

January 30th Leadership Committee Meeting Summary:

Key Discussion Points and Outcome

- **Formation of an Advisory Group:** The Leadership Committee agreed to form the **WRP Advisory Group** to support the Watershed Resilience Plan development.
 - The Advisory Group will consist of **Leadership Committee members and additional advisors.**
 - **All Leadership Committee members will be invited to join** but can opt out if desired.
 - Additional members will be **considered and invited** to join. Suggestions included CAUSE, Merito Foundation, and tribal representatives - additional suggestions can be sent to Lynn or Lara
- **Decision-Making & Advisory Group Structure:**
 - The Advisory Group will be **chaired by a Leadership Committee member.** Vivon Sedgwick with Ojai Valley Land Conservancy volunteered to serve as the chair, and we will ask for Vice Chair nominations at a future meeting.
 - The group will provide **focused input on key topics, review technical approaches, and refine draft WRP content** before broader Watershed Council, DWR, and public review.
 - A decision-making framework for the WRP will be developed to clarify the roles of the Advisory Group and the Watershed Council and processes.
 - A summary of key discussion points and actions/conclusions from Advisory Group meetings will be prepared and shared with the Watershed Council.
 - Additional members will be considered and invited to join or be added to the Advisory Group. The goal is to be equitable and inclusive, and to have diverse representation to enhance the outcomes of the WRP, while being efficient. Some suggestions discussed were CAUSE, Merito Foundation, and tribal representatives to start.
- **Next meeting of Advisory Group is March 17th at 2 pm and will be virtual.**
 - We will share draft written policies and procedures prior to that meeting for group discussion and consensus
- We will use **SharePoint as the platform** for sharing WRP materials with Advisory Group members.

See Next Page for Current Leadership Committee Membership

Ventura River Watershed Council Leadership Committee Contacts
January 2025

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Ventura County Coalition of Labor, Agriculture and Business	Louise Lampara	LLampara@colabvc.org
Tribes	TBD	

Memo to the Watershed Council Leadership Committee

Subject: Watershed Council Leadership Committee’s Role in the Watershed Resilience Plan (WRP)

Date: January 29, 2025 (Updated: January 30, 2025)

Purpose of this Memo

This memo outlines the proposed role of the **Watershed Council Leadership Committee** in the **Ventura River Watershed Resilience Plan (WRP)** and summarizes the discussion and outcomes from the January 30th, 2025 Leadership Committee meeting. The WRP, funded through the **DWR Watershed Resilience Pilot Program**, requires an **equitable and inclusive** governance structure. We propose that the existing **Watershed Council Leadership Committee** serve in an **advisory role** and that additional advisors may be added to enhance representation.

As a reminder, the focus of this planning effort is on the **water sectors**, including water supply and management, watershed and ecosystem resilience, flood and stormwater management, and water quality, to address climate related issues such as wildfire, droughts, and flooding impacts on water resources to ensure a comprehensive approach to watershed resilience.

1. Background: Watershed Network and Decision-Making Structure

As part of the DWR Watershed Resilience Pilot Program, we are required to establish a Watershed Network to guide the WRP’s development. In our case, the existing Watershed Council will serve as this Watershed Network (agreed upon at the October 3rd, 2024 Watershed Council meeting).

DWR Requirements for Watershed Network Decision-Making

DWR requires that the Watershed Network:

- ✓ Have **written policies and procedures**
- ✓ Establish an **equitable and inclusive** decision-making structure
- ✓ Ensure that all **stakeholders have a voice**, including **historically underrepresented communities**

Proposal for the Leadership Committee’s Role

To meet these requirements, we propose that the **Leadership Committee serve as the core advisory body** for the WRP. This would provide continuity while ensuring decisions are made with broad representation. However, we recognize that some additional representation may be needed to meet equity goals.

To ensure that the WRP process and outcomes are comprehensive and effective, we want to be intentional about inclusion and engage diverse perspectives. The structured approach of having an advisory body with decision-making ability will help refine key elements of the WRP and ensure they are shaped by those with the most relevant expertise, critical insights, and diverse perspectives, fostering inclusive decision-making that strengthens watershed resiliency for the greater good while ensuring equitable representation of historically underrepresented communities.

2. Consideration: Expanding the Advisory Group

The Leadership Committee already represents diverse stakeholders, and efforts are underway to add additional representatives (e.g., **Tribal representation, Ojai Fire Safe Council, and CAUSE**). However, to ensure that **frontline and disadvantaged communities** have a meaningful voice in resilience planning, we may also want to include **additional advisors** beyond the current Leadership Committee members.

We ask the Leadership Committee to consider:

- **Should additional advisors be formally added to the group?**
- **Who should be invited?** (e.g., another **Tribal representative**, a **CAUSE representative**, or others who can represent frontline communities)
- **How should we integrate these advisors into the decision-making process?**

Recommendation presented on January 30th: WRP Workgroup as an Advisory Body

Create a **WRP Advisory Group** consisting of Leadership Committee members **plus additional advisors**. This Advisory Group will provide recommendations and review draft materials related to the WRP only (remain separate from the formal Watershed Council decision-making structure). This allows for additional expertise (particularly related to water and impacts to water) and representation while maintaining the long-term stability of the Leadership Committee and its role in broader watershed coordination beyond the WRP.

The Advisory Group will operate as follows:

- Serve in an advisory role to guide Water Resilience Plan development, to provide focused input on key WRP topics, including problem statements, goals, vulnerabilities, and adaptation strategies.
- Chaired by a member of the Leadership Committee
- Meet regularly (virtual meetings)
- Utilize a consensus approach for decision-making. While we value diverse perspectives, we will move forward based on general consensus while ensuring any dissenting views are documented.

Consideration: Do we need any Charter revisions to give the Advisory Group decision-making authority for the purpose of the WRP process only (in place of the Leadership Committee)?

We are seeking input from the Leadership Committee on this proposed structure.

3. Leadership Committee/Workgroup Meeting Schedule

We propose the WRP Advisory Group convene approximately **5-6 times** between **January 2025 and February 2026** to support progress on the WRP. The proposed schedule is to meet January, March, May, July, September, November, January. These dates may need to be modified to accommodate the availability of documents to review in order to stay on schedule on the tight grant timeline.

Purpose of Meetings:

- Provide **input and guidance on key WRP topics**
- Conduct **focused review of workshop materials in advance of Watershed Council Meetings/Workshops**
- Provide review of draft **WRP chapter development** before DWR, Watershed Council, and public review

Expectations for Workgroup Members:

- Provide **expert advice** based on their areas of expertise
- Share materials with colleagues within their organization and partnerships for **substantive input**
- Offer feedback in a **timely manner** to keep the project on schedule

4. Next Steps & Discussion

We would like the **Leadership Committee to provide feedback** on the following:

- 1** Does the Leadership Committee agree to serve as the advisory body for the WRP?
- 2** Should additional advisors be added, and if so, who?
- 3** Does the proposed WRP Workgroup structure align with the Council's long-term goals?
- 4** Does the proposed meeting schedule (bi-monthly) work for Leadership Committee members?

We appreciate your input and look forward to discussing these topics further at the January 30th meeting. Please feel free to contact us if you have questions.

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See Next Page for Leadership Committee Membership

**Ventura River Watershed Council
Leadership Committee Contacts
January 2025**

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