committee Members. Committee Members made self-introductions and a quorum was established.

2. Approval of Meeting Minutes from September 7, 2022

District staff presented the meeting minutes from the previous meeting. Member Yazdan Emrani motioned to approve the meeting minutes from September 7 and Member Mark Lombos seconded the motion. The WASC voted to approve the September 7 meeting minutes with 10 in favor, 3 abstentions, and 0 opposed (approved, see vote tracking sheet).

3. Ex Parte Communication Disclosures

There were no ex parte communication disclosures.

4. Committee Member and District Updates

Chair Villegas shared that the City of Los Angeles is hosting a tree planting event Saturday, October 8 which will be co-sponsored by the Board of Public Works for Latino Heritage Month and noted that a flyer can be circulated to Members of the Committee and interested parties.

District staff provided an update:

- On September 27, the Board of Supervisors (Board) voted to continue meeting virtually, acting under the authority of Assembly Bill 361 which authorizes public committees to meet without complying with all the teleconferencing requirements of the Brown Act when the situation warrants it. The Board is reviewing its position every 30 days and will act to cover all the commissions and committees under their authority. This will also act as an indicator for when in-person meetings may resume. District Staff noted that if the Board decides to no longer approve findings to continue teleconference meetings under Assembly Bill 361 and the region is still in a state of emergency, the WASC has the authority to make their own Assembly Bill 361 findings. The District noted that they can provide additional guidance if this occurs.
- The call for projects for Fiscal Year 2023-2024 (FY23-24) closed on July 31. The District conducted completeness checks for the submitted Infrastructure Program (IP) projects. The preliminary total number of applications for all 9 watersheds is as follows: 39 IP projects, 4 Scientific Studies (SS), and 4 Technical Resource Program (TRP) projects. In the ULAR region, 13 IPs were submitted (one was a re-submittal and four were previously TRPs), 2 SS projects were submitted, and no TRP projects were submitted.
- FY22-23 Quarterly 1 Report for IP and SS projects are due November 15. Past-due reports must still be completed even if no project activities have occurred, as they may be discussed at future WASC meetings and even if the Transfer Agreements have not been executed.
- The Scoring Committee is meeting October 6 to score 6 ULAR IP projects. The remaining 7 ULAR projects will be scored on October 17. Projects that need to be re-scored will be re-scored on December 1.
- As a reminder, Article 5 of the WASC Operating Guidelines require regular attendance to WASC meetings. Failure to attend 2 consecutive meetings or more than 3 meetings in a year will make the member eligible for removal, so be sure to have an alternate that can attend meetings in the primary's absence.
- Members are required to complete Form 700 once when joining the WASC, once when leaving the WASC, annually, or when changing email.

Chair Villegas asked if District Staff can notify Committee Members that have missed meetings on their potential removal from the Committee, and District Staff confirmed.

5. Watershed Coordinator Updates

Watershed Coordinator Adi Liberman shared that following the strategies in the Strategic Outreach and Engagement Plan, the Watershed Coordinators are continuing the effort to connect with local stakeholders, which includes community groups, elected officials, staff at local state and federal levels, and resource districts to share information about the Safe, Clean Water Program and learn about various needs, concerns, and possible project ideas. Watershed Coordinator Liberman also mentioned the possibility of a

check-in with Committee Members for suggestions and other contacts in the near future. Watershed Coordinator Carlos Moran shared that the ULAR Water Tours are directly tied to the approved Strategic Outreach and Engagement Plan (SOEP). Dates for Water Tours in December 2022 are still being determined, in addition to tours on February 18, March 20, and May 20 of 2023 for any Committee Member interested in placing a calendar hold. The Watershed Coordinators also let Committee Members know of a few meetings recently held which consisted of:

- A meeting with T.J. Moon at Infrastructure LA regarding federal dollars for regional projects under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law which has potential to leverage SCWP projects (InfrastructureLA.org), and
- A meeting with leads of the preSIP study to inform decision-making information that can be relayed to the WASC for deliberating Stormwater Investment Plans. Leads of the study shared that it is helpful for the WASC to identify past, present, and future project locations and to compare them. Project leads are also developing multi-benefit project portfolios for each tributary and subregion of the Los Angeles River, which are to be compiled into a web-based database for a decision-making tool. This database will be hosted on the ULAR Watershed Management Group website. The preSIP Study team has provided updates to the Rio Hondo WASC and Regional Oversight Committee (ROC) to-date and are willing to provide updates to this WASC closer to SIP deliberations, and Round 4 project details could be included in that update, again, if it is of interest to ULAR WASC.

6. Public Comment Period

Chair Villegas opened the Public Comment Period. District Staff compiled all public comment cards received by 5:00pm the day before the meeting, loaded them to the SCWP website, and displayed them on-screen. Public comment cards or other correspondence received after 5:00pm will be added to the meeting minutes. Refer to Meeting Minutes Attachment.

Board Supervisor Hilda Solis submitted a public comment card in support of the proposed The Nature Conservancy's Bowtie Demonstration Project (Updated).

Elysian Valley Riverside Neighborhood Council submitted a public comment card in support of the proposed The Nature Conservancy's Bowtie Demonstration Project (Updated).

Social Model Recovery Systems submitted a public comment card in support of the proposed City of Los Angeles Sanitation and Environment's Hollenbeck Park Lake Rehabilitation Project.

Karen Barnett commented on the proposed Regional Pathogen Reduction Study. Barnett noted that the amount requested is the largest amount requested for the entire study across WASCs and was made without team references, specific outreach strategies, or methodologies. Barnett also noted that timelines for deliverables were missing, which is necessary for the commitment of public funds, and should be required before funding an study. Barnett shared that they are unsure as to how this study will help the ULAR and Atwater Village users who utilize the river for fishing, bathing, cleaning, cooking, and more.

7. Presentations and Discussion Items

a) Regional Program Quarterly Reporting Summary FY2021-22 Q1 (July – September) and Q2 (October – December) (Report Summary)

District Staff provided a background and summary of Quarterly Reports, which were displayed on the screen and shared with the WASC in advance, which included instructions on how to upload the full

quarterly reports. District Staff conducted a brief live tutorial on how to view quarterly reports on the SCWP Portal. District Staff noted that if Committee Members have any questions regarding project progress, they can ask the developer of each project for details on activity concerns and scope modifications.

District Staff clarified that a "yes" in the "activity concern" column denotes when a concern is present. District Staff summarized the project names that have activity concerns:

- City of San Fernando Regional Park Infiltration Project (IP)
- Fernangeles Park Stormwater Capture Project (IP)
- Rory M. Shaw Wetlands Park Project (IP)
- Strathern Park North Stormwater Capture Project (IP)
- Valley Village Park Stormwater Capture Project (IP)
- LRS Adaptation to Address the LA River Bacteria TMDL for the ULAR Watershed Management Group (SS)

District Staff will be providing a summary of Quarterly Reports FY21-22 Q3 (January – March) and Q4 (April-June) in early 2023, which will include Round 1 and Round 2 Projects.

Chair Villegas asked if developers were present, and if so, to raise their hands. District Staff reminded Committee Members that the summaries presented are for context in modifying budgets throughout the year rather than immediately discussing specific dollar amounts.

Member Osmena commented on Rory M. Shaw Wetlands Park Project by mentioning it is delayed by one year due to a scheduling change on the finalization and specifications of plans, which were mainly from geotechnical compaction methods needing to be confirmed. Chair Villegas asked if a delay impacts the budget for fiscal year allocations on that timeline. Member Osmena answered that the project is still able to receive annual allocations because the scope and budget have not changed. The project proponents are providing scheduling updates, and as long as they are met, proponents can use the awarded funds within the 5-year Project period.

Brianna Datti commented on the LRS Adaptation to Address the LA River Bacteria TMDL by stating that the delay came from data collection, and otherwise, business will resume as usual.

Ryan Aghakhani commented on Fernangeles Park and Strathern Park North Stormwater Capture Projects by clarifying that the scheduling delay came from permitting, which resulted in an additional 45 days for Fernangeles and 90 days for Strathern from the original date of late January 2022. Strathern required additional permits, hence the longer delay.

Kenneth Jones commented on the City of San Fernando Regional Park Infiltration Project by stating, on behalf of the project manager, that the delay is now ahead of schedule from their last check-in, changing from June to March 2023.

Noel Le from Los Angeles Department of Water and Power spoke on behalf of the Valley Village Park Stormwater Capture Project, stating that it had delay of 45 days to secure permits, and commented that the change does not affect fiscal-year funding allocations.

b) Scientific Studies (SS) Presentations (SCW Portal)

i. Groundwater Quality Monitoring: Studying Pollution Removal in Stormwater Drywells and Monitoring the Spatial and Temporal Effects of Stormwater Drywells on Local Groundwater Quality – Presentation by California State Polytechnic University, Pomona.

Dr. Sharbat, Dr. Shah-Fairbank, and Scott Kindred presented on the Groundwater Quality Monitoring SS. The team shared that the stakeholders involved in the Groundwater Quality Monitoring SS will consist of students, academics, consultants, and local agencies. The goal of this study is to quantify the removal of contaminants in pre-treatment dry well systems to understand the connection of stormwater, urban runoff, and pollution reduction. Nature-based stormwater management is often misunderstood, and wanted to share information with the region on stormwater best-management practices and groundwater quality.

The team shared that they are working with LASAN and County Public Works to collaborate during construction of dry wells to monitor projects and their impacts pre and post construction, noting outreach and engagement is also a component of their plan. The presenters noted that the timeline for this project is 4 years. With the knowledge that the roll-over budget is around $2 million, they adjusted funding requested amounts. Progress reports will be shared throughout the duration of the project.

Benefits include benefits to technical community, taxpayers, and workforce. For the technical community, this study will add to an understanding of contaminants in all stages of stormwater infiltration. For taxpayers, this project would ensure transparency in knowledge of drywell projects and the improvement of existing drywell infrastructure. For the workforce, 75 students from California State Polytechnic University, Pomona will be involved either through undergraduate senior projects or the development of stormwater and low-impact development courses. Students in their programs are often first-generation students or first-generation students of color.

Chair Villegas asked about possible site locations for monitoring and if the team will address TMDLs. Dr. Sharbat answered that LASAN and County Public Works are communicating with the team on collaborating on a few sites, specifically newly installed dry wells to provide unbiased data, so no previous contamination is expected. As for TMDL, Dr. Sharbat noted that the team could include some parameters, but they are specifically looking for groundwater contaminants. Chair Villegas asked if the team was working with the District to get a list of new dry well sites, and Dr. Sharbat responded that they were communicating to soon identify sites. To avoid project bias, District only provides advice on how to apply for funding and what to prepare and encourages prospective proponents to interact with past proponents that have received funding.

Member Lombos reminded the team that depending on the site locations, it is necessary to coordinate with the Waterbasin Masters to receive consent from whomever has adjudicated rights to the groundwater basin. Member Lombos also added that this information was missing from the team's application.

Member Emrani commented that dry wells are beneficial for stormwater capture and groundwater recharge and asked about using findings to be able to make a generalized forecast for monitoring technology throughout the LA basin. Scott Kindred noted that this study would provide more good quality data on identifying how much pretreatment is necessary before stormwater enters drywells, which could be used by agencies to set standards with the hope of this information being applicable to the entire County.

Chair Villegas asked if they look to implement dry well best-management practice standards. Kindred answered that the team hopes to work with agencies to set those policies in the long term. Dr. Sharbat answered that the current research that exists often underestimates the capacity of the soil column and seeks to use this study to display that natural soil can provide ample treatment for subsurface stormwater storage.

ii. Regional Pathogen Reduction Study – Presentation by Gateway Water Management Authority

Richard Watson of Gateway Water Management Authority (GWMA) shared that the goal of this study is to collect samples in urbanized water bodies to analyze them for the presence of human pathogens. The study will collaborate with wastewater and unhoused services agencies. Most watershed areas have TMDLs or are actively working on having them besides the Dominguez Channel.

Watson reminded the WASC that this study has applied for funding in previous years, but it now includes a wide variety of stakeholders like non-governmental agencies, engineers, statisticians, and others into the study team, which were selected by GWMA to address the scope of the project. The project aims to target Fecal Indicator Bacteria (FIB) to understand threats to people who recreate and/or use urban waterways, which includes coastlines.

Watson noted that the project will prioritize areas with the highest risk of FIB based on the samples collected with the hopes of identifying best-management practices to address the source of these pathogens. The Health Risk Assessment composes approximately 68% of the total budget. Benefits of the study includes understanding pathogens, protecting unknown health risks, targeting best-management practice locations to treat the sources of those pathogens, and providing the Regional Water Quality Control Board with data on risk-based pathogen approaches.

Watson noted that the biggest change from the last year's presentation was the goal to implement testing where monitoring programs exist already, which aligns where people will provide funding.

8. Public Comment Period

Karen Barnett made a public comment on Regional Pathogen Reduction Study noting that a peer review is important. Barnett also noted that there should be some identification on whether the pathogens are from humans or animals (e.g. E. Coli) and for further clarification on information transparency for public spending.

Mark Hall (Greater Los Angeles County Vector Control District) made a public comment on the Groundwater Quality Monitoring Dry Well Scientific Study. Hall suggested that the group contact the Vector Control District since mosquitos are attracted to dry wells, and noted that designs tend to not drain completely, providing a breeding ground for mosquitos. It was also shared that the Vector Control District has strong requirements for the installation of dry wells to not be a health hazard. Hall extended communication to the team to discuss this further.

Robert Blankenship made a public comment, appreciating the comments on controlling mosquito breeding. Blankenship wanted to know if more information could be provided from the Groundwater Quality Monitoring Scientific Study team on the other variables that will be measured at each site (e.g. depth, width, and diameter of each well) and their effect on how fast water infiltrates, which can be an element of the vector control conversation.

Chair Villegas also noted that the Groundwater Quality Monitoring Scientific Study team should keep communication on the sites chosen and amongst the agencies they are collaborating with in writing to maintain transparency with the WASC and the District.

9. Voting Items (continued)

a) **None**

10. Items for Next Agenda

Chair Villegas confirmed the following agenda items:

a) Findings to Continue Teleconference Meetings under Assembly Bill 361 (if needed)

b) Infrastructure Program (IP) Project Presentations (if needed)

11. Adjournment

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

Next Meeting: Wednesday, November 2, 2022
2:00 PM – 4:00 PM
WebEx Meeting – See SCW website for meeting details

Upper Los Angeles River - October 5, 2022						
		Quorum Present				Voting Items
Member Type	Position	Member	Voting/ Present?	Alternate	Voting/ Present?	Approve 9-7-2022 Meeting Minutes
Agency	FCD	Genevieve Osmena	x	Ramy Gindi		y
Agency	Water Agency	Delon Kwan		Art Castro	x	a
Agency	Groundwater / Water Agency 2	Paul Liu		John Huynh	x	a
Agency	Sanitation	Ida Meisami-Fard	x	Alfredo Magallanes		y
Agency	Open Space	Cathie Santo Domingo	x	Javier Solis		y
Community Stakeholder	At Large	Ernesto Pantoja	x	Sergio Rascon		y
Community Stakeholder	At Large	Miguel Luna		Yvette Lopez-Ledesma		
Community Stakeholder	Environment	John Luker	x	Wendi Gladstone		y
Community Stakeholder	Business	Max Liles	x			a
Community Stakeholder	EJ	Veronica Padilla-Campos	x	Felipe Escobar		
Municipal Members	Glendale / Pasadena	Yazdan Emrani	x	Kris Markarian		y
Municipal Members	La Cañada Flintridge / South Pasadena	Patrick DeChellis	x	Ted Gerber		y
Municipal Members	Los Angeles	Teresa Villegas	x	Barbara Romero		y
Municipal Members	Los Angeles	Max Podemski				
Municipal Members	Los Angeles	Christine Peters	x	Rafael Prieto		
Municipal Members	Los Angeles County	Mark Lombos	x	Thuan Nguyen		y
Municipal Members	San Fernando / Calabasas	Kenneth Jones	x	Alex Farassati		y
Watershed Coordinator Non-Voting Member	Environmental Outreach Strategies	Adi Liberman	x			
Watershed Coordinator Non-Voting Member	Council for Watershed Health	Clarasophia Gust				
Watershed Coordinator Non-Voting Member	Council for Watershed Health	Carlos Moran	x			
Total Non-Vacant Seats		17			Yes (Y)	10
Total Voting Members Present		15			No (N)	0
Agency		5			Abstain (A)	3
Community Stakeholder		4			Total	13
Municipal Members		6				Approved

Attendees
Upper Los Angeles River WASC Meeting - October 5, 2022

Mayra Cabrera - LACFCD
Christian Uy
Justin Jones
Haris Harouny - LACFCD
Seema Shah-Fairbank
Luis Carmona
Fredy Aziz
Makayla Nagata
Jeannette Hernandez
Anthony Tsoi
Fabian Fernandez
Ali Sharbat
Lidia Rivera
Rizwan Syed
Joe Kebbeh
Ali Sharbat - Cal Poly Pomona
Pablo Forni
Thy Cao
Mike Antos (Regional Coordination)
Rigoberto Rosales
Richard Watson
Tyler Pham
Jonathan Hall
Huaqin Xu
Brianna Perez
Alexander Uribe Morales
Art Castro
Sean Lin
Rene Samano
Jovani Orta-Ramirez
Peter Tran
trung lam
Kara Plourde
Lauren Mojica
Max Liles
Genevieve Osmena
Erick Lopez
Adi Liberman
Elijah Ibarra
Noel Le
Hector Garcia
Valeria Arteaga

Victor Tran
Lorena Matos
Lionicio Mata
Shane Santos
Felicia Yin
Mark Lombos
karen barnett
Ryanna Fossum
john huynh
Mark Tadros
Kenneth Jones
Phuoc Le
Jack Casas
Yaz Emrani
Cathie Santo Domingo
Hayat Rasul
JAVIER VALLE AVILA
Ernesto Pantoja
William Meleka
Fernando Garcia de Alba
Giselle Ramirez
Rafael Piamonte
Carlos Moran
Alonso Garcia
Marissa Hernandez
Ted Gerber
Jennifer Amarant
Patrick DeChellis
Erin Shimazu
Paige Bistromowitz
Robert Blankenship
Tsu Chang
Vanessa Rosales
Matt Rich
Brad Wardynski
Javier Valle
Alynn Sun
Scott Kindred
Zachery Van Vorce
Brianne Logasa
Kayla Urbina
Jon Ball

krisitna leyva
Carmen Andrade
Adolfo Ramirez
Greg Jaquez
josh garcia
Mayra Martinez
Ryan Aghakhani
brett perry
Teresa Villegas
Mike
Mehrad Kamalzare
Susie Santilena
Mark Hall GLAmosquito
wendy Dinh
Wendi Gladstone
perrin thompson
Conor Mossavi
Craig Doberstein
Mark Nguyen
Michael Scaduto
Carlos A
Christine McLeod
Imelda Gharapetian
Ngoc-Han Cao
gabriela gonzalez
Melissa Levitt
John luker
Jose Luis Escajeda
Celine Bates
Jonathan Espinoza
Nicko Soliman
Sarai Bhaga
Andre Mai
Brenda Stevens
Arlene Guzman
Gabriel Macias
Nathan Schreiner
Gus Orozco
cp
Mark Gergis
Pauline Nguyen
Brent Maue

Erin Shimazu
Melany Lopez
Joyce Amaro
Veronica Padilla
Sheila Brice
Mahtab Ahmed(CPP)
Garen Hartoonian
William OBraitis
Miller Zou
Christian Wimenta
Guadalupe Diaz
Anthony Armanyous
Darin Son
Ida Meisami (LASAN)
Defeng Chen
Jason Tandoc
Alexander Salazar
Majid Sadeghi
Matthew Diez
Brianna Datti
Jayna Alviar
Michelle Nguyen
austin Martino
Garrett Petracek
Robert Price
Sarah Otto
Ramon Rodriguez
You-Ping Yang
Alexander Uribe
Matthew Lara
amir pouria zavar
Alex Wrightsman
Nhat Ngo
Dawood Aljarrar
Ben Fodor
Joshua Romero
NAYIRI VARTANIAN
Nayiri Vartanian
benny kona