



**Westside Creeks Restoration
Oversight Committee (WCROC) Meeting
San Antonio River Authority
In-person: 100 E. Guenther St.
Virtual: GoToMeetings
February 18, 2025 - 6 p.m.**

Committee Members Present

Robert Ramirez, Co-Chair
Ana Sandoval, Co-Chair
Gabriel Velasquez, Avenida Guadalupe
Mary Ann Valdez-Hernandez,
Historic Westside Residents Assoc.
Rick Hernandez, Los Bexareños
Genealogical Society
Reb Lopez, Martinez Creek Neighborhood
Association
Athena Santos, River Aid San Antonio

Abel Ramirez, SA Wheelman
William Buhrman, St. Mary's Univ.
Kamala Platt, Ph.D., TexasTejano.com
Maia Woodall, Student At-Large
Michael Lopez, Opportunity Home
Adam Bynum, OLLU
Rebeca Canizales, Prosper West
Erwin De Luna, United San Antonio Pow
Wow Inc
Charles Oisten, Woodlawn Lake
Neighborhood Association

Staff and Public Present

Lourdes Galvan, RA Board Member
Derek Boese, RA
Brian Mast, RA
Rebecca Krug, RA
Kendall Hayes, RA
Nicole Marshall, RA
Margarita Saldana, RA
Christina M. Castaño, Ximenes & Assoc

John Watson
Roberto Rodriguez
Micky Clemmons
Mark Liberatore
Eddie Gutierrez
John Luera
Maria Rodriguez
Matilde Torres
Robert Gonzales

I. Welcome

Co-Chair Ana Sandoval called the WCROC meeting to order.

II. Roll Call – Kendall Hayes, RA

Ms. Hayes called the WCROC roll. Committee members who were present either in person or online are listed above. A quorum was met.

III. Approval of Meeting Minutes – August, September and November 2024.

The meeting minutes were approved unanimously.

IV. Calendar Items – Kendall Hayes, RA

Ms. Hayes provided an overview of all items on the related PowerPoint slide (slide 5).

V. Project Status Update, Rebecca Krug, RA

Ms. Krug provided updates on the project (slides 6-12, respectively).

Slide 7: Ms. Krug provided an update on the Ecosystem Restoration Design Activity. She stated that the design team is working towards the 90% design. She shared that the United States Army

Corps of Engineers (USACE) has a new Project Manager, Andrew Park. The approval letter for additional features and betterments to include pedestrian bridges, vehicular and pedestrian trailheads, and other recreational features was received by USACE in early January, the RA is still awaiting their approval. The next steps include amending updates by the design team, local funding, and ensuring that there are no negative impacts on the restoration design or flood control project.

Slide 8: Ms. Krug provided an update on the design activity for the Martinez Trail Extension to Farias Park. She noted that USACE provided comments on the new design for this project. Most of their recommendations will be included as additional work/betterments once approved. RA staff are currently working on contracting with professional real estate appraisers, surveyors, etc., for the acquisition of additional required real estate for the project. Slide 8 includes pictures of aesthetic design that is still under design consideration.

Slide 9: Ms. Krug noted that regarding real estate acquisitions, title research is in progress for the Texas Department of Transportation, and a survey for the San Antonio Independent School District, while the survey for Opportunity Home will soon begin. Noted that the photo depicts the Texas Department of Transportation's right of way. Construction and staging access plans, including long-term usage, are currently under review by the design team for acquisition. The final access point for San Pedro Creek is being surveyed.

Slide 10: Ms. Krug noted that for utility relocations, the design team is coordinating work with the San Antonio Water System for sanitary and water lines. A baseline aquatic survey is being conducted by the aquatic sciences department as a point of reference for future studies as a baseline comparison – post restoration. Good news is that we may see more Guadalupe Bass, a type of fish that requires high water quality, as evidenced by findings in the Southern reach of San Pedro Creek.

Slide 11: Ms. Krug noted that the general manager would be discussing additional project updates in his update today. The schedule impacts on full restoration are being evaluated.

Slide 12: For the Apache Creek Remediation update, construction solicitation is open, and there is a good amount of interest based on attendance at the pre-bid meeting. Construction is targeted to begin in the Summer of 2025; the commitment is that the local project will be completed before the start of Apache ecosystem restoration construction.

Slide 13: Ms. Galvan inquired on the status of coordination efforts with Union Pacific. Mr. Boese addressed Slide 16 concerning dealing with Union Pacific on the area just south of South Alamo street. The demolition and construction of the railroad bridge was completed on time, and the San Pedro Creek improvement project is on target to finish this spring. There are no railroad issues still in question for the Westside Creeks project. Ms. Galvan is pleased that the project is done. Ms. Sandoval inquired as to what the contamination was that is being addressed in the local remediation project, and Ms. Krug stated the contamination was heavy metals, lead.

VI. General Manager Update – Derek Boese

Slide 15: Mr. Boese provided an update on the “Supplemental Oral History Project”, denoting the availability of appointments available for those interested, response has been positive, members are encouraged to invite others to interview or fill out the form on the project website.

Mr. Velasquez noted the location is at the Avenida Guadalupe Association (not the Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center).

Slide 16: Note, this slide was addressed during Agenda Item V.

Slide 22: The general manager skipped ahead to this slide because he felt it laid the groundwork for the rest of the updates. He stated that their latest trip to Washington, DC, confirmed that there is a lot of uncertainty about federal funding for all projects. The River Authority's team members in SA and DC are keeping up with all the changes. The team had a successful meeting with USACE to discuss the passage of the "Water Resources Development Act" and forthcoming implementation guidance. Mr. Mast stated that Section 1043(b) allows the non-federal sponsor to take the lead on managing construction of a project; and while meeting with USACE, the RA suggested anticipation of an application to operate this way for the construction of the WSC. The RA noted this would be the same as in recent history with the Mission Reach, where RA lead the construction and for the final 6 miles and saved \$25M. The first week of March, RA staff will again be in DC with the annual SA to DC trip.

Slide 17: Mr. Boese reviewed the January-March events and looks forward to working with the USACE on federal funding, as denoted on the slide, moving towards the 90% design.

Slide 18: The RA anticipates 95% designs in May and hosting public information sessions in June. The local Apache Creek Remediation project begins construction in May and will host pre-construction public meetings. Discussion ensued on potential City of San Antonio 2027 Bond projects. Ms. Sandoval suggested that staff design a one-pager to leave with all the council members. Mr. Mast also suggested that the bond committees are open and encourages those interested in serving on the committees to contact their councilperson.

Slide 19: In Quarter 3 of 2025, fieldwork should be closing out during the September timeframe, including real estate.

Slide 20: In Quarter 4 of 2025, the RA Staff is working through the construction procurement, real estate certification, and federal funding. The President's new budget will be a consideration. The full Apache Creek Remediation construction will be completed in December 2025.

Slide 21: On January 4th, the Water Resources Development Act was signed into law by President Biden, which was a huge win. The RA held a press conference on January 10th, to celebrate the milestone. The press conference was attended by Congressman Castro, Congressman Cuellar, Judge Sakai, Councilwoman Castillo, Councilwoman Kaur, RA Board Members, and other notable local and federal staff.

Slide 16: The RA continues monitoring the appointment of the new Assistant Secretary of the Army, Civil Works.

VII. Citizens to Be Heard

John Watson, a member of the Jefferson Neighborhood Association, asked if some of the trails would be closed during construction. Mr. Boese commented that there will certainly be some closures during construction for public safety.

John Luera lives on the Alazan side by Farias Park and is concerned with public safety because he experiences a lot of crime there. He is requesting lighting and has also requested it from Councilwoman Castillo. He states that this area has different needs than others and requests the RA to be mindful of such needs. Mr. Velasquez responded that conversations have been held over the last 20 years to consider such concerns, along with further concerns, as brought up by

the community, and he assured the committee will continue to address those concerns in future meetings. Dr. Platt stated that the lighting isn't decided locally; it is determined at a higher level, and she wants to ensure the decisions do not rest on any councilperson.

Matilda Torres is concerned with migratory birds. Asked if the migratory birds have anything to do with this project. Mr. Mast explained that certainly, these birds played an integral role in receiving project funding. Mr. Boese directed her to the website, as the information on the migratory birds is extensive.

VIII. Miscellaneous Items

Slide 24: Ms. Galvan reiterated that the naming of the "Roberto Rodriguez Westside Creeks Ecosystem" officially occurred on December 5, 2024; and the City of San Antonio received positive feedback on the name. She stated that Councilwoman Teri Castillo led the effort. Ms. Galvan also suggested that information should be made public (potentially in the way of signage) denoting the full creek restoration timeline, funding and the new name. Discussion on signage and a future celebration ensued.

Ms. Valdez-Hernandez provided commentary to address questions from the community members (Agenda VII.), agreeing with and suggesting more of the RA's continued efforts for communications with the public on all aspects of the creek restoration, prior and during construction. Both Ms. Sandoval and Dr. Platt agreed that temporary signage should be placed prior to, and during construction. Dr. Platt suggests signs be installed at "street level", not just at creek level. Ms. Galvan stated that she will facilitate setting up meetings with respected officials on this issue.

Ms. Santos invited everyone to be part of the Basura Bash happening Saturday, February 22, 2025. Also informed of a benefit dinner on Sunday at Texas Public Radio and of a community celebratory fair.

IX. Adjourn

Co-Chair Ramirez adjourned the meeting at 7:20 p.m.

Westside Creeks Restoration Oversight Committee Meeting – February 2025

February 18, 2025 · 5:50 PM · ID: 810326589

Chat

Kendall Hayes sent a chat · 6:11 PM

Thank you for joining us for the February Westside Creeks Restoration Oversight Committee meeting. We ask that online participants sign in using this link: <https://forms.office.com/r/gMMSZua4Tm>. This is your opportunity to indicate if you want to speak during the Citizens to be Heard item.

Athena Santos (River Aid San Antonio) sent a chat · 6:14 PM

Hello Kendall, I'm sitting in for Charlie tonight. I was wondering if I could say a few words regarding Basura Bash this Sat?

Kendall Hayes sent a chat · 6:17 PM

Hi Athena, thank you for joining us. Agenda Item No.9 is Miscellaneous Items. Please feel free to unmute yourself then and share the event details.