

The background of the slide features a dark blue gradient. Overlaid on this are two prominent, wavy, horizontal bands. The upper band is a vibrant green, and the lower band is a medium blue. Both bands have a white outline, giving them a layered, ribbon-like appearance. They flow from the left side of the slide towards the right, with gentle undulations.

Appendix B: Working Group Process

MEMO

TO: Accelerate Resilience L.A. (ARLA)

FROM: Emergent Strategy and Craftwater Engineering, Inc.

SUBJECT: Working Group Consensus Outcomes on Goals and Metrics

The Safe, Clean Water Program (SCWP) promised L.A. County voters a multi-benefit approach to address a variety of water-related issues by improving water quality, increasing drought preparedness, prioritizing Nature-Based Solutions (NBS), providing Disadvantaged Community (DAC) Benefits, and promoting green jobs, among others. The SCWP is expected to generate \$250-300 million per year to fund stormwater infrastructure projects. To meet its diverse goals, scoring criteria and guidelines were initially developed to incentivize projects that simultaneously address water, environmental, compliance, and social issues; however, the first round of Stormwater Investment Plan (SIP) development featured extensive committee debate and public comments concerning the balance of these goals. This public debate illuminated the need for an assessment of the extent to which the SCWP guidance, criteria, structure, and processes are successfully driving meaningful progress towards the fourteen SCWP Program goals. Accelerate Resilience L.A. (ARLA) is leading the SCWP Working Group Project to help address this need.

To build consensus around balanced, strongly defined, predictable, and monitorable metrics at multiple spatial scales that can be realistically utilized throughout the SCWP, ARLA saw the need to bring both non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and municipalities to the table to collaborate and give creative and realistic input. Because NGOs and municipalities have not always seen eye-to-eye on approaches for managing stormwater in the Los Angeles region, a group of three NGO and three municipal representatives with expertise in evaluating the various elements of the SCWP Goals was established. This group is known as ARLA's SCWP Working Group ("Working Group"), and representatives include: Bruce Reznik (LA Waterkeeper); Rowan Roderick-Jones (The Nature Conservancy, TNC); Tiffany Wong (Strategic Concepts in Organizing and Policy Education, SCOPE); Susie Santilena (City of Los Angeles); Lisa Rapp (City of Lakewood and Gateway Water Management Authority, GWMA); and Alex Tachiki (City of Monrovia and San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments, SGVCOG). All representatives were hand-selected given their specific mix of skill sets, backgrounds, and perspectives to give a representative voice for the various municipal staff, scientists, lawyers, and policymakers involved with stormwater management in the Los Angeles region; further, through their affiliations, they represent two-thirds of the municipal permittees in the Region. Also, two key non-voting members of the Working Group are Matt Frary and Kirk Allen from the LA County Flood Control District (LACFCD).

The roles and responsibilities of the Working Group include the following:

- Provide specific local expertise that includes the opinions and viewpoints of their members or respective organizations;
- Frequently communicate progress and information from the Working Group meetings, seek approval from their respective organizations, when needed, and gather information/feedback from their organizations as practicable before each meeting;
- Review Project materials and comment promptly;
- Complete all necessary assignments prior to each meeting; and
- Support and stand behind the recommendations of the Working Group.

Between January 2021 and January 2022, ARLA convened a technical advising team consisting of Bethany Bezak from Emergent Strategy, Chad Helmle, Brad Wardynski, and Pauline Nguyen from Craftwater Engineering, Inc., and Angela Fletcher, Trygve Madsen, Olivia Molden, Laura Villegas and Rowan Schmidt from Earth Economics (the "Technical Team")

along with multiple technical advisors including: Dr. Sarah Diringer from the Pacific Institute; Dr. Gregory Pierce and Jon Christensen from the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) Luskin Center for Innovation; Vanessa Carter from the University of Southern California (USC) Equity Research Institute; and Dr. Elizabeth Fassman-Beck from the Southern California Coastal Water Research Project (SCCWRP). Members of the Technical Team facilitated several Working Group meetings to foster an environment in which the Working Group could build trust to collectively define metrics (Appendix D: Metric Definitions and Model Assumptions) that are meaningful for measuring progress and success of the Working Group’s prioritized SCWP Goals.¹ Abiding by the Working Group Charter (Attachment A), Working Group members were required to attend each Working Group meeting and encouraged to come with an open mind, respectful stance towards all participants and opinions, and continued interest and curiosity for ideas that may uplift all parties’ interests.

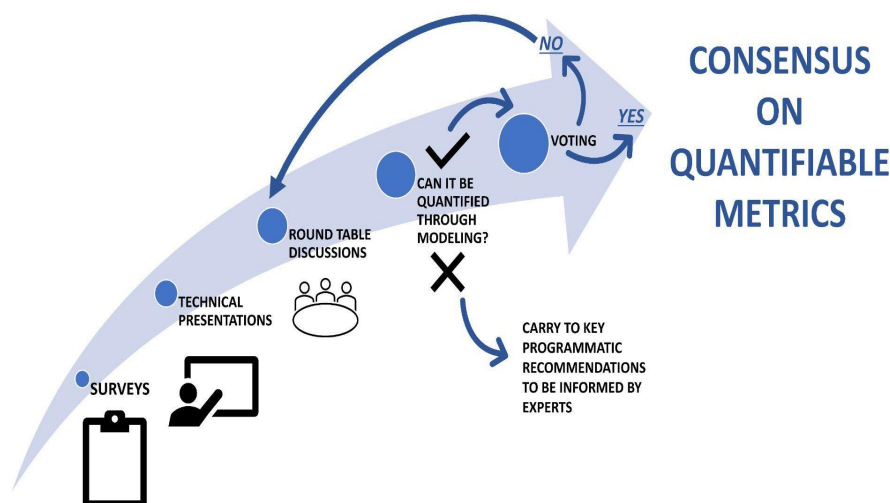
1.0 WORKING GROUP PROCESS

The Technical Team developed the following process as illustrated in **Figure 1** to:

- Ensure that Working Group members were well-informed of the background and nuances behind the prioritized SCWP Goals;
- Gather feedback and values from the Working Group; and
- Select appropriate, quantifiable metrics that could not only be modeled but also were monitorable at multiple spatial scales.

Ultimately, the goal of defining quantifiable metrics (through the Working Group consensus) was to allow for modeling results to form the basis of quantifiable recommendations and simultaneously inform programmatic recommendations. The programmatic recommendations were also informed by the technical advisors noted above.

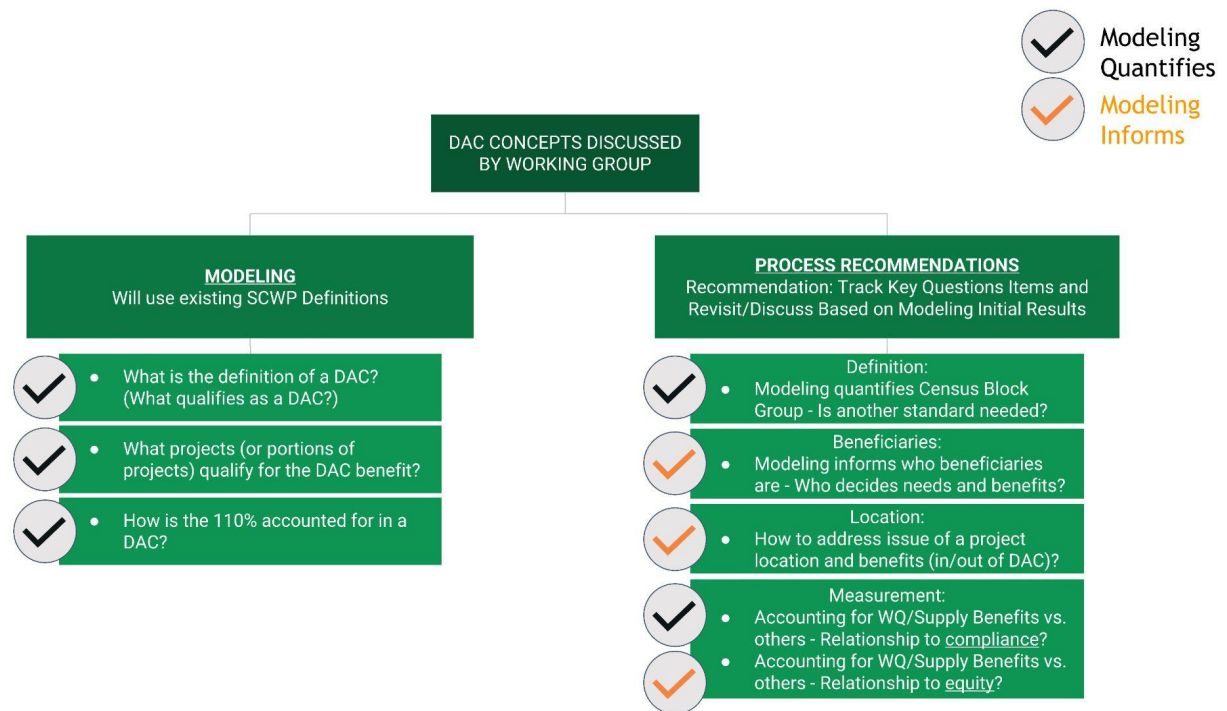
Figure 1. Working Group process for coming to a consensus on quantifiable metrics to be modeled in the pilot watershed.



¹ The Working Group’s prioritized SCWP Goals are those in which recommendations or analysis will require Working Group agreement on specific metrics or methods. The Working Group came to a consensus that prioritized goals include all of the fourteen SCWP Goals with the exception of *Innovation*, *Scientific Research*, and *Adaptive Management*.

The modeling process will be used to both quantify benefits and inform programmatic recommendations. An example of this approach is demonstrated with elements of the Disadvantaged Community Benefits in **Figure 2**.

Figure 2. Example of how modeling quantifies and informs recommendations around DAC issues in the SCWP.



1.1 Working Group Surveys and Homework

Each Working Group meeting was planned around one or several of the Working Group's prioritized SCWP Goals, depending on the content and time needed to thoroughly address all the interrelated pieces for each goal. A week prior to each Working Group meeting, Ms. Bezak emailed surveys using SurveyMonkey to the Working Group members. The purpose of the surveys was to gather Working Group members' opinions on different subtopics related to each of the prioritized SCWP Goals, including:

- Definitions, programmatic process considerations, and programmatic vulnerabilities;
- Relationship of a SCWP goal to other SCWP Goals or benefits;
- Contentious topics as raised in the Regional Oversight Committee (ROC) meetings, and/or highlighted in the associated workbooks created by District staff;^{2,3}
- Beneficiaries of the goals/benefits;
- Appropriate spatial scales (project vs. neighborhood vs. regional) to realize benefits;
- Timing of when benefits are realized;
- Types of land use/properties to prioritize for stormwater capture projects in order to realize benefits; and
- Scenarios in which type of benefits should be attributed/counted.

² ROC workbook on water supply and Nature-Based Solutions (NBS) (January 28, 2021): <https://safecleanwaterla.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/20210128-ROC-Agenda-DRAFT-Workbook-clean-1.pdf>

³ ROC workbook on Disadvantaged Community (DAC) Benefits and community engagement (February 25, 2021): <https://safecleanwaterla.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/02.25.2021-ROC-Agenda-Workbook.pdf>

After reading the literature review developed for this project, Working Group members were encouraged to take the surveys in collaboration with other representatives from their respective organizations so that each organization's value system and priorities could be accounted for in the survey results. The thought-provoking questions in the surveys were meant to encourage Working Group members to think critically about the prioritized SCWP goal prior to each technical presentation and round table discussion on the topic.

1.2 Technical Presentations

After receiving survey results from the Working Group members, the Technical Team determined the appropriate technical advisor(s) to share in-depth knowledge and nuances regarding the prioritized SCWP goals (and in many cases using the same advisors as LACFCD). The list of technical advisors is presented in **Table 1**. Presentations were curated to ensure that the content would be understandable to all Working Group members, regardless of their expertise or knowledge around technical or non-technical topics. The purpose of the presentations was not only to bring all the Working Group members up to speed surrounding the most recent academic or experiential knowledge regarding the topic, but to also help seed discussion amongst the Working Group members as discussed in Section 1.3. It is important to note that the technical presentations were developed based on foundational acceptance of the existing definitions in Chapters 16 and 18 of the Flood Control District code; these existing definitions were introduced at the beginning of each presentation to lay the existing direction for the Working Group to build upon. Initial metrics developed by the Technical Team and technical advisors were proposed for the Working Group to discuss and later vote on at the end of the presentations.

Table 1. Technical Advisors for each Working Group prioritized SCWP Goal.

SCWP Prioritized Goal	Technical Advisor	Organization
Water Quality (Meeting 2)	Brad Wardynski, P.E.	Craftwater Engineering, Inc.
Community Investment Benefits/Nature-Based Solutions/Multiple Benefits (Meetings 3 & 4)	Dr. Sarah Diringer	Pacific Institute
	Dr. Gregory Pierce	University of California, Los Angeles (Luskin Center for Innovation)
Disadvantaged Community Benefits and Community Engagement (Meetings 5 & 6)	Jon Christensen	University of California, Los Angeles (Luskin Center for Innovation)
	Vanessa Carter	University of Southern California (Equity Research Institute)
Water Supply (Meeting 7)	Brad Wardynski, P.E.	Craftwater Engineering, Inc.
Green Jobs and Career Pathways Operations and Maintenance (Meeting 8)	Bethany Bezak, P.E.	Emergent Strategy

1.3 Round Table Discussions

Ms. Bezak facilitated the round table discussions at each meeting, and gave Working Group members the opportunity to ask questions or provide commentary and points of clarification during the technical presentations. Each Working Group member was encouraged to participate in the discussions and share information openly, transparently, promptly, and respectfully. If any Working Group member did not provide commentary during a discussion, Working Group members were encouraged to confirm that they (1) properly understood the concepts or issues being discussed and (2) did not have any objections or commentary to add. This was to ensure that all members who wished to have an opportunity to speak were afforded a chance to do so.

A Craftwater staff member took meeting minutes at each Working Group meeting, detailing a record of meeting attendees, key issues raised, actions required, and any topics on which the Working Group came to consensus. The purpose of these meeting minutes was to document the discussion including: similarities and differences between Working Group members'

opinions, consensus and voting by the Working Group, and any outstanding topics that required further future discussion for programmatic recommendations.

1.4 Will the Modeling Quantify or Will the Modeling Inform?

Once initial proposed metrics were thoroughly discussed by the Working Group, Mr. Helmle, Mr. Wardynski, Dr. Diringer, Mr. Christensen, Dr. Pierce provided commentary regarding whether the proposed metric:

- Had sufficient locally available and accessible data;
- Would be able to be modeled given the current best available tools; and
- Meaningfully measures the intended benefit.

For instance, several proposed Community Investment Benefit metrics, such as air quality, carbon sequestration, and urban heat island effect, were deemed infeasible to model or measure at the spatial scales needed for the project. This was due to various reasons, such as lack of instrumentation, lack of an accessible model, or lack of complex life cycle accounting tools that would be able to attribute the benefit solely to a given project. For example, while the Working Group members agreed that carbon sequestration was important, the Working Group members acknowledged that it would be difficult to attribute measurable carbon reduction to the benefit of carbon sequestration from planting trees at the project site rather than reduced carbon emissions from cars taken off the road, or any other outside factor not attributable to the project. For metrics that were unable to be quantified directly, the Working Group agreed on **proxies** to indirectly quantify those metrics. As such, the Working Group agreed that the benefits of added **trees and vegetation** could indirectly quantify the benefits of improved air quality, carbon sequestration, and reduced urban heat island effect. These directly- or indirectly-quantifiable metrics were then ultimately voted on by the Working Group to keep or to discard as described in Section 1.5.

Several questions raised by the Working Group, particularly related to Disadvantaged Community Benefits, were deemed unable to be directly- or indirectly-quantified; rather, it was agreed upon that the modeling would be able to **inform** the Working Group's recommendations once the data was analyzed from the modeling. These questions were characterized as either **definitions-based**, **process-based**, or **outcomes-based**. Using an example for the "Disadvantaged Community Benefits" topic, the modeling would be able to determine the beneficiaries attributed to a project, but it would be unable to quantify who should determine needs and benefits; instead, this would be considered a **process-based question**. Unlike the directly- or indirectly-quantifiable proposed metrics, these recommendations were instead carried over to a future meeting agenda to be more thoroughly discussed once the modeling was complete.

It was important to manage the Working Group's expectations when discussing what the model would be able to quantify versus inform. The Metric Definitions and Model Assumptions report (Appendix D) from the ARLA Technical Team was shared with the Working Group in June 2021 to help delineate Working Group questions that can or cannot be quantified by the modeling.

1.5 Voting

The Working Group ultimately strove to reach agreement by full consensus, as described in Attachment B: Consensus Levels for Decision-Making. All twenty-two recommendations proposed by the Working Group were unanimously agreed to using the consensus levels for decision making. The Metric Definitions and Model Assumptions report (Appendix D) documents the data sources, assumptions, and specific methodology for modeling each agreed-upon metric for transparency to the Working Group, the L.A. County Flood Control District, and key stakeholder groups.

2.0 CONCLUSION

Ultimately, the Working Group process described in this memo has been successful in allowing Working Group members to be thoroughly informed regarding several seemingly disparate topics all related to the success of the SCWP, attentively listen to and acknowledge each other's perspectives respectfully, and come to a consensus on many decisions leading to twenty-two consensus-based recommendations on behalf of their respective organizations.

ATTACHMENT A: WORKING GROUP CHARTER

ARLA'S SCWP WORKING GROUP PROJECT

January 21, 2021

SCWP Working Group Project Purpose

The Safe Clean Water Program (SCWP) promised L.A. County voters a multi-benefit approach to address a variety of water-related issues by improving water quality, increasing drought preparedness, prioritizing Nature-Based Solutions (NBS), providing Disadvantaged Community (DAC) Benefits, and promoting green jobs, among others. To meet these diverse goals, scoring criteria and guidelines were initially developed to incentivize projects that simultaneously resolve water, environmental, compliance, and social issues; however, the first round of Stormwater Investment Plan (SIP) development featured extensive committee debate and public comments concerning the balance of these goals.

This public debate illuminated the need for an assessment of the extent to which the SCWP guidance, criteria, structure, and processes are successfully driving meaningful progress toward the fourteen SCWP Program Goals. Accelerate Resilience L.A. (ARLA) created the SCWP Working Group Project ("Project") to help address this need. As part of the Project, ARLA is convening a Working Group to build consensus around definitions and metrics for balanced watershed projects stemming from the SCWP from two key constituencies: municipalities and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The Project will utilize a robust and collaborative scientific approach to identify metrics that represent select SCWP Goals, evaluate historical program data against those metrics, and analyze the potential of future projects to collectively and equitably accomplish the overarching Program Goals. The effort will aim to maximize attainment of SCWP Goals (and to consider opportunities to leverage investment and benefits of other regional infrastructure efforts).

Working Group Goals

The Working Group will select the SCWP Goals to prioritize for this Project. With the SCWP Goals identified, the Working Group will utilize a consensus-based process to identify metrics for each prioritized goal. These metrics will then be assessed and modeled (via a variety of selected water capture projects) to illuminate and quantify the benefits for balanced watershed projects stemming from the SCWP. The Working Group's goal is to provide consensus-based recommendations to L.A. County regarding potential refinements to SCWP guidelines.

Project Outcomes

ARLA's SCWP Working Group will:

- Establish clear, consensus-based recommendations on potential refinements to SCWP guidelines.
- Ensure recommendations are vetted and approved by participants' respective Working Group member organizations.
- Ensure recommendations are considered scalable across the SCWP and across all watersheds covered by the Program.
- Ensure recommendations are considered realistic and implementable.

- Create deliverables that are presented in a clear, transparent, and visually-compelling manner for meaningful stakeholder communication.

Working Group Composition

Each Working Group member was invited to participate based on their specific mix of skill sets, backgrounds, and perspectives. To achieve the Project's goals and outcomes, a common understanding of the barriers and opportunities in the SCWP needs to be fostered, along with a level of trust among Working Group participants over time. Therefore, it is critical that all Working Group members attend each Working Group meeting. Working Group members are asked to commit to attend each meeting with an open mind and continued interest and curiosity for ideas that may advance all parties' interests.

Working Group Operating Guidelines

Convening of Meetings

- Meetings will be held through a digital meeting platform (e.g. Zoom) at a date and time chosen by the Working Group in the course of their meetings.
- It is anticipated that there will be twice monthly two-hour meetings during February and March. Through the remainder of the Project (April through January) monthly two-hour meetings are anticipated.
- Working Group members will be informed of meetings through email. The previous meeting minutes and meeting agenda (including meeting materials) will be forwarded to members of the Working Group at least two business days before each meeting.
- Meetings will be attended by invited members, advisors, and expert advisors. Meetings will not be open to the public.
- Meetings will be facilitated. Periodically expert advisors will be invited to participate to inform discussions and facilitate consensus.
- Meetings will end with a clear understanding of expectations and assignments for next steps.
- ARLA consultants will keep a record of meeting attendees, key issues raised, and actions required. Comments from individual members will generally not be attributed, and a verbatim record of the meeting will not be prepared. Meetings will not be recorded, unless desired by all participants.
- Project documents will be posted on the Project's Google Drive.
- Primary Working Group coordination, logistics, and communication will be through ARLA's consultant, Bethany Bezak.

Communication and Collaboration

In the spirit of collaboration and consensus building (and because virtual calls can provide additional communication challenges), members are asked to pay particular attention to the following:

- Speak one at a time and refrain from interrupting others.
- Wait to be recognized by the facilitator before speaking. The facilitator will call on people who have not yet spoken before calling on someone a second time for a given subject.
- Be deliberate and mindful to ensure that all members who wish to have an opportunity to speak are afforded a chance to do so.
- Maintain a respectful stance toward all participants and opinions; listen to other points of view and try to understand other interests.
- Share information openly, transparently, promptly, and respectfully.

- Ask questions if needed to ensure that you properly understand concepts or issues being discussed.
- Remain flexible and open-minded, and actively participate in meetings. Please remain as present as possible during the Working Group meetings and minimize outside distractions and multi-tasking.
- Keep the overall Project purpose and Project outcomes prioritized in all discussions.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Working Group is an advisory group where members agree to:

- Provide specific local expertise that includes the opinions and viewpoints of their members or respective organizations;
- Communicate progress and information of the Working Group to their respective organizations, and seek approval from their respective organizations, when identified. Gather information/feedback from their organizations as practicable before each meeting;
- Review project materials and comment promptly;
- Complete all necessary assignments prior to each meeting; and
- Support and stand behind the recommendations of the Working Group.
- Note: Conflicts of interest should be avoided and disclosed to the Working Group.

Decision-Making

The Working Group members will strive to reach agreement by consensus. If full consensus cannot be reached, a recommendation will move forward when five of the six Working Group members are in consensus. Members will strive to work expeditiously and try to avoid revisiting decisions once made. Once consensus is reached, decisions will be documented in meeting minutes, and final Working Group deliverables will be described as “Working Group Approved”. In the unlikely event where agreement cannot be reached on a particular issue, ARLA will retain final decision-making authority, but any written documents or deliverables of the Working Group would not denote “Working Group Approved.”

Conflict Resolution

When an issue arises that cannot be easily resolved, Working Group members agree to:

- Remember that Working Group outcomes and recommendations are most meaningful and beneficial to the SCWP when consensus is achieved; the intent is to resolve issues so the Project outcomes can be met.
- Determine if the issue should be resolved within or outside of the Working Group and participate however is appropriate.

References and Background Documents

The Working Group acknowledges and references the following foundational documents as background material for the Working Group process:

- [SCWP Ordinance \(2019\)](#)
- [Board of Supervisors Letter Package \(2018\)](#)
- [LA County Board of Supervisors Motion \(2017\)](#)

ATTACHMENT B: CONSENSUS LEVELS FOR DECISION-MAKING

ARLA'S SCWP WORKING GROUP PROJECT

Adapted from The Steve Alexander Group¹

Consensus is achieved if five of the six Working Group members denote acceptance at Levels 1 through 4.

The Working Group Levels of Consensus are:

1. **"Unqualified Yes"**: I can say an **unqualified 'yes'** to the decision. I am satisfied that the decision represents the wisdom of the Working Group.
2. **"Perfectly Acceptable"**: I find the decision **perfectly acceptable**. It is the best of the real options that the Working Group has available to us.
3. **"Live with"**: I can **live with** the decision, even though I may not be especially enthusiastic about it.
4. **"Stand Aside"**: I do not fully agree with the decision, but I want to keep the process of the Working Group moving forward. I am willing to **stand aside** to support the decision because I trust the wisdom of the Working Group.
5. **"Oppose"**: I do not agree with the decision and feel the need to **oppose** the decision being accepted as consensus; however, the Working Group process should not be slowed or modified.
6. **"Do More Work"**: I feel that we have no clear sense of unity across the Working Group, and we need to **do more work** before consensus can be achieved. This decision is so important that the Working Group schedule should be modified to allow further assessment and discussion.

¹ The Steve Alexander Group. <https://alexanderpa.com/>