



# Public Comment Form

Name:\* Gina Hakim Organization\*: N/A  
Email\*: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone\*: \_\_\_\_\_  
Meeting: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: 3/12/2025

LA County Public Works may contact me for clarification about my comments

\*Per Brown Act, completing this information is optional. At a minimum, please include an identifier so that you may be called upon to speak.

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## Comments

Good afternoon.

I'm a Doctoral student at UC Irvine where I study how immigrant communities interact with water infrastructure in their local communities. To inform my work, I maintain updated on SCWP developments, and I'd like to say a few things. First, the SCWP is spending significant amount of time, resources, and funding to develop a path for the program—however, I do not see this path being implemented. Second, I would like to see the vast experience of ROC committee members offer more specific direction for projects, whether infrastructure projects of scientific studies. It's unclear to me what the role of Regional Coordination is vis-à-vis the ROC in providing leadership for the program. Finally, as a resident of the San Gabriel Valley, I would like to see how this program will adapt some of its approaches to infrastructure project in response to the recent fires.

Thank you for your time.



# Public Comment Form

Name:\* Maggie Gardner Organization\*: OurWaterLA Coalition  
Email\*: maggie@lawaterkeeper.org Phone\*: (310) 651-3360  
Meeting: ROC Date: 3/12/2025

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## Comments

Please see attached letter



**Date:** March 12, 2025

**To:** Regional Oversight Committee

**From:** OWLA Core Team (Heal the Bay, LAANE, LA Waterkeeper, Nature for All, Pacoima Beautiful, The Nature Conservancy and TreePeople)

**RE:** 2025 Biennial Review Public Input

**On behalf of the OurWaterLA (OWLA) coalition, the undersigned strongly urge the Regional Oversight Committee (ROC) to consider the following recommendations in their preparation of the biennial SCWP Progress Report.**

As we enter into another biennial review of the Safe Clean Water Program, the OurWaterLA Coalition has distilled our top priorities below. With the biennial review, the ongoing watershed planning process, and the planned release of updated guidance and definitions later this year, there are ample opportunities to ensure these priorities are addressed.

#### **Top Priorities**

1. Adopt more **metrics and transparent definitions** around Community Investment Benefits, Community Engagement and Support, Nature-Based Solutions, Disadvantaged Community Benefits, and Workforce Impact/PLA Compliance.
2. Take all steps to **prioritize hardscape removal**, and creation of NEW green space that uses native vegetation— especially at schools and park-poor communities.
3. Roll out the programs that are promised like **K-12 and workforce development**
4. Investigate ways to **streamline applications for smaller, more community-based projects**

#### **Recommendations for the Regional, Municipal, and District Programs**

OWLA is pleased to offer insights on best management practices for the SCWP. As the upcoming Biennial Review Process approaches, we respectfully urge the Regional Oversight Committee (ROC) to consider the following recommendations. These practices have been implemented or discussed by various committees, and many have already demonstrated success. By integrating these proven methods more uniformly across the program, SCWP can significantly enhance transparency, equity, and efficiency in water management throughout Los Angeles County. We appreciate your thoughtful consideration of these recommendations.

*Recommendations for the Regional Program:*

- **Allocating Funding for Smaller-Scale Projects:** WASCs should set aside dedicated funding to support smaller-scale projects that provide localized benefits, encourage community engagement, and enhance equity in project distribution. This has been implemented successfully by the Lower San Gabriel River WASC.
- **Funding for Groupings of Smaller Projects:** We encourage broader adoption of funding approaches that support multiple green street projects within a watershed area, maximizing water quality benefits and leveraging economies of scale. A collection of Green Streets was approved for funding as one project in the South Santa Monica Bay WASC.
- **Encouraging Scientific Studies to Address WASC-Specific Questions:** WASCs should identify key questions that need scientific studies to provide necessary insights, ensuring that research efforts are directed toward addressing specific challenges and improving decision-making processes. This has been implemented successfully by the North Santa Monica Bay WASC.
- **Consideration of a Sunset Date for Allocated SCWP Funds:** To mitigate unnecessary inflation increases, WASCs should establish reasonable sunset dates for allocated funds, with an option to approve extensions, only with proven justification from the project proponent for the requested extension. While additional funding requests due to inflation or project modifications should be considered, they should not be guaranteed. A preference for additional funds should be given to projects that pursue additional cost-sharing mechanisms to enhance financial sustainability. This has come up in multiple WASC meetings, in response to recent Project Modification Requests.
- **Allocating a Small Percentage of Technical Resources Program (TRP) Funds to Project Applicants:** While the majority of TRP funds rightfully support consultants, a small percentage should be allocated to project applicants who play an integral role in project development and engagement. Project proponents have expressed that this would improve program accessibility.

*Recommendations for the Municipal Program:*

- **Enhancing Transparency in Municipal Fund Expenditures:** We recommend that the allocation and use of municipal SCWP funds be transparently reported to stakeholders, and there should be an assessment to ensure SCWP funds are being used to enhance (and not simply replace) previous stormwater investments. A detailed breakdown of expenditures and outcomes will enable public oversight and promote accountability in municipal spending decisions.
- **Encouraging More Creative Uses of Municipal SCWP Funds:** Municipal SCWP funds should also be used more creatively to address emerging challenges, such as funding fire response water quality monitoring, to ensure communities have the necessary data to protect public and environmental health.

*Recommendations for the District Program:*

- **Ensuring Sufficient Staffing to Effectively Run the SCWP:** Adequate staffing is essential for the efficient administration of the SCWP. We recommend evaluating current staffing levels and ensuring that sufficient resources are allocated to effectively manage program implementation, stakeholder engagement, and oversight responsibilities.
- **Ensuring Consistency in Translation Services:** The Scoring Committee, ROC, and Upper Los Angeles River WASC have set strong precedents in providing consistent translation services. To ensure accessibility for all stakeholders, we recommend expanding these services and improving transparency. The ongoing community needs assessment could help determine which WASCs require consistent translation services. Additionally, the SCWP website should more clearly communicate the availability of translation services to encourage broader participation.

Thank you for your consideration of our recommendations. We are happy to answer any questions you may have. We look forward to continuing our engagement with the Safe Clean Water Program to ensure a better water future for the region.

Sincerely,

The OurWaterLA Coalition

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*OurWaterLA is a diverse coalition of community leaders and organizations from across Los Angeles County united to create a strong water future for Los Angeles. Our goal is to secure clean, safe, affordable and reliable water for drinking, recreation and commerce now and for the future. We have a deep commitment to uphold the trust that voters had in us when passing this measure and that projects which achieve Safe Clean Water Program objectives of water quality, water supply, nature-based solutions and community investments are prioritized.*



# Public Comment Form

Name:\* Ashley Mercado Organization\*: Resident- Glendora  
Email\*: ashleyvmercado@gmail.com Phone\*: 626-519-7787  
Meeting: ROC. 3/12/25 Date: 3/11/2025

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## Comments

To the Regional Oversight Committee.

In response to the question asked about the SCWP, I'd like to share the following thoughts.

I would like to see SCWP work with cities and landowners to address the vast amounts of concrete in parking lots in both public and private properties. During rain, parking lots often flood and in the summer they enhance the heat island effect. I live in the SGV and there are many, many parking lots that are in need of improvements.

I have seen several parks be improved (or are in the process of being improved). This is a positive development. For some other communities, however, there needs to be greater efforts at identifying new park locations. New large parks won't be possible but small unused lots would be locations to explore (like mini local parks for neighborhoods). These can help advance water capture and quality goals of SCWP and are a great resource for green space.

There has been a lot of good education and outreach by the SCWP. I have seen booths in several community events in Pomona and other cities in the east SGV. This should continue and to ensure residents are learning about SCWP.



# Public Comment Form

Name:\* Kelsey Jessup Organization\*: The Nature Conservancy  
Email\*: kelsey.jessup@tnc.org Phone\*: 650-248-8878  
Meeting: SCWP Regional Oversight Committee Date: 3/11/2025

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## Comments

As a member of the OurWaterLA Coalition and on behalf of The Nature Conservancy in California, I endorse the comment letter submitted by OWLA in response to the biennial review.

I want to specifically highlight the need to have stronger goals and clearer metrics and definitions around nature-based solutions. A top priority for OWLA has been and continues to be prioritization of hardscape removal, and creation of green space. We know that nature provides multiple benefits to people and wildlife and is critical infrastructure. We should treat it that way. Tracking the conversion of impermeable to permeable surfaces is an important metric to show success of the SCWP toward many of the identified goals.