TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP MEETING #4

NOVEMBER 18, 2025 2:00 PM – 3:30 PM

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL FLOWS FRAMEWORK LOS ANGELES RIVER

Attendees

Name		Affiliation	In person/virtual
Michael	**Affeldt**	LA Bureau of Engineering	Virtual
Manuel	**Aguilar**	LA Department of Water and Power	Virtual
Steve	**Appleton**	Elysian Community Operations	Virtual
Brian	**Baldauf**	Mountains Recreation & Conservation Authority	Virtual
Jonathan	**Ball**	LA Department of Sanitation and Environment	Virtual
Eric	**Batman**	LA County Public Works	Virtual
Edward	**Belden**	LA Bureau of Engineering	Virtual
Isaac	**Brown**	McMillen	Virtual
Nate	**Butler**	Stillwater Sciences	Virtual
Cara	**Campbell**	Mountains Recreation & Conservation Authority	Virtual
Rebecca	**Correa**	Mountains Recreation & Conservation Authority	Virtual
Candice	**Dickens-Russell**	Friends of the LA River	Virtual
Mary	**Fergueson**	LA County Parks and Recreation	Virtual
Hannah	**Flynn**	Stillwater Sciences	Virtual
Alonso	**Garcia**	Council for Watershed Health	Virtual
Jesus	**Gonzalez**	LA Department of Water and Power	Virtual
Deena	**Hansen**	California Department of Fish and Wildlife	Virtual
Ben	**Harris**	LA Waterkeeper	Virtual
John	**Huynh**	LA Department of Water and Power	Virtual
Tom	**Juma**	LA Department of Sanitation and Environment	Virtual
Stacee	**Karnya**	LA Department of Sanitation and Environment	Virtual
Wendy	**Katagi**	McMillen	Virtual
Nurit	**Katz**	LA Biodiversity Council	Virtual
AJ	**Keith**	Stillwater Sciences	Virtual
Sapna	**Khandwala**	Stillwater Sciences	Virtual

TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP MEETING #4

NOVEMBER 18, 2025 2:00 PM – 3:30 PM

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL FLOWS FRAMEWORK LOS ANGELES RIVER

Name		Affiliation	In person/virtual
Lindsay	**LaBrecque**	LA Department of Water and Power	Virtual
Melissa	**Lane**	Stillwater Sciences	Virtual
Qiong	**Lei**	LA Department of Sanitation and Environment	Virtual
Ronald	**Mayuyu**	LA Department of Sanitation and Environment	Virtual
Mayra	**Molina**	California Department of Fish and Wildlife	Virtual
Carling	**Monder**	University of Southern California Public Exchange	Virtual
Nathan	**Nunez**	Nunez and Nunez Consulting	Virtual
Sophia	**Olmeda**	LA Department of Water and Power	Virtual
Bruce	**Orr**	Stillwater Sciences	Virtual
Mahesh	**Pujari**	LA Department of Sanitation and Environment	Virtual
Matt	**Qassis**	LA Department of Water and Power	Virtual
Sarah	**Rascon**	Mountains Recreation & Conservation Authority	Virtual
Ernie	**Rivera**	LA County Public Works	Virtual
Alex	**Robinson**	University of Southern California	Virtual
Christian	**Romberger**	California Department of Fish and Wildlife	Virtual
Clark	**Stevens**	Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains	Virtual
Ryan	**Thiha**	LA Department of Sanitation and Environment	Virtual
Vicente	**Villasenor**	Heal the Bay	Virtual
Amanda	**Wagner**	US Army Corps of Engineers	Virtual
Liam	**Walsh**	Mountains Recreation & Conservation Authority	Virtual
Sam	**Ward**	Stillwater Sciences	Virtual
Scott	**Webster**	Elysian Community Operations	Virtual
Samson	**Wong**	LA Bureau of Engineering	Virtual
Pat	**Wood**	LA County Public Works	Virtual
Belle	**Zheng**	Council for Watershed Health	Virtual
Miller	**Zou**	LA Sanitation Watershed Protection Program	Virtual

TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP MEETING #4

NOVEMBER 18, 2025 2:00 PM – 3:30 PM

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL FLOWS FRAMEWORK LOS ANGELES RIVER

Agencies, Organizations, and CEFF Terminology

Acronym	Meaning
CDFW	California Department of Fish and Wildlife
CWH	Council for Watershed Health
CEFF	California Environmental Flows Framework
ECO	Elysian Community Operations
FoLAR	Friends of the Los Angeles River
HtB	Heal the Bay
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
NRDC	Natural Resources Defense Council
RCDSMM	Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains
S.AS	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	Technical Working Group
UCANR	University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources
UCLA	University of California, Los Angeles
ULAR	Upper Los Angeles River
USACE	US Army Corps of Engineers
USC	University of Southern California
USFS	US Forest Service
USFWS	US Fish and Wildlife Service
WCA	Watershed Conservation Authority

TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP MEETING #4

NOVEMBER 18, 2025 2:00 PM – 3:30 PM

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL FLOWS FRAMEWORK LOS ANGELES RIVER

Overview

The purpose of this meeting was to will share initial model output for the Downtown LA River reach (LOI 17.23) and prepare for next project steps at TWG#5 on December 2, 2025, to be held in person at the LA River Center and Gardens.

Meeting Notes

Introduction

Wendy Katagi (McMillen) welcomed the TWG members and reviewed the meeting agenda. Nate Butler (Stillwater Sciences) presented a review of the CEFF Section C process and overview of the TWG #4 purpose.

Flow Assessment Scenarios

Isaac Brown (McMillen) provided an overview of the Flow Assessment and Scenarios Development methodologies.

Edward Belden, LABOE: Asked what was meant by "park" in typology assumptions because many of the parcels are entirely "parks".

Stillwater responded in email later that "park" should be changed to "recreation" as this typology was meant to estimate the area of the parcel serving the primary uses as active or passive recreation. Ed is correct "parks" can include all typologies.

Commented [HF1]: I missed this question.

Commented [NB2R1]: I do not recall what it was either.

Commented [GU3R1]: I followed up with Edward and we (said we would) change "park" use to "recreation" . For clarity.

Flow Assessment Initial Results for Downtown LA / LOI 17.23

Nate Butler (Stillwater Sciences) shared preliminary results of the Flow Assessment, focusing on downtown Los Angeles (LOI 17.23) and sample performance measures from Water Supply, Water Quality, Biodiversity, and Recreation.

Ben Harris, LA Waterkeeper: Ben asked about the impact on flows for scenarios that optimized for Water Quality and Water Supply performance measures.

Nate Butler: Nate explained that in these model runs, flows generally went down, but it is nuanced.

Pat Wood, LADPW: Pat requested clarification on the 1% exceedance flows listed in BD-PM-1, noting that steelhead migration could be at odds with the high ends of flows estimates for a 1% flood event.

Nate Butler: Nate clarified that the exceedance flows in BD-PM-1 are calculated differently than the 1% flood event. The exceedance flows in BD-PM-1 are based on the flows that occur 1 % of the time between Oct 1-June 30. Estimated about 5,000 cfs for LOI 17.23. Happy to provide the numbers.

Isaac Brown: Peak flow in this area is above 90,000 cfs, for reference.

Eric Batman, LADPW: Eric asked why certain parts of LOI 17.23 were shown to require more flow.

Wendy Katagi: Wendy explained that the roughness and fish pool riffle run features that are part of the LA River Fish Passage and Habitat Structures may contribute.

Isaac Brown added that the bend in the river by the downstream end of the reach lacks a low-flow notch.

Edward Belden, LABOE: Edward asked about the suitable flow ranges for adult steelhead migration in LOI 17.23.

Commented [HF4]: I missed his question but this was generally what I heard - please add/edit

Commented [NB5R4]: I made a minor edit, but I'm good with this.

Nate Butler: Nate explained that the suitable flow range for adult steelhead migration in LOI 17.23 varies depending on the focus area.

Steve Appleton, Elysian Community Operations: Steve noted that kayak season for performance measures starts Memorial Day, not May 1 as currently shown. **(ACTION ITEM)**

Pat Wood: Pat asked about the 1% flow exceedance between Oct 1 and Jun 30 being discussed for steelhead migration and how that related to the 1% flood event.

Ben Harris, LA Waterkeeper: Ben asked how flood risk management considerations and feasibility are addressed when evaluating peak suitable flows. Ben suggested that the high buildout scenario may need to consider additional strategies that aren't represented in plans in the case of needing to reduce flow for flood reasons.

Nate Butler: Nate agreed this is important to address and noted that more refinement will help to address this.

Wendy Katagi: Wendy also noted that this will be part of the LA River Flow Optimization Project in upcoming quarters. Also, note that the fish frequently migrate at the tail end of the storm when the flow is decreasing from the peak flow back to its base flow.

Commented [HF6]: How do we want to state this?

Commented [NB7R6]: I've made a minor edit that adds context.

Isaac Brown: Isaac explained that while developing typologies, an assumption was made that the typologies have been designed to cause no rise in water level of peak flow events as was the case for the design projects that served as the basis for the typologies (e.g., Downtown LA River Fish Passage and Habitat Design Structures project, USACE LA River Ecosystem Restoration Project). Therefore, peak flood flows are not modeled, but will be addressed as a design recommendation in the flows recommendation process. Additionally, flow optimization may help to refine alternate scenarios for peak flows.

Steve Appleton, ECO: Steve noted that the typologies are designed specifically to enable kayak recreation and access. He suggested thinking about how to integrate public access with ecological strategies. He clarified that access can refer to physical access, legal access, easements, etc.

Looking Ahead to TWG #5

Isaac Brown (McMillen) and Nate Butler (Stillwater Sciences) provided a look-ahead for TWG #5.