

**EST.**



**1996**

***October 18th, 2022***

*An Evening Under the Stars at Our Original Offices  
LADWP John Ferraro Building, Los Angeles, CA*

# welcome



## A Welcome From Our Host

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On behalf of the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, I'm pleased to welcome the Council for Watershed Health to the LADWP Headquarters, the site of its first offices from a quarter century ago. I am honored that Eileen and the team chose our building as the venue for CWH's Silver Anniversary. Welcome back home!

"We have enough water, if only we manage it wisely," said Dorothy Green, founder of the Council for Watershed Health, former LADWP Commissioner and environmental activist. Dorothy knew that watershed management takes many people with a variety of skills. True to her vision when she founded CWH in 1996, the organization continues to convene stakeholders to promote that thinking and keep sustainability at the core of watershed management in Southern California and beyond.

Los Angeles has a long history of managing stormwater runoff. For most of our history, the primary objective of "stormwater management" has been to control catastrophic flooding. But Dorothy and CWH helped changed that narrative, promoting stormwater capture to increase local water supplies and achieve multiple benefits. And we at LADWP, along with other public agencies, know how valuable and precious stormwater is as a part of our local water supply portfolio.

As we face the challenges of urbanization and climate change, we are working hard to reduce our reliance on imported water by capturing more stormwater and cleaning up our aquifers to maximize groundwater replenishment. Meaningful partnerships like the one we have with CWH, with a vested interest in the health of our watersheds, the communities we serve, and the preservation of the environment, are important in finding innovative ways to build a more resilient, water strong city.

LADWP is excited to be a part of CWH's significant milestone and to reaffirm our shared commitment to our environment and the protection of our natural resources. We are honored to join you in celebrating Dorothy's vision and the accomplishments of CWH on your 25th Anniversary. Congratulations and to many more years ahead!

### Martin L. Adams

LADWP General Manager and Chief Engineer

*Founding. The Los Angeles and San Gabriel Rivers Watershed Council is founded by Dorothy Green and collaborators. After holding monthly informal, informational meetings, which served as educational forums and opportunities for relationship building, the decision to form a non-profit organization was made. Published Vision 2025 - An Integrated Vision for the Future and our first Watershed Wise quarterly newsletter.*

*Our 5th Year Anniversary! Published The Beneficial Uses of the Los Angeles and San Gabriel Rivers, by Heather Trim, which demystified the Clean Water Act and provided useful information on rivers and their tributaries. Developed and later implemented the Compton Creek Watershed Management Plan. Established a partnership with the Sanitation Districts of LA County, SCCWRP, and other agencies to develop a watershed-wide water quality monitoring program for the San Gabriel River.*

1996

1997

1998

1999

2000

2001

2002

2003

2004

2005

*Published Storm Water: Asset Not Liability, by Suzanne Dallman and Tom Piechota exploring alternative ways to manage stormwater. Convened a workgroup of representatives from federal, state, and local agencies to discuss the potential benefits and barriers to using stormwater runoff for water quality which became the Water Augmentation Study Technical Advisory Committee.*

*Moved offices from LADWP to MWD. Provided a variety of GIS and mapping services, including notable compilation of an Arundo database for the Wetlands Recovery Project (WRP). Finalized LA River Master Plan Landscaping Guidelines and Plant Palette, approved by LA County Board of Supervisors.*

# A Letter from Our Board President & Executive Director

In 1996, Dorothy Green and a courageous circle of founders, convened local water allies to take bold action to preserve, restore, and enhance the Los Angeles and San Gabriel River Watersheds. These visionaries started with focused steps to convene representatives from various siloed agencies in regular meetings to talk about the major impediments to watershed health. These meetings, often hosted by the County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works and Metropolitan Water District, were exactly what was needed to achieve a long-term vision of sound regional watershed management.

Once the Council for Watershed Health, then the Los Angeles and San Gabriel Rivers Watershed Council, was formalized, our early directors had the foresight to hire the best of the best. We would like to recognize both Rumi Yanakiev, our Director of Finance & Operations, and Jason Casanova, Director of Planning & Information Design, for passionately advancing the mission of CWH for 25 and 20 years respectively.

Our mission is to advance the health and sustainability of our region's watersheds, rivers, streams and habitats - both in natural areas and urban neighborhoods. We strive for this outcome using science-based research, education and a commitment to inclusive engagement. For a quarter century, CWH, with the support and guidance of you here tonight, has influenced sound watershed planning and management by providing leadership, project management, guidance and technical assistance to agencies and organizations, both in greater Los Angeles and throughout the State. We are committed to adaptation measures that recognize the needs of frontline communities experiencing the first and worst impacts of climate change. We are committed to the same vision, and have the same passion and the same courage that Dorothy instilled in us 25 years ago.

Thank you for being a partner, for supporting the work of CWH, and for celebrating our accomplishments with us over the years. We look forward to continuing our collaboration with you.

Sincerely,

**Steve Arakawa**

Board President

**Eileen Alduenda**

Executive Director

## CWH Staff

Rumi Yanakiev, 23 years  
**Director, Finance & Operations**

Jason Casanova, 20 years  
**Director, Planning & Information Design**

Drew Ready, 17 years  
**Senior Project Manager**

Eileen Alduenda, 13 years  
**Executive Director**

Yareli Sanchez, 5 years  
**Senior Scientist**

Elise Eberhard, 5 years  
**GIS Analyst & Digital Communication**

Clarasophia Gust, 4 years  
**Watershed Coordinator**

Andrea Dell'Apa, 2 years  
**Project Manager**

Carlos Moran, 2 years  
**Watershed Coordinator**

Amanda Zeidner, 1 year  
**Project Manager- Community Planning**

Alonso Garcia, 3 months  
**Community Communication Coordinator**

Arezo Sarwary, 8 months  
**Workforce Development Intern**

Stephany Calvillo, 4 months  
**ReDesignLA Intern**

Kristina Leyva, 3 months  
**MSW Intern**

Belle Zheng, 1.5 months  
**Staff Scientist**

Kathy O'Connell, 6 days  
**Assistant Operations Manager**

*Celebrated 10th Anniversary. Led cooperative effort to develop watershed wide monitoring program for LA River. Initiated Weed Watch Program, mapping invasive plants, producing educational materials. Identified and mapped indigenous plant populations for future seed collection.*

*Adopted the new name Council for Watershed Health that reflects the evolution of the organization beyond a particular geographic focus towards a more proactive role in creating a healthier region. By remaining a Council, we acknowledge the valuable role collaboration plays in pursuit of our vision. Celebrated 15 years!*

*Convened first State of the LA River Watershed Symposium, presented five years of monitoring data and analysis resulting from managing the LA River Watershed Monitoring Program. Received grant from SWRCB for the Drought Response Outreach Program for Schools (DROPS) Stormwater Technical Assistance, resulting in \$13M in project funding awarded to underserved schools throughout the state. Implemented partnership to monitor pre/post construction, train teachers, and engage students at five LAUSD campuses that received SWRCB DROPS funding for green infrastructure and curriculum connections projects.*

2006      2007      2008      2009      2010      2011      2012      2013      2014      2015

*Celebrated the completion of Elmer Avenue with more than 20 project partners representing federal, state, regional, and local agencies; non-profit organizations; landscape architecture and engineering firms, elected officials, and community members!*

*Completed construction of Elmer Paseo, which transformed a deteriorated alleyway using a nature-based solutions approach to create a neighborhood green space that sustainably manages stormwater. Hosted Landscaping Lightly Workshop and published the first Landscaping Lightly Calendar. Initiated the LAUSD Tree Canopy Study, informing the prioritization of urban forestry efforts at LAUSD campuses.*

# program



7PM

## Welcome & Opening Remarks

Marty Adams, CWH Vice-President  
Eileen Alduenda, Executive Director  
Steve Arakawa, CWH Board President  
Michael Drennan, CWH Board President Emeritus

7:30PM

## Dinner

8PM

## Honorees

**Felicia Marcus**, William C. Landreth Fellow,  
Stanford University Water in the West Program

**Miguel Luna**, CEO, Urban Semillas

8:30PM

## Music, Mix and Mingle

## Thank You to Our Vendors!

Homegrown Kitchen by Chef Emily Anderson

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Jessica Franz Photography

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*Hosted 20th Anniversary and awarded LA County Supervisor Sheila Kuehl the first Dorothy Green Award. Awarded grant agreement with SWRCB to provide Proposition 1 Stormwater Technical Assistance to underserved, small municipalities throughout the State, later resulting in \$23M+ in project funding. Initiated a technical assistance effort to provide resources and develop a mentor-mentee model to build the capacity of local community-based organizations to participate, become proponents and water leaders, and secure funding for multi-benefit green infrastructure and Nature-Based Solutions projects - recently named Redesign LA.*

*Awarded two of three Watershed Coordination positions for Safe Clean Water Program (Measure W) Upper Los Angeles River Watershed Area. Initiated Regional Recycled Water Communications Coordination working group with partner agencies. Convened the online Wildfire: Weather, Water, Weeds, and Wildlife Symposium over 3 days with 45+ presenters and hundreds of attendees.*

2016

2017

2018

2019

2020

2021

*Hosted 21st Anniversary and awarded the Honorable Mel Levine the Dorothy Green Award.*

*Convened the second State of the LA River Watershed Symposium with more than 200 guests attending panel discussions, presentations, and a poster session reception. Received renewed contract for LA River Watershed Monitoring Program.*

*Convened first online Symposium Rain or Shine: Soaking Up Success on the Benefits of Green Infrastructure.*





## Felicia Marcus

### **William C. Landreth Fellow, Stanford University Water in the West Program**

Felicia Marcus is an attorney who has served in leadership and management positions in the government and non-profit sectors. She is currently the Landreth Visiting Fellow at Stanford University's Water in the West Program and is an elected Fellow of the National Academy of Public Administration. Felicia was most recently Chair of the California State Water Resources Control Board after having served as Regional Administrator of the U.S. EPA Region IX and as head of the Los Angeles Department of Public Works in addition to senior leadership in national non-governmental organizations (NRDC and TPL). She has experience as a private and public interest sector attorney and has worked on issues across the West spanning water supply, water rights, and water quality in addition to experience in other sectors like energy, toxics, and land use. She is also a member of the Water Policy Group, an international network of former and current high level water officials dedicated to assisting developing nations, a Board Member of the Western Electricity Coordinating Council, which oversees the bulk electricity transmission grid for the Western US and parts of Canada and Mexico, and is also one of the three US members of the Joint Public Advisory Committee of the North American Commission on Environmental Cooperation in addition to serving of many boards and advisory committees.



## Miguel Luna

### **CEO, Urban Semillas**

Miguel grew up in a city next to a river in his hometown in Colombia, in that river he developed a kinship with water. In the late 70's he emigrated with his mother to Los Angeles where he found the LA River. That childhood kinship with water and rivers continues till this day and is the main driver behind his work. Over the last two decades Miguel has worked on master planning projects at the city and regional level that have led to the augmentation of urban green space, the augmentation of water supply and improvement of water quality, and has worked on funding measures with a focus on bringing resources to under-resourced communities. His practice has a specific focus in fostering participation in planning efforts among people who might not have previously participated in these and moderating effectively among people who might anticipate little common ground.

Miguel is the CEO of Urban Semillas. He also serves as the Tribal Historic and Cultural Preservation Department Director at the Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians and serves on the boards of Metropolitan Water District, the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, Water Education for Latino Leaders, Community Nature Connection, Pacoima Beautiful, Vincent Price Art Museum and serves as the Executive Director of the Southeast Arts and Cultural Foundation.

He is sought after and respected locally, regionally, and statewide for his expertise in working with diverse communities on social justice issues and advocacy, and for his ability to utilize community reconnaissance to develop and implement effective outreach tools and mechanisms for grass-roots coalition and consensus building. He specializes in cultivating relationships with and between community-based organizations, businesses, elected officials, environmental organizations, academia, governmental agencies, and individual stakeholders at the grass-roots level.

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Century of Connecting  
the Drops**

Congratulations to  
tonight's honorees.



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I BRING WHAT'S  
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**Happy 25th Anniversary CWH!** We're excited to celebrate your quarter-century dedication to regional watersheds.

**Congratulations Felicia Marcus!** Your receipt of the Dorothy Green Award is a great testament to your commitment to water issues and Los Angeles, kudos!

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Felicia Marcus



Miguel Luna

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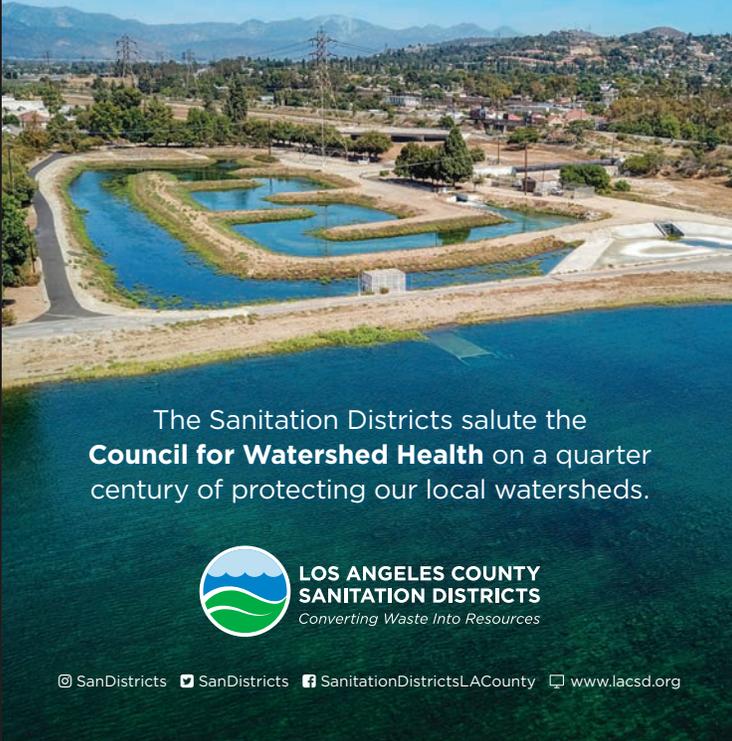
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Thank you for 25 years of  
improving our watersheds.

# CONGRATULATIONS on 25 Years of Collaboration!



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**Council for Watershed Health** on a quarter  
century of protecting our local watersheds.



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# Cheers to the council on 25 years!



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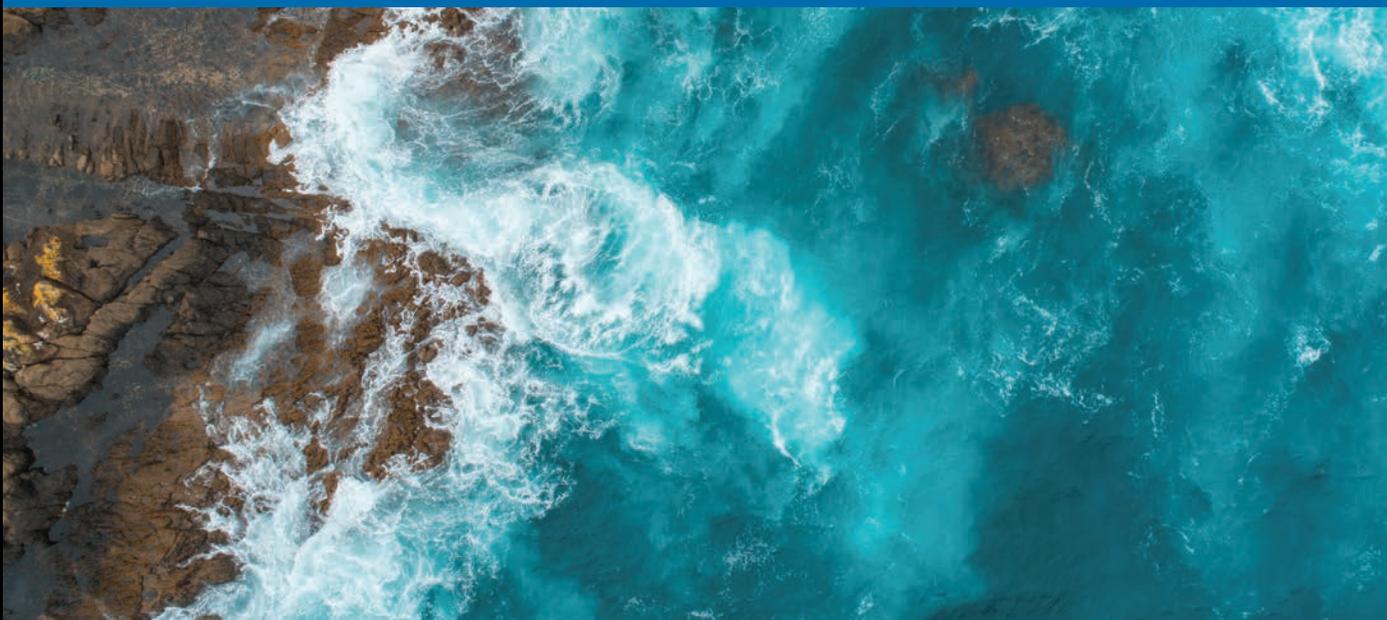
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