



# Regional Oversight Committee Memo

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To: Safe, Clean Water Program Regional Oversight Committee

From: Safe, Clean Water Program Regional Coordination Team

Date: March 24, 2025

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## **Summary of the 3/12/25 Public Meeting input for consideration in the ROC's 2025 Biennial Progress Report**

### **Purpose & Background**

At the March 12, 2025 Regional Oversight Committee (ROC) meeting, members of the public were invited to provide input about the development of the ROC's 2025 Biennial Progress Report. The ROC solicited insight on the following questions: 1) How have you seen the Safe, Clean Water (SCW) Program achieving its goals in the past two years?; 2) How do you hope the SCW Program can improve in the coming two years?; 3) What do you feel are the most important improvements over the long term that will help SCW Program be successful and achieve its goals?

Sixteen members of the public provided input during the meeting (in both Spanish and English), either during the meeting or through a written public comment card submitted prior to the meeting. This memo summarizes the common themes received during Public Input Session #1, including details on the SCW Program's progress and areas for improvement.

Many program elements referenced in public comments are currently being evaluated and/or addressed through ongoing adaptive management efforts, including Stormwater Investment Plan (SIP) Guidelines and Watershed Planning efforts. SCW Program staff will assist the ROC in identifying and articulating relevant progress on adaptive management efforts to focus the 2025 Biennial Progress Report recommendations.

### **1) How have you seen the SCW Program achieving its goals in the past two years?**

Some community members applauded the progress of the SCW Program in the past two years, specifically regional-scale investments to implement projects that provide Water Supply and Water Quality Benefits. Regional Program investments highlighted include projects that partner with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) or community-based organizations (CBOs) and provide multi-benefits to communities.

### **2) How do you hope the SCW Program can improve in the coming two years?**

#### **Theme: Accessible Community Outreach & Engagement**

Some community members requested more accessible and multilingual information be developed to better share how interested parties can engage with the SCW Program. Multilingual accessibility was highlighted as a short-term area of improvement, and it was requested the SCW Program provide more translated informational handouts and offer interpretive services for all SCW Program governance committee meetings.

Some community members additionally suggested that SCW Program projects increase partnerships with NGOs or CBOs who provide, or can help convene, community expertise related to the strengths and needs of a project area. It was also recommended by one commenter that the SCW Program reserve a portion of Technical Resources Program (TRP) funding to support the Project Developer directly (rather than through



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a Public Works consultant), especially a CBO or NGO, to improve SCW Program accessibility and support the development of community-based projects.

## Theme: Support Small-Scale Projects

Some community members acknowledged that the SCW Program has made substantial progress by funding large projects throughout Los Angeles County, but urged the Program to fund more small, neighborhood-scale projects. Members of the public commented that small-scale projects can provide equitably distributed Community Investment Benefits across the County and provide benefits to Disadvantaged Communities. These neighborhood-scale projects can also address local issues that improve quality of life, such as flooding reduction in neighborhoods and increased green spaces.

Some community members recommended the SCW Program better support small-scale projects by streamlining the project application process for smaller-scale projects and reserving funding set-asides. The Lower San Gabriel River (LSGR) Watershed Area Steering Committee's (WASC) [Prioritization Criteria](#) was cited as a current strategy that aims to support smaller-scale projects. Strategic collaboration and partnerships highlighted in the South Santa Monica Bay Watershed Area's [Beach Cities Green Streets Project](#) show a successful effort to implement a suite of neighborhood-scale green streets projects bundled into one SCW Program project.

## Theme: Prioritize Nature-Based Solutions

Some community members advocated for more SCW Program projects that prioritize hardscape removal and create new green space, rather than only improving existing green space. Community members conveyed the importance of Nature-Based Solutions, especially in light of the recent January 2025 wildfire events, emphasizing the importance of climate resilience and highlighting the need to elevate the utility of nature-based solutions during the wildfire recovery.

## Theme: More Transparent Metrics & Reporting

Some community members requested more transparent and clearer metrics on SCW Program Scoring Criteria for Regional Projects, including Community Investment Benefits, Community Engagement and Support, Nature-Based Solutions, Disadvantaged Community Benefits, and Workforce Impacts and Project Labor Agreement Compliance. Community members additionally requested more transparent and accessible reporting of the SCW Municipal Program fund expenditures.

## Theme: Reserve Funding for Future Costs

Some community members expressed the need for better planning and funding stability across Watershed Area Steering Committee budgets. Community members suggested advocating for a mandatory 80% monetary cap for WASCs, where the remaining 20% would be reserved for future funding needs, including cost escalation-related expenses and to fund new projects.

## **3) What do you feel are the most important improvements over the long term that will help SCW Program be successful and achieve its goals?**

### Theme: Watershed Planning



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Some community members commented that, in the long-term, the SCW Program should evolve from a “one size fits all” program and instead utilize watershed-specific project criteria that is unique to each Watershed Area and/or project phase. Community members additionally highlighted the need to more proactively identify SCW Program projects that reflect community needs.

Community members highlighted North Santa Monica Bay WASC’s strategic approach to Scientific Studies, which successfully resulted in Project Developers proposing studies that specifically addressed research topics prioritized by the WASC.

*Theme: Establish A Workforce to Support the Operations & Maintenance of Projects*

Community members highlighted the need to build a workforce to support the Operations & Maintenance (O&M) of current and future SCW Program projects and expressed excitement in the rollout of the SCW Program Workforce Development Program and K-12 Education Program.