TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP MEETING #3

APRIL 10, 2025 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL FLOWS FRAMEWORK LOS ANGELES RIVER

MEETING LOCATION: LOS ANGELES RIVER CENTER AND GARDENS
570 W AVE 26, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

Attendees

Name		Affiliation	In person/virtual
Michael	**Affeldt**	City of LA Bureau of Engineering	In-person
Fatema	**Akhter**	LA Department of Water and Power	Virtual
Jose	**Alberola**	Stillwater Sciences	In-person
Steve	**Appleton**	Elysian Community Operations	In-person
Elisabeth	**Aukee**	Friends of the LA River	In-person
Brian	**Baldauf**	Mountains Recreation & Conservation Authority	Virtual
Jon	**Ball**	LA Sanitation Watershed Protection Program	In-person
Eric	**Batman**	LA County Public Works	Virtual
Edward	**Belden**	City of LA Bureau of Engineering	In-person
Tim	**Brick**	Stewards of the Arroyo Seco	In-person
Isaac	**Brown**	Stillwater Sciences	In-person
Nate	**Butler**	Stillwater Sciences	In-person
Holly	**Callahan**	US Fish and Wildlife Service	Virtual
Jason	**Casanova**	Council for Watershed Health	Virtual
Josh	**Cooper**	Council for Watershed Health	In-person
Rebecca	**Correa**	Mountains Recreation & Conservation Authority	In-person
Candice	**Dickens-Russell**	Friends of the LA River	In-person
Mas	**Dojiri**	City of LA Department of Sanitation and Environment	In-person
Tim	**Fairbank**	US Army Corps of Engineers	Virtual
Mary	**Ferguson**	LA County Parks and Recreation	In-person
Hannah	**Flynn**	Stillwater Sciences	In-person
Karina	**Gonzalez**	LA Department of Sanitation and Environment	Virtual
Jonathan	**Hallemeier**	US Army Corps of Engineers	Virtual
Ben	**Harris**	LA Waterkeeper	In-person

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Name		Affiliation	In person/virtual
John	**Huynh**	LA Department of Water and Power	In-person
Katie	**Irving**	Southern California Coastal Water Research Project	In-person
Olivia	**Johnson**	California Department of Fish and Wildlife	Virtual
Stacee	**Karnya**	LA Department of Sanitation and Environment	Virtual
Wendy	**Katagi**	McMillen	In-person
AJ	**Keith**	Stillwater Sciences	In-person
Sapna	**Khandwala**	Stillwater Sciences	In-person
Melissa	**Lane**	Stillwater Sciences	In-person
Mitul	**Luhar**	University of Southern California	In-person
Chris	**Medak**	US Fish and Wildlife Service	Virtual
Annelisa	**Moe**	Heal the Bay	In-person
Carling	**Monder**	University of Southern California Public Exchange	Virtual
Bruce	**Orr**	Stillwater Sciences	Virtual
Tania	**Pineda Enriquez**	Heal the Bay	In-person
Erik	**Porse**	University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources	Virtual
Mahesh	**Pujari**	LA Department of Sanitation and Environment	In-person
Alex	**Robinson**	University of Southern California	Virtual
Rowan	**Roderick-Jones**	Stillwater Sciences	In-person
Christian	**Romberger**	California Department of Fish and Wildlife	In-person
William	**Saunders**	LA County Public Works	In-person
Bronwen	**Stanford**	The Nature Conservancy	Virtual
Clark	**Stevens**	Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains	Virtual
Kris	**Taniguchi-Quan**	Southern California Coastal Water Research Project	In-person
Melanie	**Tory**	LA Department of Water and Power	Virtual
Liam	**Walsh**	Mountains Recreation & Conservation Authority	Virtual
Sam	**Ward**	Stillwater Sciences	In-person

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Name		Affiliation	In person/virtual
Scott	**Webster**	Elysian Community Operations	In-person
Patti	**Wohner**	Stillwater Sciences	Virtual
Samson	**Wong**	LA Bureau of Engineering	Virtual
Belle	**Zheng**	Council for Watershed Health	In-person
Miller	**Zou**	LA Sanitation Watershed Protection Program	In-person

Mountains Recreation & Conservation Authority

Stillwater Sciences

McMillen

Agencies, Organizations, and CEFF Terminology

Acronym	Meaning
CDFW	California Department of Fish and Wildlife
CWH	Council for Watershed Health
CEFF	California Environmental Flows Framework
FoLAR	Friends of the Los Angeles River
LABOE	City of Los Angeles Bureau of Engineering
LACPW	Los Angeles County Department of Public Works
LADWP	City of Los Angeles Department of Water and Power
LARWQCB	Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board
LASAN	City of Los Angeles Sanitation and Environment
LLAR	Lower Los Angeles River
MRCA	Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority
RCDSMM	Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains
SAS	Stewards of the Arroyo Seco
SCCWRP	Southern California Coastal Water Research Project
SDMP	Structured Decision-Making Process
SWRCB	State Water Resources Control Board
TNC	The Nature Conservancy
TTWG	Thematic Technical Working Group
TWG	LA River CEFF Technical Working Group
UCANR	University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources
UCLA	University of California, Los Angeles
USACE	US Army Corps of Engineers
USC	University of Southern California
USFS	US Forest Service
USFWS	US Fish and Wildlife Service
USGS	US Geological Survey
WCA	Watershed Conservation Authority

This table is a comprehensive list of terms used in the LA River CEFF Project documents. Some of the terms do not occur in this document.

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Action items and comments

No.	TWG#3 Action Items	Status
1.	Provide simplifying graphics, processes, and communication tools to move toward end results and takeaways	In Progress
2.	Emphasize importance of obtaining tribal/cultural input into LA River CEFF	In Progress
3.	Connect with CWH on water quality, fire resiliency, climate, and related CEFF adaptive management and monitoring topics	In Progress
4.	Follow up with key TWG members regarding specific comments/questions where noted during TWG meeting	In Progress
5.	Connect with TWG members suggesting available data (USACE and USC)	In Progress

No.	LA River CEFF TWG Suggested Outcomes
1.	Adaptive management models that can be calibrated for now and future conditions
2.	Bacteria data included in flow assessment
3.	Maintain focus on primary influences on flow in river
4.	Decision tool focused on the avoidance of jurisdictional conflicts in diversions of recycled water
5.	Spatial model that can determine impacts of future projects, adaptable to the addition of new/changing data inputs, including a clear way for stakeholders to submit data
6.	Development of simple, clear guidance for project planning
7.	Educational tool for stakeholders and public to promote engagement, understanding of project choices, protection of LA River focal species.
8.	Open, interactive and accessible LA River CEFF interface as a live tool for continual management and reference.
9.	Decision-making tool for local agencies and can provide input to regulators

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Overview

The purpose of this meeting was to provide a status of the Los Angeles River California Environmental Flows Framework (CEFF) Project and to solicit stakeholder input on flow assessment methodology and using CEFF tools and outcomes in TWG member's respective organizations.

Meeting Summary

Welcome (start time in recording: 00:00:30)

Wendy Katagi (McMillen): Wendy provided a welcome and greeting followed by a moment of silence remembering those affected by the wildfires and recovery efforts.

John Huynh, LADWP: John spoke to the importance of is the project. Thanks to everyone for making this commitment to continuing to move the LA River CEFF forward.

CEFF Introduction, Wendy Katagi (00:07:15)

TTWG Progress and Achievements, Nate Butler (00:12:09)

Nate Butler (Stillwater Sciences) presented updates from each of the seven TTWGs.

Ben Harris, LA Waterkeeper: In response to the Biodiversity TTWG updates, Ben asked if plant species were considered within the focal species process? Nate responded that the Biodiversity TTWG only considered fauna focal species because the flora species and their role in ecological niches/food web needs will *need* to be supported in order to support fauna focal species. There will also be additional performance measures developed in the CEFF process that focus on different specific ecosystem niches and plant species that support regional biodiversity, including those previously developed by the LA River Environmental Flows Project.

Kris Taniguchi-Quan, SCCWRP: In response to the Biodiversity TTWG updates, Kris asked how will you synthesize the many species and their needs as they pertain to the annual hydrograph? How will you balance different needs across different species / different seasons? Nate responded that the flow assessment will determine the functional flows at which each species has achieved its goals and where functional flows need to be adjusted to better support balancing the flow needs of different species.

Kris Taniguchi-Quan, SCCWRP: In response to the Flood Risk Management TTWG updates, Kris asked if the changing capacity was discussed in in Flood Risk Management TTWG, including such actions as dredging sediment? She noted that the Water Quality TTWG deferred on this topic, assuming that it would be covered in Flood Risk Management. Nate responded that there were topics like this that got talked about in on TTWG before being transferred to another TTWG. Nate will follow up with Kris to confirm that changing channel capacity by dredging sediment was correctly transferred from the Water Quality TTWG to the Flood Risk Management TTWG.

Bronwen Stanford, TNC: In response to the Recreation TTWG updates, Bronwen asked if the project is thinking about the need to link back to the functional flows considering that all goals require different adaptations, etc.? Nate responded that the project will document how these parameters/suitability criteria link back to functional flows so that they can be integrated into the flow assessment. Through the flow assessment, we will be determining which suitability criteria of the goals are being best met by the existing functional flows and which functional flows may need adjustment to better support other goals. The results from the flow assessment will be shared at the next TWG meeting.

Mahesh Pujari, LASAN: Mahesh asked how the depth of flow and volume of flow and the relationship between the two is addressed in the flow assessment? Nate responded that the performance measures are largely independent of the channel form and the relationship between the depth of the flow and the volume of the flow will be evaluated as part of the flow assessment. The results from the flow assessment will be shared at the next TWG meeting.

Steve Appleton, Elysian Community Operations: Steve stated that it's important to understand how we manage our discharges. He noted that there might be days / times where it's more or less useful to alter the discharge to manage stage and water temperature, and it would be helpful to understand the impacts of the quantity and temperature of discharge on river activities. Improving our understanding of how discharges can be managed provides one of the best opportunities to balance various stakeholder needs. Nate responded that he agreed that better understanding how discharges can be managed will provide opportunities to balance stakeholder needs.

Mas Dojiri, LASAN: Mas commented that certain suitability criteria are more critical than others. He asked if the project was looking at using indicator species to simplify the analysis where appropriate? He noted that within Biodiversity analysis, an indicator species may be used such that if its criteria are met, all the other species' criteria are met

as well. Nate confirmed that the project will seek linkages among suitability criteria and determine the set of suitability criteria and the range of those criteria that bound other suitability criteria such that if this smaller set of suitability criteria are met a large number of other suitability criteria would be met.

Mas Dojiri, LASAN: Mas asked for clarification regarding what is included in tribal/cultural ceremonies. Nate responded that we are initiating discussions now with tribal representatives to better understand this. This information is not found in published documents. We understand the sensitivities there, so we are seeking only the relationship with flow and how flow supports their activities in whatever detail they are comfortable sharing. This information will be shared with the TWG as the further conversations are completed.

Ben Harris, LA Waterkeeper: Ben suggested that CEFF's technical material, including functional flow timing, could be communicated effectively through graphics, diagrams, visual tools. He noted that the TTWG spreadsheets become overwhelming.

He also noted that the 7 themes relate back to the beneficial uses. He suggested that the flow assessment and alternatives emphasize not just the channel but examine the entire watershed so we consider holistic solutions (i.e. what is the best flow), and work backwards to get there without compromising other functions.

Nate agreed that graphics are a very useful tool and that we would share simplifying graphics later in the meeting. Nate also agreed that the analysis will be at watershed level.

Mahesh Pujari, LASAN: Mahesh suggested that simple, clear communications would be best and where possible, merge management goals into larger achievable goals. For example, State Water Board's Integrated Regional Water Management Plan has many goals, so it can be challenging to understand what applies to where. Let's make it simple, doable, and understandable.

Flow Assessment overview, Nate Butler (01:09:59)

Nate Butler (Stillwater Sciences) gave an overview of the Flow Assessment process.

Kris Taniguchi-Quan, SCCWRP: Kris asked if the flow assessment includes modeling water quality? Nate responded that we are considering including water quality parameters.

Steve Appleton, Elysian Community Operations: Steve stated that he's looked at HEC-RAS data compared it to USGS gage at Sepulveda dam and concludes that the variability

yearly, seasonally, daily, tracks poorly with HEC-RAS model. He suggested that modeling may not be the best tool when we don't have enough data. On the research end, the standard around the world is to use deep learning for forecasting. He urged that the lack of data was a conceptual concern about this process. Referencing Mas' earlier comment, Steve noted that there are simplifying methods to measure achievement. For example in kayaking, there are points in the river where measuring whether there is sufficient water for a kayak to pass would help understand whether passage exists in other parts of the river. Nate responded that the project will be centering available data in the analysis and modeling. Nate noted that the model gives us the ability to look forward into future conditions. And, although models frequently are imperfect predictors, models can provide useful information for understanding our planned conditions. Steve then agreed and clarified that he's not suggesting that we eliminate modeling, just that he'd like to see more discussion around the role of data in the analysis.

Mas Dojiri, LASAN: Mas noted a point of correction: The LA River temperature study is being lead by Larry Walker and Associates. Eric Stein and SCCWRP are involved, but not leading the study.

Mitul Luhar, USC: Mitul emphasized that we have available data, including the continuing datasets from Sepulveda, Verdugo, and Arroyo. Encouraged the group to take advantage of those sources to update the models due to the dynamic nature of the River.

Flow assessment details, Isaac Brown (01:32:40)

Isaac Brown (Stillwater Sciences) presented technical details of the Flow Assessment process.

Eric Batman, LACPW: *(in chat)* Eric noted that rainfall in Los Angeles is highly variable from year to year. For example, two years ago downtown LA received over 33 inches of rain, whereas this year, only 6 inches have been received and also the timing of the rainfall can be highly variable. This year we didn't receive much rain until February. Eric asked if the flow goals would be adjusted each year and tied to the amount of local rainfall? He asked how there is an expectation of flows in the LA River if the rainfall doesn't support it? Isaac responded that the project will have flow recommendations for wet years, average years, and dry years. Even in the river's natural condition, there's a lot of variation on yearly, even decadal variations. The whole system is tailored to the natural system. We'll be providing different types of recommendations.

Josh Cooper, CWH: Josh asked how the minimum/maximum flow nexus is assessed or estimated? Isaac responded that while we have not estimated it yet, the plan is to characterize the channel form changes on a project-basis.

Scott Webster, Elysian Community Operations: Scott asked how granular the analysis data will be (millions of gallons per day or hour)? Isaac responded that we will have hourly data.

Rebecca Correa, MRCA: Rebecca asked about the best method or contact person for TWG members who have data to contribute? Isaac noted that the TTWGs will continue to convene and data collection can occur through the TTWG leaders.

Breakout groups

Each breakout group responded to the question, "What tools or products would be useful from CEFF for your organizations?"

Group 1

Participants: Michael Affeldt (LABOE), Steve Appleton (Elysian Community Operations), Mas Dojiri (LASAN), Ben Harris (LA Waterkeeper), Katie Irving (SCCWRP), Annelisa Moe (Heal the Bay), Sapna Khandwala (Stillwater Sciences), Nate Butler (Stillwater Sciences), and Nelson Henriquez (Stillwater Sciences)

Ben Harris, LA Waterkeeper: Ben would like to see a shift away from previous static plans/documents and create adaptive management models that can be calibrated for now and future conditions. He expressed hope that the LA River CEFF process will be able to tweak and propose projects/designs in CEFF flow assessment models.

Annelisa Moe, Heal the Bay: Annelisa asked how bacteria ties into CEFF functional flows, understanding that flow levels impact bacteria and in-turn recreational activities? Nate responded that the LA River SWMM model is currently being used in the flow assessment modeling; the SWMM model currently is focused on metals and chemicals. There is no model for estimating bacteria at this time. However, data related to bacteria can be included in the assessment and any relationship between flow and bacteria levels supported by the available data can be considered in the LA River CEFF analysis.

Michael Affeldt, LABOE: Michael urged that the focus of our efforts remain where we can primarily influence flow in the watershed (i.e. reclamation plants). He noted that given the

lack of control from tributaries and limited parties with the power to affect flow sources, not all flow modifications are equivalent.

Annelisa Moe, Heal the Bay: Annelisa suggested graphics and maps may be useful to show co-benefits of different themes. Nate agreed that new proposed projects may be modeled and visualized through the pie charts shown and further specified through bar charts.

Mas Dojiri, LASAN: Mas noted that jurisdiction issues may arise (i.e. City of Burbank's hypothetical new plan will potentially inhibit the City of Los Angeles goals). He suggested that the decision tool should focus on the amount of recycled water with a list of all inputs (designed and planned projects).

Ben Harris, LA Waterkeeper: Ben stated that understanding peak flow and achieving flood protection is essential. And he suggested that we must focus on recycling opportunities at the watershed level.

Michael Affeldt, LABOE: Michael voiced concern regarding whether it is possible to achieve wins across all themes given the limited number of control points for flow along the LA River. He proposed that there may need to be more control points – detention areas like Sepulveda Basin– across the watershed to provide more opportunities to modify flows and achieve multiple wins. Nate responded that yes, we can evaluate what additional control points may be needed in the watershed during the tradeoff analysis and alternative development. The flow assessment will help us see where and when such control points may be needed in the watershed. Alternatives can explore whether potential new control points, like a new detention area, would help.

Katie Irving, SCCWRP: Kris noted that she's excited for CEFF to complete trade-offs analysis.

Ben Harris, LA Waterkeeper: Ben reemphasized the need for LA River CEFF to focus on the entire watershed, not just LA River. And further he urged that the project must integrate in-channel modifications (i.e. concrete removal) and watershed-wide (i.e. diversions).

Group 2

Participants: Elisabeth Aukee (FoLAR), Jon Ball (LASAN), Edward Belden (LABOE), Tim Brick (SAS), Rebecca Correa (MRCA), John Huynh (LADWP), Rowan Roderick-Jones (Stillwater Sciences), and Melissa Lane (Stillwater Sciences)

John Huynh, LADWP: John suggested that he'd like to see a LA River CEFF outcome include a GIS tool with ability to assess future planned projects. He would like the tool to do the following:

- Easily updateable model to determine impacts of a single project or groups of projects;
- Ability to toggle type of projects
- First hand user/driver interface for the LA DWP decision makers to make real time analysis

Jon Ball, LASAN: Jon would like a LA River CEFF outcome to include the ability to integrate new data (from field collection). Jon also noted that the identification of management levers and channel building blocks would be useful.

Rebecca Correa, MRCA: Rebecca noted that a useful outcome of LA River CEFF would be the development of simple, clear guiding principles for project planning at MRCA. She also advocated for ultimate tool to be connected to real-time data such as weather data, water release data and stream gage data, similar to the structure of a weather-based irrigation controller.

Edward Belden, LABOE: Edward suggested that a dynamic tool would be useful LA River CEFF outcome with the ability to provide updated recommendations, possibly annually.

Tim Brick, SAS: Tim emphasized that the LA River CEFF outcomes could be used as educational outreach tool for stakeholders to confirm a continued understanding of LA River CEFF outcomes and for public engagement and awareness particularly regarding LA River focal species.

Elisabeth Aukee, FoLAR: Elisabeth suggested that FoLAR would like to use LA River CEFF as an educational tool. It could also be used to determine where and when to plan educational activities along the river, based on anticipated flow.

Group 3

Participants: Candice Dickens-Russell (FoLAR), Mitul Luhar (USC), William Saunders (LACPW), Kris Taniguchi-Quan (SCCWRP), Scott Webster (Elysian Community Operations), Belle Zheng (CWH), Sam Ward (Stillwater Sciences), and Jose Alberola (Stillwater Sciences)

Candice Dickens-Russell, FoLAR: Candice noted that flows in the LA River are essential to river programming, education, advocacy, events. FoLAR's main concern is the risk of zero flow in the LA River and maintenance of LA River flow as planned reuse and water supply projects are implemented.

Kris Taniguchi-Quan, SCCWRP: Kris expressed interest in the tradeoff analysis, especially the interaction of aquatic life and recreation and urban cooling, and their links to functional flow. She noted that this will be the first example of CEFF reaching tradeoffs and decision models (CEFF C) in the state and that tradeoffs involving wastewater inputs or reuse are of high interest as their impact on flow is what makes this LA River unique.

Mitul Luhar, USC: Mitul suggested that a useful LA River CEFF outcome would be access to the background models, data, and results for research. USC could continue to be a technical resource for data assimilation and implementation of LA River CEFF and other models. He advocated for an open, interactive, and accessible LA River CEFF interface as a live tool for continual management and reference.

William Saunders, LACPW: William shared concerns regarding retaining flood control abilities for LACPW. He stated that habitat restoration projects should not decrease flood capacity; the LA River must meet FEMA, federal insurance program requirements. LACPW wants LA River CEFF to prioritize the maintenance of flood capacity particularly in cases of conflict. The outcomes, recommendations, and requirements of CEFF should be feasible and achievable given system constraints.

Mitul Luhar, USC: Mitul suggested that LA River CEFF outcomes should be respectful of agencies responsible for public safety or water supply and certain requirements may take priority in the tradeoffs analysis.

Belle Zheng, CWH: Belle stated that she would like a tool that is able to identify how/why projects create a solution and the effects for public outreach and communications (for example, an organization could use the CEFF tools to demonstrate why their proposed project functions as green infrastructure, provides water quality improvements, and benefits the watershed). She suggested the following ideas for LA River CEFF outcomes: 1) useful in long term; 2) adaptive to incorporate watershed data as it's collected and in a format that matches long-running watershed monitoring efforts such as Los Angeles River Watershed Monitoring Program (LARWMP); 3) if the LA River CEFF recommendations are implemented, are we seeing the anticipated benefits ; 4) able to compare effects of planned projects.

Group 3 came to consensus on the need for a tool with adaptability and the ability to update so that the LA River CEFF can continue to provide input for decision makers.

Group 4

Participants: Josh Cooper (CWH), Mary Ferguson (LA County Parks and Recreation), Tania Pineda Enriquez (Heal the Bay), Mahesh Pujari (LASAN), Christian Romberger (CDFW), Miller Zou (LASAN), AJ Keith (Stillwater Sciences), and Anne Maher (Stillwater Sciences)

Group 4 answered the question with the following recommendations:

- LA River CEFF outcomes ideally will foster changes to water quality control/standards on the LA River
- LA River CEFF outcomes should provide recommended limits on water recycling
- Outcomes should become reference/documentation for permitting standards
- LA River CEFF outcomes would be useful as compliance/water quality standards (especially metals and bacteria)
- Outcomes would provide tools to assess viability of ecological goals in the LA River
- LA River CEFF could provide a tool for students to be involved in their community and see the vision for the LA River
- LA River CEFF could provide guidance for educational signage, future trail and park planning, programming and education and outreach
- Provide materials and context for public outreach and engagement
- LA River CEFF could be a tool to help recovery of listed species

Group 5

Participants: All virtual attendees (see attendees table at top of document), Isaac Bown (Stillwater Sciences), and Hannah Michael Flynn (Stillwater Sciences).

Brian Baldauf, MRCA: Brian shared that recommendations from CEFF will change MRCA's staffing, operations. CEFF will inform MRCA's conversations with tribal leaders who want to be involved with the river, by surfacing specific opportunities. CEFF would be useful in the form of design and operations tools, e.g. for managing recreation in a dry year.

Clark Stevens, RCDSMM: Clark stated that a helpful outcome would be the establishment of design parameters for the river. He noted that there's so much creative work to do, developing ecological and community-based connectivity, that a complete framework of

consensus-driven master design and planning parameters could be a useful common reference. Understanding what is possible with the channel in connection to functional flows will help surface more projects, more opportunities. Clark also noted that the tool will be most useful if it is continuously updated.

Alexander Robinson, USC: Alex appreciated the creation of a data- and modeling-driven base map. He noted that CEFF will unlock potential for research and innovative, integrated solutions. If it becomes a universally-adopted basemap and master planning tool, it will help him to understand how to direct research towards data gaps and bottlenecks.

Tim Fairbank, USACE: Tim praised the holistic approach of working with the river, as opposed to a conventional project-by-project basis, and shared several ways he viewed CEFF as helpful for USACE:

- Understanding water balance will be helpful to confirm that upcoming projects will have the water they need.
- The tradeoffs analysis may surface small design adjustments that provide thematic benefits, but don't impact flood risk management.
- An up-to-date list of upcoming projects could streamline the permitting process for projects that involve modifications to the channel.
- The tradeoffs analysis may also help to find conflicts with the LA River Ecosystem Restoration project.

Tim also shared data from USACE that may be useful to CEFF:

- 2D model of the entire ARBOR reach in the adaptive hydraulics program.
- Computational fluid dynamics 3D model of the LA River and Arroyo Seco confluence, and Reach 7 through Downtown LA. (Still in the process of reviewing and refining)
- Updated baseline hydrology data, which the city and county are already using.

Chris Medak, USFWS: Chris noted that the value of CEFF to USFWS would be implementation plan with biological perspective will be helpful for us to evaluate potential negative impacts to biological resources and how to potentially offset them.

Clark Stevens, RCDSMM: Clark suggested that when sharing with greater community, it would be best to have a final product with a simple, memorable name that is not an acronym.

SDMP and decision support tool, Isaac Brown (03:10:26)

Isaac Brown (Stillwater Sciences) presented on the Structured Decision-Making Process and accompanying decision support tool.

Ben Harris, LA Waterkeeper: Ben noted that he's excited about the ability to compare scenarios. He asked when that process will begin? Isaac noted that by the next TWG meeting, we will have completed the flow assessment and we will have an initial idea on what tradeoffs look like. The alternative scenarios will be discussed then.

Rebecca Correa, MRCA: Rebecca asked if this tool will be updated/evolve over time? Isaac noted that adaptive management is an important part of the implementation plan recommendations. We could consider a longer-term investment to allow the tool to be updated regularly.

Next steps, Wendy Katagi (03:21:13)

Wendy Katagi (McMillen) led the final group discussion.

Michael Affeldt, LABOE: Michael asked when will we have a functionally useful tool? Wendy replied that the LA River CEFF project would likely have demonstrations this year and that the end of this scoped process is March of 2026.

Kris Taniguchi-Quan, SCCWRP: Kris is interested in seeing the connection back to functional flow metrics. Isaac replied that we've been thinking about how to best visualize this connection, your ideas are welcome.

Candice Dickens-Russell, FoLAR: Candice confirmed that the project's ultimate goal is to make a recommendation for State Water Board. She asked about the involvement of the State Board to date and how is the project expecting to proceed. Wendy replied that at a high level we understand that the Project will be useful for our region creating clarity and consensus regarding flow recommendations for LA River. The 1211 petition is the State Board application that the City of LA will be submitting soon. **John Huynh, LADWP,** confirmed that the City's 1211 petition will be presented to State Board soon and the City will present LA River CEFF to the State Board as an evaluative tool to support regulation.

Ben Harris, LA Waterkeeper: Ben stated that he would like to see continued dialogue after LA River CEFF, so that we can avoid unilateral decisions. Wendy agreed that some sort of governance structure or vehicle to continue this work integrating goals and bringing together all the voices is essential.

Tim Fairbank, USACE: *(in chat)* Tim reiterated the importance of all stakeholder agencies reaching consensus in the LA River CEFF. He confirmed that while the project implementation is an enormous challenge, it is also an essential development for the LA River.

Steve Appleton, Elysian Community Operations: Steve noted that there is nuance to functional flows: he saw opportunity, frequency, and volume of discharges from treatment facility. He would like to see specific recommendations for the operational mechanisms.

Christian Romberger, CDFW: Christian asked how the project is incorporating a shifting baseline mentality? As our planet warms, as our baseline shifts, how is that incorporated into the modeling effort? Isaac responded that the LA River CEFF can be set up to accommodate, for example, more dry years in the future. Isaac confirmed that we are always thinking about effects of climate change and the project can incorporate new climate model data given us, for example, a 100 year flood update. Christian asks how this overall effort might be iterated in the future given shifting baselines and new data. Wendy replied that LA River CEFF can be a living tool and with ongoing funding and the governance to execute next steps.

Wendy Katagi, McMillen: Wendy wanted to elaborate on the tribal/cultural ongoing conversations with up to 5 tribes indigenous to this watershed. There are specific inputs they'll be providing and we'll share out results after we've met with them. To date, we've heard about the personhood of the river, what that means to them, and defining that and elaborating on what's in the regional board's beneficial uses.

Kris Taniguchi-Quan, SCCWRP: Kris asked related to the Biodiversity TTWG, is the project considering using bioassessment indices as an end point? Kris noted that Katie has developed models that relate functional flows to those endpoints. Nate replied that the project is interested in hearing about the model and will reach out to Kris and Katie for more information. Kris suggested that CWH is collecting monitoring bioassessment data that could be used to evaluate as a performance measure. **Mas Dojiri, LASAN,** noted that LASAN used IBI (index of biotic integrity or benthic index of biotic integrity [B-IBI]), CSCI (California stream condition index) and ASCI (algal stream condition index) in the temperature study.

Katie Irving, SCCWRP: Katie asked if the project anticipates any challenges with the current administration? Wendy replied that in terms of our current scope, the funding is secured to finish this work. This project has local support to complete and Secretary Crowfoot has echoed that sentiment. But the project team will stay alert to changing

conditions. **Chris Medak, USFWS**, noted in the chat that staffing may get very tight in her agency in the near future.