

**GREATER LOS ANGELES COUNTY REGION
INTEGRATED REGIONAL WATER MANAGEMENT
LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARY**

March 24, 2021

ONLINE MS TEAMS MEETING

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Matthew Frary for Mark Pestrella (Los Angeles County Flood Control District)
Chair, Leadership Committee

Grace Kast for Lisa Rapp (Gateway Water Management Authority)
Chair, Lower SG/LLA River Sub-region

Esther Rojas for Robb Whitaker (Water Replenishment District)
Vice-Chair, Lower San Gabriel River and Lower Los Angeles River Subregion

Dave Pedersen (Las Virgenes Municipal Water District)
Chair, North Santa Monica Bay Sub-region

David Rydman (Los Angeles County Flood Control District)
Vice-Chair, North Santa Monica Bay Sub-region

E.J. Caldwell, West Basin MWD
Chair, South Bay

Kelly Gardner (Main San Gabriel Basin Watermaster)
Chair, Upper San Gabriel Sub-region

Randy Schoellerman (San Gabriel Basin Water Quality Authority)
Vice-Chair, Upper San Gabriel Subregion

Sharon Green for Robert Ferrante (Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County)
Sanitation Water Management Area

Guangyu Wang, Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission
Open Space Water Management Area

Anthony Zampello, Raymond Basin Watermaster
Groundwater Water Management Area

OTHERS PRESENT:

Carolina Hernandez, Los Angeles County Flood Control District

Amanda Guzman-Perez, Los Angeles County Flood Control District

Anthony Nercessian, Los Angeles Department of Water and Power

Carlos Moran, TreePeople

Dave Roberts, Las Virgenes Municipal Water District

Giles Coon, Los Angeles County Flood Control District

Ian Achimore, SAWPA

Lynn Rodriguez, Watershed Coalition of Ventura County

Mary Zauner, Los Angeles County Sanitation District

Nelly Antabian, Los Angeles County Flood Control District

Paul Alva, Public Works

Peter Massey, TreePeople

Russ Bryden, Public Works

Sarah Ahmed, Public Works

TJ Moon, Public Works

CALL TO ORDER

Meeting was called to order at 9:35 a.m. by Matthew Frary, who served as the Chair.

1. Introductions

Chair welcomed all attendees to the meeting, acknowledged COVID-19 related challenges and the ongoing efforts throughout Los Angeles County, and reminded the group that the meeting would be recorded for the purpose of preparing the meeting minutes. The chair reviewed the protocols and features for conducting the meeting in the MS Teams platform.

Chair introduced new Assistant Deputy Director, Carolina Hernandez. She is taking Keith Lilley's place and overseeing integrated water resources planning for LACFCD. She may chair future meetings in Dan Lafferty's absence.

2. Roll Call

Chair called on staff, Amanda Guzman-Perez, to conduct roll. The list of attendees was reviewed to confirm quorum was present.

3. Approval of January 27, 2021 Meeting Minutes

Chair called for a motion to approve the January 27, 2021 meeting minutes. Dave Pedersen moved for a motion to approve the minutes, Grace Kast seconded motion. Guangyu Wang abstained since he was not present at the meeting. Motion was approved.

4. New Business

A. Presentation – WMMS 2.0 (LACFCD)

Chair introduced TJ Moon, Public Works to present the Watershed Management Modeling System, LACFCD's hydrology and hydraulics tool for evaluating water quality BMP's. The tool has been used for a variety of activities from evaluating projects in the Safe Clean Water Program to verifying compliance with the MS4 Permit. Chair solicited questions, comments, and discussion.

Randy Schoellerman inquired if the \$20B compliance cost was expected to increase or decrease. TJ responded that the cost information is expected to be available in July. TJ added that WMMS may be used to capture water information for the LA River.

B. Presentation – IRWM Roundtable Network Coordinator

Chair provided general overview of the IRWM Roundtable of Regions Network Coordinator Position and the benefits the position provides to collaboration of IRWM regions statewide. The GLAC IRWM leadership has been contributing since the beginning and is again being asked to help fund this position for another year. The GLAC IRWM has a balance of approximately \$70,000 available in its account, which is sufficient to cover the recommended GLAC portion (\$10,300, same as before).

Chair introduced Ian Achimore from SAWPA, to present. Ian presented the work completed by the Coordinator as part of the current contract and the intended work objectives for the new contract. He provided information on SAWPA and the Roundtable of Regions activities. Chair opened the floor to discussion or questions.

SAWPA is requesting funding for one year; however, it hopes regions consider the second year of funding in their planning efforts. Dave Pedersen inquired as to the absence of funding for IRWM in the bond measures. Ian Achimore commented that it may be due to legislature turnaround, unawareness of IRWM by new members, competition for funding, and the focus on climate change based on the current wildfires. Lynn Rodriguez added that ACWA is proposing that \$100M be included in one or both bonds. She reported that some of the regions will be sending letters and looking at policy position for funding to be funneled to IRWM.

Chair called for a motion to approve funding the Network Coordinator Position. Motion to approve funding for the Network Coordinator Position was made by Guangyu Wang and seconded by Dave Pedersen; Anthony Nercessian abstained for ULAR.

5. Old Business

A. Summary of Current Grants/Key Updates (Prop 84 Rounds 1 – 4)

Chair called on Amanda Guzman-Perez to provide updates. She reminded the committee that the Project Status Report is provided to the steering committees each month, upon request, and that input on the report information is always welcomed. Key updates on the Prop 84 grants included:

i. Round 1

LASAN has requested an end date extension to complete their Project 4 - Penmar Phase III Project. The current grant deadline is June 2021. The five-year end date extension request for the project is a result of the ongoing COVID-19 situation as well as recently adopted Senate Bill 966 (SB966) - Onsite treated non-potable water systems regulation requirements. LACFCD staff is working on the preparation of the formal request for submission to DWR.

LADWP will be requesting an extension to complete the closeout their Project 9 -Tujunga Spreading Grounds. The current project completion is scheduled for May 2021. An extension to October 2021 will be requested to complete invoicing, administrative tasks, and project closeout documentation.

ii. Round 2 Amendment 4

The formal modification was submitted to DWR in December. The amendment request included modification to Project 4, Project 8, and the grant end date.

Project 4 – Dominguez Gap Spreading Grounds West Basin Percolation Enhancements Project; LACFCD has requested budget modification to fully expend grant funds.

Project 8 – Peck Water Conservation Improvement Project - Staff followed up on DWR's request for a new project to ensure funding is best applied to benefit the region. DWR gave its preliminary approval for the new Multi-Benefit Water Conservation Project. The project combines the completion of the City of Los Angeles's Vermont Avenue Stormwater Capture and Green Street Project (Project 12) and installation of rubber dams along the San Gabriel River and Ben Lomond Spreading Grounds by LACFCD.

The current Grant End Date is December 31, 2021; requested extension to June 30, 2022.

iii. Round 3

Due to delays caused by the COVID-19 incident, two projects are requesting an end date extension. The current grant agreement end date is June 30, 2021.

Project 4 – Terminal Island Water Reclamation Plant (TIWRP) Advanced Water Purification Facility and Distribution System Expansion for the City of LA DWP. The proposed end date is March 31, 2022.

Project 14 – Well No. 2 Rehabilitation Project for the Puente Basin Water Agency. The proposed end date is December 31, 2022.

iv. Round 4 Amendment 3:

Flood Control District's staff is working with DWR to amend the schedule for 11 out of the 19 projects. DWR has unofficially agreed to extend the grant agreement end date from March 31, 2021 to June 30, 2024. The execution of the amendment is anticipated by March 31, 2021. Many of delays that have triggered the schedule amendments are related to the COVID-19 incident. Project 19 is requesting a change in the scope of work, in addition to a change in their schedule. Project 14 is requesting a change in the LPS, a change in project name, a change in schedule and a change in work plan.

- 1) Advance Water Meter Replacement (Project 1) – Extension to 12/2021
- 2) Southeast Water Efficiency Program (Project 2) – Extension to 9/2022
- 3) Comprehensive Water Conservation (Project 6) – Extension to 9/2021
- 4) Las Virgenes-Calleaguas MWD's Interconnection (Project 7) – Extension to 9/2023
- 5) North Torrance Well Field-Phase III (Project 11) – Extension to 9/2021
- 6) Recycled Water Supply for Palos Verdes Golf Course (Project 12) – Extension to 12/2022
- 7) Water LA Neighborhood Retrofits N. San Fernando Valley (Project 14) – Modification to work plan requested
- 8) Hoover, Toll, and Keppel School Recycled Water (Project 15) – Extension to 3/2023
- 9) Lopez Spreading Grounds Improvement (Project 16) – Extension to 6/2024
- 10) Centralized Groundwater Treatment System (Project 18) – Extension to 3/2022
- 11) Big Dalton Spreading Grounds Improvement (Project 19) – Extension to 10/2023. The change in the project's scope of work from the original design of a diversion and rubber dam system to the existing PM-26 interconnection to the Big Dalton Spreading Grounds. This new waterline would make the best use of the increase water capacity and give more operational flexibility to the project.

The preparation of the amendment request for all eleven projects is almost complete. The amendment will be processed before March 31, 2021, the current grant end date. The amendment should be fully executed by all parties before the end of the month via DocuSign.

B. Prop 1 DACIP and GLAC DAC Committee

Chair called on Grace Kast to report on DACIP. Grace reported that Task Order 3 - Needs Assessment remains in data collection phase. Consultants have completed 24 out of the 25 institutional interviews. Community survey collection ongoing and extended through April 2021 to allow sufficient time to receive community response. Survey is still available on the WaterTalks website (www.watertalks.csusb.edu) and all DAC members and agency employees are encouraged to complete survey.

All in-person community outreach and engagement still postponed. All three regions are continuing engagement efforts virtually. The DACIP Task Force continues to convene on a regular basis to advance the effort. The next Task Force meeting will be rescheduled. The Task Force continues to work on finalizing Task 4 Project Development Scope of Work to release RFP.

DWR recently met with the Task Force to discuss concerns that arose in the SAWPA Disadvantaged Community Tribal Involvement effort. DWR wanted to bring those issues to our attention and continues to work closely with our funding area in order to prevent those same challenges from surfacing within in the LA-Ventura region. GLAC DAC Committee is scheduled to meet at Noon, following today's Leadership Committee Meeting.

Chair acknowledged that DACIP's efforts are being reviewed through the SCWP lens for consideration of future SCWP engagement.

EJ Caldwell inquired how soon the Scope of Work would be available and whether it can be discussed now or under Item 6C. He wants to discuss AB1195 (Garcia), in relation to UCLA study, where LA County was consulted and ask how DACIP, as well as GLAC, can assist in the issues addressed in the study. He expressed that the study does not really address at-risk systems.

Grace Kast indicated that Task 4, which reflects about half of the grant and may help in addressing the question, is still outstanding. One of the exercises that the GLAC DAC Committee did to address the question of enabling communities to request assistance, such as providing a toolbox, to provide local, on the ground communities, with a program to show them how to find funding, get help with feasibility studies, and write a grant application. Lynn Rodriguez added that in addition to what types of project development, site assessments, and technical assistance that will be addressed, the Committee wants to be able to address capacity building and training that will live beyond this grant. This is the reason for the delay with Task 4. Giles Coon reported that the DACIP includes the engagement of agencies, who can help in identifying the ailing agencies that need help.

C. Prop 1 – Implementation Round 1 Allocations and Comments

Chair called on Amanda Guzman-Perez to provide an update on Prop1 Implementation Round 1 Grant. Draft grant agreement was received and is under review. The Grant agreement is expected to be fully executed in the upcoming weeks. MOU's between LACFCD and local project sponsors will be sent out once the grant agreement is finalized.

At the January meeting Dave Pedersen and Sharon Green had questions regarding distribution of funds from "placeholder" projects that did not submit required CEQA and permit documentation in time to qualify to receive the grant funds. DWR has confirmed that grant award for a "placeholder" project that fails to meet requirements and is not added to the grant agreement, will be reduced from the total. Replacement projects will not be allowed. The reduced amount will be made available to the respective Funding Area in future funding rounds on a competitive basis.

The grant agreement no longer includes provision for two amendments to include placeholder projects (PSP allows 1 amendment) and requires placeholder projects to submit CEQA and permits within 18 months of agreement execution. Staff is following up with the Roundtable of Regions to determine if there has been discussion and consensus on this topic.

Lynn Rodriguez reported that she just learned about the 18-months extension. DWR will be convening workshop with the Roundtable of Regions at 9:30 a.m., May 6, 2021 to discuss Prop 1

Round 1 survey results that will help in developing the PSP for Round 2. Meeting is open to everyone.

LACFCD has continued to work with DWR to provide input on upcoming Round 2 PSP and the appropriate revisions to facilitate a more equitable distribution of funds across the Funding Area.

D. Renewal of GLAC IRWM Regional Water Management Group MOU

Chair reminded Committee that the previous agreement that established the group and its associated operating guidelines expired on December 2020. The Committee moved to renew MOU with minor edits in November. Chair called on Giles to provide brief status.

Giles reported that LACFCD incorporated the minor updates to the MOU per the Committee's direction and has been facilitating the execution of the revised agreement. The final version was distributed to Leadership Committee members for signature.

Committee agreed that the new MOU will be effective on the date the majority of members (9 members) signed the MOU. To date, 10 members have signed. Reportedly, the next MOU signature page will be submitted by the end of this month.

The LACFCD received the required 9 signed agreements on February 19, 2021; MOU has been in effect as of that date. All committee members and alternates are encouraged to submit their signature pages at their earliest convenience.

Esther Rojas requested copy of the final MOU with all member signatures. The final MOU will be sent out to all members once all signatures are submitted; current MOU will be provided, as needed. EJ Caldwell reported that WBMWD's board has authorized MOU signature and is ready for execution.

E. Update on WaterForLA

Chair called on Sarah Ahmed to provide the update. Sarah reported that LA County Public Works' Water for LA program continues its campaign focused on stormwater and urban runoff pollution prevention, with a focus on reducing litter. The theme of the campaign is "Don't Waste Beautiful" and aims to invoke a sense of civic pride among LA County residents to keep LA County waste-free. In the past two months, the campaign has garnered nearly 8 million impressions (surpassing the overall campaign goal of 6.2 million impressions), which resulted in 13,000 new website visitors.

LA County has also partnered with the Dodgers to extend campaign advertisements on Dodgers radio and iHeart Media stations. The Dodgers will also air TV ads during Dodgers games across LA County. These additional ads will run from early April through the end of October 2021. The campaign targeted males under 35 years old, but is resonating more with females and Spanish speakers.

Everyone is invited to visit WaterforLA.com for more information about the campaign. Media kit for other organizations to share campaign materials are being developed and will be available in English and Spanish on the website.

F. Update on Safe, Clean Water Program

Chair provided an update on the SCWP. The template agreements for the Municipal Program and the Regional Program were approved last summer. Upon receipt of annual plans and other necessary paperwork, the District continues to execute transfer agreements and send out the funds. Of the \$112M for the first year SCWP Municipal Program funds, \$80M has been disbursed. This corresponds to 56 of the 85 municipalities. For the Regional Program approved by the Board in October, 42 projects and studies will be receiving funds. Agreements for 7 of the 42 projects have been executed and have received monies.

For Round 2, over 80 submissions were received; 60 were for infrastructure projects and collectively requesting over \$500M and citing countless types of leveraged funds. The Watershed Area Steering Committees have selected watershed coordinators that are currently being on-boarded, and the committees are therefore now focusing on their recommended Stormwater Investment Plans. Information can be viewed on the portal.

The watershed coordinators will be critical in connecting technical resources to those that need it. They will play a key part in community engagement and education, serve as liaisons between communities and steering committees, and help advance key discussions that will help shape program and the projects. It's recommended that all IRWM agencies get to know their respective Watershed Coordinator(s).

Regional Oversight Committee of the SCW Program met twice in January and February to discuss a few of the hot topics on how to implement certain features of the program. There are several concurrent studies underway to support and inform SCWP.

Grace Kast inquired about the location of the coordinator information. Information will be available on the website.

G. County Water Plan Update

Chair provided an update on the County Water Plan. As discussed in the last LC meeting, Phase 1 focused on early research, early scoping, early planning, and crafting the framework for engagement related to plan development. Phase 2, which includes stakeholder engagement, is expected to begin in April. LACFCD still plans to utilize the IRWM regions as a primary platform for engagement and input, and our consultant will likely be reaching out to the GLAC subregion chairs in the next couple months to schedule the first meetings and strategize about workshops.

6. Standing Committee Reports

A. Steering Committees

Chair called on each subregion chair/vice-chair to provide updates.

- NSMB – No update; no meeting held.
- South Bay – No update; no meeting held.

- ULAR – Anthony Nercessian reported that the subregion met in January; no meetings were held in February and March.
- USGRHR – No update; no meeting held.
- LSGLAR – Grace Kast reported that last meeting was held in February; two project presentations were made and both projects were approved.

B. Water Management Area Representatives

Chair called on each area representative to provide updates.

- Groundwater – Tony Zampielo reported that imported water was brought into the basin; as basin groundwater level dipped under 200 feet above sea level. He met with MWD staff and member agencies to discuss their integrated resource planning update.
- Open Space – No report
- Sanitation – Sharon Green provided Clean Water Project link.
- Stormwater – No representative present.
- Surface Water – Tony Zampielo reported that the State had lowered allocation to SWP from 10% to 5%.
- Stormwater Capture – Giles Coon reported the total rainfall to date in downtown LA was 5.4 inches; represents 42% of average rainfall to date); represents 35% of annual average rainfall.

C. Legislative Committee

Chair called on E.J. Caldwell to provide an update. AB1500 and SB45 with anywhere from \$5.5B up to \$6.7B in funding. In the last past iterations of water bonds, it has moved from IRWM to integrated watershed management and not using the IRWM structure. Organization is needed to push for IRWM and County can play a role.

UCLA Study produced in the latter part of 2020 or early part 2021 identified that in South LA County there is 53 at-risk or failing water systems and concentrates on 29 systems with highest populations. Study identified water quality issues and costs of retail water bills. The study includes maps but does not identify the at-risk or failing systems. It provides recommendations, including assessments by WRP and RWCB, and SWRCD helping with consolidations. AB1195 (Garcia) was introduced to add another water district to cover the WRD service area. EJ recommended a joint subcommittee meeting with SB, LSGLLAR, and maybe USGRARHR subregions to talk about how to assist failing systems and ensuring that their projects are included. Grace Kast reported that the Gateway Board discussed the bill at length at its last meeting. She requested updates so they can be provided to Gateway Board. Every agency should provide input on the bills. Chair added that discussion with subregions would be prudent.

7. Public Comment

Chair solicited public comments and asked staff to check chat box and call-ins. Charming Evelyn, Water Commission Chair for Sierra Club, expressed that AB1195 would disenfranchise millions of voters and opposes the bill unless it is amended. The Sierra Club also opposed SB65 last year. SB403 supported by the Sierra Club, is asking State Water Board - trying to strengthen. Sierra Club is also supporting AB377.

8. Future Agenda Items/Announcements/Other Items

Chair invited members to share ideas for future agenda items. Dave Pedersen wants to consider adding discussion about Federal COVID-19 relief funds, what may be available to the County, and what can we learn from one another's challenges and adjustments during the pandemic.

9. Next Meeting

Chair announced that the next meeting will be held May 26, 2021, 9:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m., likely on MS Teams.

10. Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 11:38 a.m.

DRAFT