



...A United Voice for the Santa Ana River Watershed

**OWOW STEERING COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
July 22, 2021**

Committee Members	
<u>Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority Representatives</u>	
Bruce Whitaker, Convener, Orange County Water District	Present
Mike Gardner, Western Municipal Water District	Absent
<u>County Supervisor Representatives</u>	
Doug Chaffee, Orange County Board of Supervisors	Present
Karen Spiegel, Riverside County Board of Supervisors	Present
Curt Hagman, San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors	Present
<u>County Municipal Representatives</u>	
Deborah Robertson, Mayor, City of Rialto	Present
Ted Hoffman, Councilmember, City of Norco	Present
Nicholas Dunlap, Mayor Pro Tem, City of Fullerton	Absent
<u>Business Community Representative</u>	
James Hessler, Director of West Coast Operations, Altman Plants	Present
<u>Environmental Community Representative</u>	
Garry W. Brown, President, Orange County Coastkeeper	Absent
<u>Regional Water Quality Control Board Representative</u>	
Joseph Kerr, Regional Water Quality Control Board	Absent
Others Present	
<u>SAWPA COMMISSIONERS:</u>	T. Milford Harrison, Jasmin A. Hall, Kelly Rowe
<u>SAWPA STAFF:</u>	Jeff Mosher, Karen Williams, Mark Norton, Ian Achimore, Rick Whetsel, Pete Vitt, Sara Villa, Haley Mullay
<u>OTHERS PRESENT:</u>	Andrew D. Turner, Lagerlof LLP

The OWOW Steering Committee meeting was called to order at 11:00 a.m. by Bruce Whitaker, Convener, at the Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority, 11615 Sterling Avenue, Riverside, CA 92503. The record will reflect this meeting was conducted virtually.



1. CALL TO ORDER | PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Pursuant to the provisions of Executive Orders N-29-20 and N-08-21 issued by Governor Newsom, this meeting was conducted virtually. All votes taken during this meeting were conducted via oral roll call.

Oral roll call was conducted. A quorum was not present for the meeting as expected. A decision made to wait a few minutes for additional Committee Members to join the virtual meeting. At 11:07 a.m., roll call was conducted again, demonstrating a quorum.

2. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments; there were no public comments received via email.

3. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES – May 27, 2021

Committee Member Ted Hoffman wanted to note that the SAWPA Commission has begun work with a consultant on homelessness in the Santa Ana River bottom. He acknowledged that he requested this topic as a future agenda item, and it's now being addressed.

MOVED, approve the May 27, 2021 meeting minutes.

Result:	Failed by Roll Call Vote (lack of quorum)
Motion/Second:	Hoffman/Hagman
Ayes:	Hagman, Hessler, Hoffman, Whitaker
Nays:	None
Abstentions:	Robertson, Spiegel
Absent:	Brown, Dunlap, Gardner, Kerr

Approval of the May 27, 2021 meeting minutes failed due to lack of quorum. The Committee moved on to consider Agenda Item 4.A.

4. BUSINESS ITEMS

A. Proposition 1 Round 2 Integrated Regional Water Management Grant Competition Process (SC#2021.8)

Ian Achimore provided the PowerPoint presentation, *Proposition 1 Round 2 Integrated Regional Water Management Grant Competition Process*, on pages 11 – 28 of the agenda packet. Mr. Achimore reviewed updates to the Communication Plan for OWOW Proposition 1 Round 2, presented possible updates to the rating and ranking criteria for grant applications, and requested feedback on the project scoring and ranking criteria from stakeholders. The Department of Water Resources (DWR) is anticipated to release an initial set of guidelines for eligible projects in August 2021, contributing to the approximate timeline and schedule of events presented. Next, Mr. Achimore reviewed the status of various communications to entities that would benefit from a presentation or workshop to promote the upcoming opportunity for grant funding under Proposition 1 Round 2. The following list of types of agencies was provided:

- Councils of Governments
- Flood Control Districts
- SAWPA Member Agencies and large to mid-sized retail water agencies
- Small Water Agencies (mutual water companies, investor-owned utilities)
- Tribes



- Non-Governmental Organizations
- Disadvantaged Communities
- Resource Conservation Districts
- Forest Related Groups (National Forests, fire safe councils, Cal-Fire)

Scheduled presentations and workshops will be effective in circulating the information about the upcoming grant opportunities through the Santa Ana River Watershed communities and ensure that entities are aware of possibilities to secure funding for any qualifying projects. SAWPA staff has already coordinated and conducted workshops with some of the entities, while others are still in the planning phase for the presentations to be made for their audiences.

Two new ideas were recommended as potential updates to the scoring and ranking criteria for Round 2 of Proposition 1 and were presented to gain feedback from stakeholders. The first suggestion was to add more descriptors to the benefit area limits. The current definitions were developed during Round 1 of Proposition 1, and it's possible that these can be clarified or expanded to help project proponents define their benefit areas more easily. The second suggestion is evaluating the OWOW process to possibly mirror DWR's methodology as DWR interpreted "direct benefit to disadvantaged communities (DAC)" very specifically. It was noted that criteria may be revised if DWR's priorities and areas of focus are other than anticipated in the draft Proposal Solicitation Package (PSP). Benefit areas described were Ecosystem Projects, Surface Water Quality and Groundwater Quality, Coastal Water quality/recreation, and Inland Park or water-body recreation projects. Advantages of matching the definitions would allow for less confusion about applications when DWR evaluates them, and it incentivizes projects that mirror the goals of the Proposition 1 Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) legislation. A disadvantage would be that it could make the OWOW application more complicated as benefit areas created via the OWOW project portal are currently drawn regardless of parcel type (being investigated to correct) and it may not incentivize project proponents to think as regionally. At the July 2021 Steering Committee meeting, SAWPA staff had also recommended other possible revisions being (1) a possible change in small project threshold of \leq \$500,000 of grant request, and/or change the 10% and 90% split for small and large projects and (2) add more categories or change the weighting factors of benefits.

Committee Member Robertson recommended holding a presentation for the Energy and Environment Committee under the Southern California Association of Governments, that includes representation of 6 counties in Southern California (3 of those being within the watershed), to further the outreach plan. Committee Member Robertson also commented on the benefit area definitions, specifically the inland park or water-body recreation definition since some projects that do not have a seemingly direct benefit to residents within just a ½ mile radius. It was suggested that the ½ mile radius could be increased to fully appreciate the range of projects in the recreational category. Committee Member Ted Hoffman added that the June workshop was very helpful and beneficial furthering the conversation on these topics. Convener Whitaker noted that the feedback he has heard from customers in Orange County is concentrated around prioritizing projects that would increase water production, reliability, or quality improvements.



Next steps include a virtual workshop that will be held by SAWPA staff on August 26, 2021 with any interested stakeholders, as well as any updates and recommended rating and ranking criteria being presented to the Committee at the September 2021 meeting. It's currently anticipated that the OWOW Call for Projects will be open from October 2021 to January 2022.

This item was for informational and discussion purposes; no action was taken on Agenda Item No. 4.A.

Committee Member Spiegel communicated that she would like to change her vote on the meeting minutes from an "Abstain" to a "Yes". Convener Whitaker returned to Agenda Item No. 3 to conduct another roll call vote to approve the Meeting Minutes from May 27, 2021 meeting.

MOVED, approve the May 27, 2021 meeting minutes.

Result:	Adopted by Roll Call Vote
Motion/Second:	Hoffman/Hagman
Ayes:	Hagman, Hessler, Hoffman, Robertson, Spiegel, Whitaker
Nays:	None
Abstentions:	None
Absent:	Brown, Dunlap, Gardner, Kerr

The committee moved on to consider Agenda Item 4.B.

B. Disadvantaged Communities Involvement (DCI) Program Status (SC#2021.9)

Rick Whetsel provided the PowerPoint presentation, *Disadvantaged Communities Involvement Program Summary Report* on pages 31 – 61 of the agenda packet. Mr. Whetsel reviewed the key program goals, partners, accomplishments, and lessons learned while working on the Disadvantaged Communities Involvement (DCI) Program. One third of the Santa Ana River Watershed qualified as a Disadvantaged Community under the Department of Water Resources definition. Reports and other deliverables from the work completed under the DCI program are available for viewing on the SAWPA website and will be updated as newer versions are released.

This item was for informational and discussion purposes; no action was taken on Agenda Item No. 4.B.

5. COMMITTEE MEMBERS' COMMENTS

There were no Committee Member comments.

6. REQUEST FOR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

There were no requests for future agenda items.

7. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting ended at 12:14 p.m.



APPROVED: September 23, 2021

Bruce Whitaker

Bruce Whitaker, Convener

Attest:

Sara Villa

Sara Villa, Clerk of the Board