

# Scoring Committee

## Meeting Minutes

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Tuesday, March 12, 2024

9:00am – 11:00am

WebEx Hybrid Meeting

LA County Public Works Headquarters

1st Floor (Courtyard) Conference Room B 900 S. Fremont Ave, Alhambra, CA 91803

### Committee Members Present:

Esther Rojas, Water Replenishment District (Water Supply/Community Investments/Nature-Based Solutions)

Bruce Reznik, LA Waterkeeper (Nature-Based Solutions/Water Quality), Chair

Dave Sorem, Mike Bubalo Construction Co., Inc. (Water Quality)

TJ Moon, LA County Public Works (Water Quality), Vice-Chair

### Committee Members Absent:

Matt Stone, Santa Clarita Valley Water Agency (Water Supply)

David Diaz, Active SGV (Community Investments)

See attached sign-in sheet for full list of attendees.

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## **1) Welcome and Introductions**

Chair Bruce Reznik welcomed Committee Members and called the meeting to order.

Los Angeles County Flood Control District (District) staff conducted a brief tutorial on WebEx. Committee Members made self-introductions and a quorum was established.

## **2) Approval of Meeting Minutes from December 7, 2023**

District staff presented the meeting minutes from the December 7, 2023 meeting. Member Dave Sorem motioned to approve the meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Member Esther Rojas. The Committee voted to approve the December 7, 2023 meeting minutes with 4 votes in favor (approved, see vote tracking sheet).

## **3) Committee Member and District Updates**

District staff provided an update, noting:

- The Regional Oversight Committee (ROC) voted to send the Biennial Progress Report to the Board of Supervisors. The ROC will begin watershed planning goal setting sessions on April 11, 2024. For more information, please see the ROC webpage on the [SCW Program website](#).
- The ROC Biennial Progress Report will be received and filed at the March 19 Board. Reappointments are also planned to be conducted.
- The Watershed Area Steering Committees (WASCs) continue to meet and discuss Fiscal Year (FY) 2024-2025 Stormwater Investment Plans (SIPs). Two WASCs have approved SIPs. The Santa Clara River WASC recommended one Scientific Study (SS) and two Technical Resource Projects (TRPs). The Lower Los Angeles River WASC recommended one Infrastructure Program (IP) project and one SS.

## **4) Public Comment Period for Non-Agenda Items**

District staff compiled all public comment cards received by 5:00pm the day before the meeting, uploaded them to the SCW Program website, and displayed them on-screen.

Susie Santilena (City of Los Angeles, Sanitation and Environment (LASAN)) expressed appreciation for the Scoring Committee's attention to detail during the Round 5 scoring process. Santilena noted that LASAN is a project proponent of the SCW Program and appreciated the recommendation themes outlined in the

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Draft Scoring Memo, particularly the following: the proposed improvements to the Projects Module to allow multiple types of best management practices (BMPs), clarity and guidance on how cost benefits for projects should be based on entire costs and have consistency across applications, and standardization of cost estimates especially regarding escalation. Santilena recommended that a minimum SCW Program escalation rate over a five-year period be created and adjusted annually. Santilena noted that the minimum of 60% design plans for construction projects may be difficult for entities that need funding to develop plans and be a potential challenge. Santilena recommended instead that the SCW Program leave an option to submit 30% design plans for entities deciding to utilize design-build project delivery processes. Santilena expressed that the 60% design plan recommendation should not be implemented until Round 7, since projects intending to apply for Round 6 would not have enough time to develop the 30% plans already being prepared up to 60% before the deadline.

### 5) Discussion Items:

#### a) Ex Parte Communication Disclosure

Member Sorem shared that a recent news article had referenced testimony provided by Member Sorem in 2018 about Measure W.

#### b) Assessment of Previous Submissions and Scoring

##### i. [FY24-25 Scoring Memo \(DRAFT\)](#)

Mike Antos (Stantec, Regional Coordination) presented a draft of the assessment of previous submissions and scoring (see attached [presentation](#)). Antos presented on the recommendations outlined in the draft memo and the Committee provided comments and feedback to be incorporated into a revised final memo.

#### Scoring Committee Recommendation 1: Implement separate applications for Infrastructure Program (IP) Projects that are in different stages of development

Vice-Chair TJ Moon reiterated support for the recommendation to modify the Feasibility Study guidelines for operation and maintenance (O&M) projects already constructed, given that constructed projects do not typically conduct community engagement and would only be able to show past engagement conducted. Vice-Chair Moon also stated that it is also difficult to evaluate a constructed O&M project's leveraged funds, about whether matching funds are for O&M or construction. Chair Reznik agreed and noted that the O&M project application would need to be simplified overall to only include a section describing the previous costs of the project and activities conducted.

Chair Reznik also noted that, in response to the public comment shared earlier in the meeting, streamlining the entire timeline for SCW Program applications would help ease difficulties related to application development. Vice-Chair Moon noted that cities have Municipal funds that can be used to further develop plans, and cities might need to reprioritize funds for this purpose. Member Sorem noted that the evaluation on design plans for stormwater infiltration projects have been rather lenient, and Vice-Chair Moon agreed that a 60% design plan does not need to be a huge effort above 30%.

Antos confirmed with the Committee Members that the intention of the Scoring Committee's recommendation is that projects awarded with design-only funds would be sufficiently funded to develop project plans to a level appropriate for submitting a construction funding application.

#### Scoring Committee Recommendation 2: Consistent inputs for Water Quality Benefits

Vice-Chair Moon affirmed the recommendation to allow applicants to select multiple BMP types, as projects are complex and applicants should have the option in the Projects Module to model the project accurately. Committee Members discussed differences in 85<sup>th</sup> percentile storm calculations generated by Los Angeles County Flood Control District's modeling system outputs versus the Los Angeles County's Watershed Modeling Management System (WMMS). One model uses past historical rainfall and gage data, while the other is calculated using the rational formula.

For one model, users can choose the ten-year period, which can easily change the result if a period of drought is chosen. Vice-Chair Moon recommended that all applicants be given a theoretical rainfall amount to use as the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile storm. Chair Reznik and Vice-Chair Moon acknowledged that this approach

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would stray from the method used in the MS4 program's Watershed Management Plans (WMPs), but would still be beneficial for a standardization across the SCW Program internally. The Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Board) also allows users to choose between models, so across the many WMPs there are inconsistent 85<sup>th</sup> percentile storms. Chair Reznik also confirmed with District staff that neither model incorporates climate change effects.

Vice-Chair Moon requested that the recommendation be modified to have District staff analyze the differences between the outputs of the two models. If the outputs are very similar, then the Scoring Committee can decide on how to use a standard value to create consistency among project applications.

Committee Members discussed that Water Quality Benefits need to be quantified based on the design storm selected by the applicant. However, the intent would not be to limit project sizes solely based on Water Quality Benefits, as volumes greater than the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile storm may be captured for greater Water Supply Benefits. Capping the project size at the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile storm without conducting water supply or routing calculations would not be ideal. Vice-Chair Moon noted that the Projects Module is currently unable to conduct a hydrology routing calculation and mentioned that adding project application requirement for engineering calculations may add additional barriers. Vice-Chair Moon expressed that project applicants should be able to complete the project application process solely with the functionalities available through the Projects Module.

Vice-Chair Moon recommended that the Scoring Memo include a request for District staff to investigate the possibility of implementing a simplified routing calculation functionality tool in the Projects Module. District staff noted that draft recommendations 2b and 2d can be grouped together.

District staff noted there may be a soft pause on the SCW Program to implement various recommendations and provide applicants a set list of updated Scoring Criteria. Chair Reznik inquired if peak flow reduction could also be included into the Projects Module, to which other Committee Members explained that peak flow reduction would be a small number for the types of projects in the SCW Program. Total volume would be a simpler calculation than the hourly increments required for a peak flow reduction calculation.

Regarding recommendations on site-specific geotechnical investigations, the Committee agreed that a 500-foot threshold would be adequate to be considered on-site. Committee Members noted that some project applicants may not have the funding to pay for a geotechnical investigation, which could be addressed with the implementation of the design-only funding application recommendation.

The Committee added that the recommendation to have load-based criteria should be revised to specifically call out the pounds of sediment removed, as sediment is what the pollutants adhere to. If implemented, this would address the sliding scale recommendation. The wet-weather projects would be a subject to a sliding scale that can either be percent reduction or load-based, the latter of which would reward large projects capturing a large volume. Committee Members suggested that the Projects Module automatically calculate both reductions and have the applicant choose the better option. These recommendations would also help address the issue of distributed projects that have in the past been forced to choose a dry-weather designation despite being designed to manage stormwater flows.

Vice-Chair Moon reaffirmed the recommendation to revise cost-effectiveness criteria and noted that a cost-effectiveness category for dry-weather would require an analysis by District staff. Antos noted that the Metrics and Monitoring Study (MMS) may have a dataset that pertains to that analysis of creating a gallons per minute/\$1M metric.

Scoring Committee Recommendation 3: Clarify eligible claims to Water Supply Benefits  
Discussed below with Recommendation 4.

Scoring Committee Recommendation 4: Evaluate Water Supply scoring methodology and Alternate Water Supply Scoring Pilot

The Committee generally agreed that points should be awarded to applicants that plan for sewer diversions, even if the reclamation facility is not yet recycling 100% of influent, since many water districts and agencies are starting to plan for the additional capacity from sewer diversions. Chair Reznik mentioned the significant

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efforts at Hyperion Water Reclamation Plant to plan for sewer diversions, but shared a preference to see stormwater projects capture closer to the source. Chair Reznik noted it may be useful to look at a timeline analysis on whether projects diverting to a treatment plant that is not planned for operation for another 20 years should be awarded funding over projects that currently capture and treat stormwater at a more local scale.

The Committee noted that it has been difficult for project applicants to gain letters of confirmation from a Watermaster but maintained that the evaluation of Water Supply Benefits should remain within the purview of a Watermaster. Member Rojas noted that most of the time, the geotechnical work is not provided to the Watermaster to conduct a proper evaluation, so those projects are not awarded water supply points. Antos noted a related issue where water meant to end up in a different groundwater basin is being captured upstream; Member Rojas concluded that tracking the exact destination of all water would be too difficult. Member Rojas noted that stormwater should be the primary source of water supply points because stormwater is free, and wastewater should be a second priority, as it is more immediately available.

Vice-Chair Moon expressed approval of the Alternate Water Supply Scoring Pilot and noted that scaling points should be implemented for all categories. The Committee agreed that the unintended deemphasis on other categories that resulted from this pilot given that projects could be judged eligible from Water Quality and Water Supply categories alone, would be addressed by having minimum required points for the other categories, such as Community Investment Benefits (CIBs) or Leveraged Funds. Member Rojas noted that project applicants that have voiced concern over the difficulty in gaining Water Supply points, in order to receive a passing score, have always had the opportunity to gain points in those other categories. Antos also noted that the cost-effectiveness recommendation in the Water Quality category could rebalance the point system.

Chair Reznik suggested that language describing the misleading nature of the cost-effectiveness metric be reordered to be a preamble to this recommendation.

### Recommendation 5: Clarify eligible claims of Community Investment Benefits

Discussed below with Recommendation 6.

### Recommendation 6: Reinforce Scoring Criteria for Nature-Based Solutions

The Committee agreed that since dry weather classification indicates only 0.25 inches of rainfall, that storms would most likely not contribute to local flooding issues. Antos noted that this scoring scenario came from classifying projects that were not quite wet weather but captured more than the minimum dry weather amount. Antos stated that if the load-based criteria recommendation is implemented, then this issue might be resolved. District staff noted that some flood protection criteria should still be created to distinguish true local flooding benefits. The Committee noted that if the amount captured is more than the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile, local flooding benefits can be awarded; if less is captured, then more documentation should be submitted. Antos noted that the double negative in Recommendation 5 language will be revised for clarity.

Chair Reznik noted that there is a definite need for projects to better demonstrate community need and quantification of benefits. Chair Reznik explained that the number of trees and a plant palette should be supplied by the project application for construction-only projects, and encouraged additional quantification of benefits. Chair Reznik conceded that many metrics available for quantifying CIBs are proxies for the impact project elements may provide. Antos noted that the MMS may have identified some quantitative metrics, but in the context of CIBs mainly focused developing techniques to permit community-selected project elements to “count” as CIB.

Chair Reznik noted that Los Angeles County’s OurCounty Sustainability Plan calls for 12,000 acres of hardscape removal to get park-poor areas to the average amount of green space in the County, and expressed opinions on how this quantity may still be insufficient. Chair Reznik suggested that there should be some exploration to develop a quantity for hardscape removal to give applicants a sense of scale. Vice-Chair Moon agreed that, while it may be difficult to quantify, applicants would prefer a quantifiable number to work towards. Vice-Chair Moon noted that the general sense of creating more green space might not

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help small projects who have benefited from the percentage of impermeable area removed, but Vice-Chair Moon still expressed support of the recommendation. Chair Reznik expressed understanding of the importance of percentage-based scoring in practice, but also noted that applicants have taken advantage of the scoring method thus resulting in the SCW Program not providing as significant benefits from a green space perspective.

### Recommendation 7: Strengthen requirements to demonstrate local support

Discussed below with Recommendation 8.

### Recommendation 8: Adjust weighting or Threshold Scores for sections of scoring criteria

Chair Reznik suggested adding references to the Accelerate Resilience LA and OurWaterLA reports to use as tools for improvement of how community engagement is encouraged and evaluated. Antos noted that the 2022 Interim Guidance is cited in the draft memo, which also has aspects drawn from the Envision framework that as a reference tool.

Vice-Chair Moon expressed hope that the MMS will have quantifiable metrics for community engagement. Member Rojas noted that the minimum scoring threshold for different categories would be contingent on having scaling scores. The Committee agreed also that the different types of funding applications (design, construction, O&M) should have different thresholds. Chair Reznik noted that communities often express that projects tend to only engage communities during the project's finalized stage. Chair Reznik explained that for projects applying for design funds, applicants should demonstrate how the project plans to engage with the public early in the project and incorporate community priorities throughout the entire project process. When applying for construction funds, projects should show those community priorities were successfully implemented.

### Additional Items

Chair Reznik expressed support in the Scoring Committee's ability to award points to projects where the applicant did not seek points for extensive efforts in community engagement or leveraged funds. Chair Reznik also noted that the points for strong local support can easily be gained if a project were to partner with a community-based organization (CBO) or non-profit organization (NGO) that is often already established in a community. Chair Reznik noted that agencies can also still conduct exemplary community engagement on their own.

Chair Reznik noted that setting aside adequate budget for community engagement, whether that be budgeting for outreach activities or budget for partnering with a CBO or NGO, is a clear way to demonstrate a commitment to community engagement.

Chair Reznik also noted that there have been issues surrounding the definition of Disadvantaged Community Benefits, and while this issue may not belong in the Scoring Memo, it was captured in the ROC's Biennial Report and is still an important concern that should be further investigated.

### **c) Meeting Schedule**

Chair Reznik shared that at the last ROC meeting, a soft pause to the SCW Program was explained as postponing Round 6 Call for Projects. The reason for the soft pause was to provide District staff time to implement all the recommendations received, and that many of the WASCs are overspent on budgeting.

District confirmed that the soft pause would impact the project application cycle so scoring would not need to occur. The Committee confirmed with District staff that projects with Project Modifications Requests (PMRs) will not be coming to the Scoring Committee since the Scoring Criteria may be adjusted in the future. The PMRs will go to the WASCs.

Member Sorem confirmed with District that most recommendations and changes to scoring will be made by June 2025, by the next Call for Projects.

District staff explained that 126 projects have been funded and around 10-12 are completed or in construction. Member Sorem explained that if there is a pause for project applications, the construction



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community would be interested in seeing the construction of SCW Program funded and approved projects to demonstrate the Program's progress. Chair Reznik expressed that the SCW Program needs to improve the marketing of completed projects and recommended including pictures of completed projects available on the SCW Program website. Member Sorem also noted that the breakdown of construction versus O&M costs should also be easily accessed or summarized for projects that received design and construction funds. Chair Reznik noted that the SCW Program's Bid and Award tab is one way that District staff has been illustrating SCW Program progress.

Member Sorem and Chair Reznik also recommended that the use of the SCW Program's municipal funds should also be better publicized.

Chair Reznik noted that the ROC will be meeting in April to discuss watershed planning.

Member Sorem confirmed with District staff that Round 5 rescoring has been completed.

District staff noted that the Scoring Committee Operating Guidelines, requires the Committee to meet an average of four times per year. Antos suggested that the next meeting could serve to onboard new Committee Members and to discuss any major changes that may be made to the SCW Program and its potential soft pause. The Committee agreed that the next two meetings can be canceled until new Members are appointed and onboarded by the District. Chair Reznik requested that District staff present on SCW Program projects that have been completed or are in construction at the next meeting, if possible.

### **6) Public Comment Period for Agenda Items**

There were no public comments.

### **7) Voting Items**

There were no voting items.

### **8) Items for Next Agenda**

The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for June 6, 2024, 9:00am – 12:00pm. See the SCW Program website for meeting details. Items on the Agenda include:

- a) Onboarding new Committee Members
- b) Updates on the SCW Program Round 6 Call for Projects
- c) Presentation on SCW Program projects that have been built or are in construction (if possible)

### **9) Adjournment**

Chair Reznik thanked Committee Members and District staff and adjourned the meeting.

| SCORING COMMITTEE MEETING - March 12, 2024                    |                     |             |                           |
|---|---------------------|-------------|---------------------------|
|   | Quorum Present      |             | Voting Items              |
| Member Type   | Member              | Voting?     | 12/7/2023 Meeting Minutes |
| Water Supply  | Matt Stone          |             |                           |
| Water Supply / Community Investments / Nature-Based Solutions | Esther Rojas        | x           | Y                         |
| Community Investments   | David Diaz          |             |                           |
| Nature-Based Solutions / Water Quality                        | <b>Bruce Reznik</b> | x           | Y                         |
| Water Quality   | Dave Sorem          | x           | Y                         |
| Water Quality   | <b>TJ Moon</b>      | x           | Y                         |
| Total Non-Vacant Seats  | 6                   | Yay (Y)     | 4                         |
| Total Voting Members Present                                  | 4                   | Nay (N)     | 0                         |
|   |                     | Abstain (A) | 0                         |
|   |                     | Total       | 4                         |
|   |                     |             | Approved                  |

| Other Attendees         |                       |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| Albert Kam              | M. Scaduto            |
| Amanda                  | Maggie Gardner        |
| Andrew Kim              | Mark                  |
| Carlos Moran - ULAR WC  | Mark Nguyen           |
| Conor Mossavi           | Marty                 |
| Drew Ready CWH          | Michael Scaduto       |
| Gabriela                | Mossavi, Conor        |
| Gina L                  | Nancy Shrodes she/her |
| Hans Tremmel Brown-Cald | Paige Bistromowitz    |
| Jason Casanova          | Sofia Cardenas        |
| Joe Venzon - LA County  | Susie Santilena       |
| John Bodenchak          | Thom Epps Craftwater  |



# Scoring Committee Memo

## Round 5 Projects

FY24-25 Call for Projects

SAFE CLEAN WATER PROGRAM  
March 12, 2024





## Summary – Recommendation Themes

Separate  
Applications for IP  
Projects in Different  
Stages of Development



Consistent Inputs  
for Water Quality  
Benefit



Clarify Eligible  
Claims to Water  
Supply Benefits



Water Supply  
Scoring & Alternate  
Water Supply  
Scoring Pilot



Eligible Claims of  
Community  
Investment Benefits



Scoring Criteria for  
Nature-Based  
Solutions



Demonstrate  
Local Support



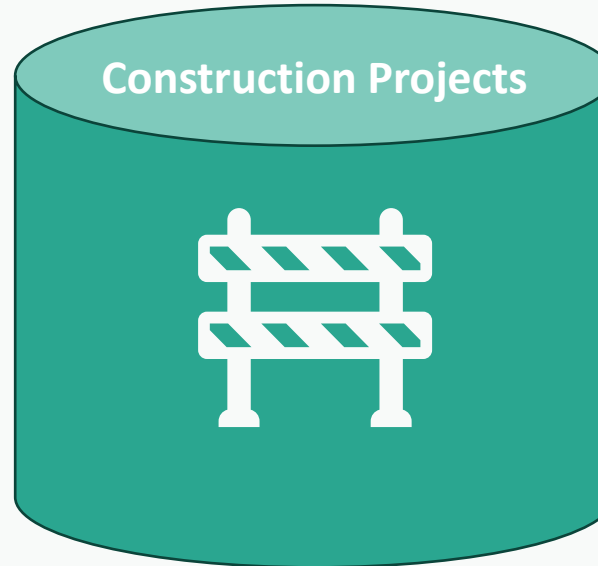
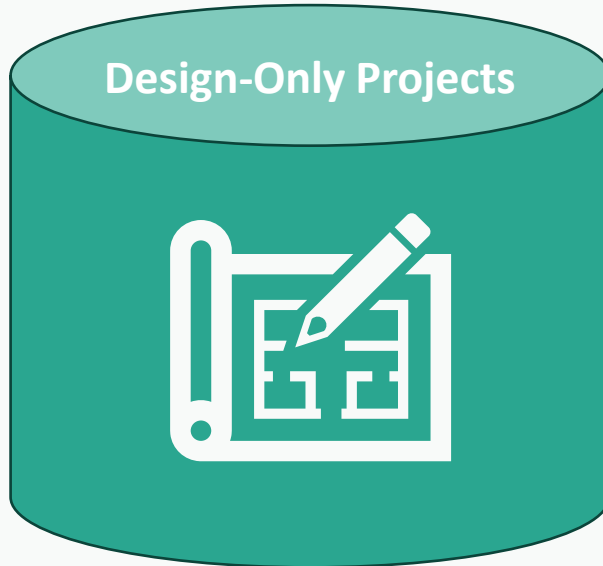
Adjust Threshold  
Scores for Scoring  
Criteria



## Recommendation #1: Separate IP Application Types for Different Project Stages

The SC recommends that the SCWP encourage projects that apply for design, construction, and/or O&M funding to submit separate applications, acknowledging there are multiple phases of the project.

Modify Feasibility Study Guidelines and the Project Module to outline specific requirements for each project submittal type:



## Scoring Committee Recommendation #1: Separate IP Application Types for Different Project Stages

### **Modify Feasibility Study guidelines for Design-only projects**

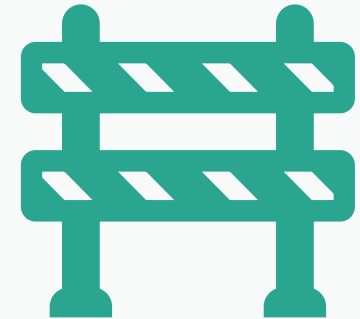
1. A more flexible application process
2. Require only \*conceptual\* plan/feasibility study
3. No required letter from Watermaster or Sanitation agency verifying Water Supply Benefit potential
4. Preference for on-site geotechnical analysis, but would be satisfactory to use existing or nearby geotechnical information at this application stage



## Scoring Committee Recommendation #1: Separate IP Application Types for Different Project Stages

### **Modify Feasibility Study guidelines for Construction projects**

1. Require a minimum of 60% design plans
  - Elevation and profile plans, strong cost estimates
2. Require site-specific geotechnical analysis
  - “Site-specific” information should refer to data obtained at the project location or another maximum distance decided upon by the Committee
3. Watermaster or Sanitation Agency letter concurring with Water Supply Benefit potential



## Scoring Committee Recommendation #1: Separate IP Application Types for Different Project Stages

### **Modify Feasibility Study guidelines for O&M projects**

1. Require monitoring data rather than modeled data





## Scoring Committee Recommendation #1: Separate IP Application Types for Different Project Stages

### **Alignment with Previous SC Recommendations:**

- Recommended different IP application types per different project stages
- Requested guidance on how to evaluate design-only projects with variety of alternatives
- Requested guidance on affirming cost/benefit calculations based on entire cost and merits of a project

### **Alignment with Existing SCW Recommendations:**

- Adjusting application process for various project stages is supported by the ROC
- Biennial Report recommends SCWP “develop guidelines/criteria to streamline applications for various sized projects and various stages of development”
- Nov. 27 Report Back to Board motion to “Accelerate Implementation of the SCWP” from Director of Public Works includes Item 2, entitled “Plans to improve, streamline, and simplify the regional application process.” Shared there is a planned effort to create “alternative application pathways based on project phase[s].”

## Scoring Committee Recommendation #2: Consistent Inputs for Water Quality Benefits

### The SC Recommended the Following Changes to Projects Module:

- Allow applicants to select multiple BMP types in series or parallel to be evaluated
- Revise the Projects Module to accurately predict Water Quality Benefits based on 24-hour BMP capacity determined using reservoir routing for the design storm, typically 85<sup>th</sup> percentile storm.
- Allow dry weather pollutant loading calculations to be superseded by monitoring data, if available.
- Investigate standardizing the process for the flow calculation inputted by the applicant.

Lean Water Projects Module Est. \$

[Bifurcation](#)
[Capture Area](#)
[Diversion](#)
[Site Conditions & Constraints](#)
[Cost](#)
[Schedule](#)
[Monitoring](#)
[O & M](#)

Please select the BMP Type that best represents the primary stormwater capture and pollutant removal mechanism.

☐ Bio-retention  
☐ Bio-retention  
☐ Infiltration Wall  
☐ Cistern  
☐ Rain Barrel  
☐ Infiltration Facility  
☐ Treatment Facility  
☐ Downspout to Sanitary Sewer  
☐ Retaining Wall

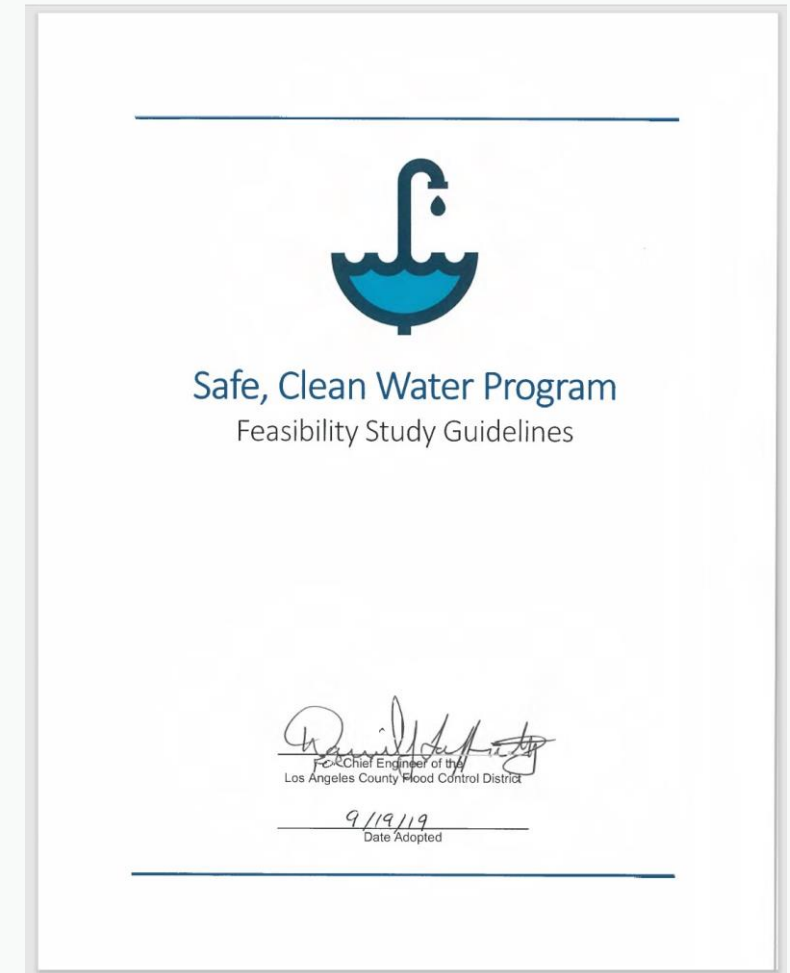
Module-generated Value:

Storage Volume: N/A ac-ft

## Scoring Committee Recommendation #2: Consistent Inputs for Water Quality Benefits

### The SC Recommended the Following Changes to the Feasibility Study Guidelines:

- a) Require site-specific geotechnical reports for projects applying for construction funding
- b) “Site-specific” information should refer to data obtained at the project location or another maximum distance decided upon by the Committee.



## Recommendation #2: Consistent Inputs for Water Quality Benefits

### The SC Recommended the Following Changes to Scoring Criteria:

- Allow applicants to categorize the project using a load-based criteria (i.e., pounds of pollutants removed), in addition to dry weather or wet weather scoring criteria.
- Create sliding scale for projects that capture quantities between dry weather and wet weather capacities.
- Revise the cost-effectiveness (per acre-foot) criteria under A.1.1 Wet + Dry Weather Water Quality Benefit section to provide additional point scale flexibility so that project scores can be tallied at one-point increments (as compared to the current stepwise criteria).
- Consider creating a cost-effectiveness category for the A.2 Dry Weather Water Supply Benefit section (possibly employing a flow rate per dollar metric such as GPM/\$1M)

| Section   | Score Range   | Scoring Standards  |
|---|---------------|--|
| <b>A.1<br/>Wet + Dry<br/>Weather<br/>Water Quality<br/>Benefits</b> | 50 points max | <b>The Project provides water quality benefits</b><br>A.1.1: For Wet Weather BMPs Only: Water Quality Cost Effectiveness<br>(Cost Effectiveness) = (24-hour BMP Capacity) <sup>1</sup> / (Capital Cost in \$Millions)<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&lt;0.4 (acre feet capacity / \$-Million) = 0 points</li> <li>0.4-0.6 (acre feet capacity / \$-Million) = 7 points</li> <li>0.6-0.8 (acre feet capacity / \$-Million) = 11 points</li> <li>0.8-1.0 (acre feet capacity / \$-Million) = 14 points</li> <li>&gt;1.0 (acre feet capacity / \$-Million) = 20 points</li> </ul> <sup>1</sup> . Management of the 24-hour event is considered the maximum capacity of a Project for a 24-hour period. For water quality focused Projects, this would typically be the 85 <sup>th</sup> percentile design storm capacity. Units are in acre-feet (AF).  |
|   | 20 points max | A.1.2: For Wet Weather BMPs Only: Water Quality Benefit - Quantify the pollutant reduction (i.e. concentration, load, exceedance day, etc.) for a class of pollutants using a similar analysis as the E/WMP which uses the Districts Watershed Management Modeling System (WMMS). The analysis should be an average percent reduction comparing influent and effluent for the class of pollutant over a ten-year period showing the impact of the Project. Modeling should include the latest performance data to reflect the efficiency of the BMP type.<br><div> <div> <u>Primary Class of Pollutants</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt;50% = 15 points</li> <li>&gt;80% = 20 points</li> </ul> </div> <div> <u>Second or More Classes of Pollutant</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt;50% = 5 points</li> <li>&gt;80% = 10 points</li> </ul> </div> </div> (20 Points Max) |
| - OR -  |               |  |
| <b>A.2<br/>Dry Weather<br/>Only<br/>Water Quality<br/>Benefits</b>  | 20 points     | A.2.1: For dry weather BMPs only, Projects must be designed to capture, infiltrate, treat and release, or divert 100% (unless infeasible or prohibited for habitat, etc) of all tributary dry weather flows.   |
|   | 20 points max | A.2.2: For Dry Weather BMPs Only. Tributary Size of the Dry Weather BMP<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&lt;200 Acres = 10 points</li> <li>&gt;200 Acres = 20 points</li> </ul>  |

## Scoring Committee Recommendation #2: Consistent Inputs for Water Quality Benefits

### **Alignment with Previous SC Recommendations:**

- SC has previously requested more consistent comparisons of Water Quality Benefits across projects

### **Alignment with Existing SCWP Recommendations:**

- Supported by MMS recommendation to benchmark performance to adapt Water Quality guidance and scoring
- Supported by ROC in Biennial Report recommendations:
  - “Establish Water Quality quantitative goals and develop a plan with timelines to accomplish these goals. Ensuring that these goals and planning efforts are developed to build upon established regional water quality programs and projects (e.g., Municipal Separation Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit) and include characterization of upstream and downstream program interactions.”

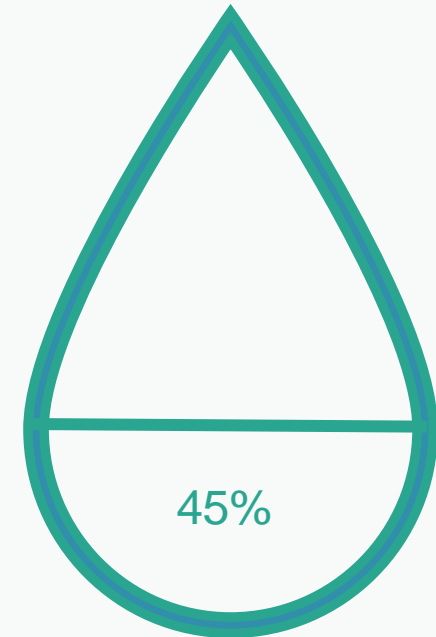
Note: Currently, SCWP projects must be included in a plan for MS4 compliance, or an Integrated Regional Water Management Plan, suggesting that SCWP is prioritizing support for projects that have been deemed important to other regional efforts to meet water quality targets. This step is evaluated by staff during completeness checks and doesn't come before the Committee.



## Scoring Committee Recommendation #3: Clarify Eligible Claims to Water Supply Benefits

**In Round 5, the SC only awarded Water Supply Benefit points to projects that could demonstrate proof of generating new water supplies through infiltration to currently pumped groundwater aquifers, diversion to reclamation facilities, or onsite reuse.**

1. SC requested that all claims be verified with a letter from appropriate Watermaster or agency overseeing reclamation of diverted stormwater
2. Consider appropriateness of claiming water supply gained through sanitary sewer diversions when the timing of stormwater capture projects and reclamation facility improvements may be misaligned



Of 20 scored IPs, 9 received  
Water Supply Benefit points

## Scoring Committee Recommendation #3: Clarify Eligible Claims to Water Supply Benefits

### **Alignment with Previous SC Recommendations:**

- SC has previously requested modifying Feasibility Study Guidelines to require projects which claim benefits via offsetting potable water demand provide an analysis of supply and demand impacts of project
- To address difficulty in claiming Water Supply points, the SC previously recommended either changing the SCWP ordinance definition of Water Supply Benefit to include activities that infiltrate water with the intent to replenish groundwater or adjust scoring criteria for each watershed.

### **Alignment with Existing SCWP Recommendations:**

- Supported by ROC in Biennial Report recommendations:
  - The ROC recommends setting “a region wide water supply target of 300,000 acre-ft of additional stormwater capture by 2045” and to “clarify that claiming Water Supply Benefits requires an applicant to demonstrate that the storm water capture is ‘new’ water and will be available for regional water supply”
- Supported by MMS recommendations:
  - Improve accounting of captured stormwater volume and potential endpoints of water use to measure progress towards goals.

## Scoring Committee Recommendation #4: Evaluate Water Supply Scoring and Alternate Water Supply Scoring Pilot

Round 5 applicants had the opportunity to select the Alternate Water Supply Scoring Pilot, developed through the MMS.

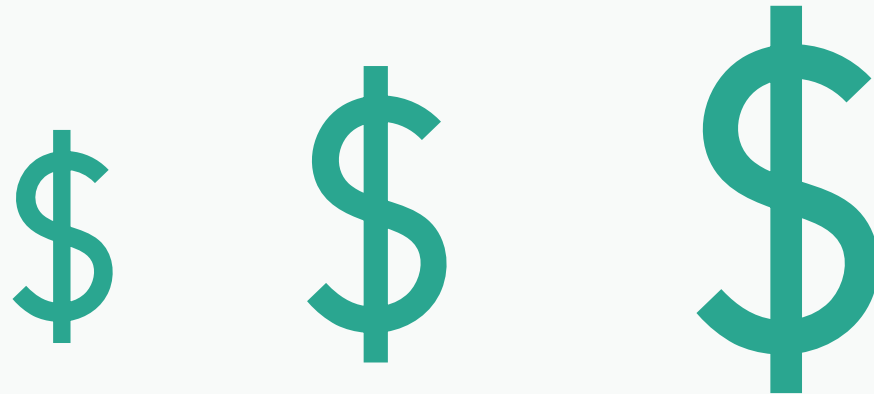
- 8 out of the 20 projects scored in Round 5 opted for the Alternate Water Supply Scoring Pilot
- Projects which used current Water Supply Scoring Rubric scored an average of 3 points
- Projects which used the Alternate Water Supply Scoring Pilot scored an average of 11 Water Supply Benefit points

| Section   | Score Range   | Scoring Standards  |
|---|---------------|--|
| <b>B.<br/>Significant<br/>Water Supply<br/>Benefits</b> | 25 points max | The Project provides water re-use and/or water supply enhancement benefits   |
|   | 13 points max | <p>B1. Water Supply Cost Effectiveness. The Total Life-Cycle Cost<sup>2</sup> per unit of acre foot of Stormwater and/or Urban Runoff volume captured for water supply is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <math>\geq \\$104,000/\text{ac-ft} = 1 \text{ point}</math></li> <li>• <math>\geq \\$39,700 \text{ and } &lt; \\$104,000/\text{ac-ft} = 2 \text{ points}</math></li> <li>• <math>\geq \\$29,400 \text{ and } &lt; \\$39,700/\text{ac-ft} = 3 \text{ points}</math></li> <li>• <math>\geq \\$19,400 \text{ and } &lt; \\$29,400/\text{ac-ft} = 4 \text{ points}</math></li> <li>• <math>\geq \\$13,600 \text{ and } &lt; \\$19,400/\text{ac-ft} = 5 \text{ points}</math></li> <li>• <math>\geq \\$8,880 \text{ and } &lt; \\$13,600/\text{ac-ft} = 6 \text{ points}</math></li> <li>• <math>\geq \\$7,020 \text{ and } &lt; \\$8,880/\text{ac-ft} = 7 \text{ points}</math></li> <li>• <math>\geq \\$5,360 \text{ and } &lt; \\$7,020/\text{ac-ft} = 8 \text{ points}</math></li> <li>• <math>\geq \\$2,930 \text{ and } &lt; \\$5,360/\text{ac-ft} = 9 \text{ points}</math></li> <li>• <math>\geq \\$2,290 \text{ and } &lt; \\$2,930/\text{ac-ft} = 10 \text{ points}</math></li> <li>• <math>\geq \\$1,786 \text{ and } &lt; \\$2,290/\text{ac-ft} = 11 \text{ points}</math></li> <li>• <math>\geq \\$976 \text{ and } &lt; \\$1,786/\text{ac-ft} = 12 \text{ points}</math></li> <li>• <math>&lt; \\$976/\text{ac-ft} = 13 \text{ points}</math></li> </ul> <p><sup>2</sup>. Total Life-Cycle Cost: The annualized value of all Capital, planning, design, land acquisition, construction, and total life O&amp;M costs for the Project for the entire life span of the Project (e.g. 50-year design life span should account for 50-years of O&amp;M). The annualized cost is used over the present value to provide a preference to Projects with longer life spans.</p> |

## Scoring Committee Recommendation #4: Evaluate Water Supply Scoring and Alternate Water Supply Scoring Pilot

### **During Round 5 scoring, the SC noted:**

- Cost-effectiveness metric may be misleading when calculating the Water Supply volume benefit against the entire cost of multi-benefit projects
- Alternate Water Supply Scoring Pilot may unintentionally deemphasized importance of other aspects (e.g., Community Investment Benefits, community engagement, Nature-Based Solutions, leverage funding) because eligibility can be achieved more easily with only Water Quality and Water Supply Benefits.



## Scoring Committee Recommendation #5: Clarify Eligible Claims of Community Investment Benefit

In Round 5, SC discussed process of awarding Community Investment Benefit points to projects that provide flood protection benefits.

**The Committee determined that dry weather projects would not be restricted from receiving these points if clear solutions to localized flooding are addressed.**





## Scoring Committee Recommendation #5: Clarify Eligible Claims of Community Investment Benefits

### **Alignment with Previous SC Recommendations:**

- SC has previously discussed the process of awarding points to Community Investment Benefits and when a project would receive flood protection benefits. In previous rounds, only projects that captured the 85th percentile storm were eligible to receive flood protection benefit points.

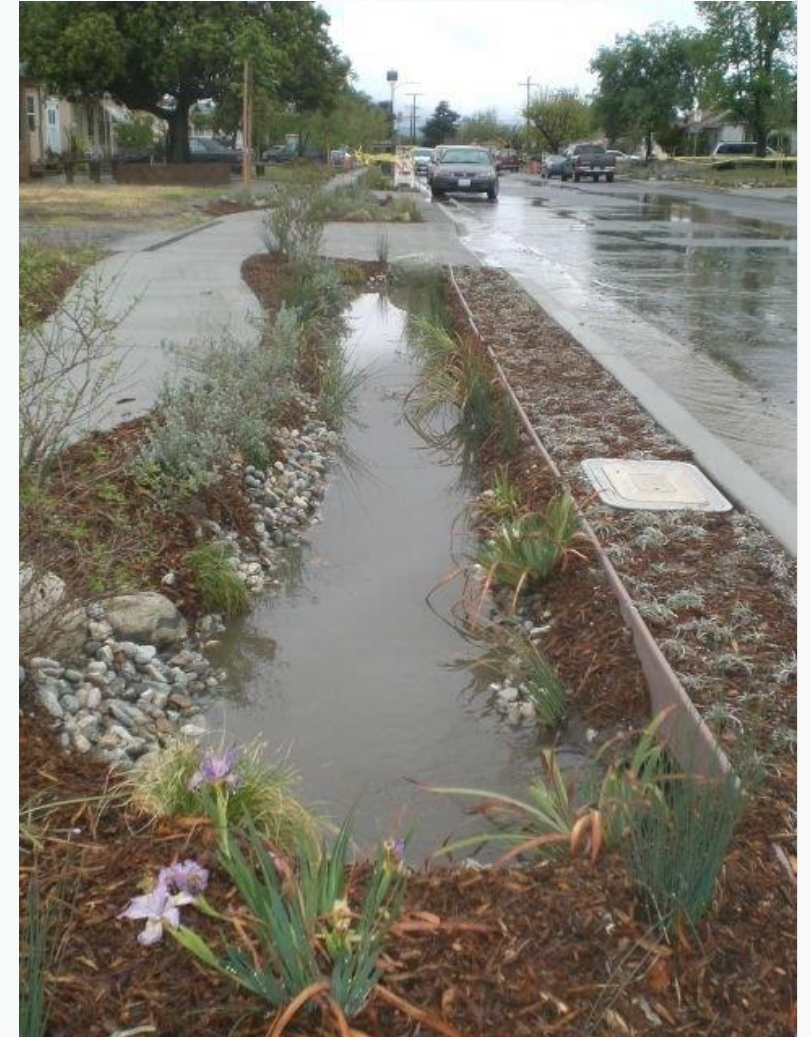
### **Additional SCWP Recommendations:**

- ROC Biennial Report recommendations:
  - Establishing “Community Investment Benefit quantitative goals, including the development of a plan with timelines to meet these goals.”
- Supported by MMS recommendations:
  - Develop approaches to quantifying Community Investment Benefits
  - Recommends adapting Community Investment Benefit scoring to accept community-preferred benefits alongside existing Community Investment Benefits

## Scoring Committee Recommendation #6: Reinforce Scoring Criteria for Nature-Based Solutions

**In Round 5, the SC recommended the following to address Nature-Based Solutions scoring criteria:**

1. Modify Projects Module to require that applicants submit additional information documenting the impermeable surface removed in relation to the total project area.
2. Consider adjusting the scoring criteria for impermeable area removed from a percentage to the total impermeable area removed.
3. Consider adjusting the scoring criteria to assign points for projects that connect habitats or community hubs, or otherwise provide net benefits via Nature-Based Solutions.



## Scoring Committee Recommendation #7: Strengthen Requirements to Demonstrate Local Support

**The SC recommended the following requirements to strengthen demonstrated local support:**

1. A clearer definition of “strong community support” and the minimum requirements associated
2. Projects provide more information from the applicants, such as number of community members contacted, community demographics, demonstration of represented population engaged from the neighborhood, and demonstration by applicants of strong local support



## Scoring Committee Recommendation #7: Strengthen Requirements to Demonstrate Local Support

### **Alignment with Previous SC Recommendations:**

- SC has previously clarified that letters of support for a project should be recent (less than 1-2 years) and addressed to the SCWP rather than reusing letters of support addressed to other organizations

### **Alignment with Existing SCWP Recommendations:**

- Supported by MMS findings and recommendations
  - Community engagement is a core consideration with stakeholder groups
  - Recommends collecting metrics around a projects “Level of Achievement” for community engagement using the Good, Better, Best framework identified in the 2022 Interim Guidance

## Scoring Committee Recommendation #8: Adjust Weighting or Threshold Score for Sections of Scoring Criteria

The SC previously recommended adjusting the scoring system to establish certain mandatory categories.





## Scoring Committee Recommendation #8: Adjust Threshold for Scoring Rubric Categories

### **Alignment with Existing SCWP Recommendations:**

- ROC Biennial Report recommendation:
  - Notes “refinements are needed to... establish scoring criteria that better align with all the SCWP goals – especially related to Community Investment Benefits, Disadvantaged Community Benefits, Equity, Community Engagement, and Nature-Based Solutions.”

## Additional Items

### **Cost Estimates Vary**

- SC encourages applicants to use industry standards for cost escalation rates and O&M budgeting.

### **Adding Points**

- In Round 5, there were two instances when the SC awarded points that were not originally claimed by an applicant (E.2 Leveraged Funds and Community Support section).

### **Additional Scoring Sections**

- SC has previously recommended that the program:
  - a) Consider awarding points for job creation in the scoring criteria, perhaps within Community Investment Benefits.
  - b) Consider including positive impact on climate response in the Scoring Criteria.



# Scoring Committee Memo

To: Safe, Clean Water Program Scoring Committee

From: Safe, Clean Water Program Regional Coordination Team

Date: January 4, 2023

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## Reference: Scoring Committee Comments and Recommendations – Round 5 Projects

### Purpose and Background

At the December 7, 2023 Scoring Committee (Committee) meeting, Committee Members requested that the Regional Coordination team summarize the observations and recommendations made by the Committee about the Safe, Clean Water Program (SCWP) scoring criteria during the evaluation of Round 5 projects (Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Call for Projects).

Because of ongoing work from the Metrics & Monitoring Study (MMS) and the work of the Regional Oversight Committee (ROC) Biennial Report, this year the memo also expresses linkages between Committee observations and recommendations being made by other adaptive management efforts.

### Scoring Committee Recommendation #1: Implement separate applications for Infrastructure Program Projects that are in different stages of development

In Round 5 and prior rounds of scoring, the Committee expressed difficulty in evaluating the three types of Infrastructure Program Project submittals: design, construction, and operations & maintenance (O&M). The Committee believes projects at different stages of development requesting funding for different phases warrant different application requirements and different scoring approaches. For example, the Committee is requiring site-specific geotechnical reports for construction funding requests but may accept simpler analyses for design-only applications.

The Committee recommends that the SCWP encourage projects that apply for design, construction, and/or O&M funding to submit separate applications, acknowledging there are multiple phases of the project. The Committee has previously suggested modifying Feasibility Study Guidelines and the Project Module to outline specific requirements for each project submittal type:

- a. Design-Only Projects:
  - i. A more flexible application process
  - ii. Require conceptual plan/feasibility study (already required)
  - iii. No required letter from Watermaster or Sanitation agency verifying Water Supply Benefit potential
  - iv. Preference for on-site geotechnical analysis, but would be satisfactory to use existing or nearby geotechnical information
- b. Construction Projects:
  - i. Require a minimum of 60% design plans (elevation and profile plans, strong cost estimates)
  - ii. Require site-specific geotechnical analysis
    - 1. "Site-specific" information should refer to data obtained at the project location or another maximum distance decided upon by the Committee.
  - iii. Require a letter from Watermaster or Sanitation agency verifying capacity to provide Water Supply Benefit
- c. Operations & Maintenance Only Projects:
  - i. Require monitoring data rather than modeling data

**Reference:      Scoring Committee Comments and Recommendations – Round 5 Projects**

In the past, the Committee also requested guidance on how to evaluate design-only projects that propose a variety of alternatives. Existing policy says that a project seeking funding for the first phase scope of a multi-phase project cannot claim benefits beyond what the first phase will achieve. In situations where an applicant is seeking funding for a design phase where multiple potential implementation scenarios exist, the Committee would like clearer guidelines about how to evaluate projects that propose a variety of alternatives.

Finally, the Committee previously requested guidance affirming that the cost/benefit calculations for project benefits are based on the entire cost and merits of a project rather than just components of the project funded by the SCWP. Some applicants have elected to include only partial project costs in the cost/benefit calculations.

Alignment with existing recommendations:

Adjusting the application process for various stages of project development is supported by the ROC. To expedite watershed planning efforts, the ROC has recommended that the SCWP “develop guidelines/criteria to streamline applications for various sized projects and various stages of development” as part of Biennial Report recommendations.

In the November 27, 2023 letter from the Director of Public Works to the Board of Supervisors, three items were called out as being responsive to the July Board motion for “accelerating implementation of the” SCWP. Item 2 is entitled “Plans to improve, streamline, and simplify the regional application process.” Shared there is a planned effort to create “alternative application pathways based on project phase[s].”

Scoring will be impacted by the establishment of separate guidance or application processes based on project stage.

**Scoring Committee Recommendation #2: Consistent inputs for Water Quality Benefits**

The Committee continues to express a challenge with making consistent comparisons of Water Quality Benefits across projects. The Committee has recommended the following changes be made to standardize calculations and information inputted by applicants:

1. Changes to Projects Module:
  - a. Allow applicants to select multiple BMP types in series or parallel to be evaluated.
  - b. Revise the Projects Module to accurately predict Water Quality Benefits based on 24-hour BMP capacity determined using reservoir routing for the design storm, typically the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile storm.
  - c. Allow dry weather pollutant loading calculations to be superseded by monitoring data, if available.
  - d. Investigate standardizing the process for the flow calculation inputted by the applicant.
2. Changes to Feasibility Study Guidelines:
  - a. Require site-specific geotechnical reports for projects applying for construction funding. “Site-specific” information should refer to data obtained at the project location or another maximum distance decided upon by the Committee.
3. Changes to Scoring Criteria:
  - a. Allow applicants to categorize the project using a load-based criteria (i.e., pounds of pollutants removed), in addition to dry weather or wet weather scoring criteria.
  - b. Create sliding scale for projects that capture quantities between dry weather and wet weather capacities.

**Reference:      Scoring Committee Comments and Recommendations – Round 5 Projects**

- c. Revise the cost-effectiveness (per acre-foot) criteria under A.1.1 Wet +Dry Weather Water Quality Benefit section to provide additional point scale flexibility so that project scores can be tallied at one-point increments (as compared to the current stepwise criteria).
- d. Consider creating a cost-effectiveness category for the A.2 Dry Weather Water Supply Benefit section (possibly employing a flow rate per dollar metric such as GPM/\$1M).

Alignment with existing recommendations:

These suggested changes are underscored by the MMS, which recommends benchmarking performance to adapt Water Quality guidance and scoring. If, for example, continuing projects are successfully reducing pollutants with multiple BMP types, an adaptive response would be to allow applicants to select multiple BMP types in the Projects Module.

In addition, the ROC has recommended that the SCWP “establish Water Quality quantitative goals and develop a plan with timelines to accomplish these goals. Ensuring that these goals and planning efforts are developed to build upon established regional water quality programs and projects (e.g., Municipal Separation Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit) and include characterization of upstream and downstream program interactions.” It is unclear how a SCWP goal of supporting MS4 compliance quantitative targets would enrich the identification of eligible projects. Currently, SCWP projects must be included in a plan for MS4 compliance or an Integrated Regional Water Management Plan, suggesting that SCWP is prioritizing support for projects that have been deemed important to other regional efforts. This step, where projects must contribute to other regional goals, is evaluated by staff during completeness checks, and doesn’t come before the Committee.

**Scoring Committee Recommendation #3: Clarify eligible claims to Water Supply Benefits**

In Round 5, the Committee only awarded Water Supply Benefit points to projects that could demonstrate proof of generating new water through infiltration to currently pumped groundwater aquifers, diversion to reclamation facilities, or onsite reuse. The Committee requested that all claims be verified with a letter from the appropriate Watermaster or agency overseeing the reclamation of diverted stormwater (e.g., Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts). The Committee previously recommended modifying the Feasibility Study Guidelines to require that projects which claim Water Supply Benefits via offsetting potable water demand provide an analysis of supply and demand impacts of the project. In addition, the Committee noted that the appropriateness of claiming water supply gained through sanitary sewer diversions has been a long-standing issue as the timing of stormwater capture projects and reclamation facility improvements may be misaligned, and the future ability for diverted stormwater to be fully used for reclamation remains speculative.

Of the 20 projects scored in Round 5, only 9 projects received Water Supply Benefit points. The average Water Supply score across all evaluated projects was 6 out of a maximum of 25 points. The Committee has previously acknowledged that the current Water Supply scoring criteria prevents them from awarding Water Supply Benefit points to projects that lack robust proof of creating new water supplies.

To address difficulty in claiming Water Supply Benefit points, the Committee has previously recommended either changing the SCWP ordinance definition of Water Supply Benefit to include activities that infiltrate water with the *intent* to replenish groundwater or adjusting the scoring criteria to include specific thresholds for each Watershed Area, creating a “base plus bonus” system of scoring, and/or assigning weights to different scoring sections.

Alignment with existing recommendations:

Improving how the SCWP achieves the goal to increase water supply from stormwater is a focus area of the ROC’s Biennial Report recommendations. To expedite watershed planning efforts, the ROC recommends

**Reference:      Scoring Committee Comments and Recommendations – Round 5 Projects**

setting “a region wide water supply target of 300,000 acre-ft of additional stormwater capture by 2045.” In addition, the ROC would like to “clarify that claiming Water Supply Benefits requires an applicant to demonstrate that the stormwater capture is “new” water and will be available for regional water supply.”

The MMS provides additional recommendations on how to better account for SCWP attainment of capturing more stormwater and provide insight on potential endpoints of captured water and progress towards goals. The Project Module currently equates water supply to a project’s annual capture volume. The MMS notes that “a more nuanced approach is needed to parse capture volume into specific fates, like infiltration to confined aquifer, infiltration to deep aquifer, diversion to reclamation facilities, or onsite reuse.” MMS recommends collecting additional metrics to represent the fate of managed stormwater, including the annual volume of stormwater managed (acre-ft/year), parsed by fate. However, which fates constitute a “locally available” water supply must be agreed upon by the District and stakeholders. It is likely that the Committee will play a role in verifying whether projects are creating “new” water based on the applicants’ ability to provide adequate proof of potential endpoints of the captured stormwater.

**Scoring Committee Recommendation #4: Evaluate Water Supply scoring methodology and Alternate Water Supply Scoring Pilot**

In Round 5, applicants had the opportunity to select the Alternate Water Supply Scoring Pilot developed through the MMS. The alternate scoring rubric calibrated Water Supply Benefits scoring to historical projects, to allow for project proponents to potentially increase their Water Supply Benefit score and address stakeholder concerns about inflation. Of the 20 projects scored in Round 5, 8 projects opted to use the Alternate Water Supply Scoring Pilot. Projects that used the Alternate Water Supply Scoring Pilot scored an average of 11 Water Supply Benefit points, compared to projects scored using the current Water Supply scoring rubric which scored an average of 3 Water Supply Benefit points.

The Committee noted that the use of a cost-effectiveness metric is misleading, because when calculating the Water Supply Benefit against the entire project cost, very high dollar-to-benefit comparisons are made. Because projects are mostly spending on benefits other than water supply, it leaves the sense that these projects are producing very expensive water supplies. Committee Members have pointed out that the multi-benefit nature of projects makes it difficult to determine the exact amount of money that produces Water Supply Benefits. The Committee recognizes that this scoring metric is one that offers comparisons between the proposed projects, but still finds the dollars-per-volume values to be troubling.

The Committee also expressed concern that the Alternate Water Supply Scoring Pilot, which made Water Supply Benefit points more easily earned, has unintentionally deemphasized the importance of CIBs, community engagement, Nature-Based Solutions, and leverage funding. Because eligibility can be achieved more easily with just Water Quality and Water Supply Benefits, other aspects of the program may suffer.

Alignment with existing recommendations:

The Committee has previously recommended adjusting scoring criteria with recommendations from the MMS investigation on how to lower or recalibrate the B.1 cost effectiveness section for Water Supply Benefit points. As a result, the MMS produced the Alternate Water Supply Scoring Pilot and recommended that SCWP evaluate the results to further refine Water Supply guidance and scoring.

The ROC has recommended that SCWP “develop guidelines/criteria to incentivize large infrastructure projects and investments.” Utilizing cost-effectiveness as a scoring metric will likely play a role in determining which projects (e.g., large or small, extent of multi-benefit features) move forward for consideration.

**Reference:** Scoring Committee Comments and Recommendations – Round 5 Projects

### **Scoring Committee Recommendation #5: Clarify eligible claims of Community Investment Benefits**

In Round 5, the Committee continued to reflect on how flood protection can be considered under the CIB section. In previous rounds of scoring, the Committee decided that only projects that capture the 85th percentile storm can receive flood management benefits. However, the Committee has also discussed how this restriction may prevent CIB points from being awarded to projects that seek to address localized flooding concerns that occur in storms less than the 85th percentile. The Committee determined that it would not restrict dry weather projects that do present clear solutions to localized flooding (i.e., addressing recurring flooding at the intersection across from a school) from receiving CIB points for flood management.

#### Alignment with existing recommendations:

The ROC recommends establishing “[CIB] quantitative goals, including the development of a plan with timelines to meet these goals.”

The MMS is recommending more specific metrics to be captured related to CIBs, which may support the Committee’s evaluation of projects in the future. The current Projects Module collects qualitative descriptions of how projects create CIBs across 7 primary CIB categories; however, very little quantitative data is being collected about the type or magnitude of these benefits. The MMS developed approaches to quantifying CIBs, such that comparisons could be made between all projects. For example, if a project claims to reduce urban heat, a collected metric might be the number and net area of manmade shade structures. In addition, the Equity in Stormwater Investments White Paper pointed to a need for projects to be responsive to specific community or tribe-identified needs (which may or may not correlate to the 7 CIBs). As a result, the MMS has recommended adapting CIB scoring criteria to accept community-preferred benefits alongside existing CIB categories.

### **Scoring Committee Recommendation #6: Reinforce scoring criteria for Nature-Based Solutions**

In previous rounds of scoring, the Committee determined that artificial turf will not be considered a Nature-Based Solution. The Committee also shared that they would like to be able to assign points for projects that connect habitats and community hubs and to pay more attention to the net or additive benefits of multiple projects. Committee Members also concluded that the best way to improve the impervious surface removal calculation is to require that applicants submit a description of impermeable surface removed relative to the total project area. Specific Committee recommendations to address these goals include:

1. Modify Projects Module to require that applicants submit additional information documenting the impermeable surface removed in relation to the total project area.
2. Consider adjusting the scoring criteria for impermeable area removed from a percentage to the total impermeable area removed.
3. Consider adjusting the scoring criteria to assign points for projects that connect habitats or community hubs, or otherwise provide net benefits via nature-based solutions.

#### Alignment with existing recommendations:

The MMS notes that the current Projects Module only gathers qualitative descriptions of how projects incorporate Nature-Based Solutions. The MMS instead recommends collecting additional metrics to quantify the extent that projects are meeting goals across the 6 categories of Nature-Based Solutions by ranking methodology as either Good, Better, or Best as defined in the 2022 Interim Guidance.



**Reference:** Scoring Committee Comments and Recommendations – Round 5 Projects

### **Scoring Committee Recommendation #7: Strengthen requirements to demonstrate local support**

In prior rounds of scoring, the Committee clarified that letters of support for a project should be recent (e.g., less than 1-2 years) and addressed to the SCWP rather than reusing letters of support addressed to other organizations. In addition, the Committee would benefit from a clearer definition of “strong support” and the minimum requirements for demonstrating that support. The Committee suggested that, at a minimum, demonstration of “strong support” should include concrete evidence of meaningful support rather than just a plan for future outreach.

The Committee has shared a preference for projects that not only provide a community engagement plan, but also a budget for community engagement. The Committee hopes that more information can be requested of the applicants, such as number of community members contacted, community demographics, demonstration of represented population engaged from the neighborhood, and demonstration by applicants of strong local support.

#### Alignment with existing recommendations:

The MMS found that community engagement emerged as a core consideration with stakeholder groups, who emphasized the need to track and account for community engagement. The MMS recommends collecting metrics around a project’s “Level of Achievement” for community engagement using the Good, Better, Best framework identified in the 2022 Interim Guidance. This additional metric about level of engagement will evaluate how well project proponents are informing, consulting, involving, educating, learning from, collaborating with, incorporating and partnering with communities and Tribes.

### **Scoring Committee Recommendation #8: Adjust weighting or Threshold Score for sections of the scoring criteria.**

In prior rounds of scoring, the Committee suggested adjusting the scoring system to establish certain mandatory categories. For example, E.2 Leveraging Funds and Community Support section is only worth 5 points, so project applicants can neglect community engagement and still achieve an eligible score. The Committee felt that this should not be the case, as intentional community outreach and engagement should be required for projects seeking SCWP funds.

#### Alignment with existing recommendations:

The ROC Biennial Report acknowledges that scoring criteria could be re-evaluated to align with experience to date in the SCWP and new metrics/methods. The scoring criteria establishes eligibility by assessing how the project will contribute to the SCWP goals. The ROC notes that “refinements are needed to... establish scoring criteria that better align with all the SCWP goals – especially related to Community Investment Benefits, Disadvantaged Community Benefits, Equity, Community Engagement, and Nature-Based Solutions.”

**Reference:**      **Scoring Committee Comments and Recommendations – Round 5 Projects**

### **Other Items**

The following comments reflect other issues raised by Committee Members:

#### ***Cost Estimates Vary***

The Committee has shared that inconsistent estimates of O&M costs across applications make it difficult to assess projects evenly. Estimates used for cost escalation have also increased, from rates of 3-5% used in the first round to the 12-15% used today. It may be helpful to encourage applicants to use industry standards for cost escalation and O&M budgeting.

#### Alignment with existing recommendations:

The ROC Biennial Report found that inflation and COVID-19 have largely impacted supply chains, thus modifying Regional Program projects' costs and schedules. Understanding the assumptions used by applicants to estimate future costs, and providing guidance on how to standardize those estimates, may mitigate challenges with future cost escalations.

#### ***Adding Points***

While the Committee often declines to award points claimed by an applicant during the evaluation process, in Round 5, there were two instances when the Committee awarded points that were not originally claimed by an applicant (E.2 Leveraged Funds and Community Support section for both the Sorensen Park Multi-Benefit Stormwater Capture Project and the Dominguez Channel Parkway BMPs Prioritization Project).

This practice is without precedent and isn't supported or prevented by guidelines in the SCWP. It is not aligned with any existing recommendations but was notable during Round 5.

#### ***Additional Scoring Sections***

The Committee recommendations from previous rounds of scoring also included considering how job creation might contribute to application scores and developing guidance on how to weigh a project's climate-related impacts. For example, some projects require a significant amount of pumping which uses energy, potentially producing greenhouse gas emissions.

Recommendations to implement these goals have included:

1. Consider awarding points for job creation in the scoring criteria, perhaps within Community Investment Benefits.
  - a. Doing so would require a standard metric for job creation, perhaps referencing [Water Use Efficiency and Jobs](#), a 2011 publication of the Economic Roundtable.
2. Consider including positive impact on climate response in the scoring criteria.

#### Alignment with existing recommendations:

The ROC has recommended making "strategic investments in workforce development programs for skills related to SCW programs and projects in the short and long term and ensure workforce-related elements are reflected in procedures, guidelines, and reports as appropriate." By awarding points related to job creation in the scoring criteria, the Committee may play a role in encouraging greater workforce development throughout the SCWP.