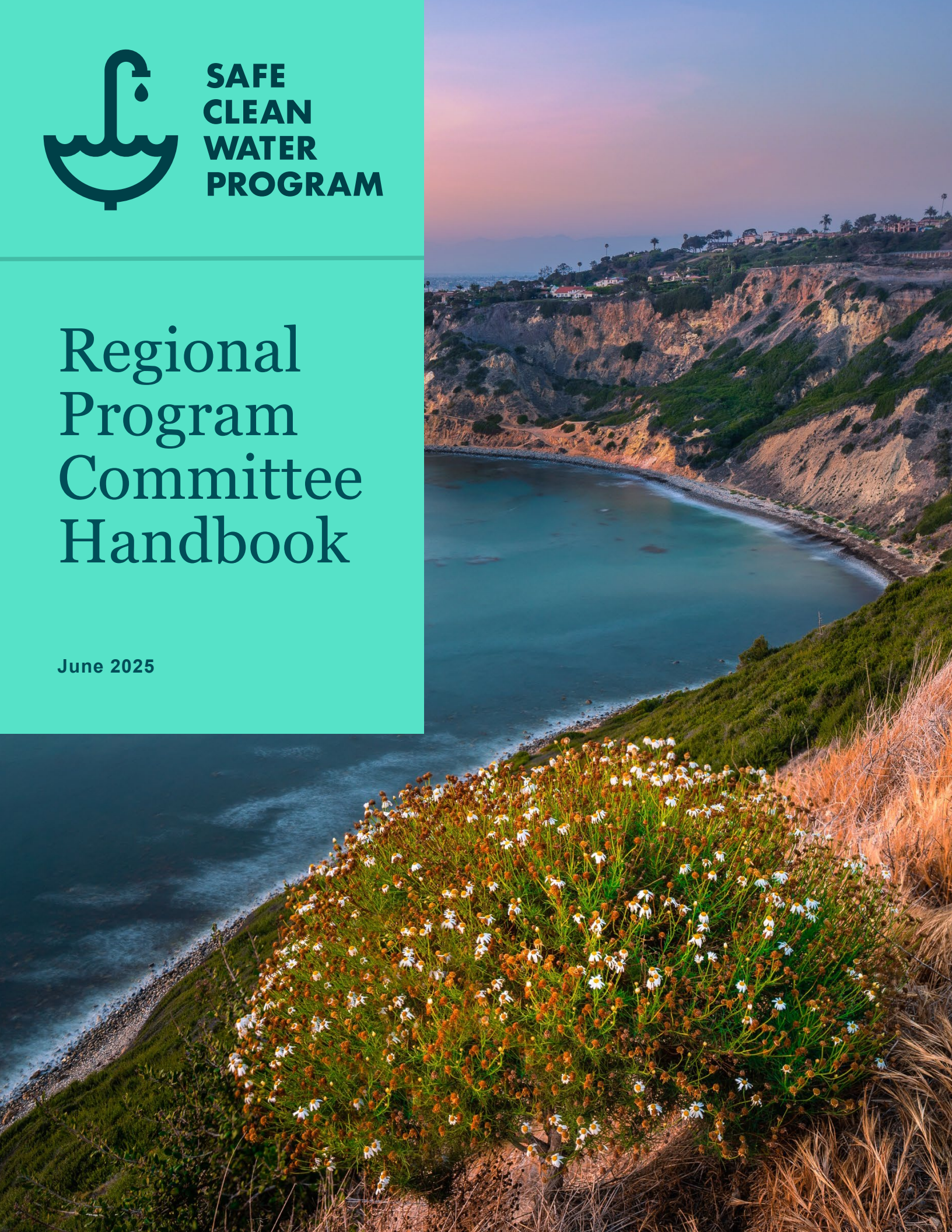
SAFE CLEAN WATER PROGRAM

Regional Program Committee Handbook

June 2025



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Section 1:
SCW Program Definitions

Safe, Clean Water Program Definitions

The definitions set forth in Sections 16.03 and 18.02 of the Los Angeles County Flood Control District Code. This represents the compiled list of definitions that may be used as reference.

TERM	DEFINITION
Additional Activities Credit	means a credit against a Parcel's Special Parcel Tax amount for Parcel owners that initiate and complete qualifying additional activities after November 6, 2018, that confer benefits to the broader regional community related to SCW Program Goals. Implementation criteria and procedures related to Additional Activities Credit will be established in the Credit Program Procedures and Guidelines.
Assessor	means the County of Los Angeles Office of the Assessor.
Auditor-Controller	means the Auditor-Controller of the County of Los Angeles.
Benefited Development	means a group of Parcels that drain to common, centralized Stormwater Improvements. Implementation criteria and procedures related to Benefited Developments will be established in the Credit Program Procedures and Guidelines.
Board	means the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, acting as the governing body of the Los Angeles County Flood Control District.
Census Block Group	means, as defined by the United States Census Bureau, a statistical division of census tracts, which are generally defined to contain between six hundred (600) and three thousand (3,000) people, and are used to present data and control block numbering. A Census Block Group consists of clusters of blocks within the same census tract. Each census tract contains at least one (1) Census Block Group and each Census Block is uniquely numbered within the census tract.
Chief Engineer	means the Chief Engineer of the District or their authorized deputy, agent, or representative.

Community Investment Benefit	means a benefit created in conjunction with a Project or Program, such as, but not limited to: improved flood management, flood conveyance, or flood risk mitigation; creation, enhancement or restoration of parks, habitat or wetlands; improved public access to waterways; enhanced or new recreational opportunities; and greening of schools. A Community Investment Benefit may also include a benefit to the community derived from a Project or Program that improves public health by reducing heat island effect, and increasing shade or planting of trees and other vegetation that increase carbon reduction/sequestration, and improve air quality.
Community Investment Credit	means a credit against a Parcel's Special Parcel Tax amount for Stormwater Improvement that results in a Community Investment Benefit.
County	means the County of Los Angeles.
Credit Program Procedures and Guidelines	means the implementation procedures and guidelines for the credit program described in Section 18.10.A. of the Los Angeles County Flood Control District Code.
Disadvantaged Community (DAC)	means a Census Block Group that has an annual median household income of less than eighty percent (80%) of the Statewide annual median household income (as defined in Water Code section 79505.5).
Disadvantaged Community (DAC) Benefit	means a Water Quality Benefit, Water Supply Benefit, and/or Community Investment Benefit located in a DAC or providing benefits directly to a DAC population.
District	means the Los Angeles County Flood Control District.
District Program	means that part of the SCW Program described in Section 16.05.B. of the Los Angeles County Flood Control District Code.
Feasibility Study	means a detailed technical investigation and report that is conducted to determine the feasibility of a proposed Project.
Feasibility Study Guidelines	means the guidelines for the preparation of Feasibility Studies described in Section 18.07.B.3. of the Los Angeles County Flood Control District Code.
Impermeable Area	means a Parcel area covered by materials or constructed surfaces such as buildings, roofs, paved roadways, sidewalks, driveways, parking lots, brick, asphalt, concrete, pavers, covers, slabs, sheds, pools, and other constructed surfaces or hardscape features. Impermeable Areas do not include permeable surfaces such as vegetated areas, grasses, bushes, shrubs, lawns, bare soil, tree canopy, natural water bodies, wetland areas, gravel, gardens and planters on bare soil, rocky shores, and other natural areas.

Industrial General Permit (IGP)	means the set of requirements by which the State Water Resources Control Board and Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board implement and enforce regulations on industrial storm water discharges and authorized non-storm water discharges from industrial facilities in California. The Industrial General Permit is called a general permit because many industrial facilities are covered by the same permit but comply with its requirements at their individual industrial facilities.
Infrastructure Program	means the program, implemented as part of the Regional Program, described in Section 16.05.D.1 of the Los Angeles County Flood Control District Code.
Infrastructure Program Project Applicant	means any individual, group, business or governmental entity, including, but not limited to, the District, a Municipality, watershed management group, joint powers authority, public utility, special district, school, community-based organization, non-governmental organization, non-profit organization, federally-recognized Indian tribe, State Indian tribe listed on the Native American Heritage Commission's California Tribal Consultation List, or mutual water company, that submits a proposed Project or Feasibility Study for consideration for funding by the SCW Program.
Infrastructure Program Project Developer	means the individual, group or entity that carries out or causes to be carried out part or all of the actions necessary to complete a Project.
Low Impact Development Ordinance (LID Ordinance)	means the most recent ordinance establishing local low impact development standards and requirements on certain new development and redevelopment projects operative within the Municipality in which the project is located that conforms to requirements imposed by the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board on that Municipality through the Municipality's MS4 Permit. In the absence of an operative LID Ordinance in the Municipality in which the project is located, the most current LID Ordinance adopted by the County shall apply.
Low-Income Household	means a household in the District with a household income that does not exceed the Low-Income limit for Los Angeles County, as determined annually by the California Department of Housing and Community Development.
Low-Income Senior-Owned Parcels	means Parcels within the District that are owned and occupied as a residence by individuals over the age of sixty-two (62) who are the head of a Low-Income Household.

MS4 Permit	means Order No. R4-2012-0175 (As Amended By State Water Board Order WQ 2015-0075 and Order No. R4-2012-0175-A01) NPDES Permit No. CAS004001 Waste Discharge Requirements For Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Discharges Within The Coastal Watersheds of Los Angeles County, Except Those Discharges Originating From The City of Long Beach MS4 or Order No. R4-2014-0024 (As Amended By Order No. R4-2014-0024-A01) NPDES Permit No. CAS004003 Waste Discharge Requirements For Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System Discharges From The City of Long Beach, or any successor permit issued by the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board.
Multi-Benefit Project	means a Project that has: (1) a Water Quality Benefit, and (2) a Water Supply Benefit or a Community Investment Benefit, or both.
Municipal Program	means that part of the SCW Program described in Section 16.05.C. of the Los Angeles County Flood Control District Code.
Municipality	means a city within the District, or the County, pertaining to unincorporated areas within the District.
Nature-Based Solution	means a Project that utilizes natural processes that slow, detain, infiltrate or filter Stormwater or Urban Runoff. These methods may include relying predominantly on soils and vegetation; increasing the permeability of Impermeable Areas; protecting undeveloped mountains and floodplains; creating and restoring riparian habitat and wetlands; creating rain gardens, bioswales, and parkway basins; and enhancing soil through composting, mulching, and planting trees and vegetation, with preference for native species. Nature-Based Solutions may also be designed to provide additional benefits such as sequestering carbon, supporting biodiversity, providing shade, creating and enhancing parks and open space, and improving quality of life for surrounding communities. Nature-Based Solution includes Projects that mimic natural processes, such as green streets, spreading grounds and planted areas with water storage capacity.
Parcel	means a parcel of real property situated within the District, as shown on the latest equalized assessment roll of the County and identified by its Assessor's Parcel Number, and that is tributary to a receiving water identified in the Water Quality Control Plan for the Los Angeles Region in effect as of January 1, 2018. Parcel shall not include a possessory interest based on a private, beneficial use of government-owned real property.
Program	means a planned, coordinated group of activities related to increasing Stormwater or Urban Runoff capture or reducing Stormwater or Urban Runoff pollution in the District.

Project	means the development (including design, preparation of environmental documents, obtaining applicable regulatory permits, construction, inspection, and similar activities), operation and maintenance (including monitoring), of a physical structure or facility that increases Stormwater or Urban Runoff capture or reduces Stormwater or Urban Runoff pollution in the District.
Regional Oversight Committee (ROC)	means the body created by the Board whose responsibilities include, but are not limited to, assessing and making recommendations to the Board regarding whether the SCW Program Goals are being achieved.
Regional Program	means that part of the SCW Program described in Section 16.05.D. of the Los Angeles County Flood Control District Code.
ROC Operating Guidelines	means the operating guidelines for the ROC described in Section 18.08.A.3. of the Los Angeles County Flood Control District Code.
RWQCB Stormwater Permit	means a permit other than an IGP, issued by the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board, governing the discharge of Stormwater or Urban Runoff.
Safe, Clean Water (SCW) Program	means the program established by the Los Angeles County Flood Control District Code, including the administration of revenues from the Special Parcel Tax levied pursuant to the Los Angeles County Flood Control District Code, and the criteria and procedures for selecting and implementing Projects and Programs and allocating revenues among the Municipal, Regional, and District Programs.
Scientific Studies Program	means the program, implemented as part of the Regional Program, described in Section 16.05.D.3. of the Los Angeles County Flood Control District Code.
Scoring Committee	means a group of six (6) subject-matter experts in Water Quality Benefits, Water Supply Benefits, Nature-Based Solutions, and Community Investment Benefits created by the Board to review and score Projects and Feasibility Studies in connection with the Infrastructure Program.
Scoring Committee Operating Guidelines	means the operating guidelines for the Scoring Committee described in Section 18.07.C.3.c. of the Los Angeles County Flood Control District Code.
SCW Program Goals	means the goals of the SCW Program described in Section 18.04 of Chapter 18 of the Los Angeles County Flood Control District Code.

SCW Program Progress Report	means a biennial report that summarizes all Regional Program WARPP Reports, all Municipal Program annual progress and expenditure reports, and all District Program annual reports and makes findings regarding whether and the extent to which SCW Program requirements were met and SCW Program Goals were achieved.
Special Parcel Tax	means the tax described in Section 16.08 of the Los Angeles County Flood Control District Code.
Stakeholder	means a person; Municipality; watershed management group; joint powers authority; citizens' group; homeowner or other property owner; business; non-governmental organization; social justice group; health advocate; local park representative; school board member; environmental group; labor union; academic institution; neighborhood council; town council; community group; water resources agency, such as a groundwater pumper or manager, or a private or public water agency; other governmental agency; or other interested party that has a direct or indirect stake in the SCW Program.
Standard Urban Stormwater Mitigation Plan (SUSMP)	means a plan that designates best management practices that must be used in specified categories of development projects under NPDES permits, as approved by the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board.
Stormwater	means water that originates from atmospheric moisture (rainfall or snowmelt) and falls or flows onto land, water or other surfaces.
Stormwater Improvement	means a structure or facility, or system of structures or facilities, that captures Stormwater or Urban Runoff or reduces Stormwater or Urban Runoff pollution in the District.
Stormwater Investment Plan (SIP)	means a five (5) year plan developed by a Watershed Area Steering Committee that allocates funding for Projects and Programs in the Regional Program's Infrastructure Program, Technical Resources Program, and Scientific Studies Program for the ensuing fiscal year and lays out tentative funding for four (4) subsequent years. SIPs will be approved by the Board on an annual basis.
Surface Water	means water that flows or collects on the surface of the ground.
Technical Assistance Team	means a group of subject-matter experts in Stormwater and/or Urban Runoff infrastructure design, hydrology, soils, Nature-Based Solutions, green infrastructure, Stormwater and/or Urban Runoff quality, water supply, recreation, open space, community needs, and other related areas, provided by the District to assist Infrastructure Program Project Applicants and others, as part of the Technical Resources Program.
Technical Resources Program	means the program, implemented as part of the Regional Program, described in Section 16.05.D.2. of the Los Angeles County Flood Control District Code.

Threshold Score	means a minimum score that Projects must meet or exceed in order to be eligible for Infrastructure Program funding.
Transfer Agreement	means the agreement described in Section 16.05.A.1. of the Los Angeles County Flood Control District Code, between the District and an Infrastructure Program Project Developer or Municipality to transfer SCW Program funds.
Treasurer	means the Treasurer and Tax Collector of the County of Los Angeles.
Urban Runoff	means Surface Water flow that may contain, but is not composed entirely of, Stormwater, such as flow from residential, commercial, or industrial activities.
WASC Operating Guidelines	means the operating guidelines for the WASC described in Section 18.07.G.1.e. of the Los Angeles County Flood Control District Code.
Water Quality Benefit	means a reduction in Stormwater or Urban Runoff pollution, such as improvements in the chemical, physical, and biological characteristics of Stormwater or Urban Runoff in the District. Activities resulting in this benefit include, but are not limited to: infiltration or treatment of Stormwater or Urban Runoff, non-point source pollution control, and diversion of Stormwater or Urban Runoff to a sanitary sewer system.
Water Quality Credit	means a credit against a Parcel's Special Parcel Tax amount for a Stormwater Improvement that results in a Water Quality Benefit by complying with: (1) an applicable LID Ordinance, (2) applicable SUSMP requirements, (3) an applicable IGP, (4) an applicable RWQCB Stormwater Permit, or (5) any combination of the foregoing.
Water Supply Benefit	means an increase in the amount of locally available water supply, provided there is a nexus to Stormwater or Urban Runoff capture. Activities resulting in this benefit include, but are not limited to, the following: reuse and conservation practices, diversion of Stormwater or Urban Runoff to a sanitary sewer system for direct or indirect water recycling, increased groundwater replenishment or available yield, or offset of potable water use.
Water Supply Credit	means a credit against a Parcel's Special Parcel Tax amount for a Stormwater Improvement that results in a Water Supply Benefit.
Watershed Area	means the regional hydrologic boundaries as depicted on maps maintained by the District for the SCW Program, that are established in consideration of topographic conditions and other factors. The SCW Program includes the following nine (9) Watershed Areas: (1) Central Santa Monica Bay; (2) Lower Los Angeles River; (3) Lower San Gabriel River; (4) North Santa Monica Bay; (5) Rio Hondo; (6) Santa Clara River; (7) South Santa Monica Bay; (8) Upper Los Angeles River; and (9) Upper San Gabriel River.

Watershed Area Regional Program Progress (WARRP) Report	means an annual report describing the progress of all Projects and Programs included in an SIP during the previous year and summarizing how the implementation of the SIP during the previous year has achieved SCW Program Goals.
Watershed Area Steering Committee	means a body created by the Board, one for each Watershed Area, for the purpose of developing SIPs and recommendations for other activities to be funded through the Regional Program.
Watershed Coordinator	means one or more persons assigned to assist a Watershed Area Steering Committee with community and stakeholder education and engagement and to perform the other activities described in Section 18.07.D.3. of the Los Angeles County Flood Control District Code.

Section 2:
Los Angeles County Flood Control District Code Chapter 16

Chapter 16 LOS ANGELES REGION SAFE, CLEAN WATER PROGRAM AND SPECIAL PARCEL TAX TO PROVIDE FOR STORMWATER AND URBAN RUNOFF CAPTURE AND REDUCED STORMWATER AND URBAN RUNOFF POLLUTION

16.01 Title.

This Chapter shall be known as the "The Los Angeles Region Safe, Clean Water Program" ordinance.

(Ord. 2018-0044 § 1, 2018.)

16.02 Purpose.

This ordinance is adopted to achieve the following purposes and directs that the provisions hereof be interpreted in order to:

A. Impose a Special Parcel Tax upon Parcels of property within the boundaries of the District at the rate of two and one-half (2.5) cents per square foot of Impermeable Area, except as exempted, to be used for the purposes set forth herein.

B. Provide funding for Programs and Projects to increase Stormwater and Urban Runoff capture and reduce Stormwater and Urban Runoff pollution in the District, including Projects and Programs providing a Water Supply Benefit, Water Quality Benefit, and Community Investment Benefit.

(Ord. 2018-0044 § 1, 2018.)

16.03 Definitions.

As used in this Chapter, the following terms mean:

A. "Assessor" means the County of Los Angeles Office of the Assessor.

B. "Auditor-Controller" means the Auditor-Controller of the County of Los Angeles.

C. "Board" means the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, acting as the governing body of the Los Angeles County Flood Control District.

D. "Census Block Group" means, as defined by the United States Census Bureau, a statistical division of census tracts, which are generally defined to contain between six hundred (600) and three thousand (3,000) people, and are used to present data and control block numbering. A Census Block Group consists of clusters of blocks within the same census tract. Each census tract contains at least one (1) Census Block Group and each Census Block is uniquely numbered within the census tract.

E. "Chief Engineer" means the Chief Engineer of the District or their authorized deputy, agent, or representative.

F. "Community Investment Benefit" means a benefit created in conjunction with a Project or Program, such as, but not limited to: improved flood management, flood conveyance, or flood risk mitigation; creation, enhancement or restoration of parks, habitat or wetlands; improved public access to waterways; enhanced or new recreational opportunities; and greening of schools. A Community Investment Benefit also includes a

benefit to the community derived from a Project or Program that improves public health by reducing heat island effect and increasing shade or planting of trees or other vegetation that increase carbon reduction/sequestration and improve air quality.

G. "County" means the County of Los Angeles.

H. "Disadvantaged Community" ("DAC") means a Census Block Group that has an annual median household income of less than eighty percent (80%) of the Statewide annual median household income (as defined in Water Code section 79505.5).

I. "Disadvantaged Community (DAC) Benefit" means a Water Quality Benefit, Water Supply Benefit, and/or Community Investment Benefit located in a DAC or providing benefits directly to a DAC population.

J. "District" means the Los Angeles County Flood Control District.

K. "District Program" means that part of the SCW Program described in Section 16.05.B. of this Chapter.

L. "Feasibility Study" means a detailed technical investigation and report that is conducted to determine the feasibility of a proposed Project.

M. "Impermeable Area" means a Parcel area covered by materials or constructed surfaces such as buildings, roofs, paved roadways, sidewalks, driveways, parking lots, brick, asphalt, concrete, pavers, covers, slabs, sheds, pools, and other constructed surfaces or hardscape features. Impermeable Areas do not include permeable surfaces such as vegetated areas, grasses, bushes, shrubs, lawns, bare soil, tree canopy, natural water bodies, wetland areas, gravel, gardens and planters on bare soil, rocky shores, and other natural areas.

N. "Infrastructure Program" means the program, implemented as part of the Regional Program, described in Section 16.05.D.1 of this Chapter.

O. "Infrastructure Program Project Applicant" means any individual, group, business or governmental entity, including, but not limited to, the District, a Municipality, watershed management group, joint powers authority, public utility, special district, school, community-based organization, non-governmental organization, non-profit organization, federally-recognized Indian tribe, State Indian tribe listed on the Native American Heritage Commission's California Tribal Consultation List, or mutual water company, that submits a proposed Project or Feasibility Study for consideration for funding by the SCW Program.

P. "Infrastructure Program Project Developer" means the individual, group or entity that carries out or causes to be carried out part or all of the actions necessary to complete a Project.

Q. "Low-Income Household" means a household in the District with a household income that does not exceed the Low-Income limit for Los Angeles County, as determined annually by the California Department of Housing and Community Development.

R. "Low-Income Senior-Owned Parcels" means Parcels within the District that are owned and occupied as a residence by individuals over the age of sixty-two (62) who are the head of a Low-Income Household.

S. "Multi-Benefit Project" means a Project that has: (1) a Water Quality Benefit, and (2) a Water Supply Benefit or a Community Investment Benefit, or both.

T. "Municipal Program" means that part of the SCW Program described in Section 16.05.C. of this Chapter.

U. "Municipality" means a city within the District, or the County, pertaining to unincorporated areas within the District.

V. "Nature-Based Solution" means a Project that utilizes natural processes that slow, detain, infiltrate or filter Stormwater or Urban Runoff. These methods may include relying predominantly on soils and vegetation; increasing the permeability of Impermeable Areas; protecting undeveloped mountains and floodplains; creating and restoring riparian habitat and wetlands; creating rain gardens, bioswales, and parkway basins; and enhancing soil through composting, mulching, and planting trees and vegetation, with preference for

native species. Nature-Based Solutions may also be designed to provide additional benefits such as sequestering carbon, supporting biodiversity, providing shade, creating and enhancing parks and open space, and improving quality of life for surrounding communities. Nature-Based Solution includes Projects that mimic natural processes, such as green streets, spreading grounds and planted areas with water storage capacity.

W. "Parcel" means a parcel of real property situated within the District, as shown on the latest equalized assessment roll of the County and identified by its Assessor's Parcel Number, and that is tributary to a receiving water identified in the Water Quality Control Plan for the Los Angeles Region in effect as of January 1, 2018. Parcel shall not include a possessory interest based on a private, beneficial use of government-owned real property.

X. "Program" means a planned, coordinated group of activities related to increasing Stormwater or Urban Runoff capture or reducing Stormwater or Urban Runoff pollution in the District.

Y. "Project" means the development (including design, preparation of environmental documents, obtaining applicable regulatory permits, construction, inspection, and similar activities), operation and maintenance (including monitoring), of a physical structure or facility that increases Stormwater or Urban Runoff capture or reduces Stormwater or Urban Runoff pollution in the District.

Z. "Regional Oversight Committee" ("ROC") means the body created by the Board whose responsibilities include, but are not limited to, assessing and making recommendations to the Board regarding whether the SCW Program Goals are being achieved.

AA. "Regional Program" means that part of the SCW Program described in Section 16.05.D. of this Chapter.

BB. "Safe, Clean Water Program" ("SCW Program") means the program established by this ordinance, including the administration of revenues from the Special Parcel Tax levied pursuant to this ordinance, and the criteria and procedures for selecting and implementing Projects and Programs and allocating revenues among the Municipal, Regional, and District Programs.

CC. "SCW Program Goals" means the goals of the SCW Program described in Section 18.04 of Chapter 18 of this code.

DD. "Scientific Studies Program" means the program, implemented as part of the Regional Program, described in Section 16.05.D.3. of this Chapter.

EE. "Special Parcel Tax" means the tax described in Section 16.08 of this Chapter.

FF. "Stakeholder" means a person; Municipality; watershed management group; joint powers authority; citizens' group; homeowner or other property owner; business; non-governmental organization; social justice group; health advocate; local park representative; school board member; environmental group; labor union; academic institution; neighborhood council; town council; community group; water resources agency, such as a groundwater pumper or manager, or a private or public water agency; other governmental agency; or other interested party that has a direct or indirect stake in the SCW Program.

GG. "Stormwater" means water that originates from atmospheric moisture (rainfall or snowmelt) and falls or flows onto land, water or other surfaces.

HH. "Stormwater Investment Plan" ("SIP") means a five (5) year plan developed by a Watershed Area Steering Committee that allocates funding for Projects and Programs in the Regional Program's Infrastructure Program, Technical Resources Program, and Scientific Studies Program for the ensuing fiscal year and lays out tentative funding for four (4) subsequent years. SIPs will be approved by the Board on an annual basis.

II. "Surface Water" means water that flows or collects on the surface of the ground.

JJ. "Technical Resources Program" means the program, implemented as part of the Regional Program, described in Section 16.05.D.2. of this Chapter.

KK. "Transfer Agreement" means the agreement described in Section 16.05.A.1. of this Chapter, between the District and an Infrastructure Program Project Developer or Municipality to transfer SCW Program funds.

LL. "Treasurer" means the Treasurer and Tax Collector of the County of Los Angeles.

MM. "Urban Runoff" means Surface Water flow that may contain, but is not composed entirely of, Stormwater, such as flow from residential, commercial, or industrial activities.

NN. "Water Quality Benefit" means a reduction in Stormwater or Urban Runoff pollution, such as improvements in the chemical, physical, and biological characteristics of Stormwater or Urban Runoff in the District. Activities resulting in this benefit include, but are not limited to: infiltration or treatment of Stormwater or Urban Runoff, non-point source pollution control, and diversion of Stormwater or Urban Runoff to a sanitary sewer system.

OO. "Water Supply Benefit" means an increase in the amount of locally available water supply, provided there is a nexus to Stormwater or Urban Runoff capture. Activities resulting in this benefit include, but are not limited to, the following: reuse and conservation practices, diversion of Stormwater or Urban Runoff to a sanitary sewer system for direct or indirect water recycling, increased groundwater replenishment or available yield, or offset of potable water use.

PP. "Watershed Area" means the regional hydrologic boundaries as depicted on maps maintained by the District for the SCW Program, that are established in consideration of topographic conditions and other factors. The SCW Program includes the following nine (9) Watershed Areas: (1) Central Santa Monica Bay; (2) Lower Los Angeles River; (3) Lower San Gabriel River; (4) North Santa Monica Bay; (5) Rio Hondo; (6) Santa Clara River; (7) South Santa Monica Bay; (8) Upper Los Angeles River; and (9) Upper San Gabriel River.

QQ. "Watershed Area Steering Committee" means a body created by the Board, one for each Watershed Area, for the purpose of developing SIPs and recommendations for other activities to be funded through the Regional Program.

(Ord. 2019-0042 § 1, 2019; Ord. 2018-0044 § 1, 2018.)

16.04 Expenditure Plan.

The District shall expend all Special Parcel Tax revenues consistent with the expenditure plan contained in this section.

A. The District shall use the Special Parcel Tax revenues to pay the costs and expenses of carrying out Projects and Programs to increase Stormwater or Urban Runoff capture or reduce Stormwater or Urban Runoff pollution in the District in accordance with criteria and procedures established in this Chapter and Chapter 18 of this code. Projects and Programs funded by the revenues from the Special Parcel Tax may provide a Water Supply Benefit, Water Quality Benefit, and Community Investment Benefit. The District shall allocate the revenues derived from the Special Parcel Tax as follows:

    1. Ten percent (10%) shall be allocated to the District for implementation and administration of Projects and Programs, and for the payment of the costs incurred in connection with the levy and collection of the Special Parcel Tax and the distribution of the funds generated by imposition of the Special Parcel Tax in accordance with the criteria and procedures established in this Chapter.

    2. Forty percent (40%) shall be allocated to Municipalities within the District, in the same proportion as the amount of revenues collected within each Municipality, to be expended by those cities within the cities' respective jurisdictions and by the County within the unincorporated areas that are within the boundaries of the District, for the implementation, operation and maintenance, and administration of Projects and Programs, in accordance with the criteria and procedures established in this Chapter.

3. Fifty percent (50%) shall be allocated to pay for the implementation, operation and maintenance, and the administration of Projects and Programs implemented through the Regional Program, including Projects and Programs identified in approved regional plans such as stormwater resource plans developed in accordance with Part 2.3 (commencing with section 10560) of Division 6 of the Water Code, watershed management programs developed pursuant to waste discharge requirements for municipal separate storm sewer system (MS4) discharges within the coastal watersheds of the County, issued by the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board, and other regional water management plans, as appropriate, in accordance with the criteria and procedures established in this Chapter and Chapter 18 of this code. Funds allocated to the Regional Program shall be distributed among the nine (9) Watershed Areas in proportion to the funds generated in each Watershed Area.

B. The District, and Municipalities within the boundaries of the District, may use the funds from the Special Parcel Tax to finance bonds issued by the District or Municipalities so long as the bond proceeds are used for Projects and Programs that are eligible for funding under the SCW Program.

(Ord. 2019-0042 § 2, 2019; Ord. 2018-0044 § 1, 2018.)

16.05 Program Elements.

A. General Requirements.

1. SCW Program funds shall be transferred to Municipalities, Infrastructure Program Project Developers and the District in advance of eligible expenditures taking place. Prior to their receipt of SCW Program funds, Municipalities and Infrastructure Program Project Developers must enter into an agreement with the District to transfer SCW Program funds.

2. Expenditures eligible for SCW Program funds include, but are not limited to, the following:

a. Infrastructure development tasks including design and planning, preparation of grant applications, preparation of environmental documents, obtaining permits, construction, operations and maintenance, and inspection;

b. Real property acquisition, including fee title, leases, easements and right of entry permits, necessary to implement Projects selected for funding under the SCW Program;

c. Scientific and technical studies, and Stormwater or Urban Runoff modeling and monitoring;

d. Water quality or regional water resilience planning;

e. Stormwater or Urban Runoff residential and/or commercial retrofits;

f. Projects or studies to pilot or investigate new technologies or methodologies to increase or improve Stormwater or Urban Runoff capture or reduce Stormwater or Urban Runoff pollution for improving water quality, increasing local water supplies, or improving the quality of life for communities;

g. The development of Feasibility Studies to enable Infrastructure Program Project Applicants to submit Projects for consideration for SCW Program funds;

h. The modification, upgrade, retrofit, or expansion of an existing Project to incorporate new elements to increase Stormwater or Urban Runoff capture and reduce Stormwater or Urban Runoff pollution to provide an additional Water Quality Benefit, Water Supply Benefit, or Community Investment Benefit;

i. Debt financing, should the District or a Municipality determine that bonds or loans are prudent and necessary to implement Projects or Programs;

j. Stormwater or Urban Runoff Programs such as, but not limited to, school education and curriculum, public education, watershed coordination efforts, regional water quality planning and coordination, and local workforce job training;

k. Administration and implementation of the SCW Program; and

l. Payments pursuant to an incentive program, as may be established by the Board.

3. Ineligible expenditures for SCW Program funds include, but are not limited to, the following:

a. Payment of fines imposed by any State, federal, or local regulatory agency;

b. Expenditures related to the investigation, defense, litigation, or judgment associated with any regulatory permit violations, notices of violation, or allegations of noncompliance with regulations brought forth by any State, federal, or local regulatory agency, or a third party unrelated to Projects and Programs selected for funding under the SCW Program;

c. Expenditures for the investigation or litigation of any claim or action against the District, County, or their officers, employees or agents alleging improper allocation, withholding or reassignment of SCW Program funds;

d. Costs associated with any litigation, including investigation, defense, or attorneys' fees, related to the design and implementation of Projects or Programs selected for funding under the SCW Program;

e. Payment of any settlement or judgment related to any claim or lawsuit arising from the negligence or wrongdoing of a Municipality or Infrastructure Program Project Developer or their respective agents in connection with any Project or Program funded under the SCW Program; and

f. Costs and expenses incurred prior to November 6, 2018.

B. District Program. Ten percent (10%) of the revenue from the annual Special Parcel Tax shall be allocated for the District Program. The District shall perform the following functions as part of the District Program:

1. Administer the SCW Program, including collection of the Special Parcel Tax and distribution of funds, tax and payment administration, including administration of credit and incentive programs, review budgets and reports, and conduct audits.

2. Plan, implement, and maintain District Projects.

3. Administer the Regional Program.

4. Provide technical assistance, including the hiring and coordination of watershed coordinators.

5. Oversee regional water quality planning and coordination, scientific studies, and water quality modeling.

6. The District will administer the Programs described below. Not less than twenty percent (20%) of District Program funds shall be allocated for these Programs over a revolving five (5) year period. These Programs will be implemented throughout the District with special attention to the needs of DACs. The District will partner with Stakeholders to collaboratively implement these Programs. Programs shall include, but are not limited to:

a. Public education Programs;

b. Local workforce job training, which will provide certification classes and vocational training at the community level for the design, construction, inspection, operation and maintenance of Stormwater or Urban Runoff management and Multi-Benefit Projects; and

c. Schools education and curriculum Programs.

C. Municipal Program. Forty percent (40%) of the revenue from the annual Special Parcel Tax shall be allocated for the Municipal Program. Each Municipality shall receive a proportional share of these Municipal Program funds based on the Special Parcel Tax revenues collected within each Municipality.

Projects implemented through the Municipal Program shall include a Water Quality Benefit. Multi-Benefit Projects and Nature-Based Solutions are strongly encouraged. The responsibilities of each Municipality receiving Municipal Program funding from the SCW Program shall include, but not be limited to:

1. Preparation of a progress/expenditure report that details a program-level summary of expenditures and a description of Water Quality Benefits, Water Supply Benefits, Nature-Based Solutions, and Community Investment Benefits realized through use of Municipal Program funds.
2. Compliance with all SCW Program fund transfer, reporting, and audit requirements.
3. Engagement with Stakeholders in the planning process for use of the Municipal Program funds during the planning and implementation of Projects and Programs.
4. Prioritization and development of Projects that, to the extent feasible, assist in achieving compliance with Order No. R4-2012-0175 (As Amended By State Water Board Order WQ 2015-0075 and Order No. R4-2012-0175-A01 NPDES Permit No. CAS004001 Waste Discharge Requirements For Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Discharges Within The Coastal Watersheds of Los Angeles County, Except Those Discharges Originating From The City of Long Beach MS4 and Order No. R4-2014-0024 (As Amended By Order No. R4-2014-0024-A01) NPDES Permit No. CAS004003 Waste Discharge Requirements For Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System Discharges From The City of Long Beach, or successor permits issued by the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board for such permits.

D. Regional Program. Fifty percent (50%) of the annual revenues from the Special Parcel Tax shall be allocated to the Regional Program. Watershed Areas shall be established to facilitate implementation of the Regional Program. Each Watershed Area shall be overseen by a Watershed Area Steering Committee that includes Municipalities, agencies, and other Stakeholders. Members of the Watershed Area Steering Committees shall be governed by and comply with State conflict of interest laws (e.g., Government Code sections 1090 et seq. and 87000 et seq.) and the County's conflict of interest policies. The Regional Program shall include an "Infrastructure Program," a "Technical Resources Program," and a "Scientific Studies Program."

1. Infrastructure Program. This program shall implement Multi-Benefit watershed-based Projects that have a Water Quality Benefit, as well as, either a Water Supply Benefit or Community Investment Benefit, or both. Infrastructure Program funds:
    a. Shall be spent on activities performed after the Feasibility Study phase, to implement Projects and Programs;
    b. Shall be allocated proportional to the revenues generated in each Watershed Area;
    c. Shall be programmed in accordance with the Board-approved SIPs for each of the Watershed Areas;
    d. Shall be allocated such that funding for Projects that provide a DAC Benefit is not less than one hundred ten percent (110%) of the ratio of the DAC population to the total population in each Watershed Area;
    e. Shall be programmed, to the extent feasible, such that each Municipality receives benefits in proportion to the funds generated within their jurisdiction, after accounting for allocation of the one hundred ten percent (110%) return to DACs;
    f. Shall be programmed, to the extent feasible, such that a spectrum of project types and sizes are implemented throughout the region;

g. Shall be programmed, to the extent feasible, such that Nature-Based Solutions are prioritized;

h. Shall be disbursed to a non-municipal Infrastructure Program Project Applicant only after the Infrastructure Program Project Applicant has secured a letter of support from the Municipality in which the Project is located; and

i. Shall be prioritized and spent on Projects that, to the extent feasible, assist in achieving compliance with Order No. R4-2012-0175 (As Amended By State Water Board Order WQ 2015-0075 and Order No. R4-2012-0175-A01 NPDES Permit No. CAS004001 Waste Discharge Requirements For Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Discharges Within The Coastal Watersheds of Los Angeles County, Except Those Discharges Originating From The City of Long Beach MS4 and Order No. R4-2014-0024 (As Amended By Order No. R4-2014-0024-A01) NPDES Permit No. CAS004003 Waste Discharge Requirements For Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System Discharges From The City of Long Beach, or successor permits issued by the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board for such permits.

2. Technical Resources Program. This program shall provide technical resources for the development of Feasibility Studies through support from teams and coordinators providing technical assistance, outreach, and education.

3. Scientific Studies Program. This program shall provide funding for eligible scientific and other activities, such as, but not limited to: scientific studies, technical studies, monitoring, modeling, and other similar activities. The District will administer this program and will seek to utilize independent research institutions or academic institutions to carry out or help design and peer review activities carried out by other entities. All activities implemented through this program shall be conducted in accordance with accepted scientific protocols.

E. Regional Oversight Committee. The Regional Oversight Committee ("ROC") is an independent body that ensures the SCW Program Goals are met. The ROC shall consist of subject-matter experts, with knowledge in Water Quality Benefits, Water Supply Benefits, Nature-Based Solutions, Community Investment Benefits, public health, sustainability, and other pertinent subject-matter. The ROC shall prepare SCW Program progress reports and submit recommendations to the Board. ROC members shall be governed by and comply with State conflict of interest laws (e.g., Gov. Code §§ 1090 et seq. and 87100 et seq.) and the County's conflict of interest policies.

(Ord. 2019-0042 § 3, 2019; Ord. 2018-0044 § 1, 2018.)

16.06 Special Account.

The Auditor-Controller shall create a new account into which the revenues from the Special Parcel Tax authorized by this ordinance shall be deposited.

(Ord. 2018-0044 § 1, 2018.)

16.07 Independent Audit.

A. The Board shall cause independent financial audits to be conducted for the purpose of determining compliance with the terms of this ordinance. The audits shall be posted on the District's publicly-accessible website.

B. Municipalities shall be subject to an independent audit of their use of SCW Program funds not less than once every three (3) years. Audits of Municipalities shall be funded with Municipal Program funds.

C. Infrastructure Program Project Developers shall be subject to an independent audit upon completion of the Project. Additional interim audits may be conducted by the District. Audits of Infrastructure Program Project Developers shall be funded with Regional Program funds.

D. The District shall be subject to an independent audit of their use of SCW Program funds not less than once every three (3) years. District audits shall be funded with District Program funds.

(Ord. 2018-0044 § 1, 2018.)

16.08 Special Parcel Tax Rate.

A. Commencing the fiscal year 2019-20, an annual special parcel tax in the amount of two and one-half (2.5) cents per square foot of Parcel Impermeable Area, is hereby imposed upon all Parcels located within the District, except as provided in Section 16.09 of this Chapter. All revenues from the Special Parcel Tax shall be used to fund Projects and Programs consistent with the expenditure plan as set forth in Section 16.04 of this Chapter, and to fund the costs incurred in connection with the levy and collection of the tax and distribution of the funds.

B. All laws and procedures regarding exemptions, due dates, installment payments, corrections, cancellations, refunds, late payments, liens and collections for the secured roll ad valorem property taxes shall be applicable to the collection of the Special Parcel Tax. The secured roll tax bills shall be the only notices required for the levying of the Special Parcel Tax. The Auditor-Controller shall place the Special Parcel Tax on the secured tax roll for the initial fiscal year 2019-20, and for subsequent fiscal years. The Treasurer shall collect the Special Parcel Tax for the initial Fiscal Year 2019-20, and for subsequent fiscal years, on the tax roll at the same time and in the same manner, and subject to the same penalties as the ad valorem property taxes fixed and collected by or on behalf of the County. The County shall be entitled to deduct its reasonable costs incurred in collecting the Special Parcel Tax before such tax is remitted to the District, including all costs incurred in connection with the levy and collection of the tax and distribution of the funds.

C. The District shall establish and administer an appeals process to address and correct errors in the levy of the Special Parcel Tax. Parcel owners or any other person or entity subject to the Special Parcel Tax may seek review of the amount of their tax on the following grounds:

    1. Mathematical error in the calculation of the tax; or

    2. Significant discrepancy between the assessed and the actual Impermeable Area.

D. The Auditor-Controller shall file a report with the Board by no later than January 1, 2021, and by January 1 of each year thereafter, stating the amount of funds collected pursuant to this ordinance. The report may relate to the calendar year, fiscal year, or other appropriate annual period, as the Auditor-Controller may determine, and may be incorporated into or filed with the annual budget, audit, or other appropriate routine report to the Board.

E. Nothing in this ordinance shall limit a Parcel owner's ability to pass through the Special Parcel Tax to a tenant, subject to all applicable rent control ordinances, contractual provisions in the specific lease, federal subsidized housing requirements, and other applicable laws.

(Ord. 2018-0044 § 1, 2018.)

16.09 Exemptions.

The following Parcels shall be subject to exemption from the Special Parcel Tax specified in Section 16.08 of this Chapter:

A. All Parcels exempt from ad valorem property taxes to the same extent partially or fully exempt as determined by the Assessor, including, but not limited to, government Parcels and Parcels owned by non-profit organizations satisfying the requirements of Revenue and Taxation Code Section 214.

B. Upon application, Low-Income Senior-Owned Parcels.

(Ord. 2019-0042 § 4, 2019; Ord. 2018-0044 § 1, 2018.)

16.10 Credit, Incentive and Credit Trading Program.

A. Credit program. The District shall implement a credit program consistent with the following provisions and in accordance with the provisions of Section 18.10 of Chapter 18 of this code. The credit program shall provide a credit to Parcel owners (including Parcel owners in developments served by a centralized Stormwater or Urban Runoff system) for qualifying improvements that capture or treat Stormwater or Urban Runoff or reduce Stormwater or Urban Runoff pollution in the District.

   1. Unless otherwise approved by the District, water quality credit shall be calculated based on the extent to which a Parcel(s) has complied with (1) an applicable Low Impact Development (LID) ordinance, (2) Standard Urban Stormwater Mitigation Plan (SUSMP) requirements, (3) an Industrial General Permit (IGP), (4) another Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board-approved permit governing the discharge of Stormwater or Urban Runoff (RWQCB Stormwater Permit), or (5) some combination of Stormwater or Urban Runoff discharge requirements for the Parcel. Credit shall also be available for improvements or projects that result in Water Supply Benefits or Community Investment Benefits.

   2. The maximum credit under the credit program shall be one hundred percent (100%) of each Parcel's specific Special Parcel Tax amount.

   3. The credit program shall include provisions allowing for aggregating Parcels under common ownership and applying the credit in developments served by centralized Stormwater or Urban Runoff improvements.

B. Credit trading program. The District shall establish a credit trading program that, at a minimum, would allow Parcel owners to purchase and sell credits to satisfy Special Parcel Tax obligations. The program shall be implemented in accordance with the provisions of Section 18.11 of Chapter 18 of this code.

C. The Chief Engineer shall work with stakeholders to develop and implement a general income-based tax reduction program, including implementation procedures and guidelines for the program, and shall update those implementation procedures and guidelines from time to time, consistent with the purposes and goals of the SCW Program, as the Chief Engineer deems necessary or appropriate for the effective operation of the program.

D. The Chief Engineer shall work with stakeholders to explore the feasibility of, and options for, additional incentives beyond or in support of the credit, income-based tax reduction, low-income senior exemption, and credit trading programs.

(Ord. 2019-0042 § 5, 2019; Ord. 2018-0044 § 1, 2018.)

16.11 Lapsed Funds.

A. Municipalities and Infrastructure Program Project Developers shall be able to carry over uncommitted Special Parcel Tax funds for up to five (5) years from the end of the fiscal year in which those funds are transferred from the District to the Municipality or Infrastructure Program Project Developer. Additional requirements may be included in the Transfer Agreement.

B. Municipalities and Infrastructure Program Project Developers who are unable to expend SCW Program funds in a timely manner shall be subject to lapsing funds procedures. Lapsed funds are funds that were transferred to a Municipality or an Infrastructure Program Project Developer, but were not committed to eligible expenditures by the end of the fifth (5th) fiscal year after the fiscal year in which those funds were transferred from the District.

C. Lapsed funds shall be allocated by the Watershed Area Steering Committee of the respective Watershed Area to a new Project or Program recommendation with benefit to that Municipality or Watershed Area.

(Ord. 2019-0042 § 6, 2019; Ord. 2018-0044 § 1, 2018.)

16.12 Reporting Requirements.

A. Each Municipality shall prepare a progress/expenditure report describing their use of Municipal Program funds in accordance with the provisions of Section 18.06.D. of Chapter 18 of this code.

B. Each Infrastructure Program Project Developer shall prepare progress/expenditure reports describing its use of Regional Program funds in accordance with the provisions of Section 18.07.F. of Chapter 18 of this code.

(Ord. 2019-0042 § 7, 2019; Ord. 2018-0044 § 1, 2018.)

16.13 Audit Recordkeeping.

The following recordkeeping and audit requirements shall apply:

A. SCW Program funds distributed to the District, Municipalities, and Infrastructure Program Project Developers shall be held in separate interest-bearing accounts and shall not be combined with other funds. Interest earned from each account shall be used by the account holder only for eligible expenditures consistent with the requirements of the SCW Program.

B. Municipalities, Infrastructure Program Project Developers, and the District shall retain, for a period of seven (7) years after Project completion, all records necessary in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles to determine the amounts expended, and eligibility of Projects and Programs implemented using SCW Program funds. Municipalities and Infrastructure Program Project Developers, upon demand by authorized representatives of the District, shall make such records available for examination and review or audit by the District or its authorized representatives. Records shall include: accounting records, written policies and procedures, contract files, original estimates, correspondence, change order files, including documentation covering negotiated settlements, invoices, and any other supporting evidence deemed necessary to substantiate charges related to SCW Program funds and expenditures.

C. At all reasonable times, Municipalities and Infrastructure Program Project Developers shall permit the Chief Engineer to examine all Projects and Programs that were erected, constructed, implemented, operated, or maintained, in whole or part, using SCW Program funds. Municipalities and Infrastructure Program Project Developers shall permit the authorized District representative, including the Auditor-Controller, to examine, review, audit, and transcribe any and all audit reports, other reports, books, accounts, papers, maps, and other records that relate to Projects or Programs funded, in whole or part, by the SCW Program.

(Ord. 2019-0042 § 8, 2019; Ord. 2018-0044 § 1, 2018.)

16.14 Indemnification.

The District shall not be required to accept ownership or responsibility for any Project developed, implemented or constructed by a Municipality or an Infrastructure Program Project Developer with SCW Program funds. Unless the

District enters into an express agreement with an Infrastructure Program Project Developer or Municipality to the contrary, neither the District, nor the County to the extent that it is acting on behalf of the District, their officers, employees, agents or volunteers ("District Indemnitees") shall be liable in connection with errors, defects, injuries, or property damage caused by or attributed to any Project that is funded in whole or in part with SCW Program funds, and each Municipality and Infrastructure Program Project Developer shall indemnify the District Indemnitees and hold them harmless for claims, liability, and expenses, including attorneys' fees, incurred by any District Indemnitees as a result of any Project developed, implemented, or constructed by the Municipality or Infrastructure Program Project Developer that is funded, in whole or in part, with the SCW Program funds, except for claims, liability, and expenses, resulting from the sole negligence or willful misconduct of District Indemnitees.

(Ord. 2018-0044 § 1, 2018.)

16.15 Amendment of Ordinance.

A. Except for amendments that would increase the Special Parcel Tax rate, impose the Special Parcel Tax on exempt properties, reduce the maximum available credit in the program, change the purpose and use of the Special Parcel Tax, violate State law or conflict with the purposes of this ordinance, the Board is hereby authorized to amend this ordinance as may be convenient or necessary to comply with the intent of this ordinance or as otherwise required by law, without submitting the amendment to the voters for approval.

B. After a period of no longer than thirty (30) years, the Board shall evaluate the needs of the SCW Program and make an affirmative determination that the Special Parcel Tax is needed to build additional Projects to achieve Water Quality Benefits and other benefits in accordance with the SCW Program Goals. Should the Board determine that no additional Projects are needed, the Special Parcel Tax will be reduced accordingly, to reflect a transition from funding new Projects to funding operation, maintenance and replacement of Projects that were constructed with SCW Program funds during the previous thirty (30) years.

(Ord. 2019-0042 § 9, 2019; Ord. 2018-0044 § 1, 2018.)

16.16. Direction to Board.

The Board shall adopt an ordinance or ordinances implementing the following provisions:

A. Criteria and procedures consistent with Section 16.05 to implement the purposes of this ordinance.

B. An exemption from the Special Parcel Tax for Low-Income Senior-Owned Parcels who apply for such exemption consistent with Section 16.09.B.

(Ord. 2019-0042 § 10, 2019; Ord. 2018-0044 § 1, 2018.)

16.17 Severability.

If any provision of this ordinance or the application thereof to any person or circumstances is held invalid or unconstitutional by any court of competent jurisdiction, such invalidity or unconstitutionality shall not affect any other provisions or applications, and, to this end, the provisions of this ordinance are declared to be severable. The Board and the electorate, should it approve the Special Parcel Tax, do hereby declare that they would have adopted and approved this ordinance and the Special Parcel Tax and each section, subsection, sentence, clause, phrase, part or portion thereof, irrespective of the fact that any one or more sections, subsections, clauses, phrases, parts or portions thereof, be declared invalid or unconstitutional. In case any provision of this ordinance is held invalid, illegal or unenforceable, the validity, legality and enforceability of the remaining provisions of this ordinance shall not in any way be affected or impaired thereby.

(Ord. 2018-0044 § 1, 2018.)

16.18 Effective Date.

This ordinance shall take effect immediately upon approval by two-thirds (⅔) of the electorate voting in an election on this ordinance.

(Ord. 2018-0044 § 1, 2018.)

16.19 Statute of Limitations.

Pursuant to Government Code section 50077.5 and Code of Civil Procedure section 860, any judicial action or proceeding to attack, review, set aside, or annul this Special Parcel Tax, if approved by the voters, shall be commenced within sixty (60) days of the effective date of this ordinance.

(Ord. 2018-0044 § 1, 2018.)

16.20 Execution.

The Chair of the Board is authorized to attest to the adoption of this ordinance by the voters of the District.

(Ord. 2018-0044 § 1, 2018.)

Section 3:
Los Angeles County Flood Control District Code Chapter 18

Chapter 18 SAFE, CLEAN WATER PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION ORDINANCE

18.01 Title.

This Chapter shall be known as the "Safe, Clean Water Program Implementation Ordinance."

(Ord. 2019-0042 § 11, 2019.)

18.02 Definitions.

The definitions set forth in Section 16.03 of Chapter 16 of this code shall apply to this Chapter 18. In addition, the following definitions shall apply to this Chapter 18:

A. "Additional Activities Credit" means a credit against a Parcel's Special Parcel Tax amount for Parcel owners that initiate and complete qualifying additional activities after November 6, 2018, that confer benefits to the broader regional community related to SCW Program Goals. Implementation criteria and procedures related to Additional Activities Credit will be established in the Credit Program Procedures and Guidelines.

B. "Benefited Development" means a group of Parcels that drain to common, centralized Stormwater Improvements. Implementation criteria and procedures related to Benefited Developments will be established in the Credit Program Procedures and Guidelines.

C. "Community Investment Credit" means a credit against a Parcel's Special Parcel Tax amount for Stormwater Improvement that results in a Community Investment Benefit.

D. "Credit Program Procedures and Guidelines" means the implementation procedures and guidelines for the credit program described in Section 18.10.A. of this Chapter.

E. "Feasibility Study Guidelines" means the guidelines for the preparation of Feasibility Studies described in Section 18.07.B.3. of this Chapter.

F. "Industrial General Permit" ("IGP") means the set of requirements by which the State Water Resources Control Board and Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board implement and enforce regulations on industrial storm water discharges and authorized non-storm water discharges from industrial facilities in California. The Industrial General Permit is called a general permit because many industrial facilities are covered by the same permit but comply with its requirements at their individual industrial facilities.

G. "Low Impact Development Ordinance" ("LID Ordinance") means the most recent ordinance establishing local low impact development standards and requirements on certain new development and redevelopment projects operative within the Municipality in which the project is located that conforms to requirements imposed by the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board on that Municipality through the Municipality's MS4 Permit. In the absence of an operative LID Ordinance in the Municipality in which the project is located, the most current LID Ordinance adopted by the County shall apply.

H. "MS4 Permit" means Order No. R4-2012-0175 (As Amended By State Water Board Order WQ 2015-0075 and Order No. R4-2012-0175-A01) NPDES Permit No. CAS004001 Waste Discharge Requirements For Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Discharges Within The Coastal Watersheds of Los Angeles County, Except Those Discharges Originating From The City of Long Beach MS4 or Order No. R4-2014-0024 (As Amended By Order No. R4-2014-0024-A01) NPDES Permit No. CAS004003 Waste Discharge Requirements For Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System Discharges From The City of Long Beach, or any successor permit issued by the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board.

I. "ROC Operating Guidelines" means the operating guidelines for the ROC described in Section 18.08.A.3. of this Chapter.

J. "RWQCB Stormwater Permit" means a permit other than an IGP, issued by the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board, governing the discharge of Stormwater or Urban Runoff.

K. "SCW Program Progress Report" means a biennial report that summarizes all Regional Program WARPP Reports, all Municipal Program annual progress and expenditure reports, and all District Program annual reports and makes findings regarding whether and the extent to which SCW Program requirements were met and SCW Program Goals were achieved.

L. "Scoring Committee" means a group of six (6) subject-matter experts in Water Quality Benefits, Water Supply Benefits, Nature-Based Solutions, and Community Investment Benefits created by the Board to review and score Projects and Feasibility Studies in connection with the Infrastructure Program.

M. "Scoring Committee Operating Guidelines" means the operating guidelines for the Scoring Committee described in Section 18.07.C.3.c. of this Chapter.

N. "Standard Urban Stormwater Mitigation Plan" ("SUSMP") means a plan that designates best management practices that must be used in specified categories of development projects under NPDES permits, as approved by the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board.

O. "Stormwater Improvement" means a structure or facility, or system of structures or facilities, that captures Stormwater or Urban Runoff or reduces Stormwater or Urban Runoff pollution in the District.

P. "Technical Assistance Team" means a group of subject-matter experts in Stormwater and/or Urban Runoff infrastructure design, hydrology, soils, Nature-Based Solutions, green infrastructure, Stormwater and/or Urban Runoff quality, water supply, recreation, open space, community needs, and other related areas, provided by the District to assist Infrastructure Program Project Applicants and others, as part of the Technical Resources Program.

Q. "Threshold Score" means a minimum score that Projects must meet or exceed in order to be eligible for Infrastructure Program funding.

R. "WASC Operating Guidelines" means the operating guidelines for the WASC described in Section 18.07.G.1.e. of this Chapter.

S. "Water Quality Credit" means a credit against a Parcel's Special Parcel Tax amount for a Stormwater Improvement that results in a Water Quality Benefit by complying with: (1) an applicable LID Ordinance, (2) applicable SUSMP requirements, (3) an applicable IGP, (4) an applicable RWQCB Stormwater Permit, or (5) any combination of the foregoing.

T. "Water Supply Credit" means a credit against a Parcel's Special Parcel Tax amount for a Stormwater Improvement that results in a Water Supply Benefit.

U. "Watershed Area Regional Program Progress (WARRP) Report" means an annual report describing the progress of all Projects and Programs included in an SIP during the previous year and summarizing how the implementation of the SIP during the previous year has achieved SCW Program Goals.

V. "Watershed Coordinator" means one or more persons assigned to assist a Watershed Area Steering Committee with community and stakeholder education and engagement and to perform the other activities described in Section 18.07.D.3. of this Chapter.

(Ord. 2019-0042 § 11, 2019.)

18.03 Purpose.

The purpose of this Chapter is to establish additional criteria and procedures related to the implementation of the Los Angeles Region Safe, Clean Water Program described in Chapter 16 of this code. The Board may consider revisions to Chapter 16 of this code and this Chapter 18 in connection with the first biennial public hearing, as described in Section 18.08.C.5. below, and as needed thereafter.

(Ord. 2019-0042 § 11, 2019.)

18.04 SCW Program Goals.

The Los Angeles Region Safe, Clean Water Program shall be implemented consistent with the following goals:

A. Improve water quality and contribute to attainment of water-quality requirements.

B. Increase drought preparedness by capturing more Stormwater and/or Urban Runoff to store, clean, reuse, and/or recharge groundwater basins.

C. Improve public health by preventing and cleaning up contaminated water, increasing access to open space, providing additional recreational opportunities, and helping communities mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change through activities such as increasing shade and green space.

D. Leverage other funding sources to maximize SCW Program Goals.

E. Invest in infrastructure that provides multiple benefits.

F. Prioritize Nature-Based Solutions.

G. Provide a spectrum of project sizes from neighborhood to regional scales.

H. Encourage innovation and adoption of new technologies and practices.

I. Invest in independent scientific research.

J. Provide DAC Benefits, including Regional Program infrastructure investments, that are not less than one hundred and ten percent (110%) of the ratio of the DAC population to the total population in each Watershed Area.

K. Provide Regional Program infrastructure funds benefitting each Municipality in proportion to the funds generated within their jurisdiction, after accounting for allocation of the one hundred and ten percent (110%) return to DACs, to the extent feasible.

L. Implement an iterative planning and evaluation process to ensure adaptive management.

M. Promote green jobs and career pathways.

N. Ensure ongoing operations and maintenance for Projects.

(Ord. 2019-0042 § 11, 2019.)

18.05 District Program Implementation.

A. The District Program shall be implemented in accordance with the provisions of this Section.

B. The District shall perform the following functions as part of the implementation of the District Program:

1. Administer the SCW Program, including collection of the Special Parcel Tax and distribution of funds; administration of credit, credit trading, low-income senior, and any income-based tax reduction or incentive programs; review of budgets and reports; and conducting of audits.
2. Annually prepare a five (5) year revenue forecast for each Watershed Area.
3. Plan, implement, and maintain District Projects.
4. Administer and provide staffing for the Regional Program.
5. Provide staffing for the Scoring Committee, Watershed Area Steering Committees, and the ROC.
6. Provide for coordination of Watershed Coordinators to ensure consistency and sharing of best practices and resources across the District.
7. Provide Technical Assistance Teams and Watershed Coordinators funded by the Technical Resources Program. The District may, in its discretion, also provide Technical Assistance Teams using funds allocated to the District Program.
8. Coordinate Watershed Area scientific studies funded by the Scientific Studies Program.
9. Engage Stakeholders in the planning process for use of the District Program funds.
10. Operate in accordance with best practices for government agencies.
11. Conduct independent audits to ensure compliance with requirements of the SCW Program.
12. Prepare, prior to the start of the District's fiscal year, a plan for how SCW Program funds will be used.
13. Prepare within six (6) months after the end of the District's fiscal year an annual report that details a Program-level summary of expenditures and a description of Water Quality Benefits, Water Supply Benefits, and Community Investment Benefits realized through use of District Program funds.
14. Comply with all SCW Program audit requirements.

C. Educational Programs.

1. The Chief Engineer shall implement and administer the following educational Programs:
    a. Public education and community engagement Programs throughout the District, including a sustained education and engagement Program for disadvantaged communities;
    b. Local workforce job training, which will provide certification classes and vocational training at the community level for the construction, inspection, operation and maintenance of Stormwater or Urban Runoff management and Multi-Benefit Projects, including instruction regarding applicable design concepts; and
    c. Schools education and curriculum Programs.
2. Not less than twenty percent (20%) of District Program funds shall be allocated for these Programs over a revolving five (5) year period.
3. These Programs will be implemented throughout the District with special attention to the needs of DACs.
4. The Chief Engineer shall partner with Stakeholders to collaboratively develop and implement these Programs.

(Ord. 2019-0042 § 11, 2019.)

18.06 Municipal Program Implementation.

A. The Municipal Program shall be implemented in accordance with the provisions of this Section.

B. Each Municipality receiving Municipal Program funding from the SCW Program shall perform the following functions as part of the Municipal Program:

1. Prioritize the development of Projects that, to the extent feasible, assist in achieving compliance with the MS4 Permit.

2. Prepare, prior to the start of that Municipality's fiscal year, a plan for how SCW Program funds will be used in the ensuing fiscal year.

3. Comply with all SCW Program reporting and audit requirements, and provide to the District additional financial and other information, as required by the SCW Program or upon request of the District.

4. As part of the Municipal Program planning process, consider Municipal-level requests for Projects from eligible Infrastructure Program Project Applicants.

5. At least annually, prepare and provide to the public informational materials containing up-to-date information on the Municipality's actual and budgeted use of revenues from the SCW Program.

6. Operate in accordance with best practices for government agencies.

7. Be strictly accountable for all funds, receipts, and disbursements by the Municipality.

8. Identify or establish, and then execute, a plan to engage with Stakeholders in the planning process for use of the Municipal Program funds during the planning and implementation of Projects and Programs.

9. Comply with all Transfer Agreement requirements.

10. Prepare a vector minimization plan addressing vector considerations for the design, operation, and maintenance of each Project.

C. Maintenance of Effort.

1. A Municipality must spend at least seventy percent (70%) of its Municipal Program funds annually on eligible expenses related to Projects or Programs implemented on or after November 6, 2018, which also includes operations and maintenance of Projects built to comply with the MS4 Permit, so long as the Project complies with Municipal Program requirements.

2. Up to thirty percent thirty percent (30%) of a Municipality's Municipal Program funds may be used to pay for costs and expenses incurred on or after November 6, 2018, related to the continuation of Programs implemented or the maintenance of Projects implemented prior to November 6, 2018.

D. Municipal Program Annual Progress/Expenditure Reports.

1. Each Municipality shall prepare and submit an annual report to the District, not later than six months after the end of that Municipality's fiscal year.

2. The annual report shall include the following information:

a. A summary of the expenditures and Water Quality, Water Supply, and Community Investment Benefits realized through use of SCW Program funds;

b. The amount of SCW Program funds expended;

c. Documentation that the SCW Program funds were used for eligible expenditures;

d. A description of work accomplished during the reporting period;

e. The milestones or deliverables completed/submitted during the reporting period;

f. The work anticipated to be accomplished during the next reporting period;

g. Photo documentation of the above, as appropriate;

h. Additional information as required by the District; and

i. A description of the Municipality's stakeholder-engagement activities during the reporting period, including documentation, as appropriate.

3. The District shall review each Municipality's annual report to make a preliminary determination of whether and the extent to which each Municipality's expenditures achieved SCW Program Goals, and the District shall forward its preliminary determination to the ROC.

4. The ROC shall review the Municipalities' annual reports after the District has completed its preliminary determination, to evaluate whether and the extent to which the Municipalities' expenditures achieved SCW Program Goals and develop recommendations as appropriate. The ROC shall report its findings and recommendations to the Board and provide copies to the respective Municipalities.

(Ord. 2019-0042 § 11, 2019.)

18.07 Regional Program Implementation.

A. The Regional Program shall be implemented in accordance with the provisions of this Section.

B. Stormwater Investment Plans (SIP).

1. A SIP shall be adopted for each Watershed Area, annually, in accordance with the following procedure:

a. The Chief Engineer shall prepare a five (5) year revenue forecast for each Watershed Area;

b. The Chief Engineer shall request proposals for Projects to be included in the Infrastructure Program, Project concepts to be included in the Technical Resources Program, and studies and other activities to be included in the Scientific Studies Program, for each Watershed Area SIP. The Chief Engineer may, in their discretion, request proposals either annually or biennially. Small and medium scale, community-level Projects may be combined into a single Project proposal to promote efficiency, achieve economies of scale and advance local-hire and job-training goals. If an Infrastructure Program Project Applicant intends for operation and maintenance costs to be considered for inclusion in a SIP, the Applicant's proposal must include an operation and maintenance plan that identifies the required activities over the useful life of the Project and any expertise or technical training necessary to perform the activities, identify the party that will be responsible for operation and maintenance of the Project, and include a letter of commitment from that party to operate and maintain the Project throughout the Project's useful life;

c. Each Watershed Area Steering Committee shall determine which proposed Feasibility Studies and/or Projects to submit to the Scoring Committee for evaluation. Only Projects meeting the following criteria shall be submitted to the Scoring Committee for evaluation:

(1) Projects for which a Feasibility Study has been completed or for which equivalent information has been developed and is available for review by the Scoring Committee;

(2) Projects that are Multi-Benefit Projects;

(3) Projects that are included in a stormwater resource plan developed in accordance with Part 2.3 (commencing with § 10560) of Division 6 of the Water Code, a watershed management program developed pursuant to an MS4 Permit, an Integrated Regional Water

Management Plan, or other regional water management plan if determined to be equivalent by the Chief Engineer; and

(4) Projects designed for a minimum useful life of thirty (30) years.

d. Projects for which a Feasibility Study has not been completed and that lack equivalent information may be referred to the Technical Resources Program at the discretion of the Watershed Area Steering Committee;

e. The Scoring Committee shall evaluate each proposed Project submitted by the Watershed Area Steering Committees and shall return scores for each proposed Project to the respective Watershed Area Steering Committee;

f. The Chief Engineer shall establish a Threshold Score for Projects proposed for inclusion in the Infrastructure Program. The Threshold Score shall be identified in the Feasibility Study Guidelines;

g. Each Watershed Area Steering Committee shall review and evaluate the proposed Project scores, proposed Project concepts and proposed studies, and shall prepare and submit a SIP, in a standard format established in the WASC Operating Guidelines, to the Regional Oversight Committee for review. Projects that lack sufficient information to be scored, or that do not score above the Threshold Score, may be included in the Technical Resources Program at the discretion of the Watershed Area Steering Committee;

h. The ROC shall review each SIP, determine whether and the extent to which each SIP achieves the SCW Program Goals, and provide its findings and recommendations to the respective WASC and to the Board;

i. The Board shall consider each SIP together with the Regional Oversight Committee's recommendation and shall either approve the SIP or return it to the appropriate Watershed Area Steering Committee for revision and resubmittal; and

j. Once the Board approves a SIP, the District shall transfer SCW Program funds to Infrastructure Program Project Developers as indicated in the SIP.

2. SIPs shall be developed by the Watershed Area Steering Committees in accordance with the following criteria:

a. Not less than eighty-five percent (85%) of the budget shall be allocated to Infrastructure Program activities, not more than ten (10%) of the budget shall be allocated to Technical Resource Program activities, and not more than five percent (5%) of the budget shall be allocated to Scientific Studies Program activities;

b. Projects that assist in achieving compliance with a MS4 Permit shall be prioritized, to the extent feasible;

c. Funding for Projects that provide DAC Benefits shall not be less than one hundred and ten percent (110%) of the ratio of the DAC population to the total population in each Watershed Area. To facilitate compliance with this requirement, the District will work with stakeholders and Watershed Coordinator(s) to utilize existing tools to identify high-priority geographies for water-quality improvement projects and other projects that create DAC Benefits within DACs, to help inform WASCs as they consider project recommendations;

d. Each Municipality shall receive benefits in proportion to the funds generated within their jurisdiction, after accounting for allocation of the one hundred ten percent (110%) return to DACs, to the extent feasible, to be evaluated annually over a rolling five (5) year period;

e. A spectrum of Project types and sizes shall be implemented throughout the region, to the extent feasible, to be evaluated annually over a rolling five (5) year period;

f. Nature-Based Solutions shall be prioritized, to the extent feasible;

g. Projects, Feasibility Studies, scientific and technical studies, and other activities selected for inclusion in a SIP should be recommended to receive funding for their total estimated costs, unless a lesser amount has been requested;

h. Operation and maintenance costs for any Project may be included in the Infrastructure Program portion of a SIP, whether or not the design and construction of that Project was included in a SIP; and

i. Only Projects that meet or exceed the Threshold Score shall be eligible for inclusion in the Infrastructure Program. Projects that receive a score below the Threshold Score may be referred to the Technical Resources Program at the discretion of the Watershed Area Steering Committee.

3. The Chief Engineer shall develop and adopt guidelines for the preparation of Feasibility Studies (Feasibility Study Guidelines), including required contents, and shall update those guidelines from time to time, consistent with the purposes and goals of the SCW Program, as the Chief Engineer deems necessary or appropriate for the effective operation of the Regional Program. Prior to adopting or updating the guidelines, the Chief Engineer shall provide not less than thirty (30) days' advance public notice of the proposed guidelines or revisions. Public notice shall, at a minimum, include posting the proposed guidelines or revisions on the SCW Program website.

C. Infrastructure Program Implementation.

1. Prior to the disbursement of any funds for a Project that has been selected for inclusion in the Infrastructure Program, the Infrastructure Program Project Applicant must identify the Infrastructure Program Project Developer for the Project. The individual, group or entity identified as the Infrastructure Program Project Developer must have sufficient knowledge, experience and resources to effectively manage the design and construction of the Project and ensure its completion. An Infrastructure Program Project Applicant may designate a construction authority to be the Infrastructure Program Project Developer. Also, at the request of the Infrastructure Program Project Applicant or the Infrastructure Program Project Developer, the District, at its discretion, may act as the Infrastructure Program Project Developer for all or any aspects of a Project.

2. Prior to the disbursement of any funds for a Project that has been selected for inclusion in the Infrastructure Program, the Infrastructure Program Project Applicant must also identify the person or entity that will be responsible for the operation, maintenance and repair of the Project and the source of funds that will be used to pay for the operation, maintenance and repair of the Project, throughout the Project's useful life.

3. Prior to the disbursement of any funds for a Project that has been selected for inclusion in the Infrastructure Program, a vector minimization plan must be prepared addressing vector considerations for the Project.

4. Scoring Committee.

a. The Scoring Committee shall include at least two subject-matter experts in Water Quality Benefits, at least one subject-matter expert in Nature-Based Solutions or Community Investment Benefits, and at least one subject-matter expert in Water Supply Benefits.

b. The members of the Scoring Committee shall comply with State conflict of interest laws (e.g., Gov. Code §§ 1090 et seq. and 87100 et seq.) and all applicable conflict of interest policies of the County;

c. The Chief Engineer shall develop and adopt operating guidelines for the governance of the Scoring Committee and the conduct of Scoring Committee business (Scoring Committee Operating Guidelines), including standard Project-scoring criteria, and shall update those guidelines from time to time, consistent with the purposes and goals of the SCW Program, as the Chief Engineer deems necessary or appropriate for the effective operation of the Scoring Committee and the conduct of Scoring Committee business. Each Scoring Committee member will be required to read and comply with the Scoring Committee Operating Guidelines, among other things, as a condition of serving as a member of the Scoring Committee;

d. The District shall provide staff support to the Scoring Committee using funds from the District Program;

e. The District may compensate members of the Scoring Committee who are not otherwise compensated, in the amount of one hundred dollars ($100) per meeting attended, using funds from the District Program; and

f. Meetings conducted by the Scoring Committee shall be open to the public.

D. Technical Resource Program Implementation.

1. The purpose of the Technical Resources Program is to provide Technical Assistance Teams to assist persons or organizations that do not have the necessary technical resources or capabilities with the development of Feasibility Studies and compliance with other technical requirements of the Infrastructure Program, and to provide Watershed Coordinators to educate and build capacity in Watershed Areas and facilitate community and Stakeholder engagement with the Technical Resources Program and the Watershed Area Steering Committees as a whole.

2. Technical Assistance Teams.

a. A Technical Assistance Team shall be assigned to assist with the development of a Feasibility Study for each Project concept identified in a SIP;

b. The District, at the request of a Watershed Area Steering Committee, shall provide a Technical Assistance Team to assist Infrastructure Program Project Applicants and others, as appropriate, in meeting other technical requirements of the Infrastructure Program, including, but not limited to, the amendment of eligible water-quality plans to include a Project and assisting non-Municipal Project Applicants with obtaining letters of support from the applicable Municipality; and

c. Technical Assistance Teams shall be paid for with funds allocated to the Technical Resources Program in the applicable SIP. In addition, the District may, in its discretion, provide Technical Assistance Teams using funds allocated to the District Program.

3. Watershed Coordinators.

a. Not less than one (1) Watershed Coordinator will be assigned to each Watershed Area; plus, one (1) additional Watershed Coordinator will be assigned for each additional one-million people within the Watershed Area;

b. Each Watershed Area Steering Committee shall select their respective Watershed Coordinator(s) from a list of eligible candidates provided by the District and shall designate them in their respective SIPs as part of the Technical Resource Program budget. A single Watershed Coordinator position may be filled by an individual or by multiple employees of a single entity at the discretion of the applicable WASC; and

c. The duties and responsibilities of Watershed Coordinator(s) center around connecting potential applicants with technical resources and building inclusion and meaningful engagement in pursuit of SCW Program Goals, and shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

(1) Work with Technical Assistance Teams to bring resources to potential Infrastructure Program Project Applicants;

(2) Work with Municipalities and Stakeholders to identify and develop Project concepts that may be elevated to the Watershed Area Steering Committees and Technical Assistance Teams to assist with development of Feasibility Studies;

(3) Identify and help leverage and secure additional funding sources for Regional Projects and Programs;

(4) Engage Municipalities, community groups, and other watershed Stakeholders to ensure diverse perspectives are included in planning and implementation of the Regional Program;

(5) Conduct community outreach to diverse communities, with an emphasis on disadvantaged communities;

(6) Provide leadership in community outreach efforts related to watershed planning;

(7) Facilitate collaborative decision-making between private and public entities to develop and implement actions that best address community priorities;

(8) Integrate community, Municipality, and regional priorities through partnerships and extensive networks;

(9) Organize public outreach events included in SIPs, such as workshops, demonstrations, community forums and restoration activities, to educate Stakeholders on stormwater-related topics;

(10) Serve as non-voting members of the Watershed Area Steering Committees for their respective Watershed Areas; and

(11) Collaborate with all other Watershed Coordinators and the District to help ensure consistency in implementation and to inform each other of effective efforts, outreach, and communication approaches, including sharing best practices and resources.

E. Scientific Studies Program Implementation.

1. The purpose of the Scientific Studies Program is to provide funding for scientific and technical activities, including, but not limited to, scientific studies, technical studies, monitoring, and modeling related to Stormwater and Urban Runoff capture and pollution reduction.

2. Watershed Area Steering Committees will recommend studies and other activities for funding by including the studies or other activities in the Scientific Studies Program portion of their respective SIPs.

3. All studies and other activities included in the Scientific Studies Program portion of a SIP shall be conducted in accordance with accepted scientific protocols.

4. The Scientific Studies Program shall be administered by the District and, to the extent feasible, shall utilize independent research institutions or academic institutions to carry out Scientific Studies or to help design and peer review Scientific Studies carried out by other entities.

F. Progress/Expenditure Reports.

1. Infrastructure Program Project Developers shall prepare midyear progress and expenditure reports, as described in subsection 3 below, for their respective Projects and Programs.

2. The Chief Engineer shall prepare midyear progress and expenditure reports, as described in subsection 3 below, for activities undertaken by the District pursuant to the Technical Resources (e.g. Watershed Coordinators and Technical Assistance Teams) and Scientific Studies Programs.

3. Midyear progress and expenditure reports shall include the following information:

   a. An estimate of the percentage of work completed;

   b. The amount of SCW Program funds expended;

   c. Documentation that the SCW Program funds were used for eligible expenditures;

   d. A discussion of work accomplished during the reporting period;

   e. The milestones or deliverables completed/submitted during the reporting period;

   f. A discussion of any scheduling concerns and issues encountered that may delay completion of the Program or Project;

   g. The work anticipated to be accomplished during the next reporting period;

   h. Photo documentation of the progress and current status of the Project, as appropriate;

   i. Any anticipated schedule or budget modifications; and

   j. A summary of the outreach activities to DACs and expenditures that achieve DAC Benefits.

4. Infrastructure Program Project Developers shall prepare an annual summary report of the progress and expenditures for their respective Programs and Projects, including all items listed in Section 18.07.F.3. The annual summary reports shall also include a description of the Water Quality Benefits, Water Supply Benefits, Community Investment Benefits and the SCW Program Goals achieved during the prior year.

5. The Watershed Area Steering Committees shall review the Infrastructure Program Project Developers' midyear progress and expenditure reports and the annual summary reports to evaluate whether the schedules, budgets, scopes and expected benefits have significantly changed and remain consistent with the SCW Program Goals. Programs and Projects that are over budget or behind schedule, or that demonstrate reduced or revised scope or benefits, may be adjusted or removed from future SIPs.

6. The Watershed Area Steering Committees shall forward each midyear progress and expenditure report and each annual summary report to the ROC, together with the Watershed Area Steering Committees' evaluations.

G. Watershed Area Steering Committees.

1. Membership Requirements.

   a. Each Watershed Area Steering Committee shall be comprised of seventeen (17) members plus the Watershed Coordinator(s) for the Watershed Area. Seven (7) members shall represent the Municipalities located within the Watershed Area, five (5) members shall represent agency members, and five (5) members shall represent community Stakeholders. Each member shall have a designated alternate to attend committee meetings, participate in accordance with the WASC Operating Guidelines, and vote in the absence of the primary member; and

   b. The Municipal members and their alternates shall be selected in accordance with the following:

      (1) A Municipality with at least fourteen percent (14%) of the Impermeable Area located within the Watershed Area shall appoint one primary member and one alternate member. A Municipality with at least twenty-eight percent (28%) of the Impermeable Area located within the Watershed Area shall appoint two primary members and two alternate

members. A Municipality with at least forty-three percent (43%) of the Impermeable Area located within the Watershed Area shall appoint three primary members and three alternate members. A single Municipality shall not appoint more than three primary and three alternate members to any Watershed Area Steering Committee, unless the Watershed Area is comprised of less than three Municipalities;

(2) The remaining primary Municipal members shall be selected by the unrepresented Municipalities in the Watershed Area; and

(3) All persons selected as primary or alternate members must meet the applicable qualifications described in the WASC Operating Guidelines.

c. The agency members and their alternates shall be selected in accordance with the following:

(1) The Board shall appoint the primary agency members. The agency members will be, to the maximum extent feasible, selected to represent a range of interests within the Watershed Area and to maintain a regional focus;

(2) One member shall represent the District;

(3) One member shall represent the largest municipal water district in the Watershed Area;

(4) One member shall represent the largest watermaster or groundwater agency in the Watershed Area or, if no such agency exists, a second municipal water district;

(5) One member shall represent the largest local park and open space agency in the Watershed Area;

(6) One member shall represent the largest sanitation agency in the Watershed Area;

(7) Each primary member shall designate an alternate member from their organization; and

(8) All persons selected as primary or alternate members must meet the applicable qualifications described in the WASC Operating Guidelines.

d. The community Stakeholder members and their alternates shall be selected in accordance with the following:

(1) The Board shall appoint all primary community Stakeholder members. The primary community Stakeholder members will be, to the maximum extent feasible, selected to maintain a geographic balance and represent a range of interests within the Watershed Area and maintain a regional focus;

(2) One member shall represent environmental justice interests;

(3) One member shall represent business interests;

(4) One member shall represent environmental interests;

(5) The two remaining primary community Stakeholder members will be from the community, including, but not limited to, public health agencies, labor organizations, non-governmental organizations, community-based organizations, schools and academia;

(6) Each primary member shall designate an alternate member from their organization; and

(7) All persons selected as primary or alternate members must meet the applicable qualifications described in the WASC Operating Guidelines.

e. The Chief Engineer shall develop and adopt operating guidelines for the governance of the WASCs and the conduct of WASC business (WASC Operating Guidelines), including minimum qualifications to serve as a committee member, and shall update those guidelines from time to

time, consistent with the purposes and goals of the SCW Program, as the Chief Engineer deems necessary or appropriate for the effective operation of the WASCs and the conduct of WASC business. Each WASC member will be required to read and comply with the WASC Operating Guidelines, among other things, as a condition of serving as a member of the WASC.

2. Meeting Procedures.

   a. Each Watershed Area Steering Committee shall hold regular meetings at a frequency and on a schedule determined by that Committee. Watershed Area Steering Committee meetings shall be open to the public;

   b. A quorum is required for Watershed Area Steering Committees to act on any item of business at a meeting. A quorum will consist of a simple majority of the members or their alternates in attendance at the meeting, out of the total existing membership positions currently occupied. If a quorum is present at a meeting, the Watershed Area Steering Committee may approve of any item of business by a simple majority vote;

   c. Each Watershed Area Steering Committee member or their alternate shall have one equally weighted vote;

   d. Watershed Coordinators shall participate in the meetings of the Watershed Area Steering Committees for their respective Watershed Areas as non-voting members;

   e. The District will provide staff support to the Watershed Area Steering Committees using funds from the District Program;

   f. Members and alternates of the Watershed Area Steering Committees who are not otherwise compensated to participate, may qualify for a stipend in the amount of one hundred dollars ($100) per meeting attended, subject to qualifying circumstances, to be paid through the District Program; and

   g. Members and alternates of the Watershed Area Steering Committees shall comply with State conflict of interest laws (e.g., Gov. Code §§ 1090 et seq. and 87100 et seq.) and all applicable conflict of interest policies of the County.

3. Additional Duties and Responsibilities. In addition to the preparation of the SIPs and review of the progress and expenditure reports, as described above, Watershed Area Steering Committees shall have the following additional duties and responsibilities:

   a. Each Watershed Area Steering Committee shall annually prepare a WARPP Report;

   b. Each Watershed Area Steering Committee shall provide information about its Watershed Area as requested by the Board; and

   c. Each Watershed Area Steering Committee, in conjunction with its Watershed Coordinator(s), shall help potential Infrastructure Program Project Applicants identify potential partners and additional sources of funding to augment and leverage SCW Program revenues for Projects and Programs.

(Ord. 2024-0026 § 1, 2024; Ord. 2019-0042 § 11, 2019.)

18.08 Regional Oversight Committees (ROC).

A. Membership Requirements.

1. The ROC shall be comprised of nine (9) voting members who shall be subject-matter experts in the areas of Water Quality Benefits, Water Supply Benefits, Nature-Based Solutions and Community

Investment Benefits, public health, sustainability, and/or other fields related to Stormwater capture or the reduction of Stormwater or Urban Runoff pollution. The ROC shall also include two (2) non-voting members, one representing the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board and one representing the District.

2. The Board shall appoint all members of the ROC. The members of the ROC will be selected to ensure a diverse representation of the subject-matter experts described above.

3. The Chief Engineer shall develop and adopt operating guidelines for the governance of the ROC and the conduct of ROC business (ROC Operating Guidelines), and shall update those guidelines from time to time, consistent with the purposes and goals of the SCW Program, as the Chief Engineer deems necessary or appropriate for the effective operation of the ROC and the conduct of ROC business. Each ROC member will be required to read and comply with the ROC Operating Guidelines, among other things, as a condition of serving as a member of the ROC.

B. Meeting Procedures.

1. The ROC shall hold regular meetings at a frequency and on a schedule determined by the ROC, but typically no less than quarterly. ROC meetings shall be open to the public.

2. A quorum is required for the ROC to act on any item of business at a meeting. A quorum will consist of five (5) voting members in attendance at the meeting. If a quorum is present at a meeting, the ROC may approve of any item of business by a simple majority vote.

3. Each voting member shall have one equally weighted vote.

4. The District will provide staff support to the ROC using funds from the District Program.

5. Members of the ROC who are not otherwise compensated to participate, may qualify for a stipend in the amount of one hundred dollars ($100) per meeting attended, subject to qualifying circumstances, to be paid through the District Program.

6. Members of the ROC shall comply with State conflict of interest laws (e.g., Gov. Code §§ 1090 et seq. and 87100 et seq.) and all applicable conflict of interest policies of the County.

C. Duties and Responsibilities. The ROC shall have the following duties and responsibilities:

1. The ROC shall annually review the SIP for each Watershed Area.

2. The ROC shall review the midyear and annual progress and expenditure reports: (a) prepared by the Chief Engineer for the Technical Resources Program and the Scientific Studies Program, and (b) prepared by the Infrastructure Program Project Developers for the Infrastructure Program, and the ROC shall provide any comments or concurrence with the evaluations by the WASCs, as appropriate.

3. The ROC shall annually review the WARPP Reports for each Watershed Area to determine whether and the extent to which Regional Program requirements were met and SCW Program Goals were achieved for the prior year and, based on its review, shall make recommendations for adjustments to the following year's SIPs and provide those recommendations to the respective Watershed Area Steering Committees and the Board.

4. The ROC shall review, evaluate and develop recommendations regarding the Municipalities' annual reports, as described in Section 18.06.D. of this Chapter.

5. The ROC shall biennially prepare a SCW Program Progress Report for the Board in accordance with the following procedures:

a. The ROC shall prepare a draft SCW Program Progress Report, circulate the draft for public comment, and conduct a noticed public hearing to receive public comments on the draft;

b. After the conclusion of the public hearing, the ROC shall revise the draft SCW Program Progress Report as it determines necessary or appropriate based on the public comments received; and

c. The ROC shall submit the final SCW Program Progress Report to the Board and make the final Report available to the public.

(Ord. 2024-0026 § 2, 2024; Ord. 2019-0042 § 11, 2019.)

18.09 Transfer Agreements.

A. The Board shall approve standard template Transfer Agreements for use by the District, Municipalities, and Infrastructure Program Project Developers.

B. Contents. The standard template Transfer Agreement will require recipients of funds to comply with the requirements of the SCW Program and other appropriate provisions established by the Board, including but not limited to:

1. Requirements for compliance with the terms of the SCW Program.

2. Provisions, as necessary, to provide clarity and accountability in the use of SCW Program funds.

3. Provisions, processes, and schedules for disbursement of funds.

4. For Regional Infrastructure Program Project Developers, Project parameters such as schedule, budget, scope, and benefits.

5. For Municipalities, a requirement to annually submit a plan of how SCW Program funds will be used during the ensuing year, which shall include, at a minimum, anticipated activities, anticipated engagement activities with stakeholders, an initial programmatic budget, and the SCW Program Goals that are anticipated to result from the planned expenditures.

6. Provisions for management of interest funds, debt, liability, and obligations.

7. Provisions for indemnification of the District.

8. Requirements for auditing and annual and midyear progress and expenditure reports.

9. With respect to a Project funded with SCW Program funds through the Regional Program, if the Project has an estimated capital cost of over twenty-five million dollars ($25,000,000), as adjusted periodically by the Chief Engineer in accordance with changes in the Consumer Price Index for all urban consumers in the Los Angeles area, or other appropriate index, a provision that the Infrastructure Program Project Developer for such a Project must require that all contractors performing work on such a Project be bound by the provisions of: (1) a County-wide Project Labor Agreement ("County PLA"), if such an agreement has been successfully negotiated between the County and the Trades and is approved by the Board, or (2) a Project Labor Agreement ("PLA") mirroring the provisions of such County PLA.

10. With respect to a Project funded with SCW Program funds through the Regional Program, if one or more of the Municipalities that is a financial contributor to a Project has its own PLA, a provision that the Infrastructure Program Project Developer for the Project must require that contractors performing work on the Project are bound to such PLA. If more than one of the contributing Municipalities to a capital project has a PLA, the Project Developer shall determine which of the PLAs will be applied to the Project.

11. With respect to a Project funded with SCW Program funds through the Regional Program, a provision that the Infrastructure Program Project Developer for such a Project must apply and enforce provisions mirroring those set forth in the then-current version of the County's Local and Targeted Worker Hire Policy ("LTWHP"), adopted by the Board on September 6, 2016, as to contractors performing work on

such a Project; or, if the Infrastructure Program Project Developer is a Municipality and has adopted its own policy that is substantially similar to the LTWHP, a provision that the Infrastructure Program Project Developer may, at its election, choose to apply and enforce the provisions of its own such policy as to contractors performing work on such a Project in lieu of the provisions of the LTWHP.

12. With respect to a Project funded with SCW Program funds through the Regional Program, a provision that the Infrastructure Program Project Developer for such a Project must apply and enforce provisions mirroring those set forth in County Code Chapter 2.211 (Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise Preference Program), County Code Chapter 2.204 (Local Small Business Enterprise Preference Program), and County Code Chapter 2.205 (Social Enterprise Preference Program), as to contractors performing work on such an Infrastructure Program Project, subject to statutory authorization for such preference program(s), and subject to applicable statutory limitations for such preference(s); and, furthermore, a provision that the Infrastructure Program Project Developer implementing such a Project must take actions to promote increased contracting opportunities for Women-Owned Businesses on such a Project, subject to applicable State or federal constitutional limitations.
13. Requirements for post-construction/implementation monitoring as appropriate.
14. Requirements on Infrastructure Program Project Developers to carry out all actions necessary to complete the Project.
15. Requirements related to the operation, maintenance, and repair of the Project throughout its useful life.
16. A prohibition against the use of SCW Program funds for any Project implemented as an Enhanced Compliance Action ("ECA") and/or Supplemental Environmental Project ("SEP") as defined by State Water Resources Control Board Office of Enforcement written policies, or any other Project implemented pursuant to the settlement of an enforcement action or to offset monetary penalties imposed by the State Water Resources Control Board, a Regional Water Quality Control Board, or any other regulatory authority, except as provided in subsection 17, below.
17. A provision that SCW funds may be used for any Project implemented pursuant to a time schedule order ("TSO") issued by the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board provided that, at the time the TSO is issued, the Project is included in an approved watershed management program (including enhanced watershed management programs) developed pursuant to the MS4 Permit.

(Ord. 2024-0026 § 3, 2024; Ord. 2019-0042 § 11, 2019.)

18.10 Credit Program Implementation.

A. The credit program described in Section 16.10.A. of Chapter 16 of this code shall be implemented in accordance with the provisions of this Section. The Chief Engineer shall develop and adopt additional or revised implementation procedures and guidelines for the program (Credit Program Procedures and Guidelines) consistent with the purposes and goals of the SCW Program, including a standard formula for calculating the specific amount of Water Quality, Water Supply, Community Investment, and Additional Activities Credits, and additional criteria for credit eligibility, and shall update those implementation procedures and guidelines from time to time, as the Chief Engineer deems necessary or appropriate for the effective operation of the program. Prior to adopting or updating the Credit Program Procedures and Guidelines, the Chief Engineer shall provide not less than thirty (30) days' advance public notice of the proposed procedures and guidelines or revisions. Public notice shall, at a minimum, include posting the proposed procedures and guidelines or revisions on the SCW Program website. The Chief Engineer shall review this Section every five (5) years and propose revisions, for approval of the Board, as necessary to conform the provisions of this Section with the provision of the Credit Program Procedures and Guidelines.

B. Credit Eligibility Criteria and Calculation of Credit Amounts.

1. Water Quality Credit. Parcels that include a Stormwater Improvement, or that are located in a Benefited Development that includes a Stormwater Improvement, shall be eligible for a Water Quality Credit as follows:

Stormwater Improvement Criteria	Maximum Credit Amount
The Stormwater Improvement meets the requirements of an applicable LID Ordinance.	Up to sixty-five percent (65%) of the Parcel's Special Parcel Tax amount.
The Stormwater Improvement exceeds the requirements of an applicable LID Ordinance.	Up to seventy-five percent (75%) of the Parcel's Special Parcel Tax amount.
The Stormwater Improvement provides Water Quality Benefits that are comparable to or greater than the Water Quality Benefits that would be achieved by a Stormwater Improvement that complies with the requirements of Section 12.84.440 of the Los Angeles County Code.	Up to sixty-five percent (65%) of the Parcel's Special Parcel Tax amount.
The Stormwater Improvement was commenced prior to November 6, 2018, and meets the requirements of an applicable SUSMP.	Up to fifty percent (50%) of the Parcel's Special Parcel Tax amount.
The Stormwater Improvement was commenced prior to November 6, 2018, and exceeds the requirements of an applicable SUSMP.	Up to sixty-five percent (65%) of the Parcel's Special Parcel Tax amount.
The Stormwater Improvement meets the requirements of an applicable RWQCB Stormwater Permit.	Up to sixty-five percent (65%) of the Parcel's Special Parcel Tax amount.
The Stormwater Improvement meets the requirements of an applicable RWQCB Stormwater Permit and has a design volume greater than or equal to the runoff volume resulting from a 2-inch, 24-hour rain event.	Up to seventy-five percent (75%) of the Parcel's Special Parcel Tax amount.
The Stormwater Improvement retains one hundred percent (100%) of all Urban Runoff from the Parcel or Benefited Development.	Up to 50% of the Parcel's Special Parcel Tax amount, through and including 2024, and up to twenty percent (20%) of the Parcel's Special Tax amount thereafter.

2. Water Supply Credit. Parcels that include a Stormwater Improvement or that are located in a Benefited Development that includes a Stormwater Improvement providing a Water Supply Benefit shall be eligible for a Water Supply Credit of up to twenty percent (20%) of the Parcel's Special Parcel Tax amount.

3. Community Investment Credit. Parcels that include a Stormwater Improvement or that are located in a Benefited Development that includes a Stormwater Improvement providing a Community Investment Benefit shall be eligible for a Community Investment Credit of up to ten percent (10%) of the Parcel's Special Parcel Tax amount.

4. Notice of Non-Applicability ("NONA") Credit. A Parcel or portion of a Parcel that is the subject of a NONA issued by the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board shall be eligible for a credit of up to one-hundred percent (100%) of the Parcel's Special Parcel Tax amount.

5. Maximum Combined Credit Amounts:

   a. Water Quality Credits, Water Supply Credits and Community Investment Credits may be combined up to a maximum of eighty percent (80%) of a Parcel's Special Parcel Tax amount; and

   b. An additional credit of up to twenty percent (20%) of a Parcel's Special Parcel Tax amount, may be awarded to Parcel owners that perform Additional Activities after November 6, 2018, that confer benefits to the broader regional community related to SCW Program Goals. Examples and additional details will be included in the Credit Program Procedures and Guidelines.

C. Credit Program Implementation Procedures. The District shall grant Parcel owners credit for qualifying Stormwater Improvements and Additional Activities, as described in Section 18.10.B., in accordance with the following procedures:

1. The owner or an authorized representative of the owner of a Parcel that includes a Stormwater Improvement or that is located in a Benefited Development, may submit an application for credit or recertification to the District. The application shall include the following information, as applicable:

   a. Photo documentation of the construction or installation of the Stormwater Improvement on the Parcel or Benefited Development, as applicable;

   b. A maintenance management plan for the Stormwater Improvement;

   c. The applicable LID Ordinance design storm volume or IGP or RWQCB Stormwater Permit or SUSMP design standard for the Impermeable Area of the Parcel or Benefited Development;

   d. Calculations of the following:

      (1) The total Impermeable Area of the Parcel or Benefited Development;

      (2) The Impermeable Area tributary to the Stormwater Improvement;

      (3) The maximum volume that the Stormwater Improvement is designed to capture and/or treat; and

      (4) The amount of the Water Quality Credit, Water Supply Credit, Community Investment Credit, and/or Additional Activities Credit applied for.

   e. A certification by a civil engineer licensed to practice in California, that all information in the application pursuant to subsections 1.a through d, above, is correct, that the calculations are accurate, and that the Stormwater Improvement is performing as designed; and

   f. A certification by the Parcel owner or the owner's authorized representative verifying the claimed Community Investment, NONA, and Additional Activities Credits.

2. The District shall establish application deadlines for each fiscal year and only applications submitted prior to the deadline will be considered for approval.

3. If the District approves an application for credit, the credit will be applied to the Parcel's Special Parcel Tax amount for the next two (2) fiscal years. Parcel owners or their authorized representatives must thereafter re-certify to continue the credit, every two (2) years. The re-certification to continue the credit shall contain the same information as the initial application for credit, as applicable, and shall be subject to the application deadlines established for the year of re-certification.

4. Procedures for aggregating multiple Parcels with common ownership and procedures for Benefited Developments shall be included in the Credit Program Procedures and Guidelines. In addition, the Chief

Engineer shall consider developing procedures for preliminary review of credit eligibility for Parcel owners and Benefited Developments for inclusion in the Credit Program Procedures and Guidelines.

5. Applicants shall have the right to appeal a credit determination in accordance with the procedures established in the Credit Program Procedures and Guidelines.

(Ord. 2019-0042 § 11, 2019.)

18.11 Credit Trading Program.

A. The credit trading program described in Section 16.10.C. of Chapter 16 shall be implemented in accordance with procedures and guidelines developed and adopted by the Chief Engineer, in consultation with stakeholders, and updated from time to time, consistent with the purposes and goals of the SCW Program, as the Chief Engineer deems necessary or appropriate for the effective operation of the program. Prior to adopting or updating the procedures and guidelines, the Chief Engineer shall provide not less than thirty (30) days' advance public notice of the proposed procedures and guidelines or revisions. Public notice shall, at a minimum, include posting the proposed procedures and guidelines or revisions on the SCW Program website.

B. Credits earned but not applied in the Credit Program will be eligible for trading.

(Ord. 2019-0042 § 11, 2019.)

18.12 Exemption for Low-Income Senior-Owned Parcels.

The exemption for Low-Income Senior-Owned Parcels described in Section 16.09.B. of Chapter 16 shall be implemented in accordance with procedures and guidelines developed and adopted by the Chief Engineer, and updated from time to time, consistent with the purposes and goals of the SCW Program, as the Chief Engineer deems necessary or appropriate for the effective implementation of the exemption. Prior to adopting or updating the procedures and guidelines, the Chief Engineer shall provide not less than thirty (30) days' advance public notice of the proposed procedures and guidelines or revisions. Public notice shall, at a minimum, include posting the proposed procedures and guidelines or revisions on the SCW Program website.

(Ord. 2019-0042 § 11, 2019.)

18.13 Appeals Process for Review of Calculation of Special Parcel Tax Amount.

The appeals process referenced in Section 16.08.C. of Chapter 16 of this code shall be administered in accordance with procedures and guidelines developed and adopted by the Chief Engineer and updated from time to time, consistent with the purposes and goals of the SCW Program, as the Chief Engineer deems necessary or appropriate for the effective administration of the appeals process. Prior to adopting or updating the procedures and guidelines, the Chief Engineer shall provide not less than thirty (30) days' advance public notice of the proposed procedures and guidelines or revisions. Public notice shall, at a minimum, include posting the proposed procedures and guidelines or revisions on the SCW Program website.

(Ord. 2019-0042 § 11, 2019.)

18.14 Enforcement and Remedies for Violations.

A. The purpose of this Section is to establish baseline alternate remedies for the District to utilize in enforcing the provisions of this Chapter. The remedies authorized in this Chapter are cumulative to any other remedy

provided for in this code, or the laws of the State of California or the United States of America, so long as the cumulative application of such available remedies would not violate any applicable law.

B. If the District determines that a Municipality, Infrastructure Program Project Developer, or any other recipient of SCW Program funds has violated any provision of this Chapter or an applicable Transfer Agreement, the District is authorized to issue a notice of violation to the Municipality, Infrastructure Program Project Developer or other recipient of SCW Program revenues. The notice shall be in writing and shall describe the violation, the remedial actions the recipient must take to correct the violation, and the date by which the violation must be corrected.

C. If the violation involves the use of SCW Program funds for a purpose not authorized by this Chapter, the remedial actions specified in the notice may include a requirement to reimburse the funds, plus interest, to the District.

    1. SCW Program funds reimbursed by a Municipality will be used to fund Regional Projects that, to the extent feasible and as determined by the WASC, are located within the jurisdiction of the Municipality.

    2. SCW Program funds reimbursed by an Infrastructure Program Project Developer will be used to implement Projects in the same Watershed Area from which the funds were collected.

D. If the violation is not corrected by the date specified in the notice, the District is authorized to immediately suspend and withhold future disbursements of SCW Program funds to the Municipality, Infrastructure Program Project Developer, or other recipient of SCW Program funds, until the violation is corrected; provided, however, that if the violation remains uncorrected for a period of five (5) years, the withheld funds may be reallocated to a different Program or Project in the same Watershed Area, as determined by the applicable Watershed Area Steering Committee.

E. A Municipality, Infrastructure Program Project Developer, or other recipient of SCW Program funds that disputes a notice of violation that has been issued to it may submit a written notice of appeal to the District not later than twenty (20) business days from the date of the written notice from the District. The District shall appoint a hearing officer to conduct a hearing on the appeal.

    1. Where the notice of violation requires the recipient to reimburse SCW Program funds, the submission of a notice of appeal does not relieve the Municipality, Infrastructure Program Project Developer, or other recipient of SCW Program funds of the obligation to reimburse to the District the SCW Program funds in dispute. If the hearing officer determines that the expenditures in dispute did not violate this Chapter, the reimbursed funds will be returned in the next disbursement of SCW Program revenues to that Municipality, Infrastructure Program Project Developer, or other recipient of SCW Program funds.

(Ord. 2019-0042 § 11, 2019.)

Section 4:
2025 Interim Guidance

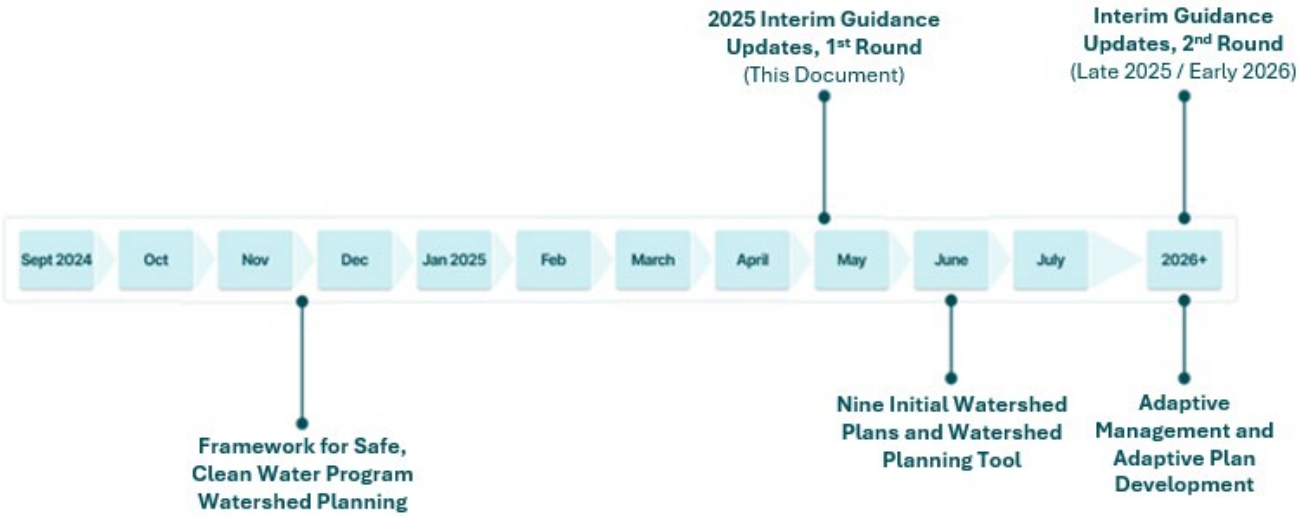
Introduction

This Safe Clean Water Program (SCW Program)[1] *2025 Interim Guidance*[2] has been developed by the Los Angeles County Public Works (Public Works), considering input from Interested Parties, to support development of projects and feasibility studies to align with the key components of the SCW Program Goals in the following areas:

- Strengthening Community Engagement and Support
- Water Supply Guidance
- Programming Nature Based Solutions
- Implementing Disadvantaged Community Policies in the Regional Program

Information in this *2025 Interim Guidance* is meant to provide context for SCW Program activities and the drivers behind new and ongoing program-related developments. This is accomplished through definitional refinements, responses to motions from the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, incorporation of early outcomes from the SCW Program Watershed Planning Framework, and other actions related to the evolving SCW Program landscape. Considering this guidance document will be released prior to the completion of the Initial Watershed Plans, subsequent adaptations may incorporate, as appropriate, outcomes from the Watershed Planning process, as well as ongoing work with Watershed Coordinators (WCs)[3], the Watershed Area Steering Committees (WASCs), and other coordination efforts, among others. Additional issues warranting further guidance may be considered in the future. Figure 1 below provides a timeline for recent SCW Program-related developments as well as those expected in the near future.

Figure 1: Tentative SCW Program Adaptive Management Timeline



[1] Terms in blue font, along with further detailed information about the SCW Program and its various aspects/components, can be found in the SCW Program Terms & Concepts Glossary (Appendix A).
[2] Italicized terms herein tend to refer to additional SCWP Guidance and other reference documents. Refer to https://safecleanwaterla.org/call-for-projects/ for a comprehensive document list.
[3] https://safecleanwaterla.org/watershed-coordinators/

SCW Program Interim Guidance Purpose

A primary function of this *2025 Interim Guidance* is to provide a basis upon which Project Applicants can build the specific features and characteristics of their proposed projects. Integrating aspects such as Community Engagement, Water Supply Benefits, Nature-Based Solutions, and Disadvantaged Community Benefits is vital for the success of any SCW Program project, as well as its inclusion within Stormwater Investment Plans (SIPs). This *2025 Interim Guidance* is intended to consolidate the existing requirements and recommendations within the SCW Program regarding these project aspects and, at a high level, support SIP programming by providing information to help:

- Project Applicants with early project development and application preparation.
- Watershed Area Steering Committees, Watershed Coordinators and the Scoring Committee consistently employ decision-making tools and strategies (both quantitative and qualitative) to inform scoring and/or the development of SIP recommendations.

An understanding of the scoring criteria for projects proposed to the SCW Program is crucial to ensure that projects sufficiently address requirements and recommendations such that they are deemed appropriate for SIP inclusion. Further details regarding scoring criteria can be found in the *Feasibility Study Guidelines* and *Supplemental Guidance to Support the Feasibility Study Guidelines*. There are specific aspects of proposed projects that can highly influence scoring. This *2025 Interim Guidance* includes an overview of scoring criteria that will aid in effective project planning and design.

Also included within this *2025 Interim Guidance* is a breakdown of the tools and strategies that may be used by entities such as WASCs, WCs, and the Scoring Committee (SC) in efforts to accurately and consistently evaluate each proposed project. Evaluation is performed in consideration of the overall SCW Program Goals.

Several additional documents, distinct from this *2025 Interim Guidance*, have been developed to provide support and/or information for a range of SCW Program-related applications. Some of these documents are referenced and/or sourced from throughout this *2025 Interim Guidance*, including the following:

- *Feasibility Study Guidelines*
- *Supplemental Guidance to Support Feasibility Study Guidelines*
- *2024 Metrics and Monitoring Study*
- *Equity in Stormwater Investments* White Paper
- *SCW Program Watershed Planning Framework*
- *Regional Program Funding Process Handbook*
- *SCW Program Handbook for Municipalities*
- *Reporting Module Guidance – New Regional Program Performance Measures*

Supplementary SCW Program details, documents, projects, and program information is available on https://safecleanwaterla.org/.

Program Background

The Safe, Clean Water Program (SCW Program) provides local, dedicated funding generated through a Special Parcel Tax to support SCW Program Goals. General SCW Program objectives are to increase regional water supply, improve water quality, and enhance communities throughout Los Angeles County Flood Control District (District) boundaries.

The SCW Program generates approximately $285 million per year in funding for multi-benefit Projects and Programs that align with SCW Program goals and objectives. The funding is divided across three sub-programs- District, Regional, and Municipal Programs.

SCW Program Goals (paraphrased):

A. Water Quality
B. Water Supply
C. Community Investment Benefits
D. Leverage Funding
E. Multi-Benefit Projects
F. Nature-Based Solutions
G. Provide a Spectrum of Project Sizes
H. Adopt New Technology
I. Scientific Studies
J. Disadvantaged Community Benefits
K. Municipal Benefits
L. Adaptive Management
M. Green Jobs and Career Pathways
N. Ongoing Operations & Maintenance

Additional detail regarding SCW Program Goals can be found in District Code Section 18.04.

The District Program administers the SCW Program and Regional Program, provides technical assistance, oversees regional water quality planning and coordination, Scientific Studies, and water quality modeling, and plans, implements, and maintains District projects. The Municipal Program funds efforts including Municipality-led infrastructure and maintenance programs to support water quality and Multi-Benefit Projects. The Regional Program funds regional projects and efforts through Watershed Area-level management oversight and includes the Infrastructure Program, Technical Resources Program, and Scientific Studies Program. Under the Regional Program and for the purposes of this *2025 Interim Guidance*, the term "Project" is intended to mean the development (including design, preparation of environmental documents, obtaining regulatory permits, construction, inspection, and similar activities) and Operations & Maintenance (O&M) (including monitoring) of a physical structure or facility that increases Stormwater or Urban Runoff capture or reduces stormwater or urban runoff pollution in the District.

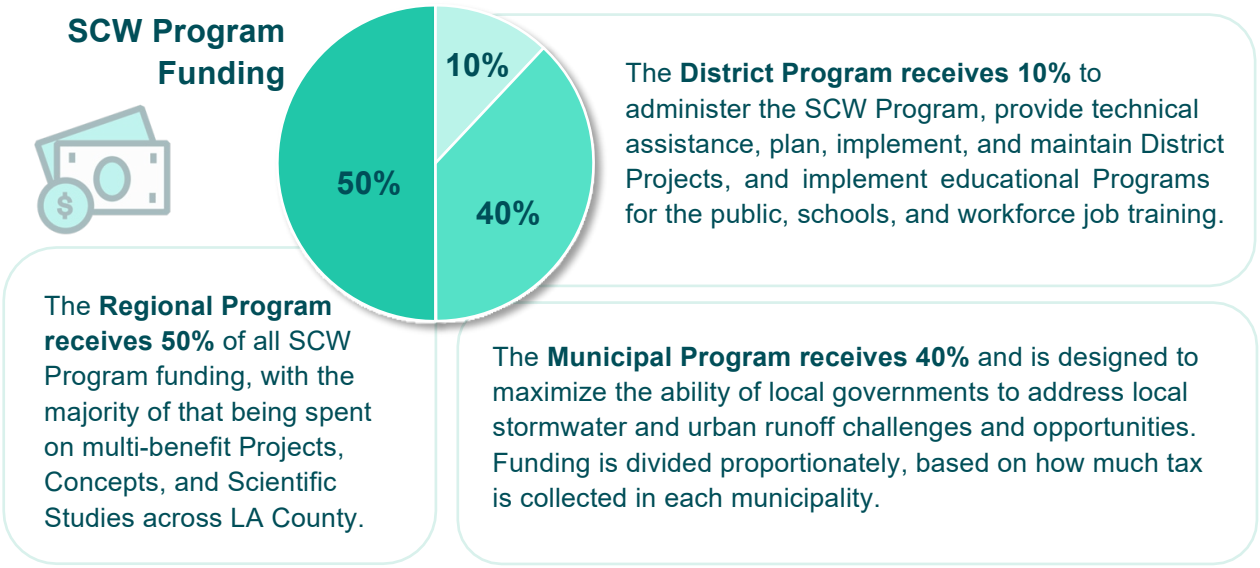


Figure 2. SCW Program funding allocations by sub-program

For each of these program areas, information and/or specific guidance documents have been developed to summarize existing SCW Program information, establish a shared vocabulary as part of the SCW Program, include information related to best practices, and provide additional clarity on key SCW Program components through implementation to date. This *2025 Interim Guidance* has been developed primarily to support the Regional Program call for projects, scoring, and SIP processes; however, information may be of value for the District and Municipal Programs as well. Additional information specific to the Regional Program is provided in the *Regional Program Funding Process Handbook*. Detailed Municipal Program guidance can be found in the SCW Program's *Handbook for Municipalities*.

Key interested parties and intended users of this 2025 *Interim Guidance* include:

- **Infrastructure Program Project Applicants:** Any individual, group, business or governmental entity that submits a proposed project or Feasibility Study for consideration for funding by the SCW Program. Entities that may submit a proposed Project or Feasibility Study for funding may include, but are not limited to: Public Works, a municipality, watershed management group, joint powers authority, public utility, special district, school, Community-Based Organization (CBO), Non-Governmental Organization (NGO), non-profit organization, Federally-Recognized Indian Tribe, State Indian Tribe listed on the Native American Heritage Commission's California Tribal Consultation List, or mutual water company.
- **Infrastructure Program Project Developer:** The individual, group, or entity that carries out or causes to be carried out part or all the actions necessary to complete a SCW Program project.

- **Project Proponents:** Community members, Project Developers/Applicants, or other interested parties with a tangible desire to promote a given project and assisting in the eventual realization of its Water Quality, Water Supply, and/or Community Investment Benefits.
- **Watershed Area Steering Committees (WASCs):** A governing body created by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors (Board), one for each Watershed Area, that reviews proposed projects, project concepts, and scientific studies, and develops SIPs for their respective Watershed Areas as part of the Regional Program. WASCs are occupied by municipal, agency, and community member representatives, and each WASC is supported by at least one WC.
- **Scoring Committee (SC):** A group of six subject-matter experts in Water Quality Benefits, Water Supply Benefits, Nature-Based Solutions, and Community Investment Benefits created by the Board to review and score projects and Feasibility Studies in connection with the Infrastructure Program.

These key interested party groups are primarily relevant in the context of the Regional Program's Infrastructure Program. Project Applicants seeking funding through the Infrastructure Program must submit a Feasibility Study, or equivalent, for evaluation through the SCW Program Projects Module. The Projects Module assigns a Feasibility Study a preliminary "Module Score" based on Scoring Criteria requirements and alignment with SCW Program Goals. The Module Score is then verified by the SC. Feasibility Studies which meet or exceed a certain Threshold Score are considered to move forward for programming into one of the nine watershed area SIPs administered by the WASC.

Project Applicants who submit a Feasibility Study through the SCW Program Projects Module are also asked to identify the Known or Perceived Needs (or Desired Outcomes) of the community or Watershed Area within which a project is located, justification of why the Project Developer understands those to be needs, and the ways that the project is anticipated to address those needs and achieve desired outcomes. This question is posed for each of the three SCW Program benefits – Water Supply Benefits (WSB), Water Quality Benefits (WQB), and Community Investment Benefits (CIB).

While not scored, the identification of needs related to each type of benefit is an important part of the project narrative that WASC members should evaluate for any individual project or suite of projects considered for inclusion in a SIP. This is particularly important for Water Supply Benefits, primarily due to the potential for one project's claimed benefit to be impacted by another that is upstream or downstream of the other, especially in the absence of any coordination prior to project development and planning.

SAFE CLEAN WATER PROGRAM

Safe, Clean Water Program 2025 Interim Guidance

Table of Contents

Community Engagement and Support

Section Highlights

Acknowledged here are the SCW Program developments that are new additions to this *2025 Interim Guidance*.

What's New

- Updated organization and clarification of community engagement and support guidance.
- Incorporation of recommendations derived from the Equity in Stormwater Investments (UCLA 2022) White Paper and MMS (LA County PWD 2024), including additional Performance Measure reporting requirements to better quantify and track outreach and engagement efforts.
- Refined best practices for comprehensive community engagement.
- Alignment of outreach and engagement guidance with project phases outlined in the *2025 Supplemental Guidance to Support Feasibility Study Guidelines* (*2025 Supplemental Feasibility Study Guidance*)
- The Community Strengths and Needs Assessment (CSNA) has been developed and implemented.
- In partnership with the Water Foundation, the Safe Clean Water Public Education and Community Engagement Grants Program has been launched by the District.

Section Highlights

In addition, the following requirements and recommendations are included for Community Outreach and Engagement within SCW Program projects:

What's Required

- Documentation of community engagement efforts prior to application submittal.
- Description of plans for engagement during project implementation.
- Requirements presented by the SCW Program Transfer Agreements.
- Efforts to mitigate issues related to displacement and gentrification.
- Plans to solicit, address, and incorporate interested party input through outreach and engagement.

What's Recommended

- Consideration of contextual variables in distinguishing individual communities.
- Demonstration of strong community-based support and/or project development in partnership with local NGOs and CBOs.
- Provision of evidence of NGO partnerships(s) and/or widespread community support for project.
- "Best"-level community outreach and engagement, as outlined in Table 3.
- Integration of CSNA input, to the maximum extent feasible.
- Discussion of engagement related to Native American Indian tribes.

For additional guidance regarding the various requirements and recommendations related to community outreach and engagement within SCW Program projects, refer to the following supplementary documents:

1. *Feasibility Study Guidelines*
2. *2024 Metrics and Monitoring Study*
3. *Reporting Module Guidance – New Regional Program Performance Measures*
4. *Equity in Stormwater Investments* White Paper

A comprehensive list of relevant SCW Program documents is available at https://safecleanwaterla.org/call-for-projects/.

Purpose

Community outreach, meaningful engagement, and the pursuit and attainment of Community Support are important for ensuring that SCW Program projects and expenditures deliver tangible *and* welcomed benefits on the ground. Program experience to date has indicated that additional detailed community engagement guidance can support development of meaningful engagement tools and approaches for SCW Program projects.

At the base of community engagement and support as related to the SCW Program is the determination of what constitutes a "community". For the purpose of this *2025 Interim Guidance,* and based on input from SCW Program interested parties, the following definition has been developed:

While the definition above provides guidance, it is the responsibility of the WASCs and SC to verify Project Applicants' interpretation of "community" based on their subject matter expertise and the context in which community is referenced by Project Applicants.

What features distinguish an individual community from another often varies based on circumstance. Any SCW Program project may be subject to a number of variables that impact how communities are differentiated. Consideration of these contextual variables is an important step in identifying individual communities and determining community boundaries in the context of a given SCW Program project.

> The term "community" refers to a group of individuals or entities that hold and recognize something in common, for instance, a geographic area, culture, needs and interests, goals, or other social bonds. Community boundaries can be defined by formal political or informal social geographies that have meaning for the community members. In the context of the SCW Program, community members can be self-defined and may include residents, CBOs, local businesses, public institutions, agencies, and other interested parties who are either directly or indirectly influenced by the development of a project and the associated benefits that support their quality of life.

Community engagement, defined as activities that solicit, address, and incorporate input from community members for SCW Program activities/projects, is a key element of the SCW Program. The intended outcome of community engagement activities is the attainment of community support, or tangible support from and/or partnerships with the local community. Engagement is woven through many different aspects of the District Program, Municipal Program, and Regional Program; however, it is not an explicitly listed Goal of the SCW Program. The focus of this *2025 Interim Guidance* chapter is in support of progressing engagement strategies and implementation aimed at developing community support for Infrastructure Projects submitted or funded by the SCW Program.

Projects submitted for inclusion in SIPs are required to document pre-submittal community engagement and describe plans for engagement during project implementation. WCs and/or the Technical Resources Program may support Project Proponents with community

engagement prior to the award of funding. Even so, completing community engagement and/or providing sufficient evidence of community support prior to receiving funding can be challenging for some Project Applicants. Further, community engagement does not guarantee community support, and a strong demonstration of community support may not necessarily be the result of engagement.

Specifically, this *2025 Interim Guidance* includes guidance related to the following:

1. **Engagement Prior to Application:** Policies for establishing and documenting that community engagement has occurred (and to what level) and/or support for a project exists (and to what level).
2. **Engagement Plan for Project Implementation:** Clarification of how project proponents and WASCs can interpret and substantiate commitment to community engagement once a project is funded and being implemented.

Note that additional guidance was provided by the Community Strengths and Needs Assessment (CSNA)[4] and the SCW Program 2024 Metrics and Monitoring Study (MMS)[5], as well as is contained the Equity in Stormwater Investments (University of California, Los Angeles [UCLA] 2022) White Paper[6].

[4] https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/8efe6e5f57804998be1a8c4067c41cab/page/Dashboard
[5] https://safecleanwaterla.org/content/uploads/2024/07/SCWP-Metrics-Monitoring-Study-Executive-Summary.pdf
[6] https://www.stantec.com/content/dam/stantec/files/PDFAssets/technical/001/equity-in-stormwater-investments-stantec-ucla.pdf

Existing Community Outreach/Engagement Policies in the SCW Program

The SCW Program includes various planning and reporting requirements for Community Outreach/Engagement activities as part of Regional and Municipal Program Fund Transfer Agreement processes and *Feasibility Study Guidelines*.

SCW Program Transfer Agreements in the Regional and Municipal Programs

A Fund Transfer Agreement is the SCW Program process used for recipients of funds to comply with the requirements of the other appropriate provisions established in the SCW Program Implementation Ordinance. The standard template Regional Program Transfer Agreement includes plan submittal requirement with provisions for outreach and engagement activities as well as ongoing biennial reminders for O&M projects and activities and measures to mitigate against displacement and gentrification.

Implementation of appropriate outreach can lead to community engagement. Community engagement activities solicit, address, and incorporate input from community members for SCW Program projects and activities.

Stakeholder and Community Outreach/Engagement Plan activities should occur during the design phase and construction/O&M phases. A broad suite of events including public meetings with multiple agenda items such as council, commission, or committee meetings where public input is invited; at festivals, fairs, or open houses where a table or booth may be set up, or project-specific meetings may be used to support community engagement. The SCW Program Transfer Agreement (Section A-8.3) specifies minimum required outreach/engagement activities for Infrastructure Program Project Funding (Table 1).

Regional Community Outreach Activities

Outreach activities are performed to provide residents information about upcoming meetings or other scheduled engagement activity. Methods should be appropriate in type and scale to the served community. Outreach methods include but are not limited to:

- **Online Media Outreach –** Online media includes email blasts, social media efforts, and website publication. Further details can be located on the SCW Program Community Engagement & Education Webpage.
- **Local Media Outreach –** Local media includes newsletters, local and regional newspaper publications, and local television and radio. Additional local media may include emerging techniques such as targeted advertisements within streaming/podcast services, and/or YouTube.
- **Grassroots Outreach –** Efforts include door-to-door canvassing, phone banking, focus groups and surveys, coordination with local community groups, and activities such as the distribution of flyers and other printed materials. This method of community outreach is accompanied by a recommendation for ongoing coordination with local organizations.

Best practice includes coordination with Public Works via web-based platforms (requires four weeks lead time), social media outreach and notifications for meetings and other engagement events.

Table 1. Minimum required and example outreach/engagement activities for different SCW Program project funding levels. (Information derived from Transfer Agreement Sections A-8.3/8.4)

Infrastructure Program Funds	Required Activity 1	Required Activity 2	Example Outreach Activity	Example Engagement Activity	Example Outreach Content
Up to $2 M	Outreach or Engagement	--	Distribution of informational materials to community via signage, online media, and/or grassroots efforts	Attendance/ presentation at Public Forums / Community Meetings	Project planning and implementation progress and schedule updates Project features and benefits
Up to $10 M	Outreach	≥ 1 Engagement	Distribution of informational materials to community via signage, online media, local media and/or grassroots efforts Earned media coverage	Attendance/ presentation at Public Forums / Community Meetings/City Council / Board of Supervisors Meetings	Project planning and implementation progress and schedule updates specific to planning / design phases Focused outreach to minimize potential construction phase impacts to the community and public-at-large
Over $10 M	Outreach	≥ 2 Engagements	Distribution of informational materials to community via signage, online media, local media and/or grassroots efforts Earned/paid media coverage	Attendance/ presentation at Public Forums / Community Meetings/City Council / Board of Supervisors Meetings Project-specific community meetings	Targeted phase-specific project progress and schedule updates Focused outreach to minimize potential construction phase impacts to the community and public-at-large Post-construction project features and Community Investment Benefits promotion
Infrastructure Program Project O&M	Outreach (Biennial)	--	Distribution of informational materials to community via signage, online media, local media and/or grassroots efforts	--	Focused outreach to remind communities of the SCW Program contribution

In addition, Regional Program Transfer Agreement plan submittal includes a requirement to address "Activities and measures to mitigate against displacement and gentrification. This includes, as applicable, an acknowledgement that the Funded Activity will be fully subject to and comply with any County-wide displacement policies as well as with any specific anti-displacement requirements associated with other funding sources."[7] Although there do not currently exist any readily available anti-displacement policies listed at the County-level in Los Angeles, interested parties can refer to other anti-displacement regulations in California (e.g. AB1482) for guidance regarding potential displacement mitigation efforts. The requirement of plans to include provisions for mitigating displacement and gentrification goes hand in hand with overall Disadvantaged Community (DAC)-related SCW Program Goals that aim to "prioritize equity in implementation" and "address inequity in infrastructure".[8] Further detail regarding the necessity for consideration of Disadvantaged Community Benefits within the SCW Program is provided in the "Implementing Disadvantaged Community Policies in the Safe, Clean Water Program" section of this *2025 Interim Guidance*.

Regional Program Feasibility Study Guidelines

A Feasibility Study is required to include a plan to solicit, address, and incorporate interested party input through outreach and engagement. Demonstration of strong community-based support for a project and/or project development in partnership with local NGOs and CBOs is not required but is suggested by the *Feasibility Study Guidelines*. A discussion of these aspects of project development is necessary if the Project Applicant intends to receive points for community support.

In addition to requirements presented by the *Feasibility Study Guidelines*, community engagement is woven into many other components of the SCW Program related to Regional Program activities. This includes, but is not limited to:

- WCs as part of the Regional Program Technical Resources Program.
- The District Education Program, including District-wide public education and community engagement programs and sustained education and engagement programs for DACs.
- The Public Education and Community Engagement Grants Program, which will provide support through funding of education and community engagement efforts.
- Municipal Program implementation, including plans for interested party engagement in Municipal Program funds allocation planning.

For additional details regarding requirements related to community engagement, refer to the SCW Program *Feasibility Study Guidelines*.

[7] See Section A-8.5.
[8] https://www.stantec.com/content/dam/stantec/files/PDFAssets/technical/001/equity-in-stormwater-investments-stantec-ucla.pdf

Additional Guidance for Community Engagement and Support

In addition to the policies and requirements listed above, Project Applicants, Developers, Proponents, and WASCs may also consider the following.

Expectations for Community Engagement by Project Phase

Sustained engagement to solicit, address, and incorporate interested party input on the project, including potential impacts related to displacement and gentrification, should occur for both the design and construction/O&M phases. Outreach and engagement activities, even if funded by other sources, should generally be aligned to provide an overview of the project and approach, appropriate technical information to support meaningful engagement and input, and summary of Community Investment Benefits. The goals and expectations for the level of community engagement may vary based on the project status and schedule. Project Applicants are strongly encouraged to seek input from WCs to achieve desired goals based on project phase. Project phase-specific expectations for community engagement are discussed in detail below.

Design Funding Applicants

During the design phase, outreach to connect with and allow for identification of key interested parties for subsequent engagement is an important first step. Project details developed during the design phase including geographic location, project goals and concepts designs, surrounding community characteristics, long-term Water Supply, Water Quality, and Community Investment Benefits may be used to support targeted outreach. Community engagement is undertaken with the goal of engaging relevant interested parties to solicit, address, and incorporate input on community needs/concerns/objectives, as well as identify potential solutions to challenges. Issues related to displacement and gentrification should also be addressed. This ongoing consideration for interested party and community views regarding a project is essential in ensuring iterative and equitable decision-making within a project design phase. Specifically, continued communication of progress and/or benefits to interested parties and the community prevents engagement fatigue and ensures that benefits claimed by Project Developers are agreed upon by community members. Those applying for design phase funding may also seek funding for community outreach and engagement efforts related to project planning phase activities.

This approach includes the minimum expectation that Program Applicants identify and inform/consult interested parties prior to application submittal (see Table 3 below). Other available funds (such as support from the Public Education and Community Engagement Grants Program and/or Municipal Program funds if the applicant is a municipality) should be utilized to prioritize and secure resources for additional community engagement needs as part of the design phase. Should such resources not exist prior to application submittal, a clear description and discussion of limitations along with a description of any plans for future resource acquisition should be included by the Program Applicant.

Construction/O&M Funding Applicants

The construction portion of this phase consists of project designs that have advanced to 60-percent or beyond and tangible project implementation, including but not limited to site preparation and construction of infrastructure components. The O&M portion of this phase involves operating and maintaining infrastructure to ensure its long-term functionality and effectiveness. Additional technical components of the O&M portion monitoring relevant parameters such as maintenance frequency and cost as well as efficacy in terms of Water Quality and Water Supply Benefits.

During and following a project's construction phase, the primary goals of community engagement are to realize and maintain effective partnerships, sustain ongoing public education, and communicate/recognize project progress and project benefits. This engagement may be used to optimize long-term maintenance, monitoring, adaptive management, and/or plans for future project phases. Project Developers are already required to report on activities through the funded duration of the project. Project Developers can refer to Table 3 for best practices.

SCW Program Infrastructure Program Scoring Criteria explicitly identifies that "a plan or existing justification for how the project demonstrates strong local, community-based support or has been developed as part of a partnership with local non-governmental organizations, community-based organizations, and others" as the criteria for which community support is evaluated. It is worth noting that outreach to communities is distinctive from support from or partnerships with communities. When demonstrating community support, it is recommended to provide evidence of partnerships with NGOs or compelling evidence that the project enjoys widespread community support. For the purposes of this *2025 Interim Guidance*, the following clarifications have been developed:

- Widespread community support is defined as verifiable support and agreement from a discrete number of distinct Interested Parties within a given community.
    - The number of interested parties from which support and agreement must be attained to be able to claim widespread community support can be determined by using the ratio of the project's drainage area to the aggregated drainage area that has been managed by Infrastructure Program projects to date in the Watershed Area for which a Project Applicant is applying (Table 2).
    - Aggregated drainage area for projects to date for given Watershed Areas were taken from FY24-25 SIPs, and are provided here:

Watershed Area	Aggregated Drainage Area (acres)
Central Santa Monica Bay (CSMB)	78,085
Lower Los Angeles River (LLAR)	29,387
Lower San Gabriel River (LSGR)	40,582
North Santa Monica Bay (NSMB)	1,889
Rio Hondo (RH)	67,500
Santa Clara River (SCR)	2,457
South Santa Monica Bay (SSMB)	27,690
Upper Los Angeles River (ULAR)	21,324
Upper San Gabriel River (USGR)	5,889

This methodology is intended to contextualize the proposed project's size in relation to the SCW Program projects that have occurred to date for its specific Watershed Area, and provide recommendations for widespread community support accordingly.

Table 2: Project Sizes and Corresponding Recommendations for Widespread Community Support

Project Size Category	Drainage Area Ratio (DAR)[9]	Support Recommendation
Small	DAR ≤ 0.005	≥ 3 Interested Parties
Medium	0.005 < DAR < 0.05	≥ 4 Interested Parties
Large	DAR ≥ 0.05	≥ 5 Interested Parties

For illustrative purposes, consider the following example:

Consider a project with a drainage area of 500 acres, located in the Lower San Gabriel River Watershed Area. This Watershed Area's aggregated drainage is 40,582 acres. Thus, this project's DAR would be equal to 500 acres divided by 40,582 acres.

$$DAR = \frac{500}{40{,}582} = 0.012$$

As this DAR value falls between 0.005 and 0.05, this project would fall into the medium size category and thus have a support recommendation of 4 or more interested parties.

- Compelling evidence is considered to be documentation of widespread community support that sufficiently achieves the "Best" benchmark in the Good/Better/Best framework presented below for community engagement best practices. Examples of such documentation include, but are not limited to:
  - Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or support letters from CBOs, tribes, elected officials, or other community representatives;
  - Documentation of community organizing, community-driven planning, open planning forums with citizen polling, consensus building, participatory action research, participatory budgeting, etc.;
  - Performance of volunteerism activities and/or workforce development activities.

Best Practices for Community Education and Engagement

Best practices for community outreach and engagement for the SCW Program are intended to assist in ensuring equity, inclusion, and accessibility (Table 3). These best practices, and the corresponding terminology, are derived from professional standards, guidance/input received to date, benchmarking, and existing analyses from Cities, non-profit experts, and other project

[9] Drainage Area Ratio means the ratio of an individual project's drainage area to the aggregated drainage area of projects to date for its Watershed Area, as listed in the Watershed Area's most recent SIP.

developers and interested party groups. Some of these resources include the *Spectrum of Community Engagement to Ownership*, originally developed by Rosa González of *Facilitating Power* in partnership with Movement Strategy Center[10] and the *Pricipios y Comunidad: Principals that Redefine Strategies & Approaches for Impactful Community Engagement* by Mujeres de la Tierra[11]. These guidelines/terms may be applied to numerous aspects of the SCW Program, including Regional Program Applicants, WC efforts, and planning/reporting in the Municipal Program. SCW Program projects should ultimately target the "Best" category at all project phases. Those claiming "Better" or "Best" engagement practices should also demonstrate the incorporation of listed examples from the lower categories when documenting their justification of completed or planned outreach and engagement.

While community engagement is, on its own merit, an essential component of projects within the SCW Program, it is also key to achieving equitable implementation of projects and associated benefits. Equity of project benefits directly relates to the community engagement and Disadvantaged Community Benefit components both of this *2025 Interim Guidance*, and of the SCW Program as a whole. Conducting sufficient community engagement promotes the recognition of benefits by community members and fosters ongoing community support through the Lifecycle of a project.

One way to promote consistency between a project's benefits and the self-identified needs/priorities of a community is through incorporation of information gathered through the Community Strengths and Needs Assessment (CSNA), a survey that gathers input from the public regarding community needs, strengths, and priorities. By doing so, the CSNA allows interested parties engaging with the SCW Program to become informed on the issues and priorities considered important by local communities. Currently, the most prominent Performance Measure (i.e., metrics) system in the SCW Program is the project scoring criteria and the Metrics and Measures data collected from Regional Program Project Applicants during semi-annual reporting. However, data gathered through the CSNA has the potential to inform the creation of new, more comprehensive performance measures for the evaluation of a project's community engagement and its provision of tangible and desired outcomes for a community. Additionally, incorporation of community input promotes a sense of involvement throughout the community and mitigates Engagement Fatigue, while addressing needs explicitly set forth by community members promotes equity and community-driven decision-making by bridging the gap between community and governance[12]. It is worth noting that use of CSNA input does not itself constitute the performance of outreach and engagement, and is best used to inform outreach and engagement efforts and more comprehensively align efforts with the self-proclaimed needs/priorities of community members. The use of CSNA data supplements but does not replace actual outreach/engagement efforts.

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[10] https://movementstrategy.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/The-Spectrum-of-Community-Engagement-to-Ownership.pdf
[11] https://safecleanwaterla.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/FINAL-Principios-y-Comunidad-Report-2020-2.pdf
[12] https://movementstrategy.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/The-Spectrum-of-Community-Engagement-to-Ownership.pdf

Table 3. Best practices for conducting outreach and engagement

Outreach/ Engagement Practice	Good	Better	Best
Engagement Levels	**Inform** - Provide the community with relevant information **Consult** - Gather input from the Community	**Involve** - Ensure community input, needs, and assets are integrated into processes, receive demonstrable consideration and appropriate responses, and inform planning **Educate** – Grow community understanding of the existing infrastructure systems, purposes, perceived outstanding needs, pertinent history and regulations, SCW Program opportunities (including WCs) to establish **Learn** – Grow own understanding of existing community, perceived needs, pertinent history, key concerns, and other potentially interested parties.	**Collaborate** - Leverage and grow community capacity to play a leadership role in both planning and implementation **Incorporate** - Foster democratic participation and equity by including the community in decision-making, bridge divide between community and governance **Partner** – Establish certain project concepts based on community-driven and identified needs, solidify formal partnerships, and build in sustained paths forward to joint implementation and management with well-defined roles per agreement, including appropriate compensation for community partners
Example Activities	• Fact Sheets with translation as needed • Open Houses • Presentations • Videos • Online Media • Social Media • Local Media • Listening Sessions • Public Comment • Focus Groups • Surveys • Polling	• Open house Meetings • Interactive Workshops & Tours • Community Forums • Canvassing • Transparent responses to community comments • Document expanded understanding and commitment to ongoing relationships	• MOUs / support letters from CBOs or Elected Officials • MOUs / support letters from impacted Tribes • Community Organizing • Citizen Advocacy Committees • Open Planning Forums with Citizen Polling • Community-Driven Planning • Consensus Building • Participatory Action Research • Participatory Budgeting • Cooperatives • Volunteerism activities • Workforce Development activities • Compensate community partners for their time and expertise

Additional best practices recommended for effective and inclusive community outreach and engagement include:

- Project Applicants should provide a reasonable budget for outreach/engagement activities that aligns with the outreach/engagement plan. These costs can be included in the SCW Program funding request or funded by other sources and should acknowledge/account for any specific needs or focuses during certain project phases. Budgets for projects included in the SIP are included in the project applications which are accessible via the SCW Program Portal[13].
- Communicate early and often with your respective WC. This can include coordinating with the WC to verify sufficient and accurate identification of interested parties, community needs/concerns, and potential solutions during the planning phase. Communication can also ensure sufficient performance of educational activities and incorporation of interested party input to enhance decision-making in project designs. Finally, communication can help to maintain effective partnerships and communicate/recognize project progress during the construction/O&M phase to best prepare for the project's long-term success.
- Engage with elected officials:
    - In the early planning phase for high profile, multi-jurisdictional, or critical resource projects to facilitate critical project aspects such as funding opportunities, interested party coordination, and community needs identification;
    - Prior to the construction/O&M phase to inform relevant interested parties and the community of a project's primary impacts and benefits;
    - Near project completion to allow for positive promotion and progress reporting and promote further interested party engagement opportunities throughout the project's continued lifecycle.
- Leverage existing relationships in the community and the outreach/engagement expertise of local CBOs/NGOs.
- Establish meaningful dialogue early in the project timeline with both Federally Recognized and Non-Federally Recognized Tribes that are or may be affected by the proposed project in an early and ongoing process with a basis of mutual respect and recognition of consultation capacity and needs.
    - Project Developers are obligated to consult with tribes regarding potential adverse changes in the significance of tribal cultural resources.
    - California Assembly Bill 52 requires public agencies to consult with tribes during the CEQA process.
- Use outreach and engagement methods that are appropriate in scale and type to the community being served (e.g., neighborhood-specific, family-focused, culturally appropriate, etc.).
- Review recent engagement efforts undertaken by others with the same community to become familiar with community goals and wishes. Ensure new engagement honors other recent contributions made by the community.
    - Incorporate public input received through CSNA.

[13] SCW Portal https://portal.safecleanwaterla.org/scw-reporting/map

- Coordinate with partner educational, non-profit, and governmental entities to prevent community meeting/engagement fatigue and frustration about redundant meetings.
    - Employ local NGOs/CBOs in efforts to most effectively engage with communities regarding local issues/challenges.
- Support awareness of outreach/engagement events through multiple platforms (Online Media, Local Media, Grassroots Outreach, etc.).
- Inform the community of engagement events at least one week prior and send reminders a day or two before the event.
- Provide project team training and consider utilizing residents from the local community.
- Consider transportation options for community members who do not own vehicles or hold community outreach and engagement activities in accessible locations.
- Consider providing at-event childcare services and compensation for participation.
- Consider virtual or online meetings to increase access to information and participation. If an online approach is taken, consider the digital divide for community members who do not have reliable access to the internet.
- When a community identified as a primary beneficiary of a given project has a population in which 5% or more of community members speak a language other than English, interpretation and translation services are recommended to ensure equitable and inclusive outreach/engagement efforts.
- Refer to https://safecleanwaterla.org/events/for community events/engagements that are being coordinated with the WC efforts.

Whenever possible, community support documentation should address specific SCW Program Goals and objectives including, but not limited to, Water Quality, Water Supply, and Community Investment Benefits, as well as anti-displacement efforts, benefits to DACs, nature-based solutions, and the needs of the community. To achieve points for community support at the discretion of the SC, documentation may include, but is not limited to:

- Letters from involved community leaders, NGOs/CBOs, individuals, tribal representatives, and elected representatives stating their support for the project and/or explaining how they contributed to shaping the proposed project, indicating that the project has garnered community support and/or has been developed in partnership with NGOs/CBOs and promoting the acquisition of associated Scoring Criteria points.
- Minutes from meetings, including attendees and their affiliations (if applicable), photos, flyers, or other documentation that provides an indication of community and/or interested party involvement in meetings and project planning.
- Community engagement plans that incorporate best practices described herein as these best practices provide the maximum potential for acquiring points for community support at the discretion of the SC.
- Verification that the benefits provided directly address identified community needs such as a summary of community concerns and how the concerns were addressed. If particular community concerns were not addressed by the project, a discussion should be provided of why those concerns could not be addressed.
- Verification of leveraged funding, which can be achieved through interested party involvement and/or partnership with entities such as NGOs/CBOs.

- Leveraged funding can provide up to six points from the Scoring Criteria, with three points available for funding matched in excess of 25% of SCW Program funding and an additional three points available for funding matched in excess of 50% of SCW Program funding.

WASC and SC Tools and Strategies

The following strategies are available to the members of WASCs and SC to assist in evaluating Community Engagement and Support.

- Read the justification provided in the application, submitted Feasibility Study, and scoring rubric about Community Engagement and Support for the project.
- Cross-check that the benefits being claimed by Project Applicants align with needs/priorities being presented by responses to the CSNA.
  - Example community priorities identified by CSNA responses at present time include: litter & illegal dumping, climate change impacts, crime, cost of living & housing, access to parks & outdoor recreation.
  - Additional information regarding community priorities can be found in the CSNA Dashboard.
- Evaluate whether the Feasibility Study includes a discussion which adequately supports the project's inclusion of Community Outreach and Engagement efforts and whether these efforts are considered sufficient in pursuit of community support.
- During presentations by Project Proponents or SC evaluations, ask questions about the type, extent, duration of Community Engagement and Support for the project and specific feedback received.
- Ask WC(s) to evaluate and report to the WASC how the community, municipal agencies, and other interested parties would describe community needs, concerns, and objectives in the Watershed Area.
- WASCs, WCs, and the SC are encouraged to collaborate in review and verification of an applicant's definition of "community" as it pertains to the community outreach and engagement efforts undertaken in relation to their proposed project.

Long-Term Vision for Strengthening Community Engagement and Support

Future guidance is currently expected to consider the following:

1. **Refinement or Additions to Interim Guidance:** This may include, but is not limited to, further refinement of best practices related to community and tribal engagement as well as documentation and demonstration of community outreach, engagement, and support. Additional refinements may be initiated as other SCW Program elements are

updated or refined. In alignment with the recommendations of the *Equity in Stormwater Investments* White Paper, this could include additional processes to engage Indigenous and tribal communities in collaboration with the California Native American Heritage Commission and building on the precedent set by the County's sustainability consultation process.

2. **Regional Program Scoring Criteria:** Assessment of potential adjustments to scoring as part of comprehensive scoring review informed by the MMS, CSNA, and robust interested party processes.
    a. Based on recent discussions, future revisions to Scoring Criteria are expected to explore the potential implementation of an explicit requirement for the undertaking of community engagement and attainment of community support to an extent sufficient for the accrual of minimum threshold points through the Scoring Criteria.
3. **Establish and Refine Metrics:** Performance Measures and Indicators for evaluating community engagement efforts over time to inform adaptive management as well as to evaluate projects and overall SCW Program equity were developed during the MMS and are being collected through routine reporting. These new insights will inform the pending Initial Watershed Plans and subsequent Adaptive Watershed Plans, and will allow for more objective and comprehensive evaluation of a project's benefits and performance in the context of community engagement.

    a. The ongoing development of Indicators such as the "Proportion of Projects and Programs addressing a community-stated priority or concern" provides a direct linkage between the performance of community engagement efforts and SCW Program decision-making processes.

4. **Incorporate Community Needs:** Assess techniques/tools for WASCs supported by WCs, or Project Proponents, for establishing community wishes, that include both strengths to be reinforced and needs to be addressed. Continued incorporation of CSNA responses is intended to contribute to addressing this consideration by incorporating meaningful community input to provide a means for more objective determination of community-specific needs and priorities.

    a. Continued outreach and engagement efforts will capture shifting priorities among community members and other interested parties and inform the SCW Program's pending adaptive management framework.

5. **Integration Across SCW Program:** Ensure that Regional Program processes and preferences are appropriately integrated with the implementation of the Municipal Program, WCs, and District Programs, including the District Education Program. Integration with the guidance for Implementing Disadvantaged Community Policies in the Regional Program.

6. **Expand Tribal Engagement Processes:** A next step in the development of SCW Program processes will be the refinement and expansion of protocols and practices related to engagement with Federally and Non-Federally Recognized Native American Tribes. Details and discussion relating to this next step are expected in the next round

of updates to this *Interim Guidance*, currently anticipated in late 2025. This will be supplemented by discussions within the WC Tribal Allyship Working Group.

The SCW Program utilizes an adaptive management framework to incorporate ongoing refinements and lessons learned. Long-term community engagement and support strategies will continually seek to update Baselines and adjust Targets and strategies through adaptive management by addressing definitional gaps and limitations, refining underlying data and analyses, and assessing progress toward meeting targets and achieving SCW Program Goals. In addition to informing the overall adaptive management process of the SCW Program, these strategies will inform adaptive Watershed Area-specific planning processes that meet the needs of both Watershed Areas and community members. The synchronicity between Watershed Area Needs and community needs is expected to evolve with adaptive management as more CSNA survey responses are collected. Additional updates to this *2025 Interim Guidance* should be periodically revisited to incorporate new information, policies, and project planning and implementation procedures.

Water Supply Guidance

Section Highlights

Acknowledged here are the SCW Program developments that are new additions to this *2025 Interim Guidance*.

What's New

- New Performance Measures have been developed and implemented in efforts to better quantify and evaluate the Water Supply Benefits provided by a project.
- Definitions of Water Supply Benefits and "locally available water supply" have been refined in order to allow for more objective and accurate interpretation and evaluation of these aspects of a given project.
- The Alternate Water Supply Scoring Pilot has been developed – as part of the MMS – to provide an alternative method of scoring for the Water Supply Benefits (both benefit magnitude and cost-effectiveness) of a given project.
- Developments made by the ROC's Water Supply Working Group have been acknowledged, and incorporated as appropriate/feasible.
- The MMS has made the determination that new local water supply can be considered as benefitting all municipalities within a given Watershed Area.
- Clarification has been made regarding the term "unmanaged aquifer".

Section Highlights

In addition, the following requirements and recommendations are presented for Water Supply Guidance within SCW Program projects:

What's Required

- Estimation and adequate justification of claimed Water Supply Benefits, including estimation of net average annual capture volume.
- Demonstration by Project Applicant that claimed Water Supply Benefits are eligible for classification as "new" locally available water supply.
- Documentation and justification of the nexus between water supply and the stormwater/urban runoff that is captured/infiltrated/diverted by a given project.
- Estimation of project lifecycle cost.

What's Recommended

- Consideration of conditions specific to a given Watershed Area.
- Review of alternate Water Supply Scoring Adaptation Pilot Rubric for potential applicability in scoring a given project.

For additional guidance regarding the various requirements and recommendations related to Water Supply Benefits within SCW Program projects, refer to the following supplementary documents:

1. *Feasibility Study Guidelines*
2. *2025 Supplemental Guidance to Support Feasibility Study Guidelines*
3. *Reporting Module Guidance – New Regional Program Performance Measures*

A comprehensive list of relevant SCW Program documents is available at https://safecleanwaterla.org/call-for-projects/.

Purpose

Water Supply Benefits refer to increases in the amount of locally available water supply. These are a key objective associated with SCW Program Goals, specifically the Program Goal to "increase drought preparedness by capturing more stormwater and/or urban runoff to store, clean, reuse, and/or recharge groundwater basins" as defined by District Code (Section 18.04.B). Experience in the SCW Program to date has highlighted the need for additional guidance related to Water Supply Benefits. This need was apparent based on two factors:

- A broad range of interpretations and/or desires regarding what could and should count as a Water Supply Benefit.
- The need to address issues that stem from the variability in potential for projects that provide Water Supply Benefits throughout the District due to factors like hydrogeology, condition of groundwater aquifers, connection to/capacity of existing infrastructure, dependency on future infrastructure, among others.
    - *Note: It's important to acknowledge that projects within a specific Watershed Area are competing for Regional Program funds only amongst one another (not against projects from other watershed areas). Thus, differing Water Supply Benefit opportunities between Watershed Areas do not influence whether a given project is included within a SIP.*

The refinement of how Water Supply Benefits are applied within the context of the SCW Program was also explored at the Regional Oversight Committee (ROC) in early 2021 and as part of adaptive management and Initial Watershed Planning (anticipated by early 2026).This *2025 Interim Guidance* accounts for discussions to date, as able, and seeks to help Project Proponents and decision-making bodies develop and consistently evaluate projects that claim to provide Water Supply Benefits.

Specifically, this *2025 Interim Guidance*:

1. Establishes a shared vocabulary for considering and evaluating Water Supply Benefits,
2. Clarifies how a Project Developer or Applicant should characterize Water Supply Benefits in relation to the *Feasibility Study Guidelines* and Scoring Criteria. Calculating Water Supply Benefits is complex and depends upon several physical/contextual variables as well as being subject to certain qualitative assumptions and assessment parameters;
3. Provides guidance to the SC on how projects claiming Water Supply Benefits should be evaluated. Specifically, this *2025 Interim Guidance* presents an overview of the existing framework for Water Supply Benefit evaluation/calculation;
4. Provides guidance to the nine WASCs about how to assess Water Supply Benefits when evaluating projects and programming recommended SIPs. The assessment methodology for Water Supply Benefits is undergoing continued refinement and future updates to this *2025 Interim Guidance* will provide more detailed analysis of this aspect of project evaluation.

This *2025 Interim Guidance* focuses on elements within the Regional Program but may also be an important reference for the Municipal Program. Ongoing refinement is anticipated as part of the adaptive management process.

Water Supply Benefits in the Safe, Clean Water Program

The term Water Supply Benefit is defined to mean an increase in the amount of locally available water supply, provided there is a nexus to stormwater or urban runoff capture. Various project types may be considered to provide a Water Supply Benefit including, but not limited to, the following:

- Reuse and conservation practices;
- Diversion of stormwater or urban runoff to a sanitary sewer system for direct or indirect water recycling;
- Increased groundwater replenishment or available yield;
- Offset of potable water use.

It should also be noted that the claiming of Water Supply Benefits is accompanied by an obligation for Project Applicants to demonstrate that stormwater capture is “new” water and will be made available for regional water supply. In other words, water that is captured or diverted by a project can only be considered a Water Supply Benefit if the locally available water supply was not already inclusive of that water. Recent developments regarding the refinement of what can and cannot be counted as Water Supply Benefits for a project have been informed by discussions involving Public Works and other key interested parties. Additionally, the MMS has determined that, under the current definition, Water Supply Benefits for given project can be considered attributable to all municipalities within the project’s associated Watershed Area[14].

[14] Compilation of MMS Metrics & Outcomes

- The following fates of captured water **count as new locally available water supply** and a Water Supply Benefit (claims to be confirmed through modeling, geotechnical analysis, and/or engagement):
    - **Net water used onsite for potable offset** (not including offset of project-created water supply demand).
    - **Water that is diverted to sanitary sewers tributary to existing treatment/reuse plants**.
    - **Water that is diverted to sanitary sewers tributary to future planned treatment/reuse plants operational within 10 years** with concurrence from treatment/reuse plant on timeline and capacity.
    - **Water infiltrated to managed useable groundwater aquifers**.
    - **Water infiltrated to unmanaged aquifer** with geotechnical analysis and/or community acknowledgement to confirm infiltration and use.
    - **Water that is treated and discharged to storm drain or receiving water** when tributary to a downstream water recharge facility in the project facilitates the recharge of water that would otherwise not be used to augment water supply.
- The following **do NOT count towards new locally available water supply** but do provide Water Quality Benefits:
    - **Water that would have already been captured downstream** of a project by an existing water recharge/treatment facility (see adjustment factors in *Watershed Planning Framework* and *2025 Supplemental Guidance to Support Feasibility Study Guidelines* that can be used to prorate the *net* new local water supply when captured upstream from existing facilities)
    - **Maintenance of existing capture/conservation infrastructure** (i.e. sediment removal behind dams).
- **Environmental Water:** Water that is allocated and managed specifically for improvements to the ecological health of receiving waters.
    - **Environmental water does not count as locally available water supply** nor a Water Quality Benefit unless analysis proves that discharging clean water to channels to support ecological functions will offset potable supplies. Environmental water may provide a Water Quality Benefit if site-specific studies demonstrate improvement in flow ecology.

An unmanaged aquifer is an area of a groundwater basin that is not managed by a Groundwater Sustainability Agency, an adjudication, or an alternative Groundwater Sustainability Plan and is not subject to deliberate human interventions such as artificial recharge efforts and relies solely on natural replenishment mechanisms. Applicants claiming a new locally available water supply from infiltration in these areas must provide proof of a specific potable or non-potable use that will be enabled by the project (for example, if a project infiltrates to a perched, unmanaged aquifer and also installs a private well to extract water to

offset existing irrigation). Further detailed information regarding the definition and interpretation of Water Supply Benefits, "locally available water supply", and other terms/concepts can be found in Appendix A: Terms & Concepts Glossary.

Regional Program Guidance

Regional Program guidance for Water Supply Benefits includes components for project scoring criteria, updates to scoring criteria provisions based on implementation of SCW Program adaptative management processes, and overall long-term vision and expectations for Water Supply Benefits as they pertain to the SCW Program as a whole.

Points Available for Water Supply Benefits

Scoring criteria in the *Feasibility Study Guidelines* currently award points for both Water Supply Cost Effectiveness and Water Supply Benefit Magnitude (25 maximum for Water Supply Benefits out of 110 total points). It should be noted that a project's capacity to capture is not equivalent to a Direct Water Supply End Use (see additional *Feasibility Study Guidelines* provisions below).

Water Supply Cost Effectiveness refers to the total lifecycle cost of a project per unit acre foot of stormwater and/or urban runoff volume captured for water supply. Projects can receive up to 13 points for cost effectiveness, ranging from a score of zero points for values exceeding $2,500/ac-ft to a score of 13 points for values below $1,000/ac-ft. It is worth noting that total lifecycle cost is calculated using annualized cost values in lieu of present value to provide a preference to projects with longer life spans.

Water Supply Benefit Magnitude refers to the yearly additional water supply volume resulting from the project. Projects can receive up to 12 points for benefit magnitude, ranging from a score of zero points for projects with less than 25 ac-ft/year of additional water supply volume to a score of 12 points for projects with more than 300 ac-ft/year of additional water supply volume.

An important recent development related to Water Supply Benefit scoring is the implementation of alternative Water Supply Scoring Adaptation Pilot Rubric. These are new, optional, project scoring rubrics calibrated the point scale to historical Infrastructure Program project performance and cost, as well as added one-point scoring increments to the current "step-wise" rubric. The alternative approaches better align the cost-effectiveness and magnitude scoring with the true range of program-worthy multi-benefit project efficiencies and performance, and inherently account for Program-wide opportunities, constraints, and economic changes over time[15]. An initial Scoring Pilot was developed as part of the MMS for the FY24-25 Call for Projects cycle and was revisited during adaptive management in 2025 to

[15] https://safecleanwaterla.org/content/uploads/2023/06/Alternate-WS-Scoring-Pilot-202306.pdf

incorporate additional data from recent Regional Program project applications. The optional Water Supply Scoring Adaptation Pilot Rubric is being offered to Project Applicants during the FY26-27 Call for Projects and can be found in the *2025 Supplemental Guidance to Support Feasibility Study Guidelines*.

Feasibility Study Guideline Provisions

Project Applicants should include detailed Water Supply Benefit information in their Feasibility Studies to be awarded points. Water Supply Benefit information includes an estimation of the net average amount of stormwater or urban runoff captured annually by the project both for onsite reuse and for augmentation of water supplies. This estimate should be based on modeling or a similar approach and include adequate justification as well as a discussion of why and how the claimed Water Supply Benefit will result from offsetting potable demand, increasing water supply, or both. Based on a project's nature and claimed Water Supply Benefits, it may also be necessary to include components such as an engineering analysis, irrigation demand projections, and a discussion of the project's ability or lack thereof to capture/divert the 85th percentile storm. Additionally, Project Applicants are expected to document and justify the nexus between water supply and the stormwater/urban runoff that is captured/infiltrated/diverted by the project as well as the project's total lifecycle cost based on annualized value. Further details regarding Water Supply Benefit information and its suggested inclusion within a Feasibility Study can be found in the *Feasibility Study Guidelines* and *2025 Supplemental Guidance to Support Feasibility Study Guidelines*.

Interim Guidance to Support Feasibility Study Guideline Provisions

Public Works acknowledges that projects seeking to achieve Water Supply Benefits in the program face additional challenges when designing, applying, and being evaluated by the program committees and community members. In some Watershed Areas, hydro-geographic conditions limit certain types of meaningful Water Supply Benefits. Careful consideration is needed moving forward as Public Works continues to promote the incorporation of other meaningful SCW Program benefits and potential water reuse projects that could be developed to augment reuse supplies during storm events. Table 4 provides an overview of various Water Supply Benefit scenarios and some of their key considerations. Infrastructure Program Project Applicants should consult the forthcoming Watershed Planning Tool (expected by early 2026) to evaluate their Project's Water Supply Benefits in the context of Watershed Area-specific opportunities, priorities, and targets.

Table 4. Example Water Supply Benefit Scenarios and Key Considerations

Water Supply Benefit Scenario	Key Considerations
Scenario 1: Projects in watersheds with existing downstream stormwater capture facilities	• Feasibility Study must demonstrate that captured or diverted water would not otherwise be captured downstream to avoid double counting of Water Supply Benefits (see adjustment factors in *Watershed Planning Framework* and *Supplemental Guidance to Support Feasibility Study Guidelines*) • Alternatively, include justification of value added in capturing or diverting upstream. • Project Proponents must establish and describe relationship to downstream projects (i.e. development of a stormwater model). • SC should consider Project Proponent's fact-based analysis and be engaged with by interested parties and agencies in support of decision-making related to evaluation of the proposed project and other downstream projects.
Scenario 2: Projects claiming to capture "first flush" flows that would not be captured by existing facilities or concurrent projects	• Projects should demonstrate the benefit of capturing these limited events (i.e. anticipated capture amount, intended beneficial use, etc.). • SC should use only first flush flows, substantiated by modeling, to determine Water Supply Benefit.
Scenario 3: Projects claiming future Water Supply Benefit due to future projects or infrastructure	• Projects may receive Water Supply Benefit points for water diverted to a downstream project that will be built and operational within 10 years, with concurrence from the manager of the future infrastructure.
Scenario 4: Projects diverting onsite runoff to a sanitary sewer	• Calculating how much stormwater runoff would reach a reclamation plant and be converted to locally available water supply can be complex. • Currently, the full calculated diversion volume will be considered locally available water supply. ○ This may change when a more refined quantitative analysis becomes available. • Outreach, engagement, and concurrence of sewer collection system owner/operator.
Scenario 5: Projects claiming infiltration of water	• It remains challenging to quantify the volume of infiltrated water that would reach a managed, usable, groundwater aquifer and be converted to locally available water supply. • Project Applicants should justify the magnitude of Water Supply Benefits using site-specific geotechnical analysis combined with groundwater management agency or community concurrence of new, locally available water supply

Evaluating Water Supply Benefits at the WASC

Tools and strategies are available for WASCs and WCs in determining the appropriateness of a project's claim of providing Water Supply Benefits over the course of a project's lifecycle:

During Project Evaluation:

- **Justifications:** Read the justification provided in the application, submitted Feasibility Study, and scoring rubric about Water Supply Benefits claimed for the project, including how the project creates locally available water supply.
- **Assurances:** Where applicable, review applications for assurance that infiltrated water reaches an aquifer managed for beneficial use through demonstration of high infiltration potential or proximity to a water reclamation facility.
- **Inquiries:** During presentations by Project Applicants, ask follow-up questions about the Water Supply Benefits claimed for the project, as appropriate.
- **Assessments:** Use the forthcoming Watershed Area Planning Tool to assess Water Supply Benefits provided by projects in comparison to Watershed Area targets.

At any time:

- **Descriptions:** Ask WC(s) to evaluate and report to the WASC how the community, public agencies, and other interested parties would describe the preferred Water Supply Benefits in the Watershed Area (i.e., desired outcomes and watershed-specific goals).
- **Presentations:** Invite informational presentations from agencies, organizations, and other interested parties to better understand potential Water Supply Benefits sought and challenges faced in the Watershed Area.

The MMS also developed new performance measures to more accurately and comprehensively evaluate the potential fate of captured runoff and amount of potable offset through onsite use. These performance measures, collected during project application and subsequent reporting, can be used by interested parties to better evaluate claimed Water Supply Benefits[16]. Infrastructure Program Project Developers/Applicants can refer to the *Reporting Module Guidance – New Regional Program Performance Measures* document for additional guidance on the definition and estimation of performance measures.

Long-Term Vision for Water Supply Guidelines

In the long term, Public Works may further enlist third-party experts to assist in informing additional guidance to score and evaluate Water Supply Benefits, in conjunction with any

[16] https://safecleanwaterla.org/content/uploads/2024/07/SCWP-Metrics-Monitoring-Study-Executive-Summary.pdf

pertinent results from SCW Program Watershed Planning. Future updates to this *2025 Interim Guidance* are currently expected to consider the following:

1. **Refinement or Additions to Interim Guidance:** As the SCW Program adaptive management process is implemented, additional updates to this *2025 Interim Guidance* may be applied.
2. **Assessment of Watershed-Specific Conditions:** Consideration of watershed-specific needs and capabilities in the planning process will allow for a more appropriate, tailored project approach in which addressing the needs of a particular area or demographic can be incorporated within project evaluation/scoring. This includes the analysis of watershed-specific hydrogeological conditions and how these may impact a project's ability to meet the Threshold Score. These assessments are currently being performed as part of the ongoing Watershed Planning process, and lessons learned will inform the development of the SCW Program's pending adaptive management framework.
    a. Watershed Planning includes the development of Initial Watershed Plans and a Watershed Planning Tool, expected to be available by early 2026.
3. **Establish and/or Refine Definitions and Metrics:** Further refinement of guidance for what is considered a Water Supply Benefit and locally available water supply and the scale at which those benefits should be considered. This will come in addition to the definitional refinements that have been developed thus far (documented above in this section and in Appendix A: Terms & Concepts Glossary).
    a. Further standardization regarding how to calculate First Flush Flows and how/whether to apply benefits for projects capturing such flows;
    b. Further establishment and/or refinement of definitions and metrics will be a vital component of the SCW Program's ongoing adaptive management process, both in the context of water supply and of the SCW Program as a whole.
4. **Guidance for Addressing Water Rights Implications** Additional future work on this topic is expected.
5. **Recommendations from Water Supply Working Group:** The ROC's Water Supply Working Group has made recommendations for continued refinement of the SCW Program, including recommending the development of an incentive program for large infrastructure projects and the development of collaborative partnerships with institutions such as the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Caltrans, LA Metro, Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP), and more.
6. **Regional Program Scoring Criteria:** A Water Supply Scoring Adaptation Pilot Rubric was developed for the FY26-27 Call for Projects cycle. Its effectiveness will be evaluated and future updates to this *2025 Interim Guidance* will include further refinements and developments relating to Water Supply Benefit scoring within the Regional Program.

The SCW Program's adaptive management framework will be a key influence on the continued long-term development of Water Supply Benefits in the context of the Regional Program. Adaptive management will seek to address definitional gaps and limitations, refine Scoring Criteria processes and underlying data and analyses, and assess progress toward meeting targets and achieving SCW Program Goals.

Programming of Nature-Based Solutions

Purpose

Los Angeles Flood Control District Code states that one of the Safe, Clean Water Program goals is to “**prioritize Nature-Based Solutions**” (Section 18.04.F),which refer to projects that incorporate nature-mimicking processes in pursuit of objectives to achieve Water Quality, Water Supply, and Community Investment Benefits. This goal applies across the entire SCW Program, with specific requirements in both the Municipal and Regional Program elements. This *2025 Interim Guidance* seeks to help project proponents and decision-making bodies prioritize Nature-Based Solutions (NBS).

Specifically, this *2025 Interim Guidance* clarifies how best to prioritize Nature-Based Solutions by:

1. Establishing a shared vocabulary, starting from the SCW Program definition, for considering Nature-Based Solutions during project development and the programming of SIPs;

2. Providing guidance to the nine WASCs about how to prioritize Nature-Based Solutions when evaluating projects and programming SIPs;
3. Clarifying how a project developer or applicant can and should support the Program Goal of prioritizing Nature-Based Solutions; and
4. Highlighting how the Feasibility Study requirements and virtual application submittal tool support project proponents and WASCs in the prioritization of Nature-Based Solutions.

This *2025 Interim Guidance* is focused on elements within the Regional Program but may also be an important reference for the Municipal Program.

Section Highlights

Acknowledged here are the SCW Program developments that are new additions to this *2025 Interim Guidance*.

At the time of publishing this 2025 Interim Guidance, a NBS Blue Ribbon Panel is being convened by Public Works to establish Countywide NBS standards. Outcomes of the panel are expected to be incorporated into subsequent interim guidance in late 2025 or early 2026; as such, this chapter is substantially identical to the 2022 Interim Guidance.

Nature-Based Solutions in the Safe, Clean Water Program

Section 16.03.V: ***Nature-Based Solution*** *means a project that utilizes natural processes that slow, detain, infiltrate or filter stormwater or urban runoff. These methods may include:*

> *relying predominantly on soils and vegetation;*
> *increasing the permeability of Impermeable Areas;*
> *protecting undeveloped mountains and floodplains;*
> *creating and restoring riparian habitat and wetlands;*
> *creating rain gardens, bioswales, and parkway basins; and*
> *enhancing soil through composting, mulching, and planting trees and vegetation, with preference for native species.*

Nature-Based Solutions may also be designed to provide additional benefits such as sequestering carbon, supporting biodiversity, providing shade, creating and enhancing parks and open space, and improving quality of life for surrounding communities.

Nature-Based Solution includes projects that mimic natural processes, such as green streets, spreading grounds and planted areas with water storage capacity.

In short, projects that use natural processes or nature-mimicking strategies to meet identified needs and deliver SCW Program benefits are Nature-Based Solutions:

Natural process or nature mimicking strategies can be further defined as follows.

Natural processes: Practices where vegetation serves as a primary treatment mechanism or endpoint for captured runoff (including irrigation)

Nature-mimicking strategies: Unvegetated practices that capture runoff and infiltrate into native soils

- Can be augmented with vegetated surface improvements
- Previously categorized Nature-Based Solutions such as permeable pavement and infiltration basins would now be in this category

Such projects can employ natural processes or nature-mimicking strategies to achieve any of the key benefits that SCW Program seeks to provide:

- Water Quality
- Water Supply
- Community Investments, including, but not limited to:
  - Improved flood management, flood conveyance, or flood risk mitigation;
  - Creation, enhancement or restoration of parks, habitat, or wetlands;
  - Improved public access to waterways such as new or improved pedestrian and bicycle paths;
  - Enhanced or new recreational opportunities;
  - Greening of schools; and
  - Reduced heat island effect and increased shade or planting of trees / other vegetation

Below are examples of Nature-Based Solutions that can be used to address needs or desired outcomes and to provide SCW Program benefits.

Need/Desired Outcome: Reduced Pollutants in Local Waterways		**SCW Program Benefit:** Water Quality Benefit
Need/Desired Outcome: Improved Local Water Supply Resilience		**SCW Program Benefit:** Water Supply Benefit
Need/Desired Outcome: Increased Park Space & Access to Recreation		**SCW Program Benefit:** Community Investment Benefit

It is important to note that Nature-Based Solutions are inherently holistic approaches, and as a result, provide multiple benefits. The examples above have been simplified for illustrative purposes. The actual benefits provided through these projects are more extensive than those listed.

The prioritization of Nature-Based Solutions, as called for in the Program Goals, is intended to apply to both the Regional and Municipal Programs. The Los Angeles Flood Control District Code calls for the following high-level policies related to Nature-Based Solutions:

Regional Program

Section 16.05.D.1.g: Regional Infrastructure Program funds *"Shall be programmed, to the extent feasible, such that Nature-Based Solutions are prioritized."*

Municipal Program

Section 16.05.C: "*Projects implemented through the Municipal Program shall include a Water Quality Benefit. Multi-Benefit Projects and Nature-Based Solutions are strongly encouraged."*

Section 16.05.C.1: Municipalities receiving funds shall prepare *"…a progress/expenditure report that details a program-level summary of expenditures and a description of Water Quality Benefits, Water Supply Benefits, Nature- Based Solutions, and Community Investment Benefits realized through use of Municipal Program Funds."*

Prioritizing Nature-Based Solutions

The prioritization of Nature-Based Solutions can be realized from initial project design to recommended programming of funds in SIPs, to retrospective program evaluation. Across these varied contexts, the following question can help Program participants prioritize Nature-Based Solutions:

Are there natural processes or nature-mimicking strategies that this project can use to address watershed needs and deliver SCW Program benefits?

For example, using this question, a project proponent can design a project that maximizes the use of natural processes and nature-mimicking strategies to provide needed or desired water quality, water supply, or community enhancement benefits, or to submit a request under the Technical Resources Program such that a Feasibility Study would be conducted, including an investigation as to if and how natural processes and nature-mimicking strategies can be used at the particular site.[17] Likewise, the governance committees can use this question in evaluating the extent to which individual projects and SIPs for each Watershed Area are fulfilling the directive to prioritize Nature-Based Solutions in order to meet needs of the

[17] Any requests to explore project concepts as part of the Technical Resources Program must be approved by Watershed Area Steering Committees as part of Stormwater Investment Plans for the Watershed Area in which the request was submitted.

watershed and/or communities within it. Additional tools and suggestions are included in the section, “Regional Program Guidance,” below.

For many watershed and community-level needs—from addressing unreliable local water supply to improving community-level investment in historically underinvested communities—and for each of the core SCW Program benefits, there are proven Nature-Based Solutions in the greater Los Angeles region and elsewhere around the world. Further, the use of Nature-Based Solutions can, in many circumstances, be the most effective tool for achieving multiple benefits. For example, prioritizing solutions that use natural processes or nature-mimicking strategies to address poor water quality or insufficient local water supply can often produce community enhancements as well. In cases where the need is not feasibly met by Nature-Based Solutions, other identified needs or desired outcomes, such as increasing access to green space or reducing vulnerability to the urban heat island effect, may perhaps be addressed with natural processes or nature-mimicking strategies. There are plentiful examples for using Nature-Based Solutions to meet a variety of needs and desired outcomes, including improved flood management; additional parks, habitat or wetlands; increasing access to waterways such as new or improved pedestrian and bicycle paths; enhancing recreational opportunities; increasing green space on school property; and mitigating against extreme heat. Applicants are encouraged to work with WCs and other resources such as the WHAM Task Force to maximize Nature-Based Solutions, develop multi-benefit projects, and evaluate other funding opportunities.

Natural Processes and Nature-Mimicking Strategies Used in Nature-Based Solutions

A clear linkage exists between watershed and community needs, Nature-Based Solutions, and delivery of the core benefits the Safe, Clean Water Program. Below is a table that attempts to capture and make explicit some of those linkages. It is important to note that many of the needs or desired outcomes, feasible Nature-Based Solutions, and the benefits that can be achieved by using them are integrated. Thus, there is significant overlap in the rows below.

The table below is not intended to be an exhaustive list of needs/desired outcomes, strategies, or benefits in any of its columns; rather it is illustrative and presented to support project developers and WASC members in identifying ways in which natural processes and nature-mimicking strategies can be used to address known challenges and as means of yielding tangible benefits. Because this table is not comprehensive, there may be natural processes and/or nature-mimicking strategies that address needs/desired outcomes and provide benefits outside of these categories. ***Any natural processes or nature-mimicking strategy claimed as Nature-Based Solutions by a Project Applicant but not included on this table will be evaluated at the discretion of WASC members in each individual Watershed Area on a case-by-case basis.***

Identified Need or Desired Outcome	Potential Natural Processes & Nature-Mimicking Strategies	SCW Program Benefits
Improved environmental water quality	Bioretention; biofiltration; removed impermeable area; increase of permeability; soil enhancement; green streets	Water Quality Benefit
Increased local water supply	Surface and subsurface infiltration to groundwater; treat and release clean stormwater flows for a justified beneficial use; stormwater capture to offset irrigation with potable water; soil enhancement to offset irrigation with potable water; new native and climate-appropriate planting to offset irrigation with potable water; remove impermeable area; increase permeability	Water Supply Benefit
Improved flood management	Bioretention; native and climate appropriate planting; removal of impermeable area; increase of permeability; microtopography changes; protection or restoration of riparian or wetland systems	CIB: Flood Management
Improved flood conveyance	Stream daylighting; bioretention; microtopography changes; removed impermeable surfaces; increase of permeability; localized infiltration to groundwater	CIB: Flood Conveyance
Reduced flood Risk	Bioretention; microtopography changes; native and climate appropriate planting; soil enhancement; construction or restoration of riparian or wetland systems; protection of undeveloped mountains or floodplains	CIB: Flood Risk Mitigation
Increased park space	New pocket parks, green alleys, green medians; new access to stormwater facilities or streams; park renovation; new native or climate appropriate planting	CIB: Create, Enhance, Restore Parks
Increased, improved, or restored habitat area	Construction or restoration of riparian or wetland systems; new native and climate appropriate planting; soil enhancement; treat and release clean stormwater flows for a justified beneficial use; protection or restoration of native or climate appropriate habitat; protection of undeveloped mountain or floodplains	CIB: Create, Enhance, Restore Habitat
Increased, improved, or restored wetlands	Construction or restoration of riparian or wetland systems; new native and climate appropriate planting, soil enhancement; treat and release clean stormwater flows to wetland habitats	CIB: Create, Enhance, Restore Wetlands
Increased public access to waterways	New parks or greenways at street ends or in streamside rights-of-way; new access points and services in waterway rights-of-way	CIB: Public Access to Waterways
Increased access to quality recreational opportunities	New or enhanced parks or greenways; stream daylighting; treat and release clean stormwater flows in recreational areas; new native and climate appropriate planting	CIB: Enhanced or New Recreational Opportunities

Increased green space on school property	Removal of impervious area; new native and climate appropriate planting	CIB: Greening Schools
Extreme heat mitigation	Removal of impervious area, new native and climate appropriate planting, soil enhancement	CIB: Reduced Heat Island Effect
Increase in shade/tree canopy and vegetation	Native and climate-appropriate shade tree planting[18]	CIB: Increased Shade; Planting Trees
Improved air quality	Native and climate-appropriate tree planting	CIB: Planting Trees
Increase in green space	New pocket parks, green alleys, green medians; new access to natural stormwater facilities; park renovation; new native or climate appropriate planting	CIB: Planting Other Vegetation
Greenhouse gas emissions mitigation	Native and climate appropriate planting; soil enhancement; construction or restoration of riparian and wetland systems	CIB: Sequestering Carbon
Enhanced biodiversity	Native and climate appropriate planting; soil enhancement; construction or restoration of riparian and wetland systems	CIB: Supporting Biodiversity
Improved quality of life	New or enhanced parks, green alleys, green medians; new or enhanced access to rights-of-way along waterways; new native and climate appropriate planting	CIB: Improving Quality of Life
Improved public health	New native and climate appropriate planting, soil enhancement; vector minimization strategies; biofiltration; treat and release stormwater flows to recreational areas; new or enhanced park and recreational access	CIB: Improve Public Health

Regional Program Guidance

Scoring and Feasibility Studies via the Project Module

All applicants seeking funding through the Regional Program must submit a Feasibility Study, or equivalent, for review by the SC and one of nine WASCs. Feasibility Study applications are submitted using a virtual tool on the website, the Project Module. Using the Feasibility Study

[18] For all plantings on SCW Program Project sites, there is a preference for plants that are native or climate-appropriate for the Los Angeles Region. Several resources with examples of these plant types are linked in the “Regional Program Guidance” section. Note that these lists are not intended to be exhaustive, and a proponent may choose to justify that a plant not found on these lists is climate-appropriate and/or native as well.

information provided by the applicant via the Project Module, the SC will verify the points awarded for projects, including points specifically for Nature-Based Solutions.

Known or Perceived Need Addressed by Project

The Project Module asks each Project Applicant to identify the known or perceived needs or desired outcomes of the community or Watershed Area within which a Project is located, justification of why the Project Developer understands those to be needs, and the ways that the project is anticipated to address those needs and achieve desired outcomes. This question is posed for each of the three SCW Program benefits – Water Supply Benefit, Water Quality Benefit, and Community Investment Benefit.

While not scored, this is an important part of the Project narrative that WASC members should consider in their evaluation of the strength of any individual Project or suite of Projects for inclusion in a SIP.

Points Available for Nature-Based Solutions

Of the total 110 points maximum, Project applicants can attain a total of 15 points for implementation of Nature-Based Solutions. See description and point distribution in the table below.

D. Nature-Based Solutions	15 points max	The Project implements Nature-Based Solutions
	15 points	D1. Project: • Implements natural processes or mimics natural processes to slow, detain, capture, and absorb/infiltrate water in a manner that protects, enhances and/or restores habitat, green space and/or usable open space = 5 points • Utilizes natural materials such as soils and vegetation with a preference for native vegetation = 5 points • Removes Impermeable Area from Project (1 point per 20% paved area removed) = 5 points

Project Applicants must include the following Nature-Based Solutions information in their Feasibility Studies in order to be awarded points:

- 5 points for **implementing natural processes** (yes/no)

  The Project Module provides the following example for implementing natural processes: "*For example, does this project implement natural processes or mimic natural processes to slow, detain, capture, and absorb/infiltrate water in a manner that protects, enhances or restores habitat, green space or usable open space*."

  To be eligible for points in this category, projects should support achieving desired outcomes related to improved water quality, water supply, and/or community investments using **embedded solutions** where the processes used to slow, detain, capture, and absorb/infiltrate water is both a natural process or nature-mimicking strategy AND protects, enhances, and or restores habitat, green space and/or usable open space.

Importantly, habitat, green space, and usable open space can often be incorporated in Stormwater Improvement strategies. However, habitat, green space, and usable open space or other natural processes or nature-mimicking strategies that are independent of the stormwater improvement would not be eligible for points in this category. Excluded strategies may include, but are not limited to, ornamental landscaping, pocket parks, and shade trees.

- 5 points for **utilizing natural materials** (yes/no)

The Project Module references the following example for how a project can use natural materials: *"For example, such as soils and vegetation with a preference for native vegetation. The explanation should include the relative increase in soils and vegetation at the project site and/or the relative increase in native vegetation. If a plant palate has been developed, it should be attached."*

To be eligible for points in this category, the project should advance benefits related to water quality, water supply, and/or community investments by incorporating natural materials such as soils and vegetation—with a preference for native and climate-appropriate vegetation—anywhere within the project area. There are multiple databases produced by Los Angeles area organizations and institutions that can support the selection of appropriate and preferred plants, trees, and soil amendments. Note that these lists are not intended to be exhaustive, and a proponent may argue that a plant not found on these lists is climate-appropriate and/or native.

The natural materials may be associated with the stormwater improvement but are not required to be. Strategies may include, but are not limited to, adding landscaping, planting shade trees, planting native and climate appropriate vegetation, soil enhancement for infiltration (or subsurface infiltration) or improved soil health, and other strategies listed in the table above.

Figure 1. Resources for Native and Climate-Appropriate Vegetation.

Los Angeles County Waterworks Division:

California Native Plant Society: https://vegetation.cnps.org

Metropolitan Water District Water Wise Program: https://www.bewaterwise.com/assets/mwd_plantguide-screen_la_4_23.pdf

Theodore Payne Foundation: Plant Guides: Plant Guides | Theodore Payne Foundation

TreePeople Climate-Appropriate Non-Native Plants List: https://www.treepeople.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Non-Native-Plant-Starter-List.pdf

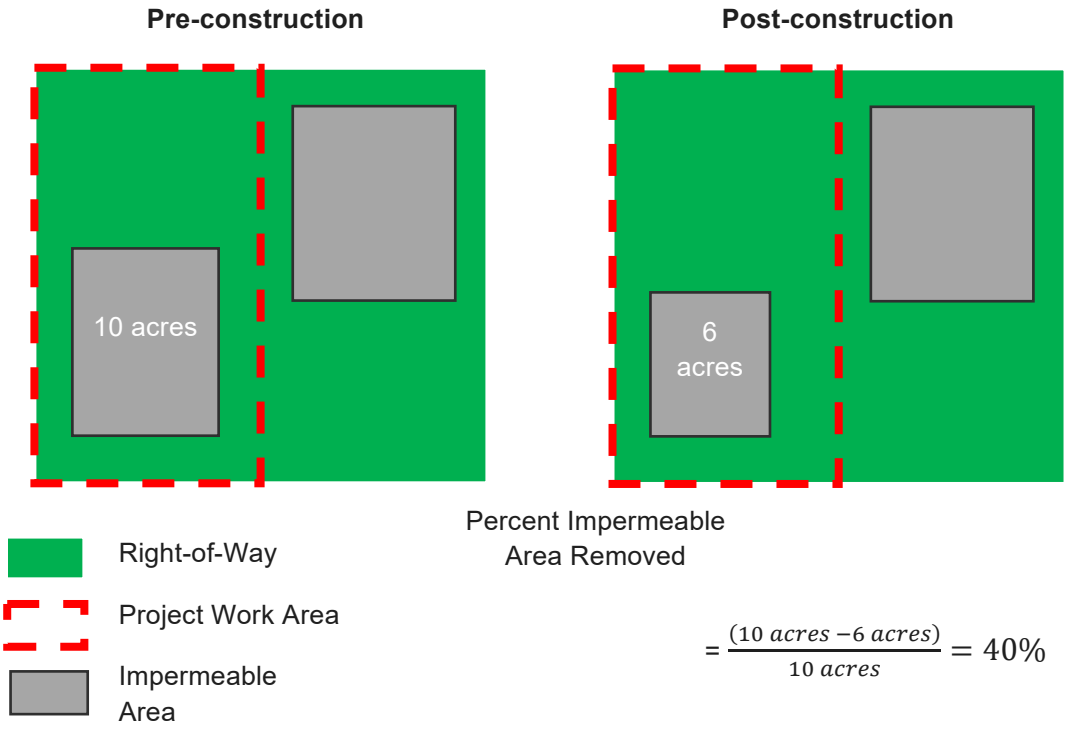
- Up to 5 points for **removing impermeable surface** (1 point for every 20% impervious area removed)

The Project Module asks the proponent to quantify the amount of impermeable surface that will be removed during the course of the project, with this guidance: "*An engineering estimate for how much impermeable area is removed after the construction of the project. Compares the impermeable area of the project work area before construction to after the project is completed."* (Yes/No; Acreage estimation

before and after)

Impermeable Areas should be calculated for the entire project work area (i.e., areas within active work limits). Percent Impermeable Area Removed shall be calculated using the following formula. See sample calculation below for reference.

$$= \frac{Impermeable\ area\ pre\ construction - Impermeable\ area\ post\ construction}{Impermeable\ area\ pre\ construction}$$



The role of impermeable surfaces in the production of polluted runoff and as a barrier to infiltration is well established. Impermeable surfaces are also often the cause of heat islands and the associated negative public health outcomes.

Absence of Nature-Based Solutions

If Nature-Based Solutions are not used, the proponent is required to provide an explanation, with supporting analysis and information, of why it is not feasible to do so.

For each of the three scored benefits in the Project Module, Water Quality, Water Supply, and each of the identified Community Investments, a Project developer is asked the following: *"Can you describe how natural processes or nature-mimicking strategies have been used to achieve this benefit? If you have achieved this benefit without using Nature-Based Solutions,*

please include a description of what options were considered and why Nature-Based Solutions were not utilized."[19]

Project Proponents are responsible for prioritizing Nature-Based Solutions at the earliest available stage of development by working through the feasibility of using natural processes and nature-mimicking strategies to meet identified needs in the watershed and/or community and provide Program benefits.

Evaluating Projects at the Watershed Area Steering Committee

WASCs develop SIPs, which summarize WASC recommendations for how to allocate Regional Program funding for each Watershed Area. One criterion the WASCs must consider in the development of their SIP recommendations is the prioritization of Nature-Based Solutions to the extent feasible.

WASC Evaluation of Individual Projects

WASCs can use the materials submitted by each applicant in the Project Module to evaluate the Nature-Based Solutions submitted for funding consideration. WASCs can use this question set to assist their consideration of each qualified project, alongside the answers provided by the proponent when they submitted the project and asserted the use of, or the decision to not use, Nature-Based Solutions:

Questions to Ask Regarding Individual Projects

Are there natural processes or nature-mimicking strategies that this Project will use to address watershed needs and deliver SCW Program benefits?

If not, should this project be revisited for future SIP consideration instead?

Where possible, WASC members should consider known needs of the Watershed Area and/or the community in which the Project is located when evaluating the benefits that it is providing.

Note that the feasibility of using Nature-Based Solutions is key to the treatment of the second question. In situations where a Project proponent has expressed that Nature-Based Solutions are infeasible, the WASC can evaluate how the proponent analyzed and ultimately decided to not include natural processes or nature-mimicking strategies in the proposed Project. If the infeasibility is considered to be demonstrated adequately, the WASC should not consider the

[19] Note that previously, a version of this question was asked just on the Project Module page for Nature-Based Solutions. Starting in Round 3, it instead is asked for each benefit in order to help the WASCs better understand and evaluate the project- and program-level prioritization of NBS.

absence of natural processes or nature-mimicking strategies as the sole grounds to revisit the Project in the future.

However, for those sites where Nature-Based Solutions are feasible and desirable, the WASC may consider shifting the Project to the Technical Resources Program for refined/new concept development (incorporating Nature-Based Solutions) or requesting the proponent bring a revised proposal back to the WASC for consideration in a future year.

WASC Evaluation of SIPs

Additionally, WASCs can prioritize Nature-Based Solutions by considering how the suite of Projects supported by past SIPs, and those under consideration each fiscal year as a SIP is programed, together reflect a prioritization of Projects that use natural processes or nature-mimicking strategies across the Watershed Area and to the benefit of all communities. A couple questions that could help this consideration are:

Questions to Ask Regarding SIPs

Has the WASC prioritized Nature-Based Solutions within this and prior SIPs?

How are the Nature-Based Solutions funded to-date collectively providing the anticipated benefits to the Watershed Area, and where are the biggest needs or opportunities?

Considering the known and perceived needs of the Watershed Area, WASC members should evaluate the extent to which full suites of Projects programmed in SIPs meet or are anticipated to meet those needs.

In cases where collective groups of Projects, including Nature-Based Solutions, do not adequately address Watershed Area Needs, WASC members may wish to reevaluate programming recommendations to have a suite of Projects more targeted toward providing specific benefits or achieving particular outcomes. If programming a SIP such that Watershed Area needs can be met is not possible (i.e. there are not eligible Projects that meet those needs that can be programmed), WASC members should provide that information to Public Works staff and to their WC(s) to assist with developing the pipeline of such Projects applying for funding in future years.

Other Tools Available to WASC Members

A series of actions and activities are available to WASCs for prioritizing Nature-Based Solutions:

Strategies to prioritize Nature-Based Solutions that WASC members can use during Project evaluation and SIP recommendation development:

- **Prior to sending submitted Projects to SC, the WASC can choose to evaluate the extent to which natural processes or nature-mimicking strategies are included in each Project, and the extent to which Nature-Based Solutions appear across the suite of Projects. This evaluation can support the WASC decision-making about which Projects are "sent" to Scoring.**
- **Upon the completion of scoring and during review of individual Projects, the WASC should read materials provided by proponents about natural processes and nature-mimicking strategies included in Projects, and in the case where Nature-Based Solutions were judged infeasible, about the analysis and reasons given.**
- **During presentations by project proponents, the WASC members can ask questions about the natural processes or nature-mimicking strategies included in the Project, or about the analysis completed which showed Nature-Based Solutions to be infeasible.**
- **When programming the SIP, the WASC can review SIP of previous years, and the suite of Projects proposed, to consider how Nature-Based Solutions are being prioritized in the Watershed Area.**

Strategies to prioritize Nature-Based Solutions that WASC members can use at any time:

- **WASCs can ask their WC(s) to evaluate and report to the WASC how the people, city and county agencies, and other interested parties would prioritize Nature-Based Solutions in the Watershed Area.**
- **WASCs can invite informational presentations from agencies, organizations, and other interested parties to better understand how Nature-Based Solutions would bring benefits and meet the challenges faced in the Watershed Area.**

SCW Program Fund Transfer Agreements in the Regional and Municipal Programs

In addition to the requirements listed above, recipients of SCW Program funding in the Regional and Municipal Programs do not receive funds until they execute a Fund Transfer Agreement that outlines several expectations relative to Nature-Based Solutions in Project design, implementation, and reporting.

Both Regional Program Fund Recipients and Municipalities are required:

- To consider using and incorporating Nature-Based Solutions for their Projects.
- To include in their Progress reports (quarterly and annual) and in the Expenditure report a summary whether and how their Projects achieve a good, better, best for each of the 6 Nature-Based Solutions methods in accordance with guidance (See section below entitled 'Annotated "Nature-Based Solutions Best Management Practices"' for the good/better/best guidance for Nature-Based Solutions).
- To include in their Progress reports (quarterly and annual)/ Expenditure Reports a discussion of any considerations taken to maximize the class within each Nature-Based Solutions method. If at least 3 Nature-Based Solutions methods score within a single class, the overall Project can be characterized as that class.
- To attach a copy of the matrix for each Project with the good, better, or best column indicated for each method, to facilitate Public Works tracking of methods being utilized.

Specifically in the case of Municipalities, Nature-Based Solutions can be effectively implemented in ways that include, but are not limited to:

- The use of NBS through the SCW Program to help engage other City Departments for partnership opportunities, for planning purposes and the potential of mitigation credit, and to achieve community development through methods such as urban greening, recreational improvements, etc.
- Leveraging NBS concepts for integration with active transportation, climate resilience, and other funding sources to maximize project cost efficiency.
- Incorporating community engagement efforts with NBS by using NBS development as an educational opportunity to inform the public and other relevant interested parties/decision-makers of the benefits provided by NBS implementation and the overall positive impacts of SCW Program investments.

Long-Term Vision for Nature-Based Solutions

Public Works recognizes that, long-term, additional measures will need to be taken across SCW Program implementation—from project design to retrospective considerations, along with ongoing adaptive management—to facilitate the prioritization of Nature-Based Solutions. While not appropriate to include within the scope of this guidance, Public Works anticipates pursuing additional activities and exploring further potential guidance in late 2025.

1. **Regional Program Project Design Phase**: Assessment of ways to build a pipeline of Nature-Based Solutions applications received for funding consideration. This could be accomplished through a variety of tactics, including but not limited to the following:
    a. Identification of regional and watershed-level needs that can be met using Nature-Based Solutions
    b. Education/training for Project developers on what is considered a Nature-Based Solution in the SCW Program, how to design, construct, and maintain Nature-Based Solutions, and examples of projects that are considered good, better, or best for meeting Nature-Based Solutions preferences of the SCW Program
    c. Incentives for Project developers, such as by specifying round-specific program preferences for funding, development of Nature-Based Solutions targets for WASCs, or other measures
    d. Exploration of an iterative project design process that enables Project developers to engage with Public Works and with WASCs earlier in the design process so that any preferences in design can be shared by governance committees and taken into account by Project developers
    e. Facilitating WASC discussions to further establish Watershed Area specific needs and opportunities that inform new project concepts and ensure maximum consideration of potential Nature-Based Solutions

2. **Regional Program Scoring:** Assessment of potential adjustments to scoring as part of comprehensive scoring review following MMS and robust interested party processes that may include modifications related to any or all of the following:

    a. Desirable Nature-Based Solutions are competitive in scoring (i.e., pass threshold)
    b. Nature-Based Solutions on the lower end of the good/better/best spectrum are not awarded de facto full points
    c. Nature-Based solutions be a means to desired outcomes related to the primary benefits and Goals of the SCW Program.
    d. Adjustment of impermeable area removal criteria to incentivize hardscape transformation.
3. **SCW Program Evaluation:** Establish processes for the biennial review in developing recommendations for adaptive program management. This will include careful consideration of lessons learned to date and resulting options to potentially improve outcomes.
4. **Watershed Planning:** Ongoing development of the SCW Program Watershed Planning Framework is expected to provide additional clarity and guidance regarding the integration of NBS in the Watershed Planning process with consideration for Watershed Area-specific needs/priorities.
5. **Nature-Based Solution Blue Ribbon Panel Developments:** Ongoing work from the NBS Blue Ribbon Panel is expected to address gaps, limitations, and ambiguity in several NBS-related areas:
    a. Final and water-specific definitions for Nature-Based Solutions.
    b. Further clarification of “natural processes”, “nature-mimicking solutions”, and “utilizing natural materials”.

   c. Recommendation of a framework for evaluating/tracking NBS to support consistent tracking, planning, reporting, and decision making within the SCW Program.

6. **Integration Across SCW Program:** Ensure that Regional Program processes and preferences are appropriately integrated with the implementation of the Municipal Program, WCs, and District Programs, including the District Education Program, such that all parties working to implement the SCW Program are fulfilling the directive to prioritize Nature-Based Solutions.

Annotated "Nature-Based Solutions Best Management Practices"

The content below has been taken from the Fund Transfer Agreements, and annotated for clarity. This annotation is meant to assist the Project Developers and Municipalities in filling out progress reports for Projects and expenditures. It clarifies terms and other ambiguities for each of the Nature-Based Solutions methods highlighted in the evaluation form.

Nature-based solutions refers to the sustainable management and use of nature for undertaking socio-environmental challenges, including climate change, water security, water pollution, food security, human health, and disaster risk management. As this environmental management practice is increasingly incorporated into projects for the SCW Program, this guidance document may be expanded upon to further quantify NBS practices based on benefits derived from their incorporation on projects.

The SCW Program defines Nature-Based Solutions as a Project that utilizes natural processes that slow, detain, infiltrate or filter Stormwater or Urban Runoff. These methods may include relying predominantly on soils and vegetation; increasing the permeability of Impermeable Areas; protecting undeveloped mountains and floodplains; creating and restoring riparian habitat and wetlands; creating rain gardens, bioswales, and parkway basins; enhancing soil through composting, mulching; and, planting trees and vegetation, with preference for native species. Nature-Based Solutions may also be designed to provide additional benefits such as sequestering carbon, supporting biodiversity, providing shade, creating and enhancing parks and open space, and improving quality of life for surrounding communities. Nature-Based Solutions include Projects that mimic natural processes, such as green streets, spreading grounds and planted areas with water storage capacity. Nature-Based Solutions improve water quality, collect water for reuse or aquifer recharge, or to support vegetation growth utilizing natural processes.

Recipients are to consider using Nature-Based Solutions for infrastructure projects and include in each quarterly and annual report whether and how their project achieves a good, better, or best for each of the 6 NBS methods in accordance with the guidance below. Additionally, reports should include discussion on any considerations taken to maximize the class within each method. If at least 3 methods score within a single class, the overall project can be characterized as that class.

Note that because Nature-Based Solutions are inherently holistic approaches, many attributes of projects that meet the description under one method will receive credit under other methods.

Method 1: Vegetation/Green Space

Purpose: This method refers to the utilization of climate-appropriate and native vegetation, as well as strategically placed shade trees that provide cooling benefits. The class is determined by the type of vegetation included in the project as well as estimated percentage of vegetative cover.

Evaluation: To be considered as meeting any class in this method, both criteria must be met in that class. This method is also intended to be cumulative, where a "best" classification is attained only when all requirements of lower tier(s) are satisfied as well. If you believe you have met a "good," "better," or "best" class but haven't met all the criteria within or below a tier, please justify.

CLASS	DESCRIPTION
GOOD	Use of climate-appropriate vegetation (groundcover, shrubs, and trees) / green space 5%-15% covered by new climate-appropriate vegetation
BETTER	Use of native, climate-appropriate vegetation (groundcover, shrubs, and trees) / green space 16%-35% covered by new native vegetation
BEST	Establishment of plant communities with a diversity of native vegetation (groundcover, shrubs, and trees) / green space that is both native and climate-appropriate More than 35% covered by new native vegetation

NOTES

"Climate appropriate vegetation" means a variety of plants that may not be "native" to the Los Angeles region, but which require below-average amounts of water. This includes certain shade trees. Examples can be found here: TreePeople Climate-Appropriate Non-Native Plants List

The **percentages** indicated here mean the portion of the total Project area cover by vegetation at plant maturity.[20]

"Native vegetation" means a variety of plants that are adapted to and historically grown within the Los Angeles region, and are non-invasive. Examples may be found using the following resources:

- Los Angeles County Waterworks Division Native Plant List
- Metropolitan Water District Water Wise Program Native Planting Guide for LA County
- TreePeople Native Plants List
- California Native Plant Society
- Theodore Payne Foundation: Plant Guides

[20] While only the portion of vegetation relative to the whole Project area is noted as a criteria for this method, Project developers and WASCs should consider the total absolute square footage of vegetation when self-assessing for reporting purposes and evaluating Project impact.

Method 2: Increase of Permeability

Purpose: This method is about increasing the amount of permeable surface in LA County. Accordingly, for projects implemented on land that is already fully permeable, this method does not apply.

Evaluation: To be considered as meeting any class in this method, two criteria must be met: (1) percentage of impermeable/paved surfaced removed and (2) the type of landscape installed (see "Notes" section for details). The other criterion in each class is desirable, but not required. This method is intended to be cumulative, where a "best" classification is attained only when all requirements of lower tier(s) are satisfied as well. If you believe you have met a "good," "better," or "best" class but haven't met all the criteria within or below a tier, please justify.

CLASS	DESCRIPTION
GOOD	Installation of vegetated landscape – 25%-49% paved area removed Redesign of existing impermeable surfaces and/or installation of permeable surfaces (e.g. permeable pavement and infiltration trenches)
BETTER	Installation of vegetated landscape – 50%-74% paved area removed Improvements of soil health (e.g., compaction reduction)
BEST	Installation of vegetated landscape – 75%-100% paved area removed Creation of well-connected and self-sustained natural landscapes with healthy soils, permeable surfaces, and appropriate vegetation

NOTES

Paved area means anything impermeable through which water cannot percolate or infiltrate.

The **percentages** refer to the proportion of paved/impermeable surface being removed in the Project area.[21]

To meet a **"good" class** in this method, a Project must have removed at least the listed percentage of impermeable/paved area, AND installed a permeable surface in its place, including but not limited to permeable pavement, soil, or vegetated landscape. Redesign of remaining impermeable/paved surfaces is encouraged but not required.

To meet a **"better" class** in this method, a Project must have removed at least the listed percentage of impermeable/paved area, AND installed soil or landscape in its place (permeable pavement does not count). Redesign of remaining impermeable/paved surfaces and improvements to soil health are encouraged but not required.

To meet a **"best" class** in this method, a Project must have removed at least the listed percentage of impermeable/paved area, AND installed vegetated landscape with groundcover, shrubs, and/or trees in its place. Redesign of remaining impermeable/paved surfaces, improvements to soil health, and creation of landscapes are encouraged but not required.

[21] While only the portion of impermeable/paved surface removed relative to the whole Project area is noted as a criteria for this method, Project developers and WASCs should consider the total absolute square footage of removed surface when self-assessing for reporting purposes and evaluating Project impact. For example, removing a total of 1 square foot of pavement that exists on a Project site shouldn't qualify for the "best" class even if the Project removes 100% of the impermeable surface.

Method 3: Protection of Undeveloped Mountains & Floodplains

Purpose: This method refers to the preservation of existing habitat, wetland, and natural hydrologic features of the watersheds of Los Angeles County. For Projects located on land that does not have existing vegetation or land to preserve, this method does not apply.

Evaluation: To be considered as meeting any class in this method, both criteria must be met in that class. This method is intended to be cumulative, where a "best" classification is attained only when all requirements of lower tier(s) are satisfied as well. If you believe you have met a "good," "better," or "best" class but haven't met all the criteria within or below a tier, please justify.

CLASS	DESCRIPTION
GOOD	Preservation of native vegetation Minimal negative impact to existing drainage system
BETTER	Preservation of native vegetation Installation of new feature(s) to improve existing drainage system
BEST	Preservation of native vegetation Creation of open green space Installation of features to improve natural hydrology

NOTES

Preserving native vegetation: Projects built in locations that already have a lot of native vegetation that is protected or will be preserved via Project implementation are considered to be in the "good" and "better" classes.

The **existing drainage system** may be the natural hydrology or an existing built drainage system, depending on the project site.

Minimal negative impact is any action or impact considered "less than significant" as defined by CEQA.

Improvements will enhance the drainage system's ability to slow, detain, capture, and/or infiltrate water without creating increased flood damage risk to property or persons.

Creating open space: Those projects that preserve native vegetation AND create open green space, using climate-appropriate and native vegetation, that is intended for safe public use are considered to be in the "best" class.
The **natural hydrology** is comprised of green infrastructure and land elements that direct and infiltrate water entering the built drainage system. To meet the "best" class in this method, improvements should be to the natural hydrology, rather than to a built system.

Method 4: Creation & Restoration of Riparian Habitat & Wetlands

Purpose: This method is about restoration of former or existing degraded riparian habitat and wetlands and/or creation of riparian and/or wetland habitat on the Project site.

Evaluation: To be considered as meeting any class in this method, all criteria must be met in that class. This method is intended to be cumulative, where a "best" classification is attained only when all requirements of lower tier(s) are satisfied as well. If you believe you have met a "good," "better," or "best" class but haven't met all the criteria within or below a tier, please justify.

CLASS	DESCRIPTION
GOOD	Partial restoration of existing riparian habitat and wetlands Planting of climate appropriate vegetation–- between 5 and 15 different climate-appropriate or native plant species newly planted No potable water used to sustain the wetland
BETTER	Full restoration of existing riparian habitat and wetlands Planting of native vegetation–- between 16 and 30 different native plant species newly planted No potable water used to sustain the wetland
BEST	Full restoration and expansion of existing riparian habitat and wetlands Planting of plant communities with a diversity of native vegetation – greater than 31 native plant species newly planted No potable water used to sustain the wetland

NOTES

Riparian habitat is defined by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and can be found here.

Wetland is defined by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and can be found here.

Restoration means the manipulation of physical, chemical, or biological characteristics of a site with the goal of returning natural or historic function of degraded habitat to equal or better than its former state.

Partial restoration means less than 80% of the existing riparian habitat or wetlands on the parcel will be restored as part of the project scope.

A list of **climate-appropriate** and **native vegetation** can be found in Method 1, "Vegetation/Green Space." Plant palettes should be designed to consider habitat opportunities, functional use, and site conditions.

Full restoration means all or almost all (at least 80%) of the existing riparian habitat or wetlands on the parcel has been restored as part of the Project scope.

To meet the **"best" class** in this method, new riparian habitat or wetlands must be created in addition to the area restored.

Method 5: New Landscape Elements

Purpose: This method refers to the use and/or manipulation of the natural landscape to capture or direct stormwater flows and to improve water quality. These new landscape elements may supplement or even replace existing drainage systems.

Evaluation: To be considered as meeting any class in this method the capture criteria indicated below must be met. This method is intended to be cumulative, where a "best" classification is attained only when all requirements of lower tier(s) are satisfied as well. If you believe you have met a "good," "better," or "best" class but haven't met all the criteria within or below a tier, please justify.

CLASS	DESCRIPTION
GOOD	Elements designed to capture runoff for other simple usage (e.g. rain gardens and cisterns), capturing the 85th percentile 24-hour storm event for at least 50% of the entire parcel
BETTER	Elements that design to capture/redirect runoff and filter pollution (e.g. bioswales and parkway basins), capturing the 85th percentile 24-hour storm event from the entire parcel
BEST	Large sized elements that capture and treat runoff to supplement or replace existing water systems (e.g. wetlands, daylighting streams, groundwater infiltration, floodplain reclamation), capturing the 90th percentile 24-hour storm event from the entire parcel and/or capturing off-site runoff

NOTES

Landscape elements that qualify a project for credit under this method include any of the following:

- Cisterns (small-scale)
- Rain gardens (small-scale)
- Treewells (small- to medium-scale)
- Bioswales (medium-scale)
- Parkway basins (medium-scale)
- Retention ponds (medium- to large-scale)
- Wetlands (large-scale)
- Daylighting streams (large-scale)
- Regional groundwater infiltration basins (*must be vegetated*) (large-scale)
- Floodplain reclamation (large-scale)

The "good," "better," or "best" evaluation for this method will depend on the amount of **stormwater effectively captured or redirected** by the elements across the parcel and off-site, as noted in the matrix.

For the **"best" class**, Projects must capture either the 90th percentile OR at least the 85th percentile from the entire parcel plus off-site runoff in order to qualify. For off-site runoff, WASCs should verify volumes in order to consider a Project as "best" under this method.

Method 6: Enhancement of Soil

Purpose: This method refers to the health of soil at the project site to ensure adequate drainage and advance co-benefits associated with healthy soils, like greenhouse gas sequestration, erosion prevention, water retention, and others.

CLASS	DESCRIPTION
GOOD	Use of soil amendments such as mulch and compost to retain moisture in the soil and prevent erosion Planting of new climate-appropriate vegetation to enhance soil organic matter
BETTER	Use of soil amendments such as mulch and compost that are locally generated to retain moisture in the soil, prevent erosion, and support locally-based composting and other soil enhancement activities Planting of new native, climate-appropriate vegetation to enhance soil organic matter
BEST	Use of soil amendments such as mulch and compost that are locally generated, especially use of next-generation design with regenerative adsorbents (e.g. woodchips, biochar) to retain moisture in the soil, prevent erosion, and support on-site composting and other soil enhancement activities Planting of new native, climate appropriate vegetation to enhance soil organic matter

Evaluation: To be considered as meeting any class in this method, all criteria must be met in that class. This method is intended to be cumulative, where a "best" classification is attained only when all requirements of lower tier(s) are satisfied as well. If you believe you have met a "good," "better," or "best" class but haven't met all the criteria within or below a tier, please justify.

NOTES

Soil amendments mean materials that are mixed into the soil to improve water retention and nutrient absorption, which could include compost, manure, wood chips, or rocks.

A list of **climate-appropriate** and **native vegetation** can be found in Method 1, "Vegetation/Green Space."

Locally-generated soil amendments are those sourced and processed within the Watershed Area of the project under consideration. **Locally-based** soil enhancement activities will be those taking place within that same Watershed Area.

For the **"best" class**, Projects should include on-site soil enhancement.

Implementing Disadvantaged Community Policies in the Regional Program

Section Highlights

Acknowledged here are the SCW Program developments that are new additions to this *2025 Interim Guidance*.

What's New

- In addition to direct community concurrence of DAC benefits, placed-based measures have been developed and refined to allow for objective and quantitative evaluation of which project-associated benefits can be considered applicable to specific communities. This includes the development of project-based "walksheds".
- Best practices for Disadvantaged Community Benefits and community engagement have been refined, with substantial influence from the MMS and the third party-developed Equity in Stormwater Investments White Paper.
- New considerations for the distinction of DACs and their geographical boundaries are being developed and incorporated into project decision-making processes.

Section Highlights

In addition, the following requirements and recommendations have been presented for DAC Benefit Policies within SCW Program projects:

What's Required

- Documentation, description, and justification of all claimed DAC benefits, including new Performance Measure reporting derived from MMS recommendations.
- Provision of DAC benefits to an extent consistent with the District Code's 110% investment requirement.
- Performance of ongoing and robust community engagement efforts throughout a project's lifecycle when claiming DAC benefits.

What's Recommended

- To the extent feasible, attempting to locate project components within the geographical boundaries of Census Block Group(s) designated as DACs.
- Obtaining documented support/interest/agreement from DAC members regarding the provision of any claimed DAC benefits.
- Incorporation "walkshed" methodology for determination of service areas of claimed DAC benefits to specific communities.
- Use of CSNA input to provide DAC benefits in alignment with self-proclaimed needs and priorities of DACs.
- Incorporation of DAC benefit assessment data sources and considerations presented in Table 5.

For additional guidance regarding the various requirements and recommendations related to community outreach and engagement within SCW Program projects, refer to the following supplementary documents:

1. *Feasibility Study Guidelines*
2. *2024 Metrics and Monitoring Study*
3. *Equity in Stormwater Investments* White Paper

A comprehensive list of relevant SCW Program documents is available at https://safecleanwaterla.org/call-for-projects/.

Purpose

Experience to-date in the Regional Program reveals that aspects of SCW Program related to providing Disadvantaged Community Benefits require further guidance to better support achieving outcomes. The SCW Program emphasizes investments that produce Equitable Benefits in or directly to DACs. Complying with the Disadvantaged Community Benefit Policy in the Program is complex, and asserting what benefits accrue to which communities is not easily quantified. While distinguishing communities and subsequently asserting the accrual of benefits to specific communities is challenging, some influential factors include geographic location, topography, socioeconomic factors and other population demographics, and public transportation system quality.

Foundational to the SCW Program is an obligation to support DACs. WASCs and Project Applicants are expected to "provide Disadvantaged Community Benefits, including Regional Program infrastructure investments, that are not less than one hundred and ten percent (110%) of the ratio of the [DAC] population to the total population in each Watershed Area." – District Code Section 18.04 (J)

Promoting the equitable implementation of benefits within any SCW Program project is a key aspect of satisfactory achievement of DAC-related Program requirements. In doing so, two primary concepts are brought to the forefront:

- Members of a DAC must agree that they will benefit from a project and express interest in the prospective benefits. Items that qualify as agreement and/or interest from DAC members regarding project benefits include, but are not limited to:
    - Written letter(s) demonstrating explicit agreement and/or interest in a project and its prospective benefit(s);
    - Official statements from community representatives and/or elected officials expressing agreement and/or interest;
    - Verified results of a survey which indicate alignment between a project's prospective benefits and the needs/wants of a given community (e.g., CSNA survey responses);
    - Other forms of documented community support including survey results, direct interactions with Project Applicants, video, social media 'likes', etc.
- Project Applicants in DACs should be required to, and provide resources for, the performance of ongoing and robust community engagement throughout the project lifecycle, especially when claiming a Disadvantaged Community Benefit.

These concepts go hand in hand, as the only way in which to verify the standing of DAC members regarding a project is through robust community engagement. Maintaining this community engagement throughout a project lifecycle is important in terms of communicating project progress and ensuring public awareness of accrued benefits, while simultaneously gauging public perception of a project and incorporating public/interested party feedback to inform adaptive management practices.

The following information is intended to support SIP programming by providing information to help Project Proponents with application preparation and WASCs with consistent evaluation and decision-making during the development of SIP recommendations. As appropriate, this *2025 Interim Guidance* may also be referenced during ongoing discussions at the WASCs for recommendations.

Specifically, this *2025 Interim Guidance* includes the following:

1. Clarification of how Project Applicants and WASCs can interpret and substantiate a project's ability to deliver Disadvantaged Community Benefits;
2. Policies for consistently accounting for the 110% investment provisions within SIPs;
3. Considerations to inform deliberation and discussion about relationships between communities, municipalities, and Census Block Groups.

Disadvantaged Community Benefit Policies in the Safe, Clean Water Program

Summarizing the ordinance sections and definitions below reveal that the program goal of investing in DACs is achieved by locating beneficial projects within, or such that the benefits of a project are directly provided to, Census Block Groups where the median household income (MHI) is less than 80% of the statewide MHI.

When a project has these qualities, and the WASC recommends it for funding, the value of regional SCW Program funding that is allocated to the project in the SIP will be used to calculate fulfillment of the 110% requirement, which mandates that funding for projects providing DAC benefits be at least 110% of the proportion of a given Watershed Area's population that is considered to be disadvantaged. For example, this would entail that if 50% of a Watershed Area's population is considered disadvantaged, then at least 55% (110% * 50%) of total SIP investments within that Watershed Area must be used for projects providing benefits to a DAC.

Key Provisions

Key provisions for SCW Program implementation are fundamentally based on the District Code. These provisions include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Section 18.07(B)2.c: Funding for Projects that provide Disadvantaged Community Benefits shall not be less than one hundred and ten percent (110%) of the ratio of the DAC population to the total population in each Watershed Area. To facilitate compliance with this requirement, Public Works will work with interested parties and WC(s) to utilize existing tools to identify high-priority geographies for water-quality improvement projects and other projects that create Disadvantaged Community Benefits within DACs, to help inform WASCs as they consider project recommendations.

- Section 18.07(B)2.d: Each municipality shall receive benefits in proportion to the funds generated within their jurisdiction, after accounting for allocation of the one hundred ten percent (110%) return to DACs, to the extent feasible, to be evaluated annually over a rolling five (5) year period.

An understanding of District Code, its provisions, and how they influence the SCW Program and its undertaken projects is foundational knowledge for Project Developers and Proponents in regard to successfully adhering to DAC Benefit policies while applying to the SCW Program for SIP programming. A comprehensive understanding of this Code is key for effective and efficient DAC-related decision-making processes throughout the lifecycle of any given project.

Regional Program Guidance for Interpreting "Disadvantaged Community Benefit"

The following Interim Guidance supports ongoing decisions at the WASCs.

1. **Direct Disadvantaged Community Benefits:** Projects will be considered as providing a Disadvantaged Community Benefit if they provide any of the benefits sought by the SCW Program (Water Quality Benefit, Water Supply Benefit, or Community Investment Benefit) directly to a DAC.

2. **Projects within a DAC:** Projects will be considered to be "within" a DAC where any of the construction effort is within a Census Block Group designated as a DAC, and therefore providing a Disadvantaged Community Benefit.

3. **Direct Benefit vs. Project Location:** Projects will be considered as providing a Disadvantaged Community Benefit where none of the construction effort is within a Census Block Group designated as a DAC, but where the completed project will provide a Direct Benefit inside a Census Block Group designated as a DAC. If two potential project locations provide substantially equivalent benefits to a DAC but one is physically located within that DAC, the prospective Project Developer(s) should pursue the location within the DAC to the extent otherwise feasible.

4. **Consideration of Direct Benefits:** Whether a project provides a "direct benefit" as used in SCW Program policy and within #3 above will be a decision made by WASCs on a project-by-project basis, considering SCW Program Goals, the benefits provided to the community by each project, and the area within which those benefits will be felt. See section, "Consideration for Direct Benefit Determination" below, for additional guidance.

5. **Public Support for Direct Benefits:** The WASC, in its determination of whether a project provides "direct benefit" to members of a DAC, should strongly rely on documented public support by members of that community such as CBOs, NGOs, elected representatives, and other interested parties. A Disadvantaged Community

Benefit can only be claimed for a specific community if members of that community recognize the benefit and express interest in it. Similarly, decisions by the WASC can rely upon the lack of documented public support, or the presence of documented resistance from members of a community. See section, “Community Support,” below, for additional guidance.

6. **Modifying Disadvantaged Community Benefit Designations:** The designation as to whether a project is providing a Disadvantaged Community Benefit may be modified from the original application during an agendized discussion of a project. Any voting WASC member may suggest adjusting the Disadvantaged Community Benefit designation of a project (in accordance with District Code Section 18.07.B.2.c) as part of a motion related to the formation of a SIP, either to say that a project claiming a Disadvantaged Community Benefit does not provide one, or that a project that did not claim to provide a Disadvantaged Community Benefit in the application does provide a benefit. In the latter case, the WASC would need to request additional information about the Disadvantaged Community Benefit from the Project Developer, consistent with the questions in the Project Module. See sections titled “Relevant information in the Project Module” and “WASC Tools and Strategies,” below.

7. **110% Investment Provision:** When a project judged to be providing benefits to members of a DAC is included in a recommended 5-year SIP, the total amount of funding provided by the Regional Program towards the project is used to make the 110% investment calculation. This “all or nothing” approach is currently the primary policy for evaluating the 110% investment provision, but governing committees should also consider the place-based measures discussed later in this section as supplemental information to inform decision-making about which Projects provide Disadvantaged Community Benefits. The place-based approach is currently being evaluated through the SCW Program Initial Watershed Planning process and may inform policy changes during the next adaptation of this *2025 Interim Guidance*.

Relevant Information in the Project Module

All applicants seeking funding through the Regional Program must submit a Feasibility Study, or equivalent, for review by the SC and one of nine WASCs. Feasibility Studies are submitted using the web-based Project Module.

The Project Module currently includes the following prompts related to Projects seeking to provide benefits to members of DACs:

- Will the project provide benefit to a disadvantaged community?
    - *Note that the questions below are posed within the Project Module only if the applicant answers “YES” to this first question.*
- Is the project located in a [disadvantaged community] Census Block Group as defined by SCW?
- If no, please describe if there is a formal or informal community boundary more

appropriate than a Census Block Group boundary to consider for the benefit area of a particular project where the MHI statistic or current CalEnviroScreen tool (linked below) considers that community "disadvantaged".
- Describe how the project will provide benefits to a [disadvantaged community].
- Describe how the project will provide Water Quality Benefits to a [disadvantaged community].
- Describe how the project will provide Water Supply Benefits to a [disadvantaged community].
- Describe how the project will provide Community Investment Benefits to a [disadvantaged community].
- Describe how the project engaged the benefitting [disadvantaged community] to date.

By default, the project's Disadvantaged Community Benefit designation will be displayed as a YES or a NO based on the entries made by Project Proponents.

Consideration for "Direct Benefit" Determination

California has two policy systems for identifying DACs, one is CalEnviroscreen which is managed by the California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA), the other is within the State Water Code and uses a MHI statistical test. In both policy systems, census boundaries are used because the relevant socioeconomic and demographic data is differentiated using those boundaries. However, neither state policy defines what a "community" means. The use of the census boundaries as community boundaries is a convention in these programs, not a formal policy. Because a "community" is undefined within the Water Code related policy system, any appropriate geographic boundary that supports the MHI statistical test can be deemed as a DAC.

Unlike the state policy, the SCW Program directs that Census Block Groups are communities, either disadvantaged or not. Functionally, Census Block Groups are rarely perceived as a community by community members, agencies, or elected representatives. Census Tracts and Blocks rarely have any utility outside the Census itself, and the use of demographic data that is differentiated with those boundaries. Census Places, however, are another geographic unit used by the Census and are typically drawn to contain political or social geographies that have meaningfulness for the people who live and work there.

The California Department of Water Resources (DWR) maintains a Disadvantaged Community Mapping Tool (linked below) for the use across many programs that it administers, which includes US Census data from 2016-2020 for analyzing DACs. The SCW Program currently uses 2020 data to determine the targeted ratios of investment into DACs but is expected to be updated roughly every five years.

- Link to DWR Disadvantaged Community Mapping Tool: https://gis.water.ca.gov/app/dacs/

- Link to CalEPA CalEnviroScreen: https://oehha.ca.gov/calenviroscreen

For a project to be credited with providing a Disadvantaged Community Benefit to any community, that community must formally and specifically agree with the suggestion that it will benefit from the project in the manner discussed by that project's Feasibility Study. This includes formal documentation by Project Proponents that DAC members have indicated that the community wants the project and that the project's proposed benefits address the needs of that community, which presents the challenge of identifying community-specific needs. Formal documentation may include things like statements from community representatives and/or elected officials and written letters from officials/representatives and/or DAC members explicitly demonstrating agreement and/or interest. Additionally, elected officials and community representatives hold the authority to identify community-specific needs and provide support/verification for suggestions of what they may be.

Identifying community-specific needs can also be accomplished using the CSNA Dashboard, which gathers information about community preferences, strengths, and needs to provide a starting point for engagement between Project Applicants/Developers and community members. This tool could be used in the context of communities prospectively benefiting from the SCW Program, not just DACs, and could assist in the development of place-based performance measures. Additionally, the development of an interactive mapping tool that combines data regarding social and/or climate vulnerability, climate hazards, infrastructure, and flood risk would also provide substantial utility for the identification and evaluation of potential SCW Program-provided Disadvantaged Community Benefits[22]; some of these elements are expected to be incorporated into the online planning tools developed through the SCW Program Watershed Planning process.

Additional Disadvantaged Community Benefit Assessment Information

A suite of additional data and information may be used to support determinations related to Disadvantaged Community Benefits. A summary of available source datasets and potential applicability to assessment of SCW Program Disadvantaged Community Benefit assessments is presented in Table 5. For additional datasets applicable to a variety of SCW Program processes, refer to https://scwp-lacounty.hub.arcgis.com/.

[22] https://www.stantec.com/content/dam/stantec/files/PDFAssets/technical/001/equity-in-stormwater-investments-stantec-ucla.pdf

Table 5. Potential Applicable SCW Program Disadvantaged Community Benefit Assessment Data Sources and Assessment Considerations

Source	Data	Assessment Considerations
LA County	• **Los Angeles County Climate Vulnerability Web Map** • https://egis-lacounty.hub.arcgis.com/maps/lacounty::los-angeles-county-climate-vulnerability-web-map/about	• The Los Angeles County Climate Vulnerability Web Map includes approximately 90 layers across boundaries, climate hazards, physical infrastructure, social sensitivity indicators, and adaptive capacity. • Data displays by Census Tract in Social Sensitivity Index categories of High, Medium, and Low.
LA County	• **2022 Population and Poverty at Split Tract** • https://demography-lacounty.hub.arcgis.com/datasets/lacounty::2022-population-and-poverty-at-split-tract/about	• This data is created by attributing population and poverty information to the split tract geography. Split tract is the product of 2020 census tract boundaries split by LA County legal city boundaries and unincorporated areas (commonly known as CSA) as of July 1, 2022. • Data displays by Census Split Tract in three categories.
LA County	• **Flood Zone Determination** • https://apps.gis.lacounty.gov/dpw/m/?viewer=floodzone	• The Flood Zone Determination website allows you to see the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) flood zones at the individual property, and whether your property is within a Los Angeles County flood zone.
State of California	• **California State Geoportal** • https://gis.data.ca.gov/	• California State Geoportal is a centralized geographic open data portal, which includes authoritative data and applications from a multitude of California state entities. Potentially applicable data categories include economy, education, environment, health, and transportation. • Specific data sets include information related to home ownership and rental density, health trend and facilities, transportation hub and stop information, traffic, and others.
US Housing and Urban Development	• **Point-in-Time Count and Housing Inventory Count** • https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/hdx/pit-hic/#pit-count-tools	• The HUD Exchange is an online platform for providing program information. • The Homelessness Data Exchange 2.0 is HUD's platform that allows view of Point-in-Time (PIT) Count data. • The PIT Count is a count of sheltered and unsheltered people experiencing homelessness on a single night in January.

An integrated analysis of the information in Table 5 and other potential data sets may allow for Project Developers to better understand, describe, and quantify potential project service and Direct Benefit to DAC communities. Given the SCW Program investment requirements for DAC communities and the limitations associated with the Census Block Group-driven description of 'community', additional related indicators of DAC communities, especially when compiled by alternative geographic, municipal, and socio-economic boundary information, may be of value in preparing accurate and comprehensive project information and supporting measures of Community Investment Benefit metrics.

Inglewood Example

The calculated MHI for the city of Inglewood falls below 80% of the statewide MHI as a Census Place (Figure 3) and meets the designation for a DAC. However, in review of the many Census Block Groups within the city (Figure 4), some are considered disadvantaged, some severely disadvantaged (defined in the State Water Code as having a MHI below 60% of the statewide MHI), and some are neither disadvantaged nor severely disadvantaged communities.

Benefits within a community boundary can be identified formally (like the City of Inglewood) or less formally (like the community of Pacoima, where the MHI calculation using that boundary supports the designation of "disadvantaged community"), or when CalEnviroscreen suggests unjust cumulative impacts are experienced inside that boundary. In any such cases, a WASC would be justified considering that project as providing benefits across the entire area within that boundary. This is reiterated in three steps, below:

1. Is there a formal or informal community boundary more appropriate than Census Block Group boundaries to consider for the benefit area of a particular Project? *If yes…*
2. Using that boundary as a community, does the MHI statistic or the current CalEnvironScreen tool consider that community "disadvantaged?" *If yes…*
3. Does the WASC wish to recommend that the project will provide benefits across the entire community boundary?

For Project Applicants, Developers, and/or Proponents, the determination of direct benefits should begin with the identification of communities that are potential beneficiaries of a given project. This is best initiated with the distinction of specific communities and their geographical boundaries. Once these communities are distinguished, justification of their status as a DAC or a severe DAC must be provided using the MHI statistic tool or CalEnviroScreen.

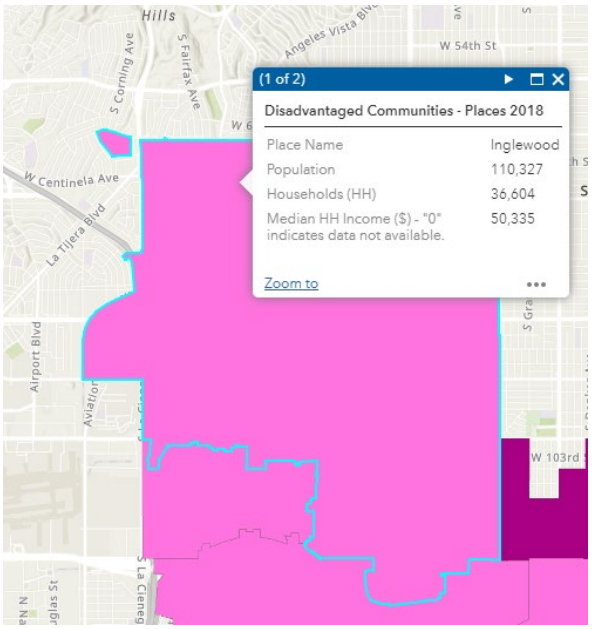


Figure 3 - Inglewood Census Place (DWR Disadvantaged Community Mapping Tool): Pink is disadvantaged, and purple is severely disadvantaged.

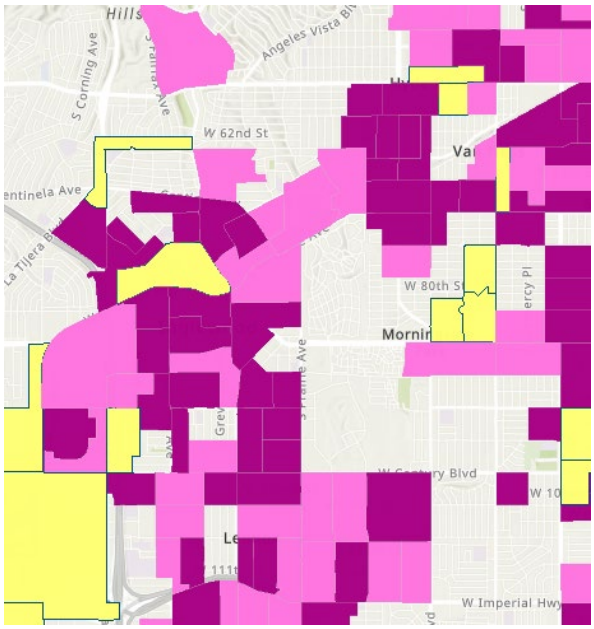


Figure 4 - Inglewood Census Block Groups (DWR Disadvantaged Community Mapping Tool): Pink is disadvantaged, purple is severely disadvantaged, and yellow is missing data.

This example is shared to reveal that a pure focus on Census Blocks may inadvertently omit projects that are of critical importance to communities that collectively have unmet needs and are therefore intended to benefit from the DAC policies of the SCW Program.

Subsequent assessment of the applicability of benefits to specific communities is complex and best performed by applying the "Walkshed" methodology. Further details of this methodology can be found in the Long-Term Vision for Disadvantaged Community Benefits section of this document.

The following municipalities are within the SCW Program boundaries, and are US Census Places that have an MHI below 80% of the statewide MHI (2023 data), and therefore could be considered disadvantaged at the scale of the municipality (alphabetical):

- Bell
- Bellflower
- Bell Gardens
- Commerce
- Compton
- Cudahy
- El Monte
- El Segundo
- Hawaiian Gardens
- Hawthorne
- Huntington Park
- Industry
- Inglewood
- Lynwood
- Maywood
- Montebello
- Paramount
- Rosemead
- South El Monte
- South Gate
- Vernon

Information for both statewide MHI and MHI of individual municipalities is based on data from the U.S. Census Bureau's 2023 American Community Survey.

Community Support

The SCW Program places priority on developing community engagement and support for projects that yield Water Quality Benefits, Water Supply Benefits, and Community Investment Benefits. Within the scoring process for regional projects, points are available for projects that document community support.

Assertion that a project will provide benefit to a particular community is most effectively supported by documentation that the community itself agrees and expresses support. Project Applicants are encouraged to obtain letters of support documenting that communities who will benefit from the project are, in fact, eager for those project benefits and supportive of the effort. Alignment of anticipated project benefits with community preferences can also be achieved through the incorporation of community input from the CSNA. WASCs too, when considering which communities will benefit from regional projects, can rely on assertions from communities and their representatives that the project will provide benefits. This underscores the importance of empowering community members to voice their perceived benefits through community education and engagement.

This approach can be very effective when projects are anticipated to provide Regional Benefits, some of which will accrue to one or many DACs. If a Project Proponent engages with members of those communities and their representatives and has received their concurrence that the project benefits will be felt by their community, this becomes strong evidence that the project will provide a Disadvantaged Community Benefit.

WASCs can look towards the letters of support that are provided by a Project Proponent, or to public engagement during the programming of the SIPs. Public testimony offered during public

meetings that expresses how a project will, or will not, provide benefits to a community can be part of the decision-making process of the WASC as the question of "direct benefit" is settled.

Estimating Disadvantaged Community Benefits Using Place-Based Measures

Place-Based Performance Measures

Place-based performance measures have become a desirable concept for future enhancements to the SCW Program in terms of determining the applicability of benefits for specific communities. The necessity of such performance measures stems from a Project Applicant's ability to claim Disadvantaged Community Benefits for a specific community if project features are within a reasonable distance from the community in question, even if the project itself is not located within a DAC. Analysis of walkable, bikeable, and drivable routes to project components such as parks and other public facilities allows for a more accurate, objective determination of Disadvantaged Community Benefits in the context of their applicability to specific communities. This approach also enables governing bodies to evaluate the proportion of benefits attributed to DACs and non-DACs when designating whether a Project provides Disadvantaged Community Benefits and when evaluating the 110% investment provision.

The MMS recommended presumptive methods for estimating how many people and which communities may benefit from a project based on proximity and potential accessibility. A range of "service areas" were defined using the walkable road network to estimate the population within reasonable walking, biking, and/or driving distances from projects. Because the approach considers population density, the benefits of projects theoretically increase with higher population served; this helps differentiate the total magnitude of benefits with respect to both "what" (e.g., acres of new park) and "who" (e.g., how many people now have access to the new park space). This approach may be useful for quantifying potential benefits to Disadvantaged Communities, and provide more insight when evaluating the equity of SCW Program investments; however, it is still the responsibility of the WASC—as subject matter experts in their Watershed Areas and communities—to designate which Projects provide Disadvantaged Community Benefits.

Service Areas for Estimating Community Investment Benefit Accrual

For most Community Investment Benefits, the MMS suggested that people living within ¼ mile (approximately equivalent to a 5-minute walk) have the potential to experience a benefit. For parks and green space opportunities that may draw users from farther away, a ½-mile walking distance (using the walkable road network) could be used to evaluate potential access, which is consistent with the assumptions of the 2016 Los Angeles County Park Needs Assessment. A ½-mile (or approximately 10-minute walk) is also supported by the National Household

Travel Survey average distance for social and recreational trips. The National Household Travel Survey also supports the use of a 2-mile travel distance as the threshold for acceptable recreational access by bicycle.

Based on the MMS and the SCW Program Working Group convened by Accelerate Resilience L.A., Public Works recommends the following service areas when estimating populations and communities potentially served by projects:

Table 6: Service areas corresponding to types of project benefits.

Project Benefit Type	Project Size	Service Area Using Walkable Road Network
Creation/enhancement/restoration of parks, habitat, or wetlands; enhanced or new recreational opportunities; and improved public access to waterways	< 3 acres	1/4 mile
	3-10 acres	1/2 mile
	10+ acres	2 miles
Greening of Schools	Any size	2 miles (or applicant-specified)
Improved flood management, flood conveyance, or flood risk mitigation	Any size	Applicant-defined service area. Service area/needs identification based on CSNA/community engagement, drainage needs assessment, and/or regional flood modeling
Reduction of local heat island effect and shade increases, increasing number of trees and/or other vegetation at the site location that will increase carbon reduction/sequestration and improve air quality	Any size	1/4 mile service area. These benefits are typically only realized in close proximities
Other community-identified benefits		Applicant-defined service area. Service area/needs identification based on CSNA/community engagement and acknowledgement
Water Quality Benefits	Any size	Considered a regional benefit to all communities in a Watershed Area, unless justification of a localized benefit is provided
Water Supply Benefits	Any size	Realized at the scale of municipalities, tributaries, and Watershed Management Groups, and Watershed Areas

It is important to consider the walkable road network when defining service areas to account for features that can impede pedestrian or cycle travel (e.g., freeways, river channels, large private parcels, etc.).

To develop service areas and estimate population within different travel distances from projects, the MMS recommended the following steps:

1. Use GIS tools to delineate 0.25-mile, 0.5-mile, and 2-mile services areas to SCW Program projects. The Network Analyst tool in ArcGIS uses the walkable road network when evaluating distances, so it inherently accounts for pedestrian or cyclist barriers like parcels, rivers, and freeways. For larger projects, the public access point (i.e., entrance) to the project should be used to accurately estimate distances. If Network Analyst is unavailable, Project Applicants can simply use best judgment to delineate a buffer around a project and exclude areas from which travel may be obstructed by barriers like freeways, private parcels, or flood control channels.
2. Intersect the service areas with population data to estimate the population within each project service area range. Publicly available census data collected within the last 10 years at the tract level can be used. Converting the tract-level data to 1-acre grids can help streamline analysis.
3. Intersect the service area and population data with Disadvantaged Community boundaries to estimate the population within and outside of Disadvantaged Communities that could be served by each project (Figure 5).

While the service areas above can be used to evaluate potential access to Community Investment Benefits provided by Projects, support for those benefits must be confirmed by the community through the engagement guidelines in this document.

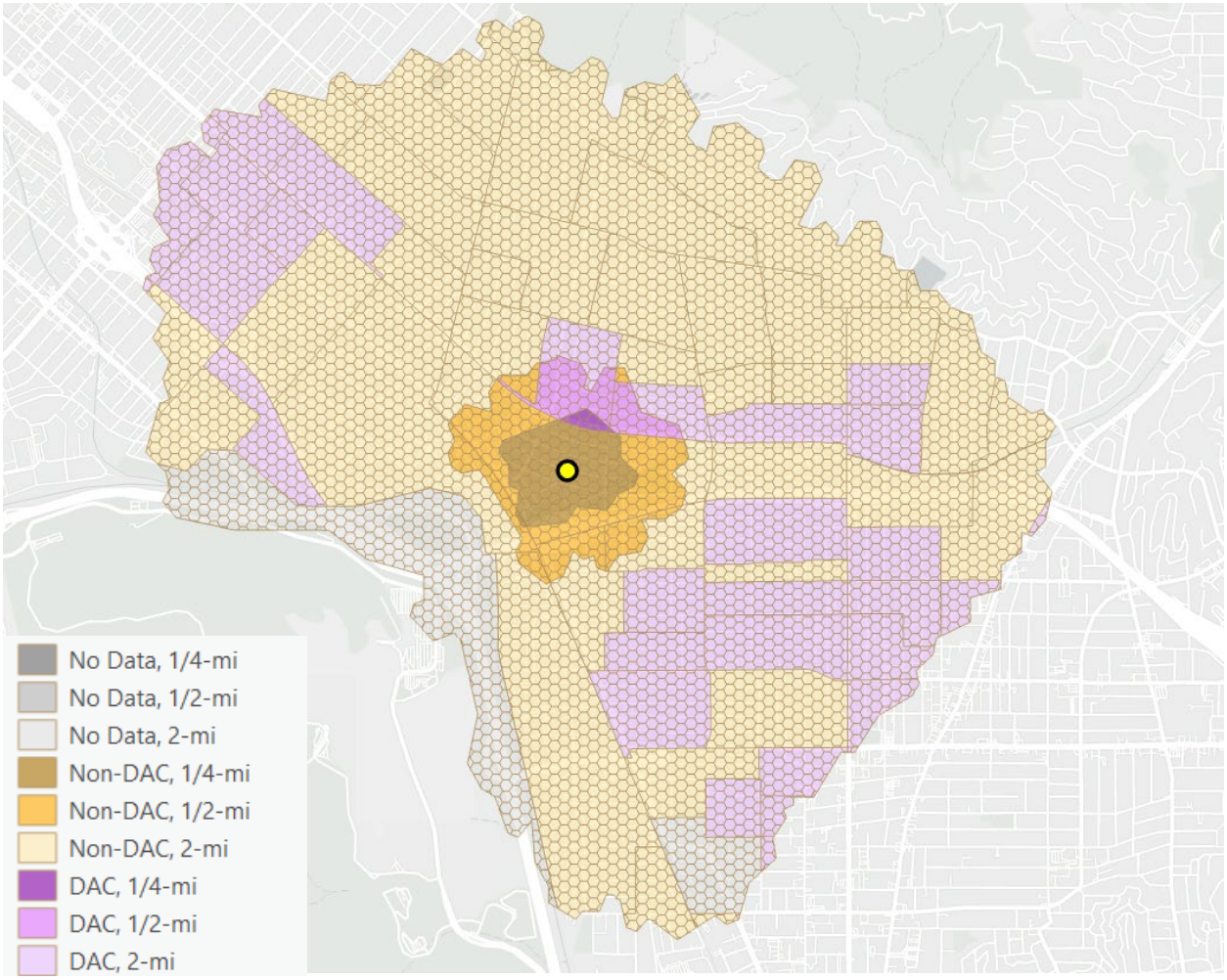


Figure 5. Example delineation of alternative service areas to a project (yellow circle) using the walkable road network, intersected with Disadvantaged Community (DAC) boundaries

Attributing Water Quality and Water Supply Benefits to Disadvantaged Communities

The MMS suggested that Water Quality Benefits may accrue to municipalities (and, potentially, the communities within those municipalities) according to Watershed Management Group (WMG) boundaries. WMGs are groups of municipalities that are collaborating towards achieving water quality compliance, and are separate entities from SCW Program Watershed Areas and WASCs. Each WMG has its own distinct compliance plan with targets and strategies, which is why the MMS suggested that Water Quality Benefits should accrue at that scale.

If a Project Applicant wants to claim Water Quality Benefits as Disadvantaged Community Benefits, the Applicant must provide documentation that members of the DAC agree and support those claims.

On the other hand, due to the regional nature of drinking water management in Los Angeles County, the MMS suggested that Water Supply Benefits accrue to *all* communities throughout a Watershed Area and do not apply when considering equity and Disadvantaged Community Benefits.

Aggregating Place-Based Measures to Guide Evaluation of Disadvantaged Community Benefits

The SCW Program's Initial Watershed Planning is evaluating how the place-based approaches described above may provide supplemental or alternative approaches to estimate progress towards the Program's 110% Disadvantaged Community Investment policy (see Appendix G of the *SCW Program Watershed Planning Framework*,[23] Figure 6). To inform target-setting and strategies, the Initial Watershed Plans hypothetically assume that Community Investment Benefits provide Disadvantaged Community Benefits to those living within each project's service area. Then, the ratio of Water Quality Benefits to DACs versus non-DACs is estimated by attributing Water Quality Benefits to WMGs and the DACs within each WMG. The ratios of Community Investment Benefits and Water Quality Benefits to DAC and non-DAC populations were then weighted using the Regional Program Scoring Criteria at a ratio of 5:1 (i.e., 50 maximum points available for Water Quality Benefits and 10 maximum points available for Community Investment Benefits).

While this approach does not confirm that those within a project's service area support the presumed benefits, it can be used in combination with direct engagement and CSNA results to help justify the potential extent of benefits to Disadvantaged Communities. The approach will be tested during Initial Watershed Planning and may be incorporated into subsequent adaptations of this *2025 Interim Guidance*.

[23] https://safecleanwaterla.org/content/uploads/2024/11/Deliverable-3.2.4-FINAL-Framework-Appendices.pdf

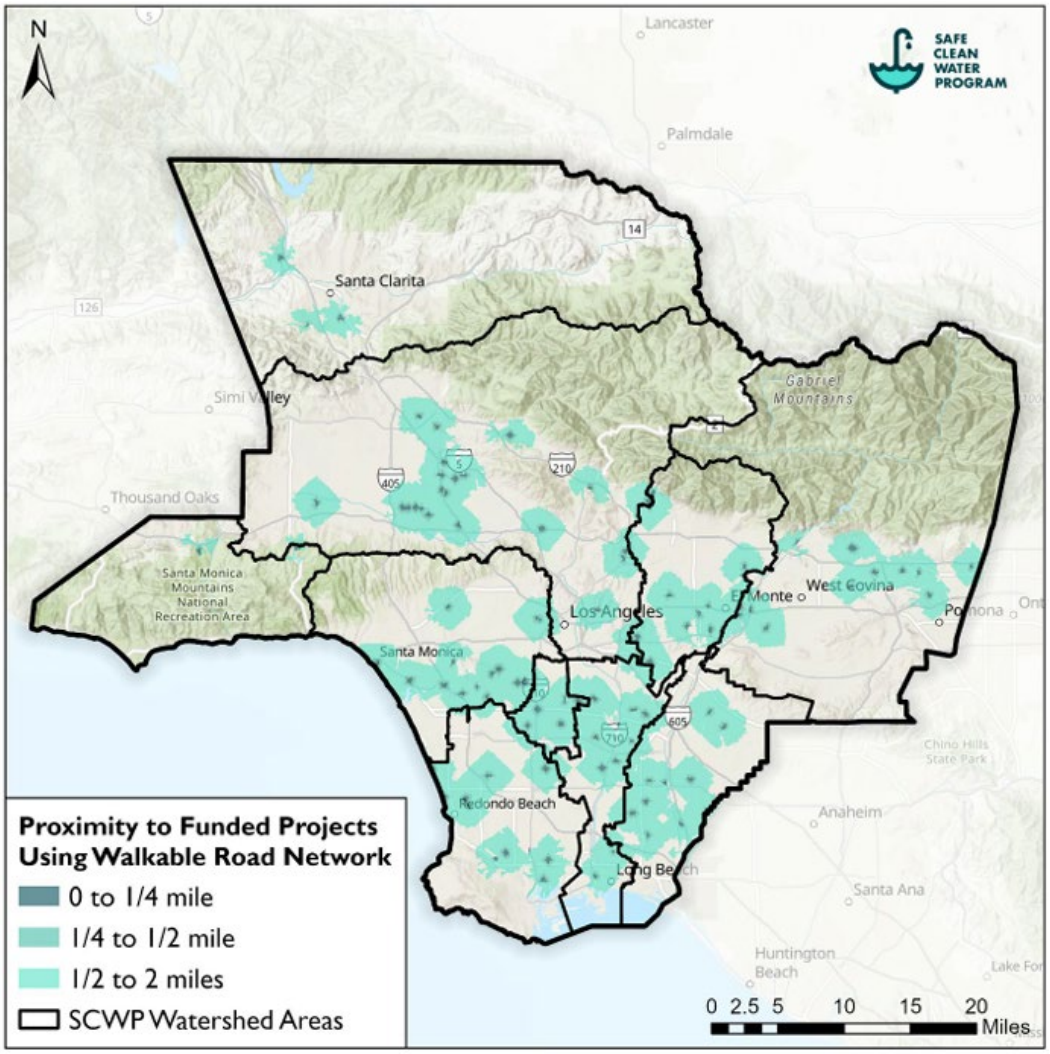


Figure 6. Service areas to SCW Program-funded projects evaluated in MMS

WASC Tools and Strategies

Tools and strategies are available to the members of WASCs both during project evaluation and as part of the project lifecycle. These tools and strategies may assist in determining benefits to members of DACs using available resources.

At any time:

- WASCs can ask their WC(s) to evaluate and report to the WASC how the people, city and county agencies, and other interested parties would describe the preferred Disadvantaged Community Benefits in the Watershed Area.
- WASCs can invite informational presentations from agencies, organizations, and other interested parties to better understand potential Disadvantaged Community Benefits sought and challenges faced in the Watershed Area.

During Project Evaluation

- WASC evaluation of the justification provided in the application and submitted Feasibility Study about Disadvantaged Community Benefits claimed for the project; Project Applicants must provide documented support from members of DACs to justify claims of Disadvantaged Community Benefits.
- Responses to questions during Project Proponent presentations posed by WASC members about the Disadvantaged Community Benefits claimed for the Project.
- During the agendized project discussion period, any voting WASC member may suggest modifying the Disadvantaged Community Benefit designation of a project in accordance with 18.07.B.2.c and the recommended criteria described above as part of a motion related to the formation of a SIP.
    - When modifying a Disadvantaged Community Benefit designation from NO to YES, where justification was therefore not provided in the Project Module application and submitted Feasibility Study, the WASC may consider the recommended criteria described herein and seek equivalent information to that solicited in the Project Module and otherwise as necessary.
- WASC members may aggregate place-based measures to guide the evaluation of a project's claimed DAC benefits, as discussed in the "Estimating Disadvantaged Community Benefits Using Place-Based Measures" section above, and in the SCW Program's Initial Watershed Plans.

Long-Term Vision for Disadvantaged Community Benefits

Public Works recognizes that long-term, additional tools and engagement are needed to enhance efforts across the SCW Program to achieve benefits sought by those who live in, work in, and represent DACs.

1. **Evaluating and sharing accomplishments of WCs:** WCs are a key element within the SCW Program for ensuring communities are engaged and able to influence the Regional Program in each Watershed Area. Providing engagement opportunities, education, and technical assistance to members of DACs will be fundamental to the WCs' work. Future guidance will evaluate and share accomplishments from the WCs' efforts.

2. **Watershed Planning:** Future additions to this *2025 Interim Guidance* will incorporate lessons learned from the SCW Program's ongoing Watershed Planning process regarding needs and priorities related to the evaluation and estimation of DAC benefits.

3. **Evaluating community support or opposition:** One element that is clarified in this *2025 Interim Guidance* is how the WASCs, the SC, and the ROC can rely on representations of community support or opposition as part of their decision-making. This includes discussion of requirements and recommendations for evidence of community support, the degree of documented support necessary for a project based on project characteristics, and incorporation of CSNA input. It is expected that future guidance will further describe how community support can additionally influence the SCW Program and use ongoing engagement efforts to inform the continued refinement of processes for evaluating community support and/or opposition.

    a. The "Estimating Disadvantaged Community Benefits Using Place-Based Measures" section of this chapter provides clarification regarding the presumptive attribution and calculation of projects' Water Quality, Water Supply, and Community Investment Benefits as they pertain to DACs. Future guidance is expected to build upon this clarification using further developments from the Watershed Planning Framework and Initial Watershed Plans.

4. **Further clarifying what constitutes a "community":** A community can be defined by several factors, such as geographical boundaries, socioeconomic characteristics, and population demographics. A definition and discussion of what constitutes a "community" is provided in the Community Engagement and Support section of this *2025 Interim Guidance*. Included is a definition of "community", developed for the specific context of the SCW Program, and a discussion of the considerations that should be made when distinguishing communities within the context of a given SCW

Program project. Within the SCW Program, Census Block Groups are specifically used for the identification of DACs. The current policy, as described above, directs the consideration of Census Block Groups while acknowledging that the Regional Program is conceptually focused on projects that provide regional benefits. This means that projects can benefit multiple communities that are distant from the physical project. When considering "disadvantaged communities" as the beneficiary of investments in the Regional Program, who and what constitutes a "community" requires additional guidance to be developed in collaboration across multiple interested parties in the SCW Program. Additional information (see Table 4) may be used to determine Direct Benefit information. The alignment between scales – the scale of the Regional Program's focus on Watershed Areas, the scale of community boundaries, and the scale of the benefit area of projects – is expected to be explored further once the recommendations in this section are implemented. Future guidance is intended to include efforts to bring more certainty for community members, elected leaders, municipal and county staff, Project Proponents, and decision-making bodies inside the SCW Program about how to judge or quantify the beneficiaries of a project.

5. **Revisiting inclusive language:** Multiple policies at the state and regional levels, including the SCW Program, use the term "disadvantaged community" to explain how aspects of the program are intended to provide enhanced or targeted support to communities that are low-income, pollution burdened, underserved, or historically and currently marginalized or underrepresented. Future guidance within the program may include incorporation of additional inclusive language that better captures the richness and complexity of these communities.

6. **Strengthening anti-displacement policies:** The Regional Program Fund Transfer Agreement, when describing the Stakeholder and Community Outreach/Engagement Plan required of every signatory, refers to "activities and measures to mitigate against displacement and gentrification." It also requires the plan to include commitments to comply with "any County-wide displacement policies" and "specific anti-displacement requirements associated with other funding sources." The role of projects in the SCW Program Regional Program to support anti-displacement is one that could be strengthened in future guidance, as the County and cities adopt additional practices and policies, and as additional policies are added to other funding programs. Currently, there are no readily available anti-displacement policies explicitly listed at the County-level for Los Angeles County. However, interested parties can refer to other anti-displacement policies at various levels of government elsewhere in California for guidance on potential ways to undertake displacement mitigation efforts. Examples of such policies include California's Tenant Protection Act of 2019 (AB 1482), which has provisions for both rent control and "just cause" eviction requirements.

7. **Advancing workforce development:** The SCW Program has explicit goals to support workforce development. Primarily, this is being carried out within the District Program, as an element of the broader Education Program, and is still early in its development. Many WASCs have considered, and heard public comments regarding, the role of

projects within the Regional Program providing workforce development and jobs that benefit all communities, but also specifically members of DACs. Future guidance is expected to discuss the relationship between elements of the Regional Program and the workforce development within the District Program, and how those SCW Program elements could leverage benefits to members of DACs.

The SCW Program's pending adaptive management framework is expected to influence aspects of the long-term vision for DAC benefits and related policies in the SCW Program. This will include, but not be limited to, increased CSNA development/incorporation, addressing definitional gaps, and updates to both short and long-term strategies and targets. Additional developments in this context will be included in future updates to this *2025 Interim Guidance*, currently anticipated in late 2025.

SAFE CLEAN WATER PROGRAM

Appendix A: Terms & Concepts Glossary

Terms and definitions presented here are intended to support a shared language and understanding of concepts used throughout Safe, Clean Water Program (SCW Program) documents. The **SCW Program††** is a collaborative approach to address LA's water needs. Through a **Special Parcel Tax** that provides local, dedicated funding for **Stormwater** initiatives, it supports **SCW Program Goals** and general Program objectives to increase regional water supply, improve water quality, and enhance **Communities** throughout **Los Angeles County Flood Control District (LACFCD or District)** boundaries. By doing so, it allows for communities to help design and implement local infrastructure improvements that lead to **Water Quality Benefits**, **Water Supply Benefits**, and **Community Investment Benefits†** and prioritizes nature-based approaches, such as green spaces and recreation areas, that combat heat and improve neighborhoods.

The SCW Program is complex in nature, consisting of many different components with varying functions and being supported by several distinct resources. This Glossary is intended to alleviate the ambiguity of frequently used terms and concepts with utility in various Program-related contexts, thus maximizing efficiency in communication and decision-making processes. Many definitions presented here are derived or directly taken from the **LACFCD** Municipal Code. Others are being considered and refined by external committees, such as the **Nature-Based Solutions** Blue Ribbon Panel. Additional policy/technical definitions can be found in the separate *SCW Program Definitional Needs* document.

Terms and concepts included in this Glossary will be useful to any individuals or parties involved with SCW Program activities and/processes. Specifically, it is intended for use by **Watershed Area Steering Committees (WASCs)**, **Watershed Coordinators (WCs)**, the **Scoring Committee (SC)**, **Infrastructure Program Project Applicants/Developers**, **Project Proponents**, governmental agencies and representatives, local community members, and other stakeholders.

†: As defined in Chapter 16 of the Los Angeles County Flood Control District Code for the Safe, Clean Water Program Implementation Ordinance (Ord. 2018-0044 § 1, 2018.)
‡: As defined in Chapter 18 of the Los Angeles County Flood Control District Code for the Safe, Clean Water Program Implementation Ordinance (Ord. 2019-0042 § 11, 2019.)
α: As defined in the Regional Program Fund Transfer Agreement.
β: As defined in the Municipal Program Fund Transfer Agreement.
††: Bolded font indicates terms that are defined elsewhere in the Glossary.

Adaptive Management: An iterative adaptive approach to evolve stormwater management practices to optimize resource use, periodically reassess strategies, and implement changes based on monitoring outcomes, new data and/or changing environmental, social, or political conditions.

Agreement[α, β]: Refers to an individual (either Regional or Municipal) **Fund Transfer Agreement**, including all exhibits and attachments thereto.

Anticipated Benefits: The expected outcomes of a given **SCW Program Project**, typically referring to either **Water Quality Benefits**, **Water Supply Benefits**, and/or **Community Investment Benefits**.

Asset: In the context of the **SCW Program**, an asset typically refers to a tangible component of a project or infrastructure. Examples of SCW Program assets are storm drains, pipes, drains, etc.

Baseline: Pre-implementation conditions of a project site or geographic SCW Program area prior to water quality improvement or water supply augmentation activities. Baselines support the development of **SCW Program Targets**, identification of **Watershed Area Needs**, and the communication of progress.

Board[†]: Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, acting as the governing body of the **LACFCD**.

CalEnviroScreen[1]: A mapping tool that helps identify California communities most affected by various sources of pollution as well as where people are typically most vulnerable to the effects of pollution. It uses environmental, health, and socioeconomic data to produce scores for each census tract statewide, mapping the scores to allow for comparison of different communities.

Census Block Group[†]: As defined by the United States Census Bureau, a statistical division of census tracts, which are generally defined to contain between 600 and 3,000 people, and are used to present data and control block numbering. A Census Block Group consists of clusters of blocks within the same census tract. Each census tract contains at least 1 Census Block Group and each Census Block is uniquely numbered within the census tract.

Code[β]: **Los Angeles County Flood Control District Code**.

Community: The term Community refers to a group of individuals or entities that hold and recognize something in common, for instance, a geographic area, culture, needs and interests, goals, or other social bonds. Community boundaries can be defined by formal political or informal social geographies that have meaning for the community members. In the context of the **SCW Program**, community members can be self-defined and may include residents, **CBOs**, local businesses, public institutions, agencies, and other **Interested Parties**

[1] https://oehha.ca.gov/calenviroscreen/about-calenviroscreen

who are either directly or indirectly influenced by the development of a **Project** and the associated benefits that support their quality of life.

Community-Based Organization (CBO): A typically non-profit entity that operates within a specific **Community** or geographical area, aiming to address local needs and challenges and improve the well-being of community members. CBOs play an important role alongside governmental efforts by catering to the unique needs and desires of local communities.

Community Engagement: Activities that solicit, address, and incorporate input from **Community** members for **SCW Program** activities/projects. Community engagement activities may include public meetings or forums, tabling, survey-based assessments, etc.

Community Investment Benefit (CIB)†: A benefit created in conjunction with a **Project** or **Program**, such as, but not limited to: improved flood management, flood conveyance, or flood risk mitigation; creation, enhancement or restoration of parks, habitat or wetlands; improved public access to waterways; enhanced or new recreational opportunities; and greening of schools. A Community Investment Benefit also includes a benefit to the **Community** derived from a **Project** or **Program** that improves public health. This is typically done by reducing heat island effect, increasing shade or planting of trees or other vegetation that increase carbon reduction/sequestration and improve air quality, and/or making improvements to surface water quality in community-accessible areas.

Community Strengths and Needs Assessment (CSNA): Intended to support ongoing **Watershed Planning** efforts, the CSNA collects responses from communities served by the **SCW Program**. It consists of a survey to gather input from the public about **community** needs, strengths, and priorities, as well as a GIS-based Dashboard that visually depicts survey results and tracks response trends over time.

Community Support: Tangible support from and/or partnerships with the local **Community** as a result of engagement throughout **Project** development. It is possible for Community Support to exist without engagement, and engagement does not necessarily guarantee Community Support.

Construction/O&M Funding Phase: One of the two funding phases for which **Infrastructure Program Project Applicants** can apply for funding, as identified in the *Supplemental Guidance to Support Feasibility Study Guidelines*. The Construction/O&M Funding Phase includes **Project** designs that have advanced to 60-percent or beyond. Construction/O&M funding requests may also include additional design funding to advance from 60-percent to 100-percent design.

Construction Phase: The phase of an **Infrastructure Project's Lifecycle** that involves carrying out physical construction of a Project's infrastructural components including site preparation, demolition, excavation, material delivery/handling, and construction activities as well as assurance of the regulatory compliance of these activities.

County†: The County of Los Angeles.

Design-Only Funding Phase: One of the two funding phases for which **Infrastructure Program Project Applicants** can apply for funding, as identified in the *Supplemental Guidance to Support Feasibility Study Guidelines*. The Design-Only Funding Phase includes funding for planning and design of **Project** concepts for which 60-percent plans have not yet been developed.

Design Phase: The phase of an **Infrastructure Project's Lifecycle** that involves the creation of engineering designs for a Project's infrastructural components including technical drawings, material specifications, environmental assessments, and permitting requirements.

Desired Outcomes: The intended impacts/outcomes of a **Project**. In the context of **SCW Program** projects, these typically refer to **Water Quality Benefits**, **Water Supply Benefits**, or **Community Investment Benefits**.

Direct Benefit: Typically determined by **Watershed Area Steering Committees (WASCs)** on a project-by-project basis, Direct Benefits refer to **Project** environmental and/or social benefits that are directly applicable to a specific **Community**. They strongly rely on documented public support from community members that they not only agree that the benefit is applicable to their community, but also that the community desires that benefit. Applicability of Direct Benefits to specific Communities is often based on accessibility, which can in turn be determined by strategies such as the **Walkshed** methodology.

Direct Water Supply End Use: The ways in which water is used directly from a potable water source without any prior treatment or reuse. Examples are drinking, bathing, watering gardens, washing cars, etc.

Disadvantaged Community (DAC): Community within **Census Block Group(s)** that have an annual median household income (MHI) of less than eighty percent (80%) of the Statewide annual median household income (as defined in Water Code section 79505.5).

Disadvantaged Community and Community Enhancement White Paper: Commissioned by the **LACFCD** as part of the **Metrics and Monitoring Study (MMS)**, this report provides advice drawn from research and stakeholder engagement that is intended to enhance the District's ability to measure **Community Engagement** and **DAC** Benefits in pursuit of achieving equitable impact through the **SCW Program**. A key aspect of this report is recommendations for the establishment of metrics that can be used for these purposes.

Disadvantaged Community Benefit: A **Water Quality Benefit**, **Water Supply Benefit**, and/or **Community Investment Benefit** located in a **DAC** or providing benefits directly to a DAC.

Disadvantaged Community Benefit Policy: A goal of the **SCW Program**, as stated in LACFCD Code Section 18.04 (J), is to "provide Disadvantaged Community Benefits, including **Regional Program** infrastructure investments, that are not less than one hundred ten percent (110%) of the ratio of the [Disadvantaged Community] population to the total population in each Watershed Area."

District[†]: **Los Angeles County Flood Control District**.

District Education Program[2]: Intended to encourage and support efforts by the people of Los Angeles County to take action in support of **SCW Program Goals**. Overseen by the District, it includes programs such as public education and **Community Engagement** programs, local workforce job training, and school education and curriculum programs.

District Program†: One of three sub-programs within the **SCW Program**. The District Program funds and facilitates program administration as well as **District Projects**, education and curriculum programs, and local workforce job training.

Dry Weather Project: In the context of the **SCW Program**, Dry Weather **Projects** refer to Projects designed to treat runoff from 0.25-inch rain events or below.

Engagement Fatigue[3]: A phenomenon that occurs when **Community Engagement** is consistently performed but without the presence of observable impacts that result from the solicitation of public input. **Community** members may experience Engagement Fatigue if they are being given ample opportunity to voice their opinions/concerns, but do not feel that their views are being incorporated into a **Project's** decision-making process.

Equitable Benefits: The **SCW Program's** emphasis on Equitable Benefits stems from general historical inequity in the implementation of infrastructure projects and the distribution of their associated benefits. Prioritization of equity in implementation is a foundational provision of the SCW Program and is primarily addressed through **Disadvantaged Community Benefit Policy**.

Feasibility Study†: A detailed technical investigation and report that is conducted to determine the feasibility of a proposed **Project**.

Feasibility Study Guidelines‡[4]: The guidelines for the preparation of **Feasibility Studies** as described in Section 18.07.B.3 of **LACFCD Code**.

Federally Recognized and Non-Federally Recognized Tribes[5]: Federally Recognized Tribes are American Indian or Alaska Native tribal entities that have a recognized government-to-government relationship with the United States and are eligible for funding and services from the Bureau of Indian Affairs. They also possess certain inherent rights of self-government, and are entitled to receive certain federal benefits, protections, and services. Non-Federally Recognized Tribes lack this status and eligibility for the associated benefits.

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[2] https://dpw.lacounty.gov/wp/safecleanwaterla/education/

[3] https://www.stantec.com/content/dam/stantec/files/PDFAssets/technical/001/equity-in-stormwater-investments-stantec-ucla.pdf

[4] https://library.municode.com/ca/los_angeles_county/codes/code_of_ordinances/379113?nodeId=FLCODICO_CH18SACLWAPRIMOR_18.07REPRIM

[5] https://www.bia.gov/faqs/what-federally-recognized-tribe#:~:text=A%20federally%20recognized%20tribe%20is,Alaska%20Native%20tribes%20and%20villages

First Flush Flow: The initial portion of **Stormwater** runoff that occurs in the beginning of a rainfall/storm event in which the concentration of pollutants is generally higher than during the latter portions of the storm event.

Funded Activity[α]: The **Infrastructure Program Project**, or **Scientific Study** described in the Scope of Work, including the Stakeholder and Community Outreach Plan and all other tasks and activities described in the Scope of Work.

"Good", "Better", and "Best" Engagement: Benchmarks associated with the attainment of different levels of community outreach and engagement. The community outreach and engagement efforts of a given **Project** are evaluated by **WASCs** and the **Scoring Committee (SC)** alongside other project details to carry out the scoring process and determine a project's eligibility for **Stormwater Investment Plan (SIP)** inclusion.

Grassroots Outreach: Efforts such as door-to-door canvassing, phone banking, focus groups and surveys, and the distribution of printed materials such as flyers. This method of community outreach is generally conducted with ongoing coordination with local **CBOs** and organizations.

Green Jobs: Any job or career generated as a result of the **SCW Program**.

Handbook for Municipalities[6]: Consolidates information on existing requirements and guidance, focusing on the **Municipal Program**. Concepts covered within the document include Municipal Program Ordinance Requirements of the **LACFCD** Code, **Fund Transfer Agreement** requirements, timelines for the Municipal Program, eligible and ineligible expenditures, FAQs, and other various ongoing and related efforts that may be useful to municipalities for **SCW Program** implementation.

Impermeable Area[†]: A parcel area covered by materials or constructed surfaces such as buildings, roofs, paved roadways, sidewalks, driveways, parking lots, brick, asphalt, concrete, pavers, covers, slabs, sheds, pools, and other constructed surfaces or hardscape features. Impermeable areas do not include permeable surfaces such as vegetated areas, grasses, bushes, shrubs, lawns, bare soil, tree canopy, natural water bodies, wetland areas, gravel, gardens and planters on bare soil, rocky shores, and other natural areas.

Indicator: A high-level metric that measures progress toward achieving **Program Goals**. Indicators roll up **Performance Measures** by Watershed Area and on a **SCW Program**-wide scale to quantify cumulative benefits of SCW Program funded **Projects** and **Programs** to communicate and track progress toward Program Goals.

Infrastructure Program[†]: Part of the **Regional Program**, this program shall implement multi-benefit watershed-based **Projects** that have a **Water Quality Benefit**, as well as either a **Water Supply Benefit** or **Community Investment Benefit**, or both.

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[6] https://safecleanwaterla.org/content/uploads/2023/01/Handbook-for-Municipalities-202301.pdf

Infrastructure Program Project Applicant†: Any individual, group, business or governmental entity, including, but not limited to, the **District**, a Municipality, watershed management group, joint powers authority, public utility, special district, school, **CBO**, **NGO**, non-profit organization, **Federally-Recognized Indian Tribe**, State Indian tribe listed on the Native American Heritage Commission's California Tribal Consultation List, or mutual water company, that submits a proposed **Project** or **Feasibility Study** for consideration for funding by the **SCW Program**.

Infrastructure Program Project Developer†: The individual, group, or entity that carries out or causes to be carried out part or all of the actions necessary to complete a **Project**.

Infrastructure Project: A multi-benefit **Project** funded through the **SCW Program's Infrastructure Program.**

Initial Watershed Plans: Illustrative documents created by the **Los Angeles County** Department of Public Works as part of the **SCW Program** that include relevant, individual watershed-specific information including, but not limited to: a summary of **Watershed Area** characteristics, a snapshot of the **Baseline** of **Municipal** and **Regional Program** funded **Projects**, SCW Program-wide and Watershed Area-specific **Targets**, **Watershed Area Needs**, **Priority Goals and Strategies**, **Opportunity Areas**, recommendations and findings, and key data gaps and limitations.

Interested Parties[7]: In the context of the **SCW Program**, Interested Parties refer to municipalities, NGOs/CBOs, **Communities,** and individual members of the public with personal or organization stake in the implementation and outcomes of SCW Program activities. Interested Parties include, but are not limited to: SCW Program Governance Committees (**Scoring Committee**, **WASCs**, **ROC**, **WCs**, ROC Water Quality Working Group), **Municipalities**, Subject Matter Experts and SCW Program Consultants, **Los Angeles County** Public Works staff, **Community** members, **CBOs**, and any other entity who provides public comment or participates in SCW Program dialogue or activities. These Interested Parties are all entities that have a vested interest in the SCW Program and related activities/processes.

Interim 2022 Guidance: Developed as a supporting document for the **Regional Program**, providing important information for various audiences regarding Regional Program guidelines, details, and requirements. Although primarily developed to support the Regional Program call for projects, scoring, and **SIP** processes, Interim Guidance information also provides utility for the **District Program** and **Municipal Program**. Focuses on the following areas: Community Engagement and Support, **Water Supply**, **Nature-Based Solutions**, and **Disadvantaged Community** Policies.

Known or Perceived Needs: An aspect of project development which **Program Applicants** are obligated to identify as part of the **SCW Program Projects Module**. Essentially refers to a justification of why the **Desired Outcomes** of a **Project** are relevant and applicable to a

[7] https://safecleanwaterla.org/content/uploads/2024/11/Deliverable-3.2.4-FINAL-Framework-Appendices.pdf

specific **Community** or Watershed Area based on the needs and wants of that community or Watershed Area.

Local Media Outreach: Newsletters, local and regional newspaper publications, and local television and radio-based outreach efforts. Contacts for these sources are typically available via internet search and/or direct contact.

Los Angeles County Flood Control District (LACFCD): Created in 1915 under the Los Angeles County Flood Control Act, the LACFCD's mission is to construct, operate, and maintain an advanced system for flood protection and water conservation, while improving water quality and maximizing habitat, open space, and recreational opportunities. LACFCD boundaries encompass approximately 2,752 square miles. Major programs within the LACFCD are categorized as flood control, water conservation, and **Urban Runoff** and **Stormwater** quality.

2024 Metrics and Monitoring Study (MMS)[8]: The MMS was designed to develop **Program** methods, metrics, and monitoring criteria to inform tracking, planning, reporting, and decision-making within the **SCW Program**. Conducted by a consultant team in collaboration with the **LACFCD** and informed by stakeholder involvement. MMS recommendations are intended to inform ongoing **Watershed Planning** and adaptive management efforts including updates to guidance documents, scoring criteria, monitoring, and project development.

Module Score[9]: A preliminary score given by the **SCW Program Projects Module** based on a **Project's** Feasibility Study, which is subsequently verified by the **Scoring Committee (SC)** prior to the project's consideration for **SIP** inclusion.

Multi-Benefit Project†: A **Project** that has: (1) a **Water Quality Benefit**, and (2) a **Water Supply Benefit** or a **Community Investment Benefit**, or both.

Municipal Program†: One of the sub-programs within the **SCW Program**. The Municipal Program distributes funds across the 86 Los Angeles County municipalities to fund project initiatives within those municipalities and create benefits for the communities within them.

Municipal Program Transfer Agreement: Functionally, a Transfer Agreement between the **LACFCD** and a **Municipality** to distribute **Municipal Program** funds, which are divided amongst Municipalities proportionate to the revenue they have generated for the Municipal Program. Each Municipality may receive their portion of Municipal Program revenue within 45 days after execution of a Municipal Program Transfer Agreement by the **District** or within 14 days of the District's receipt of the **Annual Plan**, whichever comes later. Components of the **Agreement** include an Annual Plan, a description of **Nature-Based Solutions** BMPs, **O&M** guidance, and general terms and conditions.

Municipality†: A city within the **District**, or the **County**, pertaining to unincorporated areas within the District.

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[8] https://safecleanwaterla.org/content/uploads/2023/04/SCWP-MMS-Fact-Sheet-20230412.pdf
[9] https://portal.safecleanwaterla.org/scw-reporting/map

Nature-Based Solution (NBS)†: A **Project** that utilizes natural processes that slow, detain, infiltrate or filter **Stormwater** or **Urban Runoff**. These methods may include relying predominantly on soils and vegetation; increasing the permeability of impermeable areas; protecting undeveloped mountains and floodplains; creating and restoring riparian habitat and wetlands; creating rain gardens, bioswales, and parkway basins; and enhancing soil through composting, mulching, and planting trees and vegetation, with preference for native species. Nature-Based Solutions may also be designed to provide additional benefits such as sequestering carbon, supporting biodiversity, providing shade, creating and enhancing parks and open space, and improving quality of life for surrounding communities.

NBS Blue Ribbon Panel: A task force convened by the **County** tasked with the development of standards and standardized definitions for the implementation of **Nature-Based Solutions** for water management across the County to improve the health of **Communities** and ecosystems. This includes the implementation of priority tasks from the County Water Plan.

Non-Governmental Organization (NGO): Mission-driven advocacy or service organizations that typically operate in the nonprofit sector, independent of governmental operations. NGOs differ from **CBOs** in that they do not necessarily operate within a specific **community** or geographical area, or at least not at the same local scale that CBOs operate.

Online Media Outreach: Email blasts, social media efforts, and website publications.

Operations & Maintenance (O&M): Refers to a set of efforts/activities that ensure a facility, equipment, or other asset is functioning properly and safely. This includes day-to-day running of the asset as well as maintenance activities that prevent problems from occurring over various timescales.

O&M/Monitoring Phase: The phase of an **Infrastructure Project's Lifecycle** that involves the ongoing operations, maintenance, and monitoring of a Project to ensure continued functionality and effectiveness. This includes any necessary physical operation of project components, maintenance activities to ensure continued functionality and prevent degradation, and monitoring of project effectiveness and outcomes relative to overall Project goals/objectives and making necessary adjustments over time.

Parcel†: A Parcel of real property situated within the **District**, as shown on the latest equalized assessment roll of the **County** and identified by its **Assessor's** Parcel Number, and that is tributary to a receiving water identified in the Water Quality Control Plan for the Los Angeles Region in effect as of January 1, 2018. Parcel shall not include a possessory interest based on private, beneficial use of government-owned real property.

Performance Measure (PM): Quantitative or qualitative metric that quantifies benefits provided by individual **Projects** and **Programs**, inventoried and tracked to support **SCW Program** assessment. Select PMs are rolled up across the Watershed Area and Program to support progress tracking toward achievement of **Indicators** / **SCW Program Goals**.

Planning Phase: The phase of an **Infrastructure Project's Lifecycle** that involves the initial creation of a Project's overall plans, including needs assessment, preliminary planning and

concept creation, **Stakeholder** identification, community engagement, identification/leveraging of funding sources, teaming, and a **Feasibility Study**.

Program†: A planned, coordinated group of activities related to increasing **Stormwater** or **Urban Runoff** capture or reducing Stormwater or Urban Runoff pollution in the **District**.

Project†: The development (including design, preparation of environmental documents, obtaining applicable regulatory permits, construction, inspection, and similar activities) and operations and maintenance (including monitoring) of a physical structure or facility that increases **Stormwater** or **Urban Runoff** capture or reduces Stormwater or Urban Runoff pollution in the **District**.

Project Lifecycle: In the context of the **SCW Program**, the Project Lifecycle is comprised of **Planning Phase**, **Design Phase**, **Construction Phase**, and **O&M/Monitoring Phase**.. Applications for funding through the **Regional Program** are organized into two categories based on Project Lifecycle phase: **Design-Only Funding Phase** applications and **Construction/O&M Funding Phase** applications.

Project Proponent: A community member, **Project Developer**, or other stakeholder(s) with a tangible interest in promoting a given **Project** and assisting in the eventual realization of its claimed benefits.

Public Education and Community Engagement Grants Program: Administered by the **District** in partnership with the Water Foundation, this **Program** is meant to support education and **Community Engagement** efforts related to **Stormwater** and **Urban Runoff** capture. Proposals for funding through the Program are evaluated by the Water Foundation, and grant funds are subsequently awarded for the most appropriate/eligible applicants.

Regional Benefits: Benefits that are realized across multiple **Communities, Municipalities,** or **Watershed Areas**.

Regional Oversight Committee (ROC)†: The body created by the LA County Board of Supervisors (Board) whose responsibilities include, but are not limited to, assessing and making recommendations to the Board regarding whether the **SCW Program Goals** are being achieved at a program-wide scale.

Regional Program†: One of the sub-programs within the **SCW Program**. The Regional Program receives fifty percent (50%) of the annual revenues from the **Special Parcel Tax** to fund the **Infrastructure Program**, a **Technical Resources Program**, and a **Scientific Studies Program**. Watershed Areas shall be established to facilitate implementation of the Regional Program. Each Watershed Area shall be overseen by a **WASC** that includes municipalities, agencies, and other Stakeholders.

Regional Program Transfer Agreement: An agreement that must be executed for **Infrastructure Program Project Developers** and **Scientific Study** Applicants after the LA County Board of Supervisors has approved the **SIPs**. Functionally, it is a Transfer Agreement between the approved applicant/developer and the **LACFCD** to allocate funds through the

Infrastructure Program or **Scientific Studies Program**. Components of the Transfer Agreement include a scope of work, general terms and conditions, special conditions, addendum to agreement, discussion of **Nature-Based Solutions**, and an **O&M** guidance document, as well as a designation of the project developer.

Safe, Clean Water Program (SCW Program)†: The **Program** established by Chapter 16 of the **LACFCD** Code, including the administration of revenues from the **Special Parcel Tax** levied pursuant to the ordinance, and the criteria and procedures for selecting and implementing **Projects** and Programs and allocating revenues among the **Municipal**, **Regional**, and **District Programs**.

Scientific Studies Program†: Part of the **Regional Program**, this **Program** shall provide funding for eligible scientific and other activities, such as, but not limited to: **Scientific Studies**, technical studies, monitoring, modeling, and other similar activities. The **District** will administer this Program and will seek to utilize independent research institutions or academic institutions to carry out or help design and peer review activities carried out by other entities. All activities implemented through this Program shall be conducted in accordance with accepted scientific protocols.

Scientific Study: Scientific research that is performed to help with understanding where and what watershed/**community**-specific needs are, and how they can best be addressed through the **SCW Program**.

Scoring Committee (SC)‡: A group of six (6) subject-matter experts in **Water Quality Benefits**, **Water Supply Benefits**, **Nature-Based Solutions**, and **Community Investment Benefits** created by the **Board** to review and score **Projects** and Feasibility Studies in connection with the **Infrastructure Program**. The SC works with **Public Works** to review and finalize scores for **Projects** being considered by each **Watershed Area Steering Committee** for the **Regional Program**.

Scoring Criteria: Presented as a component of the **SCW Program's Feasibility Study Guidelines**, the Scoring Criteria is used by entities such as **WASCs** and **WCs** to assess the degree to which **Projects** submitted to the **Regional Program** meet **Program** expectations. Via the Scoring Criteria, Projects are awarded points for categories such as **Water Quality Benefits**, **Water Supply Benefits, Community Investment Benefits, Nature-Based Solutions,** and Leveraging Funding and **Community Support** based on the characteristics of the **Feasibility Study** that is submitted to the **SCW Program Projects Module**.

SCW Program Goals (Goals)[10]: The fourteen (14) SCW Program Implementation Goals (A-N) outlined in Section 18.04 of the **LACFCD Code** for the **SCW Program** Implementation Ordinance.

SCW Program Projects Module: A tool through which **Program Applicants** can provide detailed information from their **Project's** Feasibility Study. The SCW Program Projects

[10]https://library.municode.com/ca/los_angeles_county/codes/code_of_ordinances/349596?nodeId=FLCODICO_CH18SACLWAPRIMOR_18.04SCPRGO

Module provides a preliminary **Module Score** for a given project, which is then verified by the **Scoring Committee (SC)**. Projects must meet the **Threshold Score** to be considered for **SIP** inclusion.

SCW Program Watershed Planning (Watershed Planning): A dynamic process by the **SCW Program** involving establishing **Watershed Area Targets** to quantify progress towards **SCW Program Goals**, incorporating input from **Interested Parties** and community members and evolving **Community** priorities, and identifying opportunities for multi-benefit **Projects. Watershed Planning is** intended to guide prospective applicants, municipalities, and the **District** in developing projects and Programmatic investments that will best serve the Watershed Areas; supports the identification of **Watershed Area Needs**, **Priority Goals and Strategies**, and **Opportunity Areas**.

Special Parcel Tax†: The annual Special Parcel Tax in the amount of 2.5 cents per square foot of **Parcel Impermeable Area**. Further described in Section 16.08 of the **LACFCD** Code for the **SCW Program** Implementation Ordinance.

Stakeholder†: A person; **Municipality**; watershed management group; joint powers authority; citizens' group; homeowner or other property owner; business; **NGO**; social justice group; health advocate; local park representative; school board member; environmental group; labor union; academic institution; neighborhood council; town council; community group; water resources agency, such as a groundwater pumper or manager, or a private or public water agency; other governmental agency; or other interested party that has a direct or indirect stake in the **SCW Program**.

State Water Code[11,12]: The California State Water Code is a comprehensive set of laws that governs the state's water resources, encompassing everything from water rights and water quality to dams and flood control. In the context of the **SCW Program**, the California State Water Code defines a **Disadvantaged Community** and a Severely Disadvantaged Community as having an MHI below 80% and below 60% of the statewide MHI, respectively.

Stormwater†: Water that originates from atmospheric moisture (rainfall or snowmelt) and falls or flows onto land, water, or other surfaces.

Stormwater Improvement‡: A structure or facility, or system of structures or facilities, that captures **Stormwater** or **Urban Runoff** or reduces **Stormwater** or **Urban Runoff** pollution in the **District**.

Stormwater Investment Plan (SIP)†: The SIP is a 5-year plan developed by a **WASC** that allocates funding for **Projects** and **Programs** in the **Regional Program's Infrastructure Program**, **Technical Resources Program**, and **Scientific Studies Program**. The SIP for the ensuing fiscal year and lays out tentative funding for 4 subsequent years. SIPs will be approved by the **Board** on an annual basis.

[11] CA Water Code § 79505.5 (2024)
[12] CA Water Code § 13476 (2024)

Strategies: Describe the means through which **Program Goals** will be achieved and **Watershed Area Needs** will be addressed; determined by working backwards from the desired outcomes to determine necessary actions. **Watershed Planning** is developing strategies that are specific to progress toward a given target to support achievement of Program Goals, while **Priority Strategies**, identified through engagement, focus on preferred actions for the respective Watershed Area or **SCW Program**-wide.

Surface Water†: Water that flows or collects on the surface of the ground.

Technical Resources Program (TRP)[13]: A form of **SCW Program** support which offers technical support from District staff to develop a feasibility study, intended to enable **Project Proponents** to subsequently apply to the **Infrastructure Program**. Eligibility for the TRP is based on whether the **Project** is determined to provide benefit by increasing local water supply, improving water quality, and/or providing community investment. Selection for the TRP entails that **District Technical Assistance Teams (TATs)** will work with project proponents to complete Feasibility Studies based on project concepts.

Threshold Score: The minimum score that **Projects** must meet or exceed in order to be eligible for **Infrastructure Program** funding.

Unmanaged Aquifer[14]: An area within a groundwater basin that is not managed by a Groundwater Sustainability Agency, an adjudication, or an alternative Groundwater Sustainability Plan and is not subject to deliberate human interventions such as artificial recharge efforts and relies solely on natural replenishment mechanisms.

Urban Runoff†: **Surface Water** flow that may contain, but is not composed entirely of, **Stormwater**, such as flow from residential, commercial, or industrial activities.

Walkshed: A strategy for determining the applicability of a **Project's** benefits to specific **Communities** based on that Project's accessibility for Community members. Determined on a project-by-project basis, influencing factors can include topography, geographical boundaries, public transportation quality/availability, and other contextual characteristics.

Water Quality Benefit†: Defined as a reduction in **Stormwater** or **Urban Runoff** pollution, such as improvements in the chemical, physical, and biological characteristics of Stormwater or Urban Runoff in the District. Activities resulting in this benefit include but are not limited to: infiltration or treatment of Stormwater or Urban runoff, non-point source pollution control, and diversion of Stormwater or Urban Runoff to a sanitary sewer system.

Water Supply Benefit†: Defined as an increase in the amount of locally available water supply, provided there is a nexus to **Stormwater** or **Urban Runoff** capture. Activities resulting in this benefit include, but are not limited to, the following: reuse and conservation practices, diversion of Stormwater or Urban Runoff to a sanitary sewer system for direct or indirect water

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[13] https://safecleanwaterla.org/content/uploads/2021/09/Safe-clean-water-program-handout-2_eng.pdf

[14] https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/sgma/groundwater_basins/#:~:text=Groundwater%20Basins%20with%20Unmanaged%20Areas,by%20the%20State%20Water%20Board.

recycling, increased groundwater replenishment or available yield, or offset of potable water use.

Water Supply Benefit Magnitude: The total **Project** capacity for long-term volume captured; the annual additional water supply volume resulting from the project.

Water Supply Cost-Effectiveness: The total life-cycle cost per unit of acre foot of **Stormwater** and/or **Urban Runoff** volume captured for water supply.

Water Supply Scoring Adaptation Pilot Rubric[15]: Incorporates a newly developed, alternative (optional) **Scoring Criteria** for evaluating the **Water Supply Benefits** of a given **Project**. The new Scoring Criteria is intended to provide additional point scale flexibility so that Project score can be tallied at one-point increments (as compared to the current stepwise criteria) and would enable projects managing smaller drainage areas to earn points. This approach better aligns the **Cost-Effectiveness** and **Benefit Magnitude** scoring with the true range of program-worthy **Multi-Benefit Project** efficiencies and performance, and inherently accounts for **District**-wide opportunities, constraints, and economic changes over time.

Watershed Area†: The regional hydrologic boundaries as depicted on maps maintained by the **District** for the **SCW Program**, that are established in consideration of topographic conditions and other factors. The SCW Program includes the following nine (9) Watershed Areas: (1) Central Santa Monica Bay; (2) Lower Los Angeles River; (3) Lower San Gabriel River; (4) North Santa Monica Bay; (5) Rio Hondo; (6) Santa Clara River; (7) South Santa Monica Bay; (8) Upper Los Angeles River; and (9) Upper San Gabriel River.

Watershed Area Needs: Difference between the **Baseline** of an **Indicator** and the **Watershed Area Target** for that Indicator.

Watershed Area Steering Committee (WASC)†: A governing body created by the Board, one for each **Watershed Area**, **for** the purpose of developing **SIPs** and recommendations for other activities to be funded through the **Regional Program**.

Watershed Coordinator (WC)†: One or more persons assigned to assist a **WASC** with **Community** and stakeholder education and engagement and to guide **Projects** from concept to implementation..

Wet Weather: In the context of the **SCW Program**, **Wet Weather Projects** refer to Projects designed for rainfall events in excess of 0.25 inches.

[15] https://safecleanwaterla.org/content/uploads/2023/06/Alternate-WS-Scoring-Pilot-202306.pdf

Acronyms

The list of acronyms presented here will evolve with the Initial Watershed Plan development.

Table 1. SCW Program Watershed Planning Framework Acronyms

Acronym	Definition
BMP	Best Management Practice
BoS	Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors (Board)
CalEPA	California Environmental Protection Agency
CBO	Community-Based Organization
CIB	Community Investment Benefit
CSMB	Central Santa Monica Bay
CSNA	Community Strengths & Needs Assessment
DAC	Disadvantaged Community
FAQ	Frequently Asked Questions
LA	Los Angeles
LACFCD	Los Angeles County Flood Control District (District)
LACPW	Los Angeles County Department of Public Works (Public Works)
LLAR	Lower Los Angeles River
LSGR	Lower San Gabriel River
MHI	Median Household Income
MMS	Metrics and Monitoring Study
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NBS	Nature-Based Solutions
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NSMB	North Santa Monica Bay
O&M	Operations and Maintenance
PM	Performance Measure
RH	Rio Hondo
ROC	Regional Oversight Committee
SC	Scoring Committee
SCR	Santa Clara River
SCW	Safe, Clean Water
SCWP	The Safe, Clean Water Program
SIP	Stormwater Investment Plan
SSMB	South Santa Monica Bay
TRP	Technical Resources Program
ULAR	Upper Los Angeles River
USCR	Upper Santa Clara River
USEPA	United States Environmental Protection Agency
USGR	Upper San Gabriel River
WASC	Watershed Area Steering Committee

Acronym	Definition
WC	Watershed Coordinator
WMG	Watershed Management Group
WMP	Watershed Management Plan
WQB	Water Quality Benefit
WSB	Water Supply Benefit

Section 5:
Feasibility Study Guidelines

Safe, Clean Water Program

Feasibility Study Guidelines

For Chief Engineer of the
Los Angeles County Flood Control District

9/19/19
Date Adopted

Safe, Clean Water Program Feasibility Study Guidelines

1.0 Background and Purpose

The definitions set forth in Sections 16.03 and 18.02 of the Los Angeles County Flood Control District Code shall apply to these Guidelines.

The objective of the Infrastructure Program is to plan, build, and maintain watershed-based Multi-Benefit Projects. In order for a Project to be eligible for consideration by the Watershed Area Steering Committee (WASC) and scoring by the Scoring Committee, a Feasibility Study for that Project must first be completed.

Section 18.07.B.3. of the Los Angeles County Flood Control District Code states:

> The Chief Engineer shall develop and adopt guidelines for the preparation of Feasibility Studies (Feasibility Study Guidelines), including required contents, and shall update those guidelines from time to time, consistent with the purposes and goals of the SCW Program, as the Chief Engineer deems necessary or appropriate for the effective operation of the Regional Program.

The purpose of these Feasibility Study Guidelines ("Guidelines") is to describe the minimum requirements for Feasibility Studies. If a Feasibility Study does not meet the minimum requirements described in these Guidelines, the proposed Project will not be eligible for consideration and scoring. These Guidelines may be periodically updated as deemed necessary or appropriate by the Chief Engineer of the LA County Flood Control District.

If a Feasibility Study or functionally equivalent Feasibility Study level information (see Section 5.0) has not been prepared for a proposed Project, a WASC may recommend that a Feasibility Study for the proposed Project be prepared through the Technical Resources Program, in a Stormwater Investment Plan (SIP). When included in an approved SIP, the District will provide Technical Assistance Teams to complete the Feasibility Studies in partnership with and on behalf of Municipalities, community-based organizations ("CBOs"), non-governmental organizations ("NGOs"), and others who may not have the technical resources or capabilities to develop Feasibility Studies. Each Feasibility Study will be uploaded through a web-based tool that also provides applicants with a preliminary score based on their inputs. Each WASC will determine which completed Feasibility Studies will be sent to the Scoring Committee for official scoring.

The requirements in the following section are intended to be used in combination with the Project Scoring Criteria (Exhibit A) and the SCW Regional Projects Module (Exhibit B) described in Section 4.0 below.

2.0 Requirements

A Feasibility Study is required before a Project can be submitted for consideration, scoring, and potential recommendation for incorporation into a SIP. At a minimum, a Feasibility Study must include:

1. A detailed description of the proposed Project, including:
    - A summary of the Project's primary objective(s), secondary objective(s), and any additional objective(s).
    - A description of the primary mechanisms by which the Project will achieve its objectives (e.g., runoff and/or pollutant reduction through infiltration, treat and release, capture and use, etc.).
    - A description and schematic of the Project layout including its anticipated footprint and key components such as, but not limited to: inlet, outlet, diversion point, recreational components, nature-based components, pumps, treatment facilities, underdrains, conveyance, above ground improvements, and other Project components.
    - An outline of the capture area for the Project on a map and a breakdown of acreage, land uses and percent imperviousness within the capture area.
    - Land ownership and related rights of way.
2. A description and estimate of the benefits provided (determined through best engineering estimates and modeling as appropriate). More information on how to estimate Project benefits are provided in Section 3.0.
3. An estimated schedule to design, obtain permits for, construct, operate and maintain the Project.
4. A review of the effectiveness of similar types of Projects already constructed, when available.
5. A monitoring plan to measure the effectiveness of the proposed Project once completed, including metrics specific to the identified benefits.
6. A lifecycle cost estimate and schedule required to design, obtain permits for, construct, operate and maintain the Project.
    - Life-cycle cost estimates must contain Project costs including but not be limited to: costs related to early concept design, pre-Project monitoring, Feasibility Study development, site investigations, formal Project design, intermediate and Project completion audits, California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) compliance and other environmental impact studies, land acquisition, permitting, construction, full lifetime operations and maintenance, monitoring, etc. The only costs not to be included in the life-cycle cost estimate are the dismantling and replacement costs at the end of life.
7. A plan for how operations and maintenance of the Project will be carried out. The plan should include but not be limited to: estimated annual costs associated with maintenance (including: estimates for number of crew required, hours of maintenance per month/year, the staff expertise level, Projections of maintenance cost increases over the life of the Project); how Project maintenance will accommodate Project Labor Agreement (PLA) considerations (if applicable); and identification of the responsible party that has agreed to perform the operations and maintenance.

8. An engineering analysis of the proposed Project (e.g., estimates of site conditions, soil sampling, appropriate geotechnical investigations, preliminary hydrology report, site layout, utility search, environmental impacts, pertinent historical background for site location, etc.).
    - The minimum requirements for engineering analysis will depend primarily on the type of Project.
    - The engineering analysis should, at a minimum, support all benefits claimed.
    - It is understood that not all Projects will have completed CEQA and other environmental studies, so estimates and engineering analyses do not have to be as comprehensive as a full CEQA or other environmental study (unless those studies have already been completed and are available to support the Project).
9. An assessment of potential CEQA-related and permitting challenges and associated time requirements and costs.
10. For non-municipal Project applicant/developers (meaning entities that are not cities/municipalities, the LA County Flood Control District, or other government agencies) an initial letter of support from the Municipality in which the Project is proposed that includes concurrence with the plan for operations and maintenance and the responsible party that has agreed to perform the operation and maintenance.
11. A plan for outreach/engagement to solicit, address, and incorporate stakeholder input on the Project, which should also address issues related to displacement and gentrification.
12. As applicable, the Feasibility Study must include an acknowledgment that the Project will be fully subject to and comply with any County-wide displacement policies as well as with any specific anti-displacement requirements associated with other funding sources.
13. A plan to incorporate vector minimization into the Project design, operations, and maintenance. The California Department of Public Health's Checklist for Minimizing Vector Production in Stormwater Management Structures can serve as a basic guideline in developing the vector minimization plan. Projects creating vector-related public nuisances may be subject to abatement proceedings as specified in California Health and Safety Code sections 2060 et seq. It is recommended that Infrastructure Program Project Applicants have their vector minimization plans reviewed by the local vector control district or agency.
14. A description of how Nature-Based Solutions are utilized to the maximum extent feasible. If Nature-Based Solutions are not used, include a description of what options for Nature-Based Solutions were considered and why they were not feasible.
15. A summary of any legal requirements or obligations that may arise as a result of constructing the Project, and how those requirements will be satisfied.
16. For Projects involving LA County Flood Control District (LACFCD) infrastructure, facilities, or right-of-way, provide confirmation of conceptual approval from LACFCD.
17. Acknowledgment of eligible expenditures being only those incurred on or after November 6, 2018.
18. A summary of the other sources of funding that are being leveraged for Project costs (if applicable). If no other sources of funding are being utilized, provide a summary of what other sources of funding were explored and/or why funding could not be secured through these other sources.

19. If the Project is located within a Disadvantaged Community (DAC), a summary of how the Project will benefit that DAC and a discussion of measures on displacement avoidance.

The Feasibility Study should provide enough information about a proposed Project to allow the Watershed Area Steering Committee members to make an informed decision as to which Projects should move forward for consideration for funding. The Feasibility Study should provide enough information or estimates to allow each Project to be scored through the 110-point Infrastructure Program Project Scoring Criteria (Exhibit A).

3.0 Estimating Score-Based Benefits

To the extent possible, Feasibility Studies should provide estimates of the benefits provided by each Project. These include Water Quality Benefits, Water Supply Benefits, and Community Investment Benefits as well as a characterization of any Nature-Based Solutions employed by the Project, and how a Project may be leveraging funds and engaging the public.

Additional information for characterization of benefits are provided in the following subsections.

3.1 Water Quality Benefits

The scoring criteria for Water Quality Benefits is broken into two separate tracks, wet weather Projects and dry weather Projects. Only one track may be used for the purposes of scoring. Any Project may utilize the wet weather scoring section; however, only Projects designed for 0.25-inch rain events or below may utilize the dry weather scoring section. For Water Quality Benefit scoring, the management of stormwater includes activities that capture, infiltrate, divert, or treat and release stormwater or urban runoff.

At a minimum, a Feasibility Study must include the following:

Wet Weather (all Projects, 0-inch storms and above)

- An estimate of the design 24-hour BMP capacity volume, including a breakdown of the capacity volume calculation such as Project storage capacity, estimated infiltration rate (if applicable), footprint area, etc (i.e., typically the 85th percentile, 24-hour capacity).
- An estimate of the capital cost of the Project.
- A description of the diversion structure for the Project (if applicable), diversion rate(s) and conditions when diversion would and would not occur.
- An assessment of any available/anticipated monitoring data collected for the Project.
- An assessment of anticipated event-based Project performance (e.g., during the Project's 24-hour design condition) including a breakdown of the following:
    - Estimated peak inflow rate and total inflow volume.
    - Estimated portion of the peak inflow that would be retained by the Project through infiltration, capture, diversion, use, or other means.
    - Estimated outflow from the Project and bypassed flow with a breakdown of the portion released from each outlet (where multiple outlets are proposed) and portion of the outflow through each outlet that would be treated, untreated and the mechanism of treatment.
    - Estimated primary and secondary pollutant concentrations in the inflow to the Project.

- Estimated primary and secondary pollutant concentrations in the outflow from each outlet of the Project (where multiple outlets are proposed).
- Flow and pollutant balance based on the estimates above including calculations of the pre- and post-Project flows, pollutant loads and concentrations and resulting reductions of each.
- If the Project includes a diversion structure, the estimated portion of the flow volume at the diversion structure that would bypass the diversion/not be captured.
- Citations or description of methods to generate the estimates above.

- An assessment of the long-term pollutant reduction from the Project for the applicable primary and secondary pollutants. The assessment should be based on modeling similar to the Watershed Management Modeling System (WMMS) used to develop the MS4 Permit's enhanced watershed management and watershed management programs ("E/WMPs"). The assessment should include a calculation of the pollutant reduction expected to result from the Project over the most recently available 10-year model output period by comparing influent and effluent flows, concentrations and loads. The assessment should incorporate the latest applicable performance data regarding the efficiency of the BMP type utilized in the Project. Modeling results can be based on the best-case reduction among the pollutants in each class and should be expressed as a percentage and be consistent with the applicable TMDLs and E/WMPs for the pollutants in the Project's watershed. The assessment should also include justification of the selected modeling metric. The following table shows the potential modeling metrics for analysis of long-term pollutant reduction benefit.

		Pick Any One Primary Pollutant Class and Any One Secondary Pollutant Class		
Pollutant Class	**Pollutant Name**	**Method 1 (% Concentration Reduction)**	**Method 2 (% Load Reduction)**	**Method 3 (% Exceedance Day Reduction)**
Primary or Secondary	Bacteria	✔	✔	✔
	Metals	✔	✔	
	Toxics		✔	
	Nutrients	✔	✔	
	Chloride	✔	✔	
Secondary	Trash		✔	✔
	Bacteria	✔	✔	✔
	Metals	✔	✔	
	Toxics		✔	
	Nutrients	✔	✔	
	Chloride	✔	✔	

Notes:
-The Secondary Pollutant Class includes all primary pollutants with the addition of trash (NOTE: the primary pollutant class cannot be the same as the secondary pollutant class).
-Primary and secondary pollutants are pollutants subject to TMDLs for the nearby downstream receiving waters of the project.
-Secondary pollutants may also include 303(d)-listed pollutants and pollutants that have been subject to exceedances during recent monitoring programs.
-Trash is not considered a valid primary pollutant. For estimate of trash reduction, the analysis can demonstrate equivalence with the Full Capture System definition for 100% reduction.

Dry Weather (Only Projects designed for 0.25-inch storms and below)

- An analysis (with or without modeling) showing that the Project is designed to capture, infiltrate, divert, or treat and release 100% (unless infeasible or prohibited for habitat, etc) of all tributary dry weather flows at the site location.
- A description of the method used to estimate dry weather flows at the site location.

3.2 Water Supply Benefits

At a minimum, a Feasibility Study must include the following:

- An estimate of (1) the annual average amount of stormwater or urban runoff captured by the Project for reuse onsite and (2) the annual average amount of stormwater or urban runoff captured by the Project to augment water supplies, whether infiltrated or diverted (such as to a spreading facility or to a sanitary sewer for recycled water).
    - The estimate should be based on modeling or other similar approach, with justification.
    - The Feasibility Study should specify whether the Water Supply Benefit claimed will result from offsetting potable demand, increasing water supply, or both (and how). Since not all reuse offsets demand (e.g., if the Project creates new demand), the Feasibility Study should provide an analysis of supply and demand impacts when claiming an offset of potable demand.
    - Stormwater that is treated and released to a storm drain or receiving water should not be considered as reuse.
    - Stormwater that is treated and released to a storm drain or receiving water should not be considered as augmenting the local water supply unless the Project is tributary to a groundwater recharge facility, and/or unless the Project would facilitate the continued recharge of water that would otherwise be prohibited for use in the water supply (eg. the infiltration of mixed or treated reclaimed or recycled water).
    - Where a Project's Water Supply Benefits include an increase in water supply through soil infiltration, the Feasibility Study should include an engineering analysis demonstrating that that the infiltrated water is reaching a managed, usable groundwater aquifer and confirmation that the agency managing the groundwater basin concurs.
    - For Projects that treat and use stormwater to directly offset potable water use through irrigation or similar means, projections of the irrigation demand and use should be included.
    - The estimate of annual average capture should account for the inflow to the Project from the Project capture area, the storage of the Project, and the overflow/bypass during storm events (when capacity is exceeded).
    - The annual average estimate should clearly document the basis for the annual average precipitation/hydrology (e.g., whether a specific year was used as a representative average year with justification, or whether the long-term average was calculated across many years). A minimum of 20-years should be used for the annual average calculations.

- The Feasibility Study must demonstrate that the diverted water would not otherwise be diverted/captured downstream of the Project site[1].
- The Feasibility study must identify whether and how the 85th percentile storm is being captured/diverted. If the Project will not capture the 85th percentile storm, the Feasibility Study must explain why.

- The nexus between water supply and the Stormwater and/or Urban Runoff that is captured/infiltrated/diverted by the Project should be clearly documented and justified.
- Total life-cycle cost of the Project based on annualized value. (See section 2.0 Requirements)

3.3 Community Investment Benefits

A Feasibility Study must include the following, as applicable:

- An explanation, with supporting analysis and information, of how the Project will improve flood management, flood conveyance, or flood risk mitigation.
- An explanation, with supporting analysis and information, of how the Project will create, enhance, or restore park space, habitat, or wetland space.
- An explanation, with supporting analysis and information, of how the Project will improve public access to waterways.
- An explanation, with supporting analysis and information, of how the Project will enhance or create new recreational opportunities.
- An explanation, with supporting analysis and information, of how the Project will create or enhance green spaces at schools.
- An explanation, with supporting analysis and information, of how the Project will improve public health by reducing local heat island effect and increasing shade.
- An explanation, with supporting analysis and information, of how the Project will improve public health by increasing the number of trees and/or other vegetation at the site location that will increase carbon reduction/sequestration and improve air quality.

3.4 Nature-Based Solutions

A Feasibility Study must include the following, as applicable:

- An explanation, with supporting analysis and information, of how the Project will implement or mimic natural processes to slow, detain, capture, and absorb/infiltrate water in a manner that protects, enhances or restores habitat, green space or usable open space.
- An explanation, with supporting analysis and information, of how the Project will utilize natural materials such as soils and vegetation with a preference for native vegetation.

[1] In the first year (SIPs for FY20-21), Projects that capture water that is already captured downstream can still be submitted and scored to receive water supply points as applicable. Public Works will continue to evaluate value added in capturing onsite and/or allowing downstream capacity to remain.

- An engineering estimate for how much impermeable area is removed after the construction of the Project. Compares the impermeable area of the site to before construction to after the Project is completed.
- If Nature-Based Solutions are not utilized, an explanation, with supporting analysis and information, of why it is not feasible to do so.

3.5 Leveraging Funds and Community Support

A Feasibility Study must include the following, as applicable:

- A discussion of how other funding sources are being leveraged to finance the Project, including documentation of such other funding sources (e.g., existing agreements, MOUs, grant awards). Other funding sources could include funds from the SCW Municipal Program.
- A discussion of whether the Project has community-based support and/or has been developed as part of a partnership with local non-governmental organizations or community-based organizations.

4.0 Feasibility Study and SCW Regional Projects Module

Exhibit B is an online web-based SCW Regional Projects Module and is available at https://portal.safecleanwaterla.org/projects-module/login. This interactive tool guides the user through the process of inputting all necessary Project data (for a Feasibility Study or otherwise) as well as data required for scoring by the Scoring Committee. It effectively represents a template for Feasibility Studies and incorporates all required information called out in these Guidelines. A complete submission will be equivalent to a Feasibility Study upon confirmation from the WASCs. Each user will have the ability to estimate their score and/or modify the Project inputs before submitting a Feasibility Study or Project for consideration by a WASC.

The Scoring Committee will use the same tool to evaluate Projects and generate an official score for WASC consideration. All Feasibility Studies and Projects that are submitted by a WASC to the Scoring Committee will be preserved in the SCW Regional Projects Module.

5.0 Functional Equivalence

Information about a proposed Project that was not developed in connection with a Feasibility Study, but that nonetheless meets the requirements of these Guidelines, shall be considered "functionally equivalent Feasibility Study level information". Where functionally equivalent Feasibility Study-level information exists regarding a proposed Project that addresses all the requirements in these Guidelines, the Infrastructure Program Project Applicant may utilize this information in lieu of preparing a Feasibility Study for the proposed Project. However, where functionally equivalent Feasibility Study-level information exists for only some of requirements of these Guidelines, the Infrastructure Program Project Applicant will need to supplement that existing information with a Feasibility Study that all includes all remaining required information detailed in these Guidelines.

Infrastructure Program Project Applicants electing to use functional equivalent Project-Feasibility Study level information must still enter that information into the SCW Regional Projects Module for scoring purposes using the Infrastructure Program Project Scoring Criteria.

Exhibit A – Infrastructure Program Project Scoring Criteria

All Regional Program Projects must meet the Threshold Score of 60 points or more using the following Project Scoring Criteria to be eligible for consideration.

Section	Score Range	Scoring Standards
A.1 Wet + Dry Weather Water Quality Benefits	50 points max	The Project provides water quality benefits
	20 points max	A.1.1: For Wet Weather BMPs Only: Water Quality Cost Effectiveness (Cost Effectiveness) = (24-hour BMP Capacity)[1] / (Capital Cost in $Millions) • <0.4 (acre feet capacity / $-Million) = 0 points • 0.4-0.6 (acre feet capacity / $-Million) = 7 points • 0.6-0.8 (acre feet capacity / $-Million) = 11 points • 0.8-1.0 (acre feet capacity / $-Million) = 14 points • >1.0 (acre feet capacity / $-Million) = 20 points *[1]. 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 85th percentile design storm capacity. Units are in acre-feet (AF).*
- OR -	30 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. <u>Primary Class of Pollutants</u> • >50% = 15 points • >80%= 20 points *(20 Points Max)* <u>Second or More Classes of Pollutant</u> • >50% = 5 points • >80%= 10 points (10 Points Max)
A.2 Dry Weather Only Water Quality Benefits	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 • <200 Acres = 10 points • >200 Acres = 20 points
B. Significant Water Supply Benefits	25 points max	The Project provides water re-use and/or water supply enhancement benefits
	13 points max	B1. Water Supply Cost Effectiveness. The Total Life-Cycle Cost[2] per unit of acre foot of Stormwater and/or Urban Runoff volume captured for water supply is: • >$2500/ac-ft = 0 points • $2,000–2,500/ac-ft = 3 points • $1500-2,000/ac-ft = 6 points • $1000–1500/ac-ft = 10 points • <$1000/ac-ft = 13 points *[2]. Total Life-Cycle Cost: The annualized value of all Capital, planning, design, land acquisition, construction, and total life O&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&M). The annualized cost is used over the present value to provide a preference to Projects with longer life spans.*
	12 points max	B2. Water Supply Benefit Magnitude. The yearly additional water supply volume resulting from the Project is: • <25 ac-ft/year = 0 points • 25 - 100 ac-ft/year = 2 points • 100 - 200 ac-ft/year = 5 points • 200 - 300 ac-ft/year = 9 points • >300 ac-ft/year = 12 points

Section	Score Range	Scoring Standards
C. Community Investments Benefits	10 points max	The Project provides Community Investment Benefits
	10 points	C1. Project includes: • One of the Community Investment Benefits identified below = 2 points • Three distinct Community Investment Benefits identified below = 5 points • Six distinct Community Investment Benefits identified below = 10 points Community Investment Benefits include: • Improved flood management, flood conveyance, or flood risk mitigation • Creation, enhancement, or restoration of parks, habitat, or wetlands • Improved public access to waterways • Enhanced or new recreational opportunities • Greening of schools • Reducing local heat island effect and increasing shade • Increasing the number of trees increase and/or other vegetation at the site location that will increase carbon reduction/sequestration and improve air quality.
D. Nature-Based Solutions	15 points max	The Project implements Nature-Based Solutions
	15 points	D1. Project: • Implements natural processes or mimics natural processes to slow, detain, capture, and absorb/infiltrate water in a manner that protects, enhances and/or restores habitat, green space and/or usable open space = 5 points • Utilizes natural materials such as soils and vegetation with a preference for native vegetation = 5 points • Removes Impermeable Area from Project (1 point per 20% paved area removed) = 5 points
E. Leveraging Funds and Community Support	10 points max	The Project achieves one or more of the following:
	6 points max	E1. Cost-Share. Additional Funding has been awarded for the Project. • >25% Funding Matched = 3 points • >50% Funding Matched = 6 points
	4 points	E2. The Project demonstrates strong local, community-based support and/or has been developed as part of a partnership with local NGOs/CBOs.
Total	Total Points All Sections 110	

Section 6:
Supplemental Guidance to Support Feasibility Study Guidelines

SAFE CLEAN WATER PROGRAM

Supplemental Guidance to Support Feasibility Study Guidelines

Background and Purpose of this Guidance

Section 18.07.B.3 of the Los Angeles county Flood Control District Code requires Project Developers who are requesting funding from the Safe, Clean Water Program (SCWP) Infrastructure Program to satisfy the minimum requirements of the *Feasibility Study Guidelines*;[1] however, feedback from interested parties, including the SCWP Scoring Committee[2] and the Los Angeles county Board of Supervisors,[3] suggested that certain adaptations were necessary to streamline the overall Infrastructure Program application process, including:

> **"Revised Regional Program application processes, feasibility study guidelines, and Scoring Criteria to account for additional performance indicators and distinct Project phases."**
>
> - *LA County Board of Supervisors*

As a precursor to formal adaptation of the *Feasibility Study Guidelines* and Scoring Criteria (which will involve public review and comment), **this supplemental guidance was developed in parallel with updates to the online application process to clarify *Feasibility Study Guidelines* requirements for specific Project phases**. This guide is intended to improve Project evaluation and accelerate implementation by better aligning Feasibility Study content with the certainty of Project attributes and benefits known during each respective phase.

This supplemental guidance also provides Regional Program applicants with resources to estimate the benefits of proposed Projects, including the Performance Measures included in the new **Metrics and Measures** component of the application process and **pilot adapted Scoring Criteria** for Water Quality Benefits and Water Supply Benefits.

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[1] https://safecleanwaterla.org/content/uploads/2019/09/Feasibility-Study-Guidelines-20190917-FINAL-1.pdf
[2] 2023: https://safecleanwaterla.org/content/uploads/2023/08/SC_RevisedMemo_Round4_Final.pdf
2024: https://safecleanwaterla.org/content/uploads/2024/07/FY24-25-SC-Memo-FINAL.pdf
[3] https://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/bos/supdocs/189664.pdf

Defining Project Funding Phases

Prior to release of this guidance, Project Developers could apply for Infrastructure Program funding for the following Project phases: Planning, Design, Construction, Operations and Maintenance (O&M), and Bid/Award. To streamline the application process and associated requirements, the funding phases have been consolidated to the following two funding request categories:

- **Design**: Includes funding for planning and design of Project concepts for which 60-percent plans have not yet been developed.
- **Construction/O&M**: Includes Project designs that have advanced to 60-percent or beyond. Construction/O&M funding requests may also include additional design funding to advance from 60-percent to 100-percent design.

Construction and O&M funding phases are currently grouped because a higher certainty of Project attributes and benefits can be demonstrated during these later phases, whereas the attributes of Projects requesting Design funding may be more conceptual. The SCWP intends to create a separate application track for O&M-only funding requests before future Regional Program Calls for Projects.

Guidance to Address Requirements

The minimum requirements of Section 2.0 of the *Feasibility Study Guidelines* are summarized below in **bold blue font** and clarified with supplemental guidance. Note that the requirements are abridged in this document, so please refer to the full text in the *Feasibility Study Guidelines*.

1. A detailed description of the proposed Project, including:

- **A summary of the Project's primary objective(s), secondary objective(s), and any additional objective(s).**
- **A description of the primary mechanisms by which the Project will achieve its objectives (e.g., runoff and/or pollutant reduction through infiltration, treat and release, capture and use, etc.).**
- **A description and schematic of the Project layout including its anticipated footprint and key components such as, but not limited to: inlet, outlet, diversion point, recreational components, nature-based components, pumps, treatment facilities, underdrains, conveyance, above ground improvements, and other Project components.**
- **An outline of the capture area for the Project on a map and a breakdown of acreage, land uses and percent imperviousness within the capture area.**
- **Land ownership and related rights of way.**

The following supplemental guidance clarifies certain requirements for each phase:

Design-Only	Construction/O&M
Provide a **conceptual** Project layout including the elements described above.	Provide at least **60% design plans**; for O&M funding, final design or as-built plans are preferred, if available.
Provide a **plan** for securing land ownership and related rights, if applicable.	Provide **documented evidence** that land ownership and related rights of way have been secured, if applicable.

Regional Water Management Plan Project Inclusion Guidelines

In addition to the requirements of the Feasibility Study Guidelines, all applications, regardless of funding phase, must document that the Project is included in a stormwater resource plan in accordance with Part 2.3 of Division 6 of the Water Code, a Watershed Management Program developed pursuant to an MS4 Permit, an Integrated Regional Water Management Plan, or other regional water management plan, if determined to be equivalent by the District. Refer to Section 18.07.B.1.c.3 of the Los Angeles County Flood Control District Code.

Inclusion in a Watershed Management Program

Project applicants should contact the lead agency of the Watershed Management Program (WMP) that presides over the area where the project is located. See page 1 of the **Regional Water Management Plan Project Inclusion Contacts** to see the WMP Lead Agency contacts.

Each WMP is organized in a slightly different way and may consist of MS4 permittees representing different cities, Los Angeles County, and others interested in achieving water quality compliance in a particular area. SCWP Project applicants are encouraged to engage the appropriate WMP group with enough time to work through the process for including a project in their plans.

Project applicants will need to provide information about their project or concept, such as location, type of project, drainage area, BMP capacity, description, and status. New projects can be included in the adaptive management section of the WMP Annual Report or the resubmittal of the WMP. The adaptive management section of the Annual Report is typically due December 15 of every year. The resubmittal of the WMP is allowed at any time. Projects that are not currently included in WMPs can be added at any time, though some WMPs have special instructions. See page 6 of the **Regional Water Management Plan Project Inclusion Contacts** to see the Special Instructions for Applicable WMPs.

For more information, please visit **Watershed Management Programs | Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board**.

Inclusion in an Integrated Regional Water Management Plan

Greater Los Angeles County Integrated Regional Water Management Plan: Projects applicants that wish to have their projects included in the Greater Los Angeles County (GLAC) Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) Plan must sign-up through the **GLAC IRWM OPTI Webpage** to become a new OPTI user. Users can submit or modify projects.

Project applicants must complete all the required project information fields in the OPTI Database. The GLAC IRWM Subregion and District Administrators will be notified of a new project entry. GLAC IRWM Subregion Administrators may then request Project Proponents attend a subregional steering committee meeting to present the project to its members and stakeholders and answer questions.

If a project is determined to support the IRWM Plan objectives and there are no issues or concerns, GLAC IRWM subregion voting members can cast a vote to accept the project as part of the IRWM Plan. The GLAC IRWM Subregion Administrator completes OPTI information that verifies acceptance of a project as part of the IRWM Plan and the project becomes eligible for consideration for inclusion in future IRWM funding proposals.

For more information about the GLAC IRWM subregional process, please contact the Subregional Steering Committee Administrator (page 5 of the Regional Water Management Plan Project Contacts). For questions about the OPTI system, please contact the District OPTI Administrators (page 5 of the **Regional Water Management Plan Project Inclusion Contacts**).

Inclusion in an Integrated Regional Water Management Plan, continued…

Upper Santa Clara River Watershed Integrated Regional Water Management Plan:
Projects applicants that wish to have their projects included in the Upper Santa Clara River (USCR) Watershed Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) Plan should review the **Project Submissions Form Guidance** and submit a completed **Project Submission Form**. Projects will either be included in the USCR IRWM Project List or Concept Project List, depending on the depth of information provided in the Project Submission Form.

Completed Project Submission Forms will be reviewed by the USCR IRWM Group at a scheduled stakeholder meeting. If the group agrees to include the project in the USCR IRWM Projects List, then the project is eligible for consideration in future IRWM funding proposals. All projects on the list are evaluated to their viability as it relates to the new funding criteria.

For more information about the USCR IRWM process, please contact the USCR IRWM Administrator (page 5 of the **Regional Water Management Plan Project Inclusion Contacts**).

2. A description and estimate of the benefits provided (determined through best engineering estimates and modeling as appropriate). More information on how to estimate Project benefits are provided in Section 3.0.

The Feasibility Study should provide enough information about a proposed Project to allow the Watershed Area Steering Committee members to make an informed decision as to which Projects should move forward for consideration for funding. The Feasibility Study should also provide enough information or estimates to allow each Project to be scored through the 110-point Infrastructure Program Project Scoring Criteria (Exhibit A of the *Feasibility Study Guidelines*). **For O&M funding requests, monitoring data should be provided to justify benefits, if available.**

Supplemental Guidance for Water Quality Benefits

In addition to the requirements in Section 3.1 of the *Feasibility Study Guidelines*, the Feasibility Study should clearly justify any claimed pollutant reduction considering the location and context of the proposed Project in the watershed. This means that Project Developers should make a good-faith effort to estimate the *net* pollutant reduction considering how long-term capture may be impacted by concurrent upstream or downstream Projects; for example, if a Project is proposed downstream from an existing runoff capture Project (i.e., “nested” in the same watershed), the Project Developer should consider modeling both Projects in series to estimate the net pollutant reduction of the system of Projects. The Projects Module now allows for modeling treatment trains of Projects to estimate net runoff capture, and Project Developers are encouraged to contact their respective Watershed Coordinators for support identifying and characterizing upstream Projects. While Project Developers are not required to compute the net benefits considering upstream/downstream Projects (because the status and certainty of those interacting Projects may be unknown), Project Developers should, at a minimum, describe what existing, planned, and/or funded Projects may be located in the same drainage; the Watershed Planning Tool developed during the SCWP Watershed Planning process is expected to be released in mid- to late-2025 to support this evaluation.

Note that the Projects Module now generates an estimate of runoff captured during an 85th percentile, 24-hour storm event. This is useful for defining projects as Wet Weather or Dry Weather BMPs, and is also used to inform scoring under Feasibility Study Guidelines Scoring Criteria Category A.1.1 if Applicants choose to use the optional **Water Quality Scoring Adaptation Pilot** described later in this document.

If Project Applicants elect to provide their own user inputs, 85th percentile design storm modeling should follow recommended best practices to ensure defensible hydrology design, consistent modeling approaches and results, and standardized scoring for the SCWP application process. To provide standard guidance for model use, Los Angeles County Public Works conducted a hydrology analysis that compared design storm results from different Los Angeles County models (WMS, WMMS 2.0, and HydroCalc). **While Public Works' Hydrology Section typically recommends use of WMS as the standard for hydrology modeling, the analysis suggested that HydroCalc can also produce acceptable results** (in alignment with WMS outputs) for a broad range of Infrastructure Program project scales. Note that, when modeling the design storm in HyrdoCalc, it is important to consider its limitations, including project drainage area; proper checks should be made for projects greater than ~750 acres by, for example, comparing HydroCalc and WMS results over the same drainage area. Other key considerations when modeling include:

- understanding typical use cases and corresponding limitations of each hydrologic model (e.g., HydroCalc being limited to a single drainage area)
- delineating subareas to sizes of less than 40 acres to be consistent with the modified rational (MODRAT) method
- understanding differences in results due to model setup (for example, delineated smaller subareas tend to result in higher peak flows but similar 24-hour runoff volumes compared to single/lumped drainage areas)

The list below includes model input data sources for modeling the 85*th* percentile design storm in WMS and HydroCalc:

- Drainage area delineation: Delineate using GIS based on topography and/or digital elevation models and stormwater infrastructure; subdivide into areas of less than 40 acres for MODRAT modeling
- Rainfall depth: Use LAC Hydrology Map's 85th percentile, 24-hour rainfall isohyetal maps (https://pw.lacounty.gov/wrd/hydrologygis/), or local weather data where available
- Design storm temporal distribution: Apply the standard 4-day unit hyetograph, available in WMS (https://aquaveo.com/downloads-wms)
- Imperviousness: Use the NLCD imperviousness raster (https://www.mrlc.gov/data), or the imperviousness shapefile available in WMS download package
- Flow path length: Use GIS to measure the longest hydraulic path for each delineated subarea ("unaltered flow path"); default to 2,087 feet for HydroCalc if detailed flow path analysis is less feasible ("recommended flow path" per Public Works and hydrology model analysis results)
- Flow path slope: Use digital elevation model to map upstream and downstream elevations in GIS, then use flow path length and "rise over run" to calculate slope
- Soil type: Assign in WMS or HydroCalc using soil map provided by LAC Hydrology Map (https://pw.lacounty.gov/wrd/hydrologygis/) and WMS download package
- Time of concentration: Calculate for each subarea using HydroCalc (downloadable here: https://pw.lacounty.gov/wmd/dsp_LowImpactDevelopment.cfm)

Supplemental Guidance for Water Supply Benefits

In addition to the requirements in Section 3.2 of the *Feasibility Study Guidelines*, the Feasibility Study should clearly justify any claimed increases in locally available water supply—as defined in the *2025 Interim Guidance*[4] and summarized below—considering the location and context of the proposed Project in the watershed. This means that Project Developers should make a good-faith effort to estimate the *net* Water Supply Benefits considering how long-term capture may be impacted by concurrent upstream or downstream Projects (see the example of "nested" Projects above for Water Quality Benefits). Similarly, Project Developers should consider accounting for the net runoff captured by proposed Projects given existing *downstream* capture infrastructure. For example, if a Project is proposed upstream from an operational spreading basin, only the net new volume captured (in addition to what would have been captured by the downstream basin before the proposed Project) would be considered new locally available water supply.

What counts as New Locally Available Water Supply?

Per the *2025 Interim Guidance*, the following fates of captured water **count as new locally available water supply** and a Water Supply Benefit (claims to be confirmed through modeling, geotechnical analysis, and/or engagement):

- **Net water used onsite for potable offset** (not including offset of Project-created water supply demand)
- **Diverted to existing treatment/reuse plant**
- **Diverted to future planned treatment/reuse plant operational within 10 years** with concurrence from treatment/reuse plant on timeline and capacity
- **Infiltration to managed useable groundwater aquifers**
- **Infiltration to unmanaged aquifer*** with geotechnical analysis and/or community acknowledgement to confirm infiltration and use
- **Treated and discharged to storm drain or receiving water** when tributary to a downstream water recharge facility if the Project facilitates the recharge of water that would otherwise not be used to augment water supply.

*see next page for discussion of unmanaged aquifers

[4] https://safecleanwaterla.org/what-we-do/adaptive-management/

The following **do NOT count towards new locally available water supply** but do provide Water Quality Benefits:

- **Water that would have already been captured downstream** by an existing water recharge facility (see adjustment factors in Watershed Planning Framework that can be used to prorate the *net* new local water supply when captured upstream from existing facilities) and
- **Maintenance of existing capture/conservation infrastructure (i.e., sediment removal behind dams).**

Environmental water does not count as locally available water supply nor a Water Quality Benefit unless analysis proves that discharging clean water to channels to support ecological functions will offset potable supplies. Environmental water may provide a Water Quality Benefit if site-specific studies demonstrate improvement in flow ecology.

An unmanaged aquifer is an area of a groundwater basin that is not managed by a Groundwater Sustainability Agency, an adjudication, or an alternative Groundwater Sustainability Plan and is not subject to deliberate human interventions such as artificial recharge efforts and relies solely on natural replenishment mechanisms. Applicants claiming a new locally available water supply from infiltration in these areas must provide proof of a specific potable or non-potable use that will be enabled by the project (for example, if a project infiltrates to a perched, unmanaged aquifer and also installs a private well to extract water to offset existing irrigation).

The Metrics and Monitoring Study (MMS) developed adjustment factors that can be used to prorate the increase in locally available water supply by a Project if it is located upstream from an existing runoff capture facility, as summarized in Table 1 and in Table H-2 of the SCWP *Watershed Planning Framework*[5]; the estimated runoff captured by a proposed Project can be multiplied by the net countable supply ratios to better estimate the net new locally available water supply. These factors will be built into the Projects Module to provide supplemental information to Program Applicants.

Table 1. Net countable supply ratios used to prorate runoff capture

Watershed Area	If Project is Upstream from…	Net countable Supply Ratio
North Santa Monica Bay	No existing facilities	Not Applicable
Central Santa Monica Bay	No existing facilities	Not Applicable
South Santa Monica Bay	No existing facilities	Not Applicable
Santa Clara River	Castaic Lake	11%
	Bouquet Reservoir	45%
	Pyramid Lake	0%
Rio Hondo	Eaton Wash Spreading Grounds	16%
	Peck Road Park Lake	21%
	Whittier Narrows Dam	34%
	Rio Hondo Spreading Grounds	47%
Upper Los Angeles River	Devils Gate Dam	68%
	Tujunga Spreading Grounds	42%
	Pacoima Spreading Grounds	16%
	Lopez Spreading Grounds	9%
	Hansen Spreading Grounds	36%
	Dominguez Gap Spreading Grounds	98%
Lower San Gabriel River	San Gabriel Coastal	39%
Upper San Gabriel River	Citrus Spreading Grounds	7%
	Forbes Spreading Grounds	3%
	Ben Lomond Spreading Grounds	7%
	Puddingstone Reservoir	2%
	Walnut Spreading Grounds	6%
	Santa Fe Dam	23%
	San Gabriel River Dams	58%
	Whittier Narrows Basin Transfer	37%

[5] https://safecleanwaterla.org/content/uploads/2024/11/Deliverable-3.2.4-FINAL-Framework-Appendices.pdf

The following supplemental guidance clarifies certain requirements for each phase:

Design-Only	Construction/O&M
For Projects offsetting potable water demand, provide a **preliminary analysis** of supply and demand impacts of the Project.	For Projects offsetting potable water demand, provide a **monthly or seasonable analysis** of supply and demand impacts of the Project.
Apply **best professional judgment, based on available data,** to justify claims of Water Supply Benefits and new locally available water supply; present a plan to obtain concurrence prior to construction.	**Document concurrence** of claimed Water Supply Benefits and new locally available water supply estimates from local groundwater management agency, treatment/reuse plant manager, or community acknowledgement.
Estimate dry weather flow rates using **desktop analysis** or modeling.	**Monitor** baseline dry weather flow rates, if possible.

Guidance for Community Investment Benefits

Refer to Section 3.3 of the *Feasibility Study Guidelines* for requirements related to Community Investment Benefits (CIBs). In addition to the seven example CIBs included in the Scoring Criteria, Project Developers are encouraged to document how the proposed Project addresses other community needs and priorities identified through engagement. To support this, the SCWP has implemented a Community Strengths and Needs Assessment (CSNA) Dashboard[6] to report local priorities defined by community members. While direct outreach and engagement with members of the community is always the preferred approach to solicit input and support for proposed Projects, the survey results in the CSNA dashboard can provide supplemental information to guide early Project concepts. Refer to the *2025 Interim Guidance*[7] for additional recommendations

Guidance for Nature-Based Solutions

Refer to Section 3.4 of the *Feasibility Study Guidelines* and the *2025 Interim Guidance* for requirements and guidance related to Nature-Based Solutions, as well as guidance related to Item 14 discussed in this document.

[6] https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/8efe6e5f57804998be1a8c4067c41cab/page/Dashboard
[7] https://safecleanwaterla.org/what-we-do/adaptive-management/

Leveraging Funds and Community Support

In addition to the requirements in Section 3.5 of the *Feasibility Study Guidelines*, note that letters of support included with a Feasibility Study should be addressed to the Safe, Clean Water Program.

3. An estimated schedule to design, obtain permits for, construct, operate and maintain the Project.

The following supplemental guidance clarifies certain requirements for each phase:

Design-Only	Construction/O&M
Provide a **coarse timeline** for design completion and construction activities, considering the transition time while awaiting construction funding.	Provide a **detailed construction schedule** including permitting, environmental documentation, bid and award, construction milestone targets, and commissioning/testing upon completion. For O&M, provide a schedule for **routine and long-term maintenance activities**.

4. A review of the effectiveness of similar types of Projects already constructed, when available.

The following supplemental guidance clarifies certain requirements for each phase:

Design-Only	Construction/O&M
General review of similar Projects to inform design approach.	Demonstrate application of **lessons learned from previous Projects in the Los Angeles Region**; contact Watershed Coordinators to gather information about Project performance in the relevant Watershed Area.

5. A monitoring plan to measure the effectiveness of the proposed Project once completed, including metrics specific to the identified benefits.

When documenting monitoring plans, Project Applicants should refer to the Performance Measures requested by the SCWP in the Metrics and Measures section of the application in the Projects Module. These Performance Measures have been prioritized by the SCWP as important for reporting progress towards SCWP Goals; refer to Metrics and Measures in this document for additional guidance.

The following supplemental guidance clarifies certain requirements for each phase:

Design-Only	Construction/O&M
Provide an **acknowledgement** that a monitoring plan will be submitted after Design is complete, and list **key performance measures** anticipated.	Provide a **detailed monitoring plan** for tracking Project effectiveness post-construction, both to inform reporting of benefits and to inform O&M.

6. A lifecycle cost estimate and schedule required to design, obtain permits for, construct, operate and maintain the Project.

Life-cycle cost estimates must contain Project costs including but not be limited to: costs related to early concept design, pre-Project monitoring, Feasibility Study development, site investigations, formal Project design, intermediate and Project completion audits, California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) compliance and other environmental impact studies, land acquisition, permitting, construction, full lifetime operations and maintenance, monitoring, etc. The only costs not to be included in the life-cycle cost estimate are the dismantling and replacement costs at the end of life.

In addition to the requirements in the *Feasibility Study Guidelines*, lifecycle costs should include estimates for outreach and engagement, reporting, and audits. As noted above, no Project components should be omitted from the lifecycle cost estimate unless completely independent of the claimed benefits. For example, if funding is being requested for green street elements included in a larger road rehabilitation Project, the road resurfacing costs may be omitted from the lifecycle costs as long as those omitted elements are unrelated to the function of the green street elements and so long as the Project Developer is not claiming Community Investment Benefits or Community Support for the road rehabilitation elements.

Costs expected in future years should be escalated using industry standards, although note that the Projects Module currently annualizes lifecycle costs at a rate of 3.375% per year. Project Developers can also refer to the California Construction Cost Index for summaries of historical cost escalation.[8]

The following supplemental guidance clarifies certain requirements for each phase:

Design-Only	Construction/O&M
The lifecycle cost estimate and schedule can be based on **preliminary estimates**.	The lifecycle cost estimate should include **detailed, line-item breakdowns based on the 60-percent plans**. For O&M applications, the lifecycle cost and schedule should be based on actual expenditures, where applicable.

[8] https://www.dgs.ca.gov/RESD/Resources/Page-Content/Real-Estate-Services-Division-Resources-List-Folder/DGS-California-Construction-Cost-Index-CCCI

7. A plan for how operations and maintenance of the Project will be carried out. The plan should include but not be limited to: estimated annual costs associated with maintenance (including: estimates for number of crew required, hours of maintenance per month/year, the staff expertise level, Projections of maintenance cost increases over the life of the Project); how Project maintenance will accommodate Project Labor Agreement (PLA) considerations (if applicable); and identification of the responsible party that has agreed to perform the operations and maintenance.

The following supplemental guidance clarifies certain requirements for each phase:

Design-Only	Construction/O&M
Provide **preliminary maintenance considerations and an acknowledgment** that an O&M plan will be submitted after Design is complete.	Identify the responsible party that has agreed to perform O&M. Provide a **detailed O&M plan** including the required elements listed in the *Feasibility Study Guidelines.* For O&M funding applications of operational Projects, document ongoing maintenance activities and describe how those informed the O&M plan.

8. An engineering analysis of the proposed Project (e.g., estimates of site conditions, soil sampling, appropriate geotechnical investigations, preliminary hydrology report, site layout, utility search, environmental impacts, pertinent historical background for site location, etc.).

- **The minimum requirements for engineering analysis will depend primarily on the type of Project.**
- **The engineering analysis should, at a minimum, support all benefits claimed.**
- **It is understood that not all Projects will have completed CEQA and other environmental studies, so estimates and engineering analyses do not have to be as comprehensive as a full CEQA or other environmental study (unless those studies have already been completed and are available to support the Project).**

Refer to the supplemental guidance related to Item 2 above, and the following clarifications to certain requirements for each phase:

Design-Only	Construction/O&M
Use **existing geotechnical data** available within 500 feet of the Project footprint and conduct at least one **cone penetration test**.	Use **site-specific geotechnical** data, including **infiltration testing at the proposed subgrade**.

9. An assessment of potential CEQA-related and permitting challenges and associated time requirements and costs.

In addition to the requirements of the Feasibility study Guidelines, provide the expected or completed CEQA approval date.

The following supplemental guidance clarifies certain requirements for each phase:

Design-Only	Construction/O&M
Identify potential permitting challenges and **general** timeline based on the type of Project.	Provide **specific** permitting challenges based on the 60-percent plans, permitting status, compliance documentation (if applicable), and permits required for O&M.

10. For non-municipal Project applicant/developers (meaning entities that are not cities/municipalities, the LA county Flood Control District, or other government agencies) an initial letter of support from the Municipality in which the Project is proposed that includes concurrence with the plan for operations and maintenance and the responsible party that has agreed to perform the operation and maintenance.

The following supplemental guidance clarifies certain requirements for each phase:

Design-Only	Construction/O&M
Provide a letter confirming agreement, support, or non-objection to the **overall Project**.	Provide a letter including **concurrence with the plan for operations and maintenance and the responsible party** that has agreed to perform the operation and maintenance throughout the Project's useful life (minimum 30 years), and agreement to be the **Lead Agency** during the CEQA process.

Non-Municipal Project applicants, such as community-based organizations (CBOs), non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and others, are those that do not represent Municipalities (also known as Cities), the Los Angeles County Flood Control District (LACFCD), or other government agencies. Councils of Governments and Watershed Management Groups are not municipalities. Refer to section 16.05.D.1.h of the SCWP Ordinance.

A **Municipality** is a city or other governmental agency within the boundaries of the LACFCD. Los Angeles County is also a Municipality that represents the County Unincorporated Communities. Municipalities can participate in the SCWP Regional Program as Project applicants and developers, supporters or coordinating partners with other Project applicants, or as the entities responsible for the operations and maintenance of the implemented projects.

During the development of a Feasibility Study, it is important for applicants to communicate with representatives from the Municipality where the proposed project will be located. This step is critical to inform the Municipality of the proposed project and to garner support for its development. To demonstrate support, **Non-Municipal Project applicants applying for SCWP Infrastructure Program funding must provide a letter of support from the municipality where the project is proposed**, in alignment with the guidance in the table above and in Section 2.10 of the *Feasibility Study Guidelines*.

Obtaining a Letter of Support from a Municipality may take several months, so it is recommended that the Project applicant contact the appropriate Municipality in advance to begin the process. The resource linked below contains contact information for Municipalities. If there are no contacts listed for a specific Municipality, it is advised to contact the Municipality's Public Works Department.

- **Municipality Contact List**

Additionally, while a Non-Municipal Project applicant can prepare their own California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) documents, they cannot sign off as a *Lead Agency for* the project. Accordingly, **a Letter of Support should also confirm that the Municipality agrees to take on the role of Lead Agency and to assist the Project applicant with the steps necessary to facilitate the CEQA process**.

It is important for Project applicants to be aware that Municipalities may have their own distinct procedures and timelines for reviewing projects and issuing Letters of Support. Therefore, effective communication at an early stage in project or concept development is key to avoid delays in the schedule. Future Project applicants are advised to reach out to the appropriate Municipal representative several months before the application deadline (typically July 31st of each year).

After submission of a complete application, the SCWP Team, on behalf of the SCWP Watershed Area Steering Committee (WASC), may contact the Municipality that provided a Letter of Support to establish concurrence with the letter and their purported obligation and commitment to the proposed project. If the Municipality decides to recall their support, they may be asked to provide the reasoning at a WASC meeting.

11. A plan for outreach/engagement to solicit, address, and incorporate stakeholder input on the Project, which should also address issues related to displacement and gentrification.

For all funding phases, also provide a description of outreach/engagement activities conducted to date and a plan for ongoing outreach/engagement. Refer to the *2025 Interim Guidance* for engagement requirements for each project funding phase.

The following supplemental guidance clarifies certain requirements for each phase:

Design-Only	Construction/O&M
Provide a summary and documentation of outreach/engagement activities conducted to date (including the types of engagement pursued and outcomes of engagement, if any).	Provide a summary and documentation of outreach/engagement activities conducted to date (including the types of engagement pursued and outcomes of engagement, if any).
Describe the **general plan** for future outreach/engagement.	Describe the **detailed plan** for future outreach/engagement (including costs, the types of engagement pursued, and regular submission of evidence of engagement).

12. As applicable, the Feasibility Study must include an acknowledgment that the Project will be fully subject to and comply with any county-wide displacement policies as well as with any specific anti-displacement requirements associated with other funding sources.

At the time this guide was issued, county-wide anti-displacement policies are still under development. Project Applicants should describe measures being taking to prevent displacement.

13. A plan to incorporate vector minimization into the Project design, operations, and maintenance. The California Department of Public Health's Checklist for Minimizing Vector Production in Stormwater Management Structures can serve as a basic guideline in developing the vector minimization plan. Projects creating vector-related public nuisances may be subject to abatement proceedings as specified in California Health and Safety Code sections 2060 et seq. It is recommended that Infrastructure Program Project Applicants have their vector minimization plans reviewed by the local vector control district or agency.

The following supplemental guidance clarifies certain requirements for each phase:

Design-Only	Construction/O&M
Describe **general vector minimization considerations** and provide acknowledgment that a plan will be submitted after Design is complete.	Provide a **detailed vector minimization plan**, preferably with confirmation of review by local vector control district or agency.

14. A description of how Nature-Based Solutions are utilized to the maximum extent feasible. If Nature-Based Solutions are not used, include a description of what options for Nature-Based Solutions were considered and why they were not feasible.

In addition to the requirements in Section 3.4 of the *Feasibility Study Guidelines*, demonstrate the quality of Nature-Based Solutions using the Good-Better-Best framework in the *2025 Interim Guidance.*[9] The following supplemental guidance clarifies certain requirements for each phase:

Design-Only	Construction/O&M
Estimate Good-Better-Best criteria based on **conceptual plans and best professional judgement**.	Estimate Good-Better-Best criteria based on **60-percent design plans**.

15. A summary of any legal requirements or obligations that may arise as a result of constructing the Project, and how those requirements will be satisfied.

The following supplemental guidance clarifies certain requirements for each phase:

Design-Only	Construction/O&M
Initial identification of legal considerations.	**Full compliance plan** and/or documentation of ongoing legal obligations.

[9] https://safecleanwaterla.org/what-we-do/adaptive-management/

16. For Projects involving LA county Flood Control District (LACFCD) infrastructure, facilities, or right-of-way, provide confirmation of conceptual approval from LACFCD.

The following supplemental guidance clarifies certain requirements for each phase:

Design-Only	Construction/O&M
Provide letter of conceptual approval.	Not required if conceptual support was obtained during previous phases, unless significant changes to Project location, configuration, scope, or operation.

The LACFCD is tasked with providing flood protection, conserving stormwater, and recreational and aesthetic enhancements within its boundaries. LACFCD does this through the management of stormwater infrastructure such as storm drains, open channels, and other infrastructure, as well as the management of other facilities and associated rights-of-way. LACFCD managed drainage infrastructure is located within the 86 incorporated cities and the Los Angeles County Unincorporated Areas.

Projects involving a connection to LACFCD infrastructure (e.g., conveyance of stormwater from a storm drain to an underground reservoir or above ground surface enhancement) or those that will be located within LACFCD right-of-way or another managed facility (e.g., open channel access road) require **confirmation of Conceptual Approval from LACFCD** when applying for Infrastructure Program funding (See Section 2.16 of the *Feasibility Study Guidelines*).

The resource linked below contains contact information for LACFCD watershed managers:

- **Watershed Area Boundaries Map and LACFCD Watershed Manager Contacts**

Early communication is recommended and, at a minimum, LACFCD Watershed Managers should be notified of the project 2-3 months before the application deadline (typically July 31st of each year). LACFCD will require submission of relevant Feasibility Study documents that clearly identify the LACFCD infrastructure, facility, or right-of-way that will be affected by the proposed project.

LACFCD will review submitted documents to ensure the proposed project will not interfere with their operations and maintenance. Not all projects will require Conceptual Approval, just those that affect infrastructure, facilities, and/or right-of-way that is owned, managed, or operated by LACFCD.

NOTE: Conceptual approval does not indicate LACFCD's consent to support or permit a proposed Project but rather an acknowledgment that LACFCD has been engaged and the proposed Project is not currently inconsistent with any LACFCD plans, policies, or goals. If Infrastructure Program funding is allocated to the Project, it is required that the Project Developer remain closely engaged with LACFCD throughout each project phase and comply with any applicable agreement and/or permit provisions.

17. Acknowledgment of eligible expenditures being only those incurred on or after November 6, 2018.

No additional guidance.

18. A summary of the other sources of funding that are being leveraged for Project costs (if applicable). If no other sources of funding are being utilized, provide a summary of what other sources of funding were explored and/or why funding could not be secured through these other sources.

Only funding sources leveraged on or after November 6, 2018 should be included. The following supplemental guidance clarifies certain requirements for each phase:

Design-Only	Construction/O&M
Provide documentation **demonstrating the certainty of leveraged funding**.	Provide **confirmation of leveraged funding and timeline**, in the form of support letter, grant award notice, etc. For O&M funding requests, summarize actual leveraged funding to date.

19. If the Project is located within a Disadvantaged Community (DAC), a summary of how the Project will benefit that DAC and a discussion of measures on displacement avoidance.

The SCWP has implemented a Community Strengths and Needs Assessment (CSNA) Dashboard[10] to help Project Developers identify local priorities. While direct outreach and engagement with members of the community is always the preferred approach to solicit input and support for proposed Projects, the survey results in the CSNA dashboard can provide supplemental information to guide early Project concepts. Refer to the *2025 Interim Guidance*[11] for additional recommendations for estimating Disadvantaged Community benefits based on potential population served.

The following supplemental guidance clarifies certain requirements for each phase:

Design-Only	Construction/O&M
Describe conceptual benefits to Disadvantaged Communities and a plan for confirming those benefits align with local priorities.	Demonstrate benefits to Disadvantaged Communities **based on priorities identified by community members** through outreach and engagement; if possible, include letters of support from members of Disadvantaged Communities and estimate the population served by specific Community Investment Benefits.

[10] https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/8efe6e5f57804998be1a8c4067c41cab/page/Dashboard
[11] https://safecleanwaterla.org/what-we-do/adaptive-management/

Additional Guidance to Characterize Project Performance

In addition to the explicit requirements of the *Feasibility Study Guidelines* clarified above, the following sections provide resources to support Project Applicants.

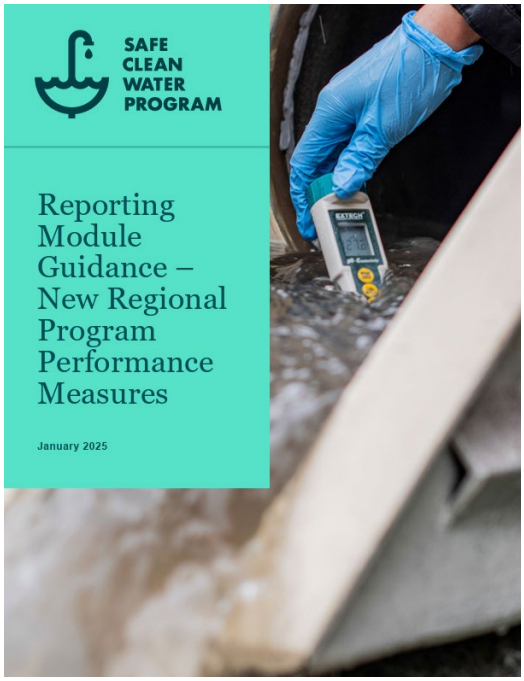
Metrics and Measures

Starting with the Fiscal Year 2026-2027 Regional Program Call for Projects, Project Applicants will be required to complete the Metrics and Measures pages in the online Projects Module. The newly requested Performance Measures have been prioritized by Public Works and interested parties as important to track SCWP Goals, inform watershed planning, and evaluate individual Projects. Project Developers with Projects in the planning phase should provide data that predicts Project performance, while those in design, construction, or post-construction should provide data that reflects their Project's design or implementation.

The Performance Measures for each Project application will be saved in the Projects Module and can be updated during subsequent Project phases through the reporting process. **A guide for estimating the new Performance Measures is available at:**

https://safecleanwaterla.org/content/uploads/2025/01/Regional-Program-Performance-Measures-Guidelines-20250128.pdf

For reference by Project Developers when scoping Feasibility Studies, the following pages summarize all Performance Measures included in the Metrics and Measures pages of the Projects Module.



The following Performance Measures must be provided; those in blue are calculated based on other entries.

				REQUIRED FOR	
CATEGORY	**METRIC**	**METRIC or SUBMETRIC TEXT**	**UNITS**	**DESIGN ONLY**	**CONSTRUC-TION/O&M**
Improve Water Quality	Zinc Load Reduction		lbs/year	Y	Y
	Total Phosphorus Load Reduction		lbs/year	Y	Y
	Bacteria Load Reduction		billion/year	Y	Y
	Trash Load Reduction		%	Y	Y
	Total DDT Load Reduction		lbs/year	Y	Y
	Total PCBs Load Reduction		lbs/year	Y	Y
Increase Drought Preparedness	Average Annual Stormwater Captured		acre-feet/year	Y	Y
	Average Annual Stormwater Capture for Recharge		acre-feet/year	Y	Y
	Stormwater Capture Infiltrated	Stormwater Capture Infiltrated Over Unconfined or Perched Aquifer	acre-feet/year	Y	Y
		Stormwater Capture Infiltrated Over Confined Aquifer	acre-feet/year	Y	Y
	Stormwater Capture Treated and Discharged	Stormwater Capture Treated and Discharged to Storm Drain	acre-feet/year	Y	Y
		Stormwater Capture Treated Discharged to a Receiving Water Body or Aquatic Ecosystem	acre-feet/year	Y	Y
	Stormwater Capture Diverted	Stormwater Capture Diverted to Existing Treatment and Reuse Plants	acre-feet/year	Y	Y
		Stormwater Capture Diverted to Future Planned Treatment and Reuse Plants	acre-feet/year	Y	Y

				REQUIRED FOR	
CATEGORY	**METRIC**	**METRIC or SUBMETRIC TEXT**	**UNITS**	**DESIGN ONLY**	**CONSTRUC-TION/O&M**
Increase Drought Preparedness	Stormwater Used On-Site for Potable Offset	Stormwater Capture Used On Site for Potable Offset	acre-feet/year	Y	Y
	Other Stormwater Capture	Stormwater Capture Other	acre-feet/year	Y	Y
Improve Public Health	Net Area of Park Created, Enhanced, or Restored	Created Park Space	acres	Y	Y
		Enhanced Park Space	acres	Y	Y
		Restored Park Space	acres	Y	Y
	Net New Green Space Created		acres		Y
	Net Change in Canopy at Maturity	Quantity of Trees Planted	acres		Y
		Quantity of Trees Removed	acres		Y
		Net Change in Canopy at Maturity	acres	Y	Y
	Net New Green Space and Tree Canopy on School Grounds	Project on School Grounds?	Y/N	Y	Y
		Net Area of New Tree Canopy at Maturity on School Grounds	acres	Y	Y
		Net New Green Space on School Grounds	acres	Y	Y
	Area of Accessible Park or Green Space	Is the Project Publicly Accessible	Y/N	Y	Y
		Is the Entire Project Site Publicly Accessible	Y/N	Y	Y
		Area of Publicly Accessible Park or Green Space	acres		Y
	Type and Number of Enhanced or New Recreational Opportunities	Select Opportunity Type (Drop-down)	count	Y	Y
	Public Access to Waterway Provided	Select Access Type (Drop-down)	count	Y	Y
	Net New Area of Cooling/Shading Surfaces	Net New Area of Manmade Shade Structures	acres		Y

				REQUIRED FOR	
CATEGORY	**METRIC**	**METRIC or SUBMETRIC TEXT**	**UNITS**	**DESIGN ONLY**	**CONSTRUC-TION/O&M**
Improve Public Health	Net Area of Impermeable Hardscape	Pre Project Impermeable Hardscape	acres	Y	Y
		Post Project Impermeable Hardscape	acres	Y	Y
	Net Area of Permeable Hardscape	Pre Project Permeable Hardscape	acres	Y	Y
		Post Project Permeable Hardscape	acres	Y	Y
	Net Area of Lawn and Turf	Pre Project Lawn and Turf	acres		Y
		Post Project Lawn and Turf	acres		Y
	Net Area of Native Vegetation	Pre Project Native Vegetation	acres		Y
		Post Project Native Vegetation	acres		Y
	Net Area of Climate Appropriate Vegetation	Pre Project Climate Appropriate Vegetation	acres		Y
		Post Project Climate Appropriate Vegetation	acres		Y
	Net Area of Irrigated Non Native Vegetation	Pre Project Irrigated Non Native Vegetation	acres		Y
		Post Project Irrigated Non Native Vegetation	acres		Y
	Net Area of Non-Vegetated Habitat		acres		Y
	Net Change in Hardscape		acres	Y	Y
Leverage Funding and Invest in Research & Development	Leverage Funding	Total	$MM	Y	Y
		Leveraged Planning Funding Through SCW Submittal	$	Y	Y
		Leveraged Design Funding	$	Y	Y
		Leveraged Construction Funding	$		Y
		Leveraged Annual O&M Funding	$		Y
		Leveraged Annual Monitoring Funding	$		Y

				REQUIRED FOR	
CATEGORY	**METRIC**	**METRIC or SUBMETRIC TEXT**	**UNITS**	**DESIGN ONLY**	**CONSTRUC-TION/O&M**
Leverage Funding and Invest in Research & Development	Phase Cost	Planning Phase Total Cost	$	Y	Y
		Design Phase Total Cost	$	Y	Y
		Construction Phase Total Cost	$	Y	Y
		Bid/Award Phase Total Cost	$	Y	Y
	Annualized Project Cost	Total	$, annualized	Y	Y
		Annualized Planning Costs	$, annualized	Y	Y
		Annualized Design Costs	$, annualized	Y	Y
		Annualized Construction Costs	$, annualized	Y	Y
		Annual O&M Costs	$, annualized	Y	Y
		Annual Monitoring Costs	$, annualized	Y	Y
		Expected Useful Life	$, annualized	Y	Y
		Annual Cost Inflation	$, annualized	Y	Y
	New Technologies or Practices Utilized	Does Project or Study Utilize or Investigate New Technology	Y/N	Y	Y
		Types of New Technology or Practice	Text	Y	Y
	Types of Independent Scientific Research	Is Project or Study Undertaking Independent Scientific Research	Y/N	Y	Y
		Types of Independent Scientific Research	Text	Y	Y
	Budget Allocated to Scientific Research	Total SCW Program Project or Study Budget Allocated to Independent Scientific Research	$	Y	Y
	SCW Program Goals Addressed by Independent Scientific Research	Does this Project improve water quality and contribute to attainment of water-quality requirements?	Y/N	Y	Y
		Does this Project increase drought preparedness by capturing more Stormwater and/or Urban Runoff to store, clean, reuse, and/or recharge groundwater basins?	Y/N	Y	Y

				REQUIRED FOR	
CATEGORY	**METRIC**	**METRIC or SUBMETRIC TEXT**	**UNITS**	**DESIGN ONLY**	**CONSTRUC-TION/O&M**
Leverage Funding and Invest in Research & Development	SCW Program Goals Addressed by Independent Scientific Research	Does this Project improve public health by preventing and cleaning up contaminated water, increasing access to open space, providing additional recreational opportunities, and helping communities mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change through activities such as increasing shade and green space?	Y/N	Y	Y
		Does this Project leverage other funding sources to maximize SCW Program Goals?	Y/N	Y	Y
		Does this Project invest in infrastructure that provides multiple benefits?	Y/N	Y	Y
		Does this Project prioritize Nature-Based Solutions?	Y/N	Y	Y
		Does this Project provide a spectrum of Project sizes from neighborhood to regional scales?	Y/N	Y	Y
		Does this Project encourage innovation and adoption of new technologies and practices?	Y/N	Y	Y
		Does this Project invest in independent scientific research?	Y/N	Y	Y
		Does this Project provide DAC Benefits, including Regional Program infrastructure investments, that are not less than one hundred and ten percent (110%) of the ratio of the DAC population to the total population in each Watershed Area?	Y/N	Y	Y

				REQUIRED FOR	
CATEGORY	**METRIC**	**METRIC or SUBMETRIC TEXT**	**UNITS**	**DESIGN ONLY**	**CONSTRUC-TION/O&M**
Leverage Funding and Invest in Research & Development	SCW Program Goals Addressed by Independent Scientific Research	Does this Project provide Regional Program infrastructure funds benefitting each Municipality in proportion to the funds generated within their jurisdiction, after accounting for allocation of the one hundred and ten percent (110%) return to DACs, to the extent feasible?	Y/N	Y	Y
		Does this Project implement an iterative planning and evaluation process to ensure adaptive management?	Y/N	Y	Y
		Does this Project promote green jobs and career pathways?	Y/N	Y	Y
		Does this Project ensure ongoing operations and maintenance for Projects?	Y/N	Y	Y
Deliver Multi-Benefit Projects	Does the Project Address a Community Concern or Priority	Does the Project Address a Community Concern or Priority	Yes/No	Y	Y
		Describe the Priority or Concern and How It Is Being Addressed	[text]	Y	Y
		How was the Community Priority or Concern Identified	[text]	Y	Y
	Does Project Mitigate Flooding Issue	Does this Project Mitigate a Flooding Issue?	Yes/No/Partial	Y	Y

				REQUIRED FOR	
CATEGORY	**METRIC**	**METRIC or SUBMETRIC TEXT**	**UNITS**	**DESIGN ONLY**	**CONSTRUC-TION/O&M**
Deliver Multi-Benefit Projects	Does Project Mitigate Flooding Issue	Select the Type of Flooding Issue Mitigated	Fluvial River or Channel Flooding Pluvial Surface Floods or Ponding Storm Drain Surcharge Coastal Other	Y	Y
	Net Area of New Habitat Created, Enhanced, Restored, or Protected		acres		Y
	Net Area of Habitat Created		acres		Y
	Net Area of Habitat Enhanced		acres		Y
	Net Area of Habitat Restored		acres		Y
	Net Area of Habitat Protected		acres		Y
	Net Area of Habitat Enhanced	Native Vegetation	acres		Y
		Climate Appropriate Vegetation	acres		Y
		Irrigated Non-Native Vegetation	acres		Y
	Net Area of Habitat Restored	Native Vegetation	acres		Y
		Climate Appropriate Vegetation	acres		Y
		Irrigated Non-Native Vegetation	acres		Y
	Net Area of Habitat Protected	Native Vegetation	acres		Y
		Climate Appropriate Vegetation	acres		Y
		Irrigated Non-Native Vegetation	acres		Y
	Number of Water Quality, Water Supply, and Community Benefits #/16		count	Y	Y

				REQUIRED FOR	
CATEGORY	**METRIC**	**METRIC or SUBMETRIC TEXT**	**UNITS**	**DESIGN ONLY**	**CONSTRUC-TION/O&M**
Deliver Multi-Benefit Projects	Number of Water Quality Benefits: 0/3	Total	count	Y	Y
		Project Reduces the Load of the Limiting Pollutant	Yes/No	Y	Y
		Project Reduces the Load of the Other TMDL Pollutant	Yes/No	Y	Y
		Project Reduces the Load of Pollutant of Interest	Yes/No	Y	Y
	Number of Water Supply Benefits: 0/6		count	Y	Y
	Number of Community Investment Benefits: #/7		count	Y	Y
	Project Catchment Area	Area of Drainage Area to Project	acre/acre by entry box	Y	Y
	Project Construction Cost	Project Construction Cost	$	Y	Y
	Project Footprint	Area of Project Extents Including All Improvements	acres	Y	Y
	BMP Footprint	Area of Project Extents Including All Improvements	acres	Y	Y
	Type of Stormwater Improvement		Bioretention, Biofiltration, Infiltration Well, Cistern, Rain Barrel, Infiltration Facility, Treatment Facility, Diversion to Sanitary Sewer, Other Activity	Y	Y
	BMP Detailed Characteristics	Ponding Depth	feet	Y	Y
		Infiltration Footprint Area	feet	Y	Y
		Media Layer Depth	feet	Y	Y
		Media Layer Porosity		Y	Y
		Underdrain Layer Depth	feet	Y	Y

				REQUIRED FOR	
CATEGORY	**METRIC**	**METRIC or SUBMETRIC TEXT**	**UNITS**	**DESIGN ONLY**	**CONSTRUC-TION/O&M**
Deliver Multi-Benefit Projects	BMP Detailed Characteristics	Underdrain Layer Porosity		Y	Y
		Single Family Residential	%	Y	Y
		Multi Family Residential	%	Y	Y
		Commercial	%	Y	Y
		Institutional	%	Y	Y
		Industrial	%	Y	Y
		Highways and Interstates	%	Y	Y
		Secondary Roads and Alleys	%	Y	Y
		Diversion Structure		Y	Y
		Typical Max Diversion Rate	cubic feet per second	Y	Y
		Storage Volume	feet	Y	Y
		Effective Drawdown Rate	cubic feet per second	Y	Y
		Stormwater Use During 24-hr Design Event	gallons	Y	Y
		Est. Total Runoff from 85th % Storm Event	acre-feet	Y	Y
		Est. Total Inflow During Design Event	gallons	Y	Y
		Inches of Stormwater Treated in 24 Hours	inches	Y	Y
		Average Dry Weather Inflow	cubic feet per second	Y	Y
Equitably Distribute Benefits	Project DAC Benefit Ratio		Yes/No/TBD		Y
	Does the Project Provide Benefit to DACs		Yes/No/TBD	Y	Y
	Is the Project Within DAC Boundary		Yes/No/TBD	Y	Y
	Project Municipal Benefit Ratio (CIBs)		Yes/No/TBD		Y
	Project Water Quality Benefit Ratio		Yes/No/TBD		Y

				REQUIRED FOR	
CATEGORY	**METRIC**	**METRIC or SUBMETRIC TEXT**	**UNITS**	**DESIGN ONLY**	**CONSTRUC-TION/O&M**
Promote Green Jobs	Total Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) Jobs Created	Project Budget	$M	Y	Y
Promote Green Jobs		FTE Jobs	FTE JOBS	Y	Y
		Organizational Leadership	#.##		Y
		Project Management	#.##		Y
		Regional/Urban Planning	#.##		Y
		Civil Engineering	#.##		Y
		Landscape Architecture	#.##		Y
		Environmental Sciences	#.##		Y
		Surveying	#.##		Y
		CEQA/NEPA Development	#.##		Y
		Community Engagement	#.##		Y
		Data Management and GIS	#.##		Y
		Geotechnical Engineering	#.##		Y
		Electrical Engineering	#.##		Y
		Permitting/Inspection	#.##		Y
		Construction Management	#.##		Y
		Construction Labor	#.##		Y
		Construction Trades	#.##		Y
		Drivers and Operators	#.##		Y
		Operation and Maintenance	#.##		Y
		Monitoring and Lab Work	#.##		Y
		Academics/Trainers	#.##		Y
	Total Project Labor Cost	Total	$M		Y
		Total Planning Labor Costs	$		Y
		Total Design Labor Costs	$		Y
		Total Construction Labor Costs	$		Y
		Total O&M Labor Costs	$		Y
		Total Monitoring Labor Costs	$		Y

				REQUIRED FOR	
CATEGORY	**METRIC**	**METRIC or SUBMETRIC TEXT**	**UNITS**	**DESIGN ONLY**	**CONSTRUC-TION/O&M**
Promote Green Jobs	Quantity of Project or other activity employees hired through a SCW Program funded training program	Quantity of Project or other activity employees who participated in SCW Program training programs during Project execution	count		Y
	Quantity of Project or other activity employees who participated in SCW Program training programs during Project execution	Quantity of Project or other activity employees hired through a SCW Program funded training program	count		Y
Ensure O&M	O&M and Monitoring Funding Ratio		%	Y	Y
	Estimated Net Present Value of O&M and Monitoring Over Project Life		$	Y	Y
	Total O&M and Monitoring Funding Set Aside	Total SCW Program O&M and Monitoring Funding Set Aside	$		Y
		Total Cost Share O&M and Monitoring Funding Set Aside	$		Y
	O&M Cost Ratio		%	Y	Y
	Estimated Net Present Value of First Year O&M Cost		$	Y	Y
	Project Construction Cost		$	Y	Y
Prioritize Meaningful Engagement	Project Level of Achievement for Community Engagement	Level of Achievement	Good/Better/Best	Y	Y

Prioritize Meaningful Engagement	Project Level of Achievement for Community Engagement	Add Engagement Activity Undertaken by Project Developer	Canvasing Citizen Advocacy Committees Community-Driven Planning Community Forums Community Organizing Consensus Building Document expanded understanding and commitment to ongoing relationships Fact Sheets with translation as needed Focus Groups House Meetings Interactive Workshops & Tours Listening Sessions Local Media MOUs or support letters with Community Based Organizations MOUs or support letters from Elected Bodies Online Media Open Houses Open Planning Forums with Citizen Polling Other educational event Other engagement event	Y	Y

				REQUIRED FOR	
CATEGORY	**METRIC**	**METRIC or SUBMETRIC TEXT**	**UNITS**	**DESIGN ONLY**	**CONSTRUC-TION/O&M**
Prioritize Meaningful Engagement	Project Level of Achievement for Community Engagement Project Level of Achievement for Community Engagement	Add Engagement Activity Undertaken by Project Developer (continued)	Other engagement meeting Other outreach event Participatory Action Research Participatory Budgeting Cooperatives Polling Presentations Public Comment Social Media Surveys Transparent responses to community comments Videos		
		Add Engagement Activity Undertaken by Project Developer	count		Y
			[text]		Y
	Project Level of Achievement for Tribal Engagement	Level of Achievement	Good/Better/Best	Y	Y

Prioritize Meaningful Engagement	Project Level of Achievement for Tribal Engagement	Add Engagement Activity Undertaken by Project Developer	Canvasing Citizen Advocacy Committees Community-Driven Planning Community Forums Community Organizing Consensus Building Document expanded understanding and commitment to ongoing relationships Fact Sheets with translation as needed Focus Groups House Meetings Interactive Workshops & Tours Listening Sessions Local Media MOUs or support letters with Community Based Organizations MOUs or support letters from Elected Bodies Online Media Open Houses Open Planning Forums with Citizen Polling Other educational event Other engagement event		Y

				REQUIRED FOR	
CATEGORY	**METRIC**	**METRIC or SUBMETRIC TEXT**	**UNITS**	**DESIGN ONLY**	**CONSTRUC-TION/O&M**
Prioritize Meaningful Engagement	Project Level of Achievement for Tribal Engagement	Add Engagement Activity Undertaken by Project Developer (continued)	Other engagement meeting Other outreach event Participatory Action Research Participatory Budgeting Cooperatives Polling Presentations Public Comment Social Media Surveys Transparent responses to community comments Videos		
			count		Y
			[text]		Y
	Letters of Support from Community and Tribes	Add Engagement Activity Undertaken by Project Developer	Community Based Organization Non-Governmental Organization Elected Body Involved Community Leader Individual Other		Y
			count		Y
	Receipt of Tribal Feedback	Was feedback received from tribes based on engagement activities undertaken?		Y	Y

Scoring Criteria Pilot Adaptations

During the first five years of Regional Program implementation, interested parties, the Scoring Committee, and the MMS documented numerous considerations to adapt the Infrastructure Program Scoring Criteria. This section discusses two optional Scoring Criteria adaptations that are being pilot tested during the Fiscal Year 2026-2027 Regional Program Call for Projects. **Project Applicants have the option (but are not required) to use the *Water Quality Scoring Adaptation Pilot Rubric* and/or *Water Supply Scoring Adaptation Pilot Rubric* in Attachment A and Attachment B**.

Water Quality Scoring Adaptation Pilot

The motivation to adapt the Water Quality Scoring Criteria stems from several challenges identified through the MMS. Primarily, the current rubric—based on 24-hour BMP capacity per dollar and percentage pollutant reduction—may not accurately reflect the true Water Quality Benefits of each Project. For example, a Project's 24-hour BMP capacity is independent of its drainage area and does not reflect how much runoff or pollution the Project is expected to capture on a long-term basis. Additionally, Projects that capture substantial pollutant loads but do not achieve high percentage reductions can be undervalued. These issues highlight a potential disconnect between the Scoring Criteria and the Water Quality Benefit Performance Measures defined by the MMS.

Several alternative approaches to scoring were evaluated to address these challenges. The first considered adding gradation to the existing scoring rubric, enabling Projects to earn points at one-point increments rather than in broad steps, allowing for more precise differentiation in performance. Another option proposed an optional metric based on 85th percentile storm runoff capture volume to replace the 24-hour capacity currently used in cost-effectiveness calculations, aligning more closely with real pollutant removal performance. Additional options included calibrating scores based on the distribution of past Project performance, and a more ambitious alternative that based scoring on the actual mass of pollutants captured annually.

After analysis, the recommended pilot rubric for Water Quality Benefit scoring combines two of the more promising approaches. First, it introduces one-point gradation into the existing scoring structure, allowing more nuanced evaluation of Project benefits. Second, it offers Project developers the option to use 85th percentile storm runoff capture volume instead of 24-hour capacity for cost-effectiveness

calculations. These adjustments provide better alignment with pollutant reduction goals and more fairly reward a wider range of Project types. By balancing rigor and flexibility, the Water Quality Benefit scoring pilot rubric helps modernize scoring in a way that remains performance-based and consistent with the SCWP's multiple-benefit Goals. This pilot Water Quality scoring rubric (see Attachment A) will be pilot tested during the Fiscal Year 2026-2027 Regional Program Call for Projects.

Water Supply Scoring Adaptation Pilot

Adaptation of the Water Supply Benefit Scoring Criteria was largely driven by performance data showing that the current rubric may be overly restrictive compared to the actual suite of multi-benefit Projects advocated by proponents across the SCWP. For example, during the first several rounds of the Infrastructure Program, only about 24% of submitted Projects earned Water Supply cost-effectiveness points, while 71% earned magnitude points. Additionally, the original rubric was based on stormwater capture Projects developed before 2018 and does not reflect the complexities and higher costs of today's integrated, multi-benefit designs. Economic inflation, regional hydrologic differences, and changes in the understanding of what constitutes a valid Water Supply Benefit also warranted review of the current criteria.

To address these issues, the MMS explored several alternative scoring strategies, one of which was pilot tested during the Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Regional Program Call for Projects and revisited during 2025 adaptations. The alternative involves calibrating score thresholds to better match the historical performance and cost of submitted Projects, as well as introducing single-point increments across the full range of both cost-effectiveness and water supply magnitude scores. This approach effectively realigns expectations with what has been shown to be achievable under the SCWP's existing constraints.

The previous pilot rubric was updated in 2025 to calibrate scoring to the first five rounds of Infrastructure Program applications. This updated rubric better captures the value of Projects that manage smaller volumes of water or operate in challenging environments, thus promoting equity in access to funding opportunities. Evaluating historical Projects using this pilot rubric suggested that no past Projects would fall below the 60-point threshold and several additional Projects would potentially qualify for funding. This pilot Water Supply scoring rubric (see Attachment B) will be pilot tested during the Fiscal Year 2026-2027 Regional Program Call for Projects to improve scoring fairness, align evaluation metrics with real-world conditions, and support the SCWP's goal of incentivizing drought preparedness.

Future Considerations

While the adaptations above will begin to better align Scoring Criteria with SCWP Goals and help alleviate barriers to pursuing Regional Program funding, additional revisions have been recommended for consideration by the MMS and interested parties. Following evaluation of the pilot adaptations in Fiscal Year 2026-2027, additional scoring adaptations may be explored, including revisions to the Community Investment Benefit, Nature-Based Solutions, and Leveraging Funds and Community Support criteria.

Attachment A – Water Quality Scoring Adaptation Pilot Rubric

Section	Score Range	Scoring Standards
A.1 Wet + Dry Weather Water Quality Benefits	50 points max	The Project provides water quality benefits
	20 points max	A.1.1 : For Wet Weather BMPs Only: Water Quality Cost Effectiveness (Cost Effectiveness) = (24-hour BMP Capacity)[1] / (Capital Cost in $Millions) • < 0.12 = 0 points • 0.12–0.169 = 1 point • 0.17–0.219 = 2 points • 0.22–0.259 = 3 points • 0.26–0.309 = 4 points • 0.31–0.349 = 5 points • 0.35–0.399 = 6 points • 0.40–0.449 = 7 points • 0.45–0.489 = 8 points • 0.49–0.539 = 9 points • 0.54–0.579 = 10 points • 0.58–0.629 = 11 points • 0.63–0.679 = 12 points • 0.68–0.719 = 13 points • 0.72–0.769 = 14 points • 0.77–0.819 = 15 points • 0.82–0.859 = 16 points • 0.86–0.909 = 17 points • 0.91–0.949 = 18 points • 0.95–0.999 = 19 points • ≥ 1.000 = 20 points *(20 Points Max)* *[1]. Management of the 24-hour event is considered the maximum volume managed by a Project during a 24-hour, 85th percentile design storm event. Units are in acre-feet (AF).*

Section	Score Range	Scoring Standards
Wet + Dry Weather Water Quality Benefits **- OR -**	30 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. Primary Class of Pollutants • < 3.0% = 0 points • 3.1–6.9% = 1 point • 7.0–9.9% = 2 points • 10.0–12.9% = 3 points • 13.0–16.9% = 4 point • 17.0–19.9% = 5 points • 20.0–22.9% = 6 points • 23.0–26.9% = 7 points • 27.0–29.9% = 8 points • 30.0–32.9% = 9 points • 33.0–36.9% = 10 points • 37.0–39.9% = 11 points • 40.0–42.9% = 12 points • 43.0–46.9% = 13 points • 47.0–49.9% = 14 points • 50.0–55.9% = 15 points • 56.0–61.9% = 16 points • 62.0–67.9% = 17 points • 68.0–73.9% = 18 points • 74.0–79.9% = 19 points • ≥ 80.0% = 20 points *(20 Points Max)* Second or More Classes of Pollutant • < 10.0% = 0 points • 10.0–19.9% = 1 point • 20.0–29.9% = 2 points • 30.0–39.9% = 3 points • 40.0–49.9% = 4 points • 50.0–55.9% = 5 points • 56.0–61.9% = 6 points • 62.0–67.9% = 7 points • 68.0–73.9% = 8 points • 74.0–79.9% = 9 points • ≥ 80.0% = 10 points (10 Points Max)
A.2 Dry Weather Only Water Quality Benefits	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 • < 20.0 Acres = 10 points • 20.0–39.9 Acres = 11 points • 40.0–59.9 Acres = 12 points • 60.0–79.9 Acres = 13 points • 80.0–99.9 Acres = 14 points • 100.0–119.9 Acres = 15 points • 120.0–139.9 Acres = 16 points • 140.0–159.9 Acres = 17 points • 160.0–179.9 Acres = 18 points • 180.0–199.9 Acres = 19 points • ≥ 200.0 Acres = 20 points *(20 Points Max)*

Attachment B – Water Supply Scoring Adaptation Pilot Rubric

Section	Score Range	Scoring Standards
B. Significant Water Supply Benefits	25 points max	The Project provides water re-use and/or water supply enhancement benefits
	13 points max	B1. Water Supply Cost Effectiveness. The Total Life-Cycle Cost[2] per unit of acre foot of Stormwater and/or Urban Runoff volume captured for water supply is: • ≥ $77,910.00/ac-ft = 1 point • $77,909.99 – $37,950.00/ac-ft = 2 points • $37,949.99 – $24,280.00/ac-ft = 3 points • $24,279.99 – $16,300.00/ac-ft = 4 points • $16,299.99 – $11,950.00/ac-ft = 5 points • $11,949.99 – $8,850.00/ac-ft = 6 points • $8,849.99 – $6,930.00/ac-ft = 7 points • $6,929.99 – $5,280.00/ac-ft = 8 points • $5,279.99 – $3,590.00/ac-ft = 9 points • $3,589.99 – $2,390.00/ac-ft = 10 points • $2,389.99 – $1,830.00/ac-ft = 11 points • $1,829.99 – $963.00/ac-ft = 12 points • < $963.00/ac-ft = 13 points *[2]. Total Life-Cycle Cost: The annualized value of all Capital, planning, design, land acquisition, construction, and total life O&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&M). The annualized cost is used over the present value to provide a preference to Projects with longer life spans.*
	12 points max	B2. Water Supply Benefit Magnitude. The yearly additional water supply volume resulting from the Project is: • < 3.0 ac-ft/year = 1 point • 3.0 – 6.9 ac-ft/year = 2 points • 7.0 – 16.9 ac-ft/year = 3 points • 17.0 – 37.9 ac-ft/year = 4 points • 38.0 – 71.9 ac-ft/year = 5 points • 72.0 – 103.9 ac-ft/year = 6 points • 104.0 – 144.9 ac-ft/year = 7 points • 145.0 – 178.9 ac-ft/year = 8 points • 179.0 – 236.9 ac-ft/year = 9 points • 237.0 – 343.9 ac-ft/year = 10 points • 344.0 – 667.9 ac-ft/year = 11 points • ≥ 668.0 ac-ft/year = 12 points

Section 7:
Watershed Area Steering Committee (WASC) Operating Guidelines

Safe, Clean Water Program

Watershed Area Steering Committee Operating Guidelines

FOR Chief Engineer of the
Los Angeles County Flood Control District

9/19/19
Date Adopted

Safe, Clean Water Program Watershed Area Steering Committee Operating Guidelines

ARTICLE I. PURPOSE

The purpose of these Safe, Clean Water (SCW) Program Watershed Area Steering Committee Operating Guidelines ("WASC Operating Guidelines") are to establish procedures, requirements and recommended protocols for governance of the Watershed Area Steering Committees (WASC) and the conduct of WASC business.

ARTICLE II. DEFINITIONS

The definitions set forth in Sections 16.03 and 18.02 of the Los Angeles County Flood Control District Code shall apply to these WASC Operating Guidelines.

ARTICLE III. MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS

Section 1. Minimum Requirements

Unless otherwise provided by the Board, or by the Chief Engineer during the duration of a term, each member must meet the minimum requirements for their type of membership seat described in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Regional Program Watershed Area Steering Committee Minimum Requirements.

Member	Years of Experience	Description
Municipalities	Five +	• General knowledge of pollution abatement projects and knowledge in Stormwater Programs, and knowledge of NPDES Stormwater Permit and TMDL issues as related to the region. • Knowledge of the roles of federal, state and local governmental agencies involved in either the regulation of or the operation of water supply facilities, as well as familiarity with key nongovernmental agencies that influence the operations of water systems.
Groundwater	Five +	• Experience in one of the following groundwater areas: remediation, supply, management and/or storage. • Educational background or equivalent work experience in engineering, natural sciences, land use management, conservation, or other water resource-related field.

Water Agency	Five +	• Educational background or work experience in engineering, environmental science, biology, chemistry, toxicology, microbiology, urban planning or closely related field. • Ability to provide a regional perspective on water supply issues. • Expertise in the planning, design and construction, financing, and operations of water works facilities which includes storage reservoirs, transmission and distribution systems, pumping plants, water treatment, water conservation, and system optimization particularly as it effects power usage. • Sound knowledge of existing and emerging regulations, as well as environmental matters and familiarity with California water law and regulations. • Knowledge of the roles of federal, state and local governmental agencies involved in either the regulation of or the operation of water supply facilities, as well as familiarity with key nongovernmental agencies that influence the operations of water systems. • Experience in the acquisition of water rights.
Sanitation	Five +	• Experience in local or regional agency that provides wastewater collection, treatment, recycling and/or disposal services. • Education background and work experience in science, engineering, waste management or related fields.
Municipal Parks/Open Space	Five +	• Experience with habitat, open space and/or recreational issues at a regional level (i.e. across Municipal jurisdictions and watershed boundaries). • Educational background or equivalent work experience in natural sciences, land use management, conservation, or other water resource-related field. • Familiar with the agencies and organizations involved in habitat/open space issues in the District who are likely to be Infrastructure Program Project Developers, land owners or permitters of Projects.
At large Community Stakeholders	Two +	• Experience in community engagement • Knowledge of and experience working with government agencies to achieve community investment • Willingness to be trained and educated on pollution abatement, Stormwater programs, and TMDL related issues.
Environmental	Two +	• Experience in water resource issues • Educational background or equivalent work experience in natural sciences, ecology, land use management, conservation, or other water resource-related field • Educational background or work experience in engineering, environmental science, biology, chemistry, toxicology, microbiology, urban planning or closely related field.

Business	Two +	• Experience in developing commercial/business Stormwater and/or Urban Runoff capture facilities • Knowledge and experience in working with government agencies to achieve water resource improvements for residential and commercial properties • Educational background or equivalent work experience in natural sciences, land use management, conservation, or other water resource-related field.
Environmental Justice	Two +	• Experience in community engagement • Knowledge and experience in community priorities regarding resource needs for quality of life issues with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental law, regulation, and policies. • Knowledge and experience in working with government agencies to achieve community investment.
Watershed Coordinator	Two +	• Experience in coordination and implementation of technical assistance. • Knowledge and experience in watershed protection planning, water quality, and/or watershed assessment. • Knowledge and experience to provide and/or coordinate technical assistance that results in Projects that are integrated and result in regionally significant and measurable watershed benefits • Experience in community engagement particularly with disadvantaged communities and small cities is desirable.
General Minimum Qualifications for all Members: • The knowledge of or willingness to be trained and educated on pollution abatement, Stormwater Programs, NPDES Stormwater Permit and TMDL related issues as related to the region. • Must be able to attend and participate in Watershed Area Steering Committee meetings.		

ARTICLE IV. TERM LENGTHS AND VACANCIES

Section 1. Serving on Multiple Committees

A person may sit on more than one WASC, the Regional Oversight Committee (ROC), or Scoring Committee, provided they can demonstrate the capacity to do so effectively. If the person is appointed by the Board, or subsequently by the Chief Engineer, to more than one committee of the Regional Program, it shall be deemed that the person has the required capacity.

The roles and responsibilities of committee members are described in ARTICLE V, below. Should a member's performance suffer as a result of multiple memberships, the WASCs are encouraged to address the member's performance with the member and decide if potential action is warranted. Withdrawal or removal of members and the filling of membership vacancies is discussed in ARTICLE IV Section 6 below.

An individual Watershed Coordinator will only sit on one WASC as a non-voting member, as this is considered a full-time position unless noted otherwise for a specific Watershed Area. A single Watershed Coordinator position may be filled by an individual or by multiple employees of a single

entity at the discretion of the WASC. If a contract for Watershed Coordinator services is awarded to an entity for multiple Watershed Areas, and that entity assigns individual full-time employees to any Watershed Areas, that entity shall provide different full-time employee for each applicable Watershed Area.

Section 2. Member Term Lengths for the WASC

Members shall be appointed or selected according to the schedule shown in Table 2 below. Members may serve multiple terms if reaffirmed through the appointment or selection process.

District staff for each WASC will track the expiration of all members' terms of service, notify the WASC of upcoming term expiration dates, and facilitate any necessary appointments and selections.

Table 2. WASC Appointment/Selection Schedule

Watershed Area Steering Committee Appointment/Selection Schedule											
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
Municipal	Initiate WASC			X			X			X	
Agency						X (45)					X (45)
Community					X (45)			X (45)			X (45)

Section 3. Municipal Members

Individuals selected as Municipal committee members shall serve a 3-year term. An individual may serve additional terms if reselected during the self-selection process.

Municipalities holding designated member seats, based on their percentage of Impermeable Area as described in Chapter 18 Section 7 of the Los Angeles County Flood Control District Code, shall select one individual to serve as a primary member and one individual to serve as an alternate member for each designated member seat for each 3-year term. Designated Municipal member seats are subject to changes in the County Landcover Survey that will occur periodically and be facilitated by District staff with at least 3-months' notice prior to a new selection process. A Municipality with multiple designated member seats may select a single individual to serve as the primary member for all the Municipality's designated municipal member seats (such that the single individual will represent all of that Municipality's municipal member seat votes) and may select a second single individual to serve as the alternate member for all the Municipality's designated member seats.

The primary and alternate members for the remaining Municipal member seats shall be selected by a group ("Selection Group") comprised of the Municipalities not holding designated member seats based on their impermeable area within the WASC and, at their discretion, some or all of the Municipalities holding designated member seats. The Municipalities selected by the Selection Group will select one individual to serve as the primary member and one individual to serve as the alternate member for each of the remaining Municipal member seats.

Every 3rd year starting 2022, the Municipalities within the Watershed Area will be invited to self-select the unrepresented seats for the upcoming term.

During the 3-year term, if a primary member withdraws or is removed from the WASC, as described in Section 6 below, the individual serving as the alternate member shall become the primary member and the Municipality that selected the outgoing primary member shall select a replacement alternate member in consultation with the Chief Engineer or their designee. If an alternate member withdraws or is removed from the WASC, as described in Section 6 below, the Municipality that selected the alternate member shall identify a replacement alternate member in consultation with the Chief Engineer or their designee.

Section 4. Agency Members

Every 5th year starting 2024, the Board, in consultation with the agencies described in Section 18.07.G.1.c. of the Los Angeles County Flood Control District Code, shall appoint one primary member to each of the agency member seats for a 5-year term. Individuals appointed as agency members may serve additional terms if reappointed in subsequent appointment cycles.

During the 5-year term, if a primary or alternate member withdraws or is removed from the WASC, the Chief Engineer or their designee shall select a replacement member in consultation with the agency represented by the outgoing member.

Section 5. Community Stakeholder Members

Every 3rd year starting 2023 (after an initial 4-year term), the Board will appoint one primary member for all five (5) Community Stakeholder member seats for 3-year terms on each WASC. Community Stakeholder members may serve additional terms if reappointed in subsequent appointment cycles. Each primary member shall have the option to designate an alternate member for the primary member's seat that is within the same organization.

During the term, if a primary member withdraws or is removed from the WASC, the alternate member shall become the primary member. The vacancy for the Community Stakeholder alternate member will be filled by someone from the same organization as determined by the new primary member. If an alternate member withdraws or is removed from the WASC, the primary member may identify a replacement alternate from the same organization. If a vacancy in a primary or alternate seat cannot be filled for any reason, that seat will remain vacant until the next appointment cycle or until the Board takes sooner action to appoint a new primary or alternate member to fill the vacancy.

Section 6. Withdrawal and Removal of Members

A member may withdraw from participation as a member of a WASC by providing sixty (60) days' prior written notice to the District.

A member may be removed from a WASC if the Chief Engineer determines that the member is no longer able to serve on the WASC, the member fails to comply with these WASC Operating Guidelines, or fails to regularly attend meetings as described in ARTICLE V, Item C. The removal

of the member shall be effective as of the date of written notice to the member from the Chief Engineer.

The WASC may also vote to request that the Chief Engineer remove a Watershed Coordinator if that Watershed Coordinator is deemed to not be satisfactorily meeting the needs of the WASC.

ARTICLE V. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

WASC members have the responsibilities identified in Chapter 18 of the Los Angeles County Flood Control District Code **and** the following additional responsibilities:

A. Select a Chair, Co-Chairs, and/or Vice-Chair as deemed prudent;

B. Work with District staff to schedule and commit to meetings in advance;

C. Regularly attend WASC meetings and conduct other WASC business. An absence of two consecutive meetings or more than three meetings in one year will be considered failure to attend meetings making the member eligible for removal as a member of the WASC;

D. Communicate regularly with District staff via phone, electronic messaging, email, and other means of communication;

E. Meet, confer, coordinate, collaborate, and cooperate with one another, in good faith, to carry out the responsibilities of the WASC;

F. Share expertise and provide guidance, and information on those matters for which it has specific expertise;

G. Participate in the development of Stormwater Investment Plans (SIP) so that the development of the SIPs benefits from various stakeholder perspectives;

H. Consider findings and recommendations from the Regional Oversight Committee before submitting final recommended SIP;

I. Collectively confirm Scoring Committee Members from the Board approved member lists of eligible candidates;

J. Use discretion and good business judgment in discussing the affairs of the WASC with Non-WASC-related parties – any media related inquires shall be directed to the District; and

K. If intending to claim a stipend for attended meetings, submit certification that he/she is not otherwise being compensated per ARTICLE VI, Section 8.

ARTICLE VI. MEETINGS

Section 1. Frequency & Schedule

Each WASC shall hold regular public meetings at a frequency and schedule determined by the members, in coordination with District staff, but no less than quarterly. Alternate forms of meeting participation such as in person teleconference or video conference will be available.

Section 2. Chair

Each WASC shall elect a Chair, Co-Chairs, and/or Vice-Chair to help direct WASC meetings and processes. In the absence of a Chair, Co-Chairs or a Vice-Chair, District staff will facilitate WASC meetings. The election of any Chair, Co-Chairs, and Vice-Chair should be revisited on an annual basis. District staff will support, and Chair, Co-Chair, and/or Vice-Chair as needed and be available to address and coordinate WASC and WASC meeting logistics.

Section 3. Facilitator

The facilitator or Chair(s) shall open the meeting, announce activities according to the agenda, recognize members, state questions and put to a vote, refuse to recognize dilatory motions, enforce order and decorum, expedite business, decide all questions of order, respond to inquiries, clarify items for future action, facilitate public comment, and close meeting.

Section 4. Minutes

Minutes of WASC meetings, including votes taken, shall be kept by District staff and made available to the public for review on the SCW Program website at www.safecleanwaterla.org.

Section 5. Quorum

A quorum shall consist of a simple majority of the non-vacant primary member seats (or their alternates if in attendance on behalf of the primary) provided that at least two members from each of the categories of members (i.e., Municipalities, Agencies, and Community Stakeholders) are in attendance. If a quorum is present at a meeting, the WASC may approve any item of business by a simple majority vote. If a tie exists on any item of business, the Agency member from the District will cast the tie breaking vote.

Section 6. Brown Act

The WASC's meetings are subject to the Brown Act. This means, among other things, that:

- An agenda for each meeting will be posted at least 72 hours prior to the meeting;
- The WASC may only take action on items that appears on the agenda for that meeting;
- Members should not discuss agenda items with other committee members outside of the meeting;
- Each meeting will include an opportunity for public comment.

Section 7. Conflict of Interest

Voting and non-voting Members of the Regional Program committees shall be governed by and comply with State conflict of interest laws (e.g., Government Code section 87000 et seq.; and section 1090 et seq.) and the following guidelines. Additionally, committee members may be required to file a Statement of Economic Interests ("Form 700"), and the District will provide the necessary guidance and corresponding County Model Disclosure Categories, as applicable.

Prohibited conflicts may arise where it is reasonably foreseeable that a Committee's decision could affect the personal financial interests of a Committee member. As such:

A. Once it's determined that a Committee member has a conflict of interest as to any item before the Committee for decision, that Committee member must disqualify themselves from voting on that item, participating in any Committee discussion of that item, or attempting to influence in any other manner, the Committee's decision on that item.

B. Employees and/or elected officials of Municipalities or other public agencies are NOT considered to have a personal financial interest in a program or project proposed by their employer.

C. Employees of private consulting firms or other private business entities are generally considered to have a personal financial interest in a program or project proposed by their employer. In addition, such employees are generally considered to have a personal financial interest in any program or project which they or their employer had provided services for in the past or which they or their employer might be hired to work on in the future.

D. Officers or employees of a non-profit organization, whether paid or volunteer, are generally NOT considered to have a personal financial interest in a program or project proposed by the non-profit organization solely because of their employment with that organization.

Section 8. Compensation for Participation

Committee members who are not otherwise compensated to participate may qualify for a stipend in the amount of one hundred dollars ($100) per meeting attended. Committee Members shall annually submit to the District a signed certification statement from their employer, or a self-certification if self-employed, that compensation is not provided for WASC meetings to be considered for a stipend.

ARTICLE VII. STORMWATER INVESTMENT PLANS

Section 1. Overview

The Stormwater Investment Plan (SIP) is an annual five (5) year plan developed by each WASC that recommends funding allocations for Projects and Programs in the Regional Program's Infrastructure Program, Technical Resources Program, and Scientific Studies Program. Table 3 below reflects the first budget submittal for the Regional Program starting in fiscal year 2020-21. Each subsequent annual submittal of the SIP shall reflect projected funds to be recommended for programming for the subsequent five (5) years. Revenue collected from fiscal year 2019 – 2020 will be budgeted for fiscal year 2020 – 2021 expenses and allocated prior to the start of fiscal year 2020 – 2021, and so forth.

The purpose of SIP is to capture recommended programming for the upcoming fiscal year (to be approved by Board) as well as anticipated recommendations for the next four subsequent years. The SIP projection for the subsequent four years should remain fluid/open for revisions as:

(1) The actual amount of available revenue for subsequent years is unknown and subject to change each year due to exemptions, credits, and appeals;

(2) Other projects or project concepts may become available that were not ready for consideration in prior years; and

(3) Contingencies for programmed projects may be required and/or change.

As such, the WASCs will apply a monetary cap to the recommended programming in the four subsequent years. For example, a WASC may choose to recommend projects and programs totaling only 50% of the current budget year for the subsequent four years.

A typical Project included on a SIP for any phase prior to operations and maintenance (O&M) will also subsequently be funded for O&M for the lifetime of the project or for the duration of available funding, whichever ends first. Therefore, the O&M for the completed project must be accounted for and earmarked in the SIPs for the lifetime of the project.

For a multi-year project, the Infrastructure Program Project Developer must either present the project in phases that can be funded annually, demonstrate the capacity and acknowledge the risk of performing the work without encumbering the entirety of funds in advance (with earmarked future funding subject to WASC annual confirmation of budget, scope, and schedule, and ultimate Board approval), or accrue approved budget recommendations of multiple years in order to encumber the required funding in advance.

Section 2. Process for SIP project recommendations

WASCs are encouraged to use the following process when determining which Projects to include in the Infrastructure Program portion of the SIP in accordance with Section 18.07 of the Los Angeles County Flood Control District Code:

(1) WASC considers watershed-wide needs in consultation with Watershed Coordinator and all interested stakeholders, with an emphasis on striving toward Program Goals, as defined in Section 18.04 of the Los Angeles County Flood Control District Code.

(2) Applicants, or authorized representative(s), submit potential Feasibility Studies, project concepts, or scientific studies into the SCW Regional Program Projects Module. Technical Resources Program applicants must also submit a letter of non-objection from the municipality in which the project concept is being proposed.

(3) District staff sends an acknowledgment of receipt to the applicants and notice(s) of official submittals to the WASC(s).

(4) WASC initiates a discussion of submitted Feasibility Studies, project concepts, and scientific studies and determines which projects to transmit to the Scoring Committee for scoring. District staff will support effort to determine completeness of the Feasibility Studies (i.e. readiness for scoring).

(5) Chair(s) or District staff contact applicants to schedule a presentation of the Feasibility Study, project concept, or scientific study at a future WASC meeting after receipt of score from the Scoring Committee (with standard presentation content for all applicants to be determined by WASC).

(6) Chair(s) or District staff schedule additional discussion of the scored projects and other eligible activities on the agenda for the next WASC meeting(s) so developer(s) and public/stakeholders can sufficiently comment and share considerations.

(7) WASC further discusses the scored projects and determines whether to include the project in the SIP in consideration of all other potential items to be included in the SIP for the

subject fiscal year, funds allocated to projects providing Disadvantaged Community (DAC) Benefits, as well as any known future considerations.

(8) Consider the findings and recommendations from the ROC as guidance to potentially enhance future SIPs and/or revise current SIPs before Board consideration. The WASC will need to confirm final recommendation as soon as possible following ROC feedback and ROC feedback will be included in the transmittal of SIPs to the Board.

Table 3. Stormwater Investment Plan Budget Template

	FY 2020-2021	FY 2021-2022	FY 2022-2023	FY 2023-2024	FY 2024-2025
	Budget	Projection	Projection	Projection	Projection
PROJECT – FEASIBILITY STUDY DEVELOPMENT					
TECHNICAL RESOURCES PROGRAM (up to 10%)					
Feasibility Studies/Concepts					
Watershed Coordinators					
Technical Assistance Team/Feasibility Study					
Technical Assistance Team/Feasibility Study					
PROJECT – POST-FEASIBILITY STUDY					
INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM (not less than 85%)					
Design/Permits/CEQA Budget/Pre-project planning/					
Project					
Project					
Project					
Right of Way Acquisition Budget					
Project					
Project					
Project					
Construction					
Project					
Project					
Project					
O&M					
Project					
Project					
Project					
NON-PROJECT ACTIVITIES					
SCIENTIFIC STUDIES PROGRAM (Up to 5%)					
Special Studies					
Project					
Project					
Monitoring					
Project					
TOTAL =					

Section 3. Funding Allocations for Projects and Programs

The WASCs will make a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors for the Regional Projects and Programs to be funded within the Infrastructure Program, Technical Resources Program, and Scientific Studies Program. Projects and Programs will typically be given conditional funding approval for their entire budget less any anticipated leveraged funds identified. Projects, scientific studies, and other activities recommended for funding do not represent procurement of services for the District. Recipients of SCW Program funds must comply with any applicable laws pertaining to construction contracting and the procurement of architectural, engineering, or other services which will be paid for by the SCW Program funds.

WASCs should review the budgets for each proposed Project or Program to confirm that all expenditures included in the budget have a reasonable nexus to the implementation of the Project or Program. Proposed expenditures that appear unrelated to carrying out the Project or Program should be questioned and deleted from the approved budget for the Project or Program if a reasonable nexus cannot be demonstrated to the WASC's satisfaction.

Quarterly, the suite of Projects and Programs included in the SIPs shall be evaluated by the corresponding WASC using the information provided in the Quarterly Expenditure/Progress Report. WASCs will verify that the Project schedule, budget, scope and benefits have not significantly changed and are consistent with the Transfer Agreement. Projects that run over budget, are behind schedule, or reduce scope or benefits may be subject to loss of funding.

ARTICLE VIII. REVIEW OF QUARTERLY PROGRESS/EXPENDITURE REPORTS

The WASCs are responsible for reviewing quarterly progress and expenditure reports, described in Section 18.07.F, prepared by all Infrastructure Program Project Developers receiving Infrastructure Program funds and the District, on behalf of the Technical Resources Program and Scientific Studies Program. District staff will track and facilitate report submissions as well as organize and distribute reports for WASC review.

The purposes of the WASC's review of the reports are: (1) to determine whether the Project's schedule, budget, scope and benefits have significantly changed and are consistent with the Transfer Agreement; and (2) for Projects that are over budget, behind schedule, or have reduced scope or benefits, to determine whether to adjust funding or remove those Projects from future SIPs.

In addition, the WASC's evaluation of each report will be forwarded to the ROC for the ROC's consideration.

ARTICLE IX. WATERSHED AREA REGIONAL PROGRAM PROGRESS REPORTS

Annually prepare a Watershed Area Regional Program Progress (WARPP) report as identified in the Los Angeles County Flood Control District Code.

District staff will prepare a draft WARPP report on behalf of each WASC. Each WASC will be responsible for review and approval of the WARPP before submittal of the report to the ROC.

ARTICLE X. AMENDMENTS

Prior to making any amendment to these WASC Operating Guidelines, the District's Chief Engineer or their designee shall solicit input on the proposed amendments from the WASCs and shall consider all input received from the WASCs, ROC, Scoring Committee, and public.

Section 8:
Regional Oversight Committee (ROC) Charter & Operating Guidelines

Safe, Clean Water Program

Regional Oversight Committee
Charter & Operating Guidelines

Chief Engineer of the
Los Angeles County Flood Control District

August 29, 2024
Date Adopted

Safe, Clean Water Program Regional Oversight Committee Charter & Operating Guidelines

ARTICLE I. PURPOSE

The purpose of these Safe, Clean Water Program Regional Oversight Committee Charter & Operating Guidelines ("ROC Charter & Operating Guidelines") is to describe the purpose of the Regional Oversight Committee (ROC) and establish procedures, requirements, and protocols for members of the ROC and the conduct of ROC business.

ARTICLE II. DEFINITIONS

The definitions set forth in Chapter 16, Section 3 and Chapter 18, Section 2 of the Los Angeles County Flood Control District (District) Code shall apply to the ROC Charter & Operating Guidelines.

ARTICLE III. REGIONAL OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

The ROC is an advisory body to the LA County Board of Supervisors (Board), charged with high-level review and assessment of the implementation of the Safe, Clean Water Program (SCWP or Program) to help ensure that Program Purposes and Goals are met. Specific “Duties and Responsibilities” are detailed in District Code Section 18.08.C and summarized here in ARTICLES VII and VIII.

Program Purpose (District Code Section 16.02)

Provide funding for Projects and Programs to increase Stormwater and Urban Runoff Capture and reduce Stormwater and Urban Runoff pollution in the District, including Projects and Programs providing a Water Quality Benefit as well as a Water Supply Benefit and/or Community Investment Benefit.

Program Goals (District Code Section 18.04)

a. Improve water quality and contribute to attainment of water quality standards and requirements.
b. Increase drought preparedness by capturing more Stormwater and/or Urban Runoff to store, clean, reuse, and/or use to recharge groundwater basins.
c. Improve public health by preventing and cleaning up contaminated water, increasing access to open space, providing additional recreational opportunities, and helping

communities mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change through activities such as increasing shade and green space.

d. Leverage other funding sources to maximize Program Goals.
e. Invest in infrastructure that provides multiple benefits.
f. Prioritize Nature-Based Solutions.
g. Provide a spectrum of project sizes from neighborhood to regional scales.
h. Encourage innovation and adoption of new technologies and practices.
i. Invest in independent scientific research.
j. Provide Disadvantaged Community (DAC) Benefits, including Regional Program infrastructure investments that are not less than one hundred and ten percent (110%) of the ratio of the DAC population to the total population in each Watershed Area.
k. Provide Regional Program infrastructure funds benefitting each Municipality in proportion to the funds generated within their jurisdiction after accounting for allocation of the one hundred ten percent (110%) return to DACs, to the extent feasible.
l. Implement an iterative planning and evaluation process to ensure adaptive management.
m. Promote green jobs and career pathways.
n. Ensure ongoing operations and maintenance for Projects.

ARTICLE IV. ROC EXECUTIVE CLERK

The ROC Executive Clerk shall serve as a principal point of contact for the ROC members, and shall be responsible for ROC meeting logistics including working with ROC Chair(s) in preparing ROC meeting agendas, assisting ROC Chair(s) in facilitating meetings, taking and providing meeting minutes and action items, and serving as liaison with the District for the purposes of providing technical information and briefings for the ROC, as needed. The Executive Clerk role shall be fulfilled by a consultant or by District staff at the discretion of the Chief Engineer.

ARTICLE V. ROC MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS

The ROC consists of nine (9) subject-matter experts with knowledge in Water Quality Benefits, Water Supply Benefits, Nature-Based Solutions, Community Investment Benefits, public health, sustainability, and/or other pertinent subject matter. The ROC also consists of two (2) non-voting members, the Chair of the Regional Water Quality Control Board and the Chief Engineer of the District or their respective designee. ROC members are appointed by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors (Board) to ensure a diverse representation of subject-matter experts.

ARTICLE VI. TERM LENGTHS AND VACANCIES

Section 1. Serving on Multiple Committees

A person may be a member of more than one SCWP committee simultaneously, including the Regional Oversight Committee, and one or more Watershed Area Steering Committees (WASC), and/or the Scoring Committee, provided they can demonstrate the capacity to do so effectively. If the person is appointed by the Board to more than one SCWP committee, it shall be deemed that the person has the required capacity.

The duties and responsibilities of ROC members are described in ARTICLES VII and VIII, below. Should a member's performance suffer as a result of serving on more than one SCWP committee, the members of the ROC are encouraged to address the member's performance with the member and decide if potential action is warranted. Withdrawal or removal of members and the filling of membership vacancies is discussed within ARTICLE VI Sections 3 and 4.

Section 2. Member Term Lengths

The membership term for all members shall be four years, and new appointments or reappointments shall be made as generally shown in Table 1 below. The membership terms in each membership cycle may be extended by a period determined by the Chief Engineer to be sufficient for the ROC to complete the preparation of a pending SCW Program Progress Report and submit that report to the Board. Additionally, Board-appointed members continue to serve at the pleasure of the Board even after their terms expire until new appointments or reappointments are made.

Members may serve multiple terms if reappointed by the Board. The appointments for each term must include at least two Water Quality Benefits experts, one Water Supply Benefits expert, and one expert in Community Investment Benefits and/or Nature-Based Solutions.

The Executive Clerk shall track the expiration of all members' terms of service, notify ROC members of upcoming term expiration dates, and as needed, assist District staff in supporting the Executive Office of the Board's facilitation of the nomination process for the next term.

Table 1. ROC Membership Term Expiration and Appointment Schedule

Term Expiration/Appointment Schedule											
Subject matter experts have expertise in the following categories: Water Quality Benefits (WQ), Water Supply Benefits (WS), Nature-Based Solutions (NBS)/ Community Investments Benefits (CIB)											
	2019	**2020**	**2021**	**2022**	**2023**	**2024**	**2025**	**2026**	**2027**	**2028**	**2031**
ROC	X				X				X	…	X

** X denotes when the members are intended to be appointed*

Section 3. Withdrawal and Removal of Members

A member may withdraw from participation as a member of the ROC by providing sixty (60) days prior written notice to the Executive Clerk and District.

A member may be removed from the ROC if the Chief Engineer determines that the member is no longer able to effectively serve on the ROC, the member fails to comply with these Charter & Operating Guidelines or fails to regularly attend meetings as described in Article VI, Section 4, below. The removal of the member shall be effective as of the date of written notice to the member from the Chief Engineer.

Section 4. Attendance

Regular attendance at meetings is critical to the effective performance of ROC members of their responsibilities and the overall functioning of the ROC. Members are expected to make themselves reasonably available for meetings and to cooperate with the Executive Clerk in advance of ROC meetings by providing timely responses to requests for availability. The Executive Clerk will track attendance and communicate in advance with any ROC members regarding attendance concerns. Absence of a ROC member from three consecutive meetings or more than five meetings within the ROC term will be considered a failure to regularly attend meetings and subject the member to removal under Section 3, above.

Section 5. Vacancies

During a ROC term, if a member withdraws or is removed from the ROC, the vacancy will be filled with someone having similar subject matter expertise by the Chief Engineer or their designee for the remainder of the term.

ARTICLE VII. DUTIES OF THE ROC

The ROC's purpose is stated above in ARTICLE III and includes high-level review and assessment of the adaptive management of the Program. The ROC has the following duties as identified in Chapter 18 of the Los Angeles County Flood Control District Code, which should be exercised at the program-wide level (not project-specific):

1. The ROC shall annually review the Stormwater Investment Plan (SIP) for each Watershed Area and make recommendations to the Board for approval thereof. The purposes of the ROC's review of the reports are to: (1) determine whether the WASC evaluations are appropriate; and (2) identify additional comments or recommendations. ROC will provide feedback to the WASCs and report findings to the Board. Additional details are described in ARTICLE IX.

2. The ROC shall review the midyear and annual progress and expenditure reports (a) prepared by the District for the Technical Resources Program and the Scientific Studies Program, and (b) prepared by Infrastructure Program Project Developers for the Infrastructure Program. The District will compile high-level feedback to consider for future planning and future reporting, which will be made available to the WASC, the Board, and the public.

3. The ROC shall annually review the WARPP Reports for each Watershed Area to determine whether and the extent to which Regional Program requirements were met and Program Goals were advanced or achieved for the prior year, and based on its review, shall make recommendations for adjustments to the following year's SIPs, and provide those recommendations to the respective WASC and the Board.

4. The ROC shall review, evaluate, and develop recommendations regarding the annual progress and expenditure reports prepared, as required, by each Municipality, as described in Chapter 18 Sections 8.C and 6.D of the District Code. The purpose of the

ROC's review of the reports is to: (1) determine whether the Municipalities used SCWP funds for qualifying eligible expenses; and (2) determine whether and the extent to which each Municipality has achieved Program Goals. The ROC shall provide feedback to the Municipalities and report findings to the Board, as appropriate.

5. The ROC shall biennially prepare a SCW Program Progress Report for the Board in accordance with the following procedures:
    a. The ROC shall prepare a draft SCW Program Progress Report, circulate the draft for public comment, and conduct a noticed public meeting to receive public comments on the draft. Comments may also be submitted in writing;
    b. After conclusion of the public comment period, the ROC may revise the draft SCW Program Progress Report as it determines appropriate or necessary based on public comments received; and
    c. The ROC shall submit – through the District – the final SCW Program Progress Report to the Board and make the final Report available to the public.

ARTICLE VIII. RESPONSIBILITIES OF ROC MEMBERS

ROC members shall have the following responsibilities:

A. Annually elect a Chair, Co-Chairs, and/or Vice-Chair;

B. Work with the Executive Clerk and/or Chief Engineer and/or their designees to schedule and commit to meetings in advance;

C. Regularly attend ROC meetings and conduct other ROC business;

D. Meet, confer, coordinate, collaborate, and cooperate with one another, in good faith, during all ROC meetings, to carry out the duties and responsibilities of the ROC;

E. Share expertise and provide guidance and information on those matters for which members have specific expertise;

F. Use discretion and good business judgment in discussing the affairs of the ROC with outside parties. Any media-related inquires shall be directed to the Executive Clerk and/or Chief Engineer or their designee; and

G. If intending to claim a stipend for meetings attended, submit certification that he/she is not otherwise being compensated per ARTICLE IX, Section 8.

ARTICLE IX. MEETINGS

Section 1. Frequency & Schedule

The ROC shall hold regular public meetings at a frequency and schedule determined by the Chair and Vice-Chair or Co-Chairs, in coordination with the members, the Executive Clerk, and Chief Engineer or their designee, but no less than quarterly and additionally as needed. In person attendance is expected at each committee meeting provided, however, that remote participation may be authorized for individual members on a case-by-case basis in accordance with the provisions of the Brown Act.

Section 2. Chair, Co-Chairs, and Vice-Chair.

The ROC shall annually elect or re-elect a Chair, Co-Chairs, and/or Vice-Chair to help direct ROC meetings and processes. In the absence of a Chair, Co-Chairs or a Vice-Chair, the Executive Clerk shall facilitate ROC meetings. The Executive Clerk and/or District staff will support the Chair, Co-Chairs, and/or Vice-Chair as needed and be available to address and coordinate ROC and ROC meeting logistics.

Section 3. Facilitation

The Chair(s) or Executive Clerk shall open the meeting, announce activities according to the agenda, recognize members, state questions and put to a vote, refuse to recognize dilatory motions, enforce order and decorum, expedite business, decide all questions of order, respond to inquiries, clarify items for future action, facilitate public comment, and close the meeting.

Section 4. Minutes

Minutes of ROC meetings, including a record of votes taken on agenda items, shall be kept by the Executive clerk and/or District staff, and made available to the public for review on the SCW Program website at www.safecleanwaterla.org.

Section 5. Quorum

A quorum is required for the ROC to conduct a meeting. A quorum will consist of at least five (5) voting members in attendance at the meeting. If a quorum is present at a meeting, the ROC may approve any item of business by a simple majority vote.

Section 6. Brown Act

The ROC's meetings are subject to the Brown Act. This means, among other things, that:

- An agenda for each meeting will be posted at least 72 hours prior to the meeting
- The ROC may only take action on items that appear on the agenda for that meeting
- Members should not discuss agenda items with a majority of other committee members outside of the meeting
- Each meeting will include an opportunity for public comment

Section 7. Conflict of Interest

Members of the Regional Program committees shall be governed by and comply with State conflict of interest laws (e.g., Government Code sections 1090 et seq. and 87000 et seq.) and the following guidelines. Additionally, committee members may be required to file a Statement of Economic Interests ("Form 700"), and the District will provide the necessary guidance and corresponding County Model Disclosure Categories, as applicable.

Prohibited conflicts may arise where it is reasonably foreseeable that a Committee decision could affect the personal financial interests of a Committee member. As such:

A. Once it's determined that a Committee member has a conflict of interest as to any item before the Committee for decision, that Committee member must disqualify themselves from voting on that item, participating in any Committee discussion of that item, or attempting to influence in any other manner, the Committee's decision on that item.

B. Employees and/or elected officials of Municipalities or other public agencies are NOT considered to have a personal financial interest in a program or project proposed by their employer.

C. Employees of private consulting firms or other private business entities are generally considered to have a personal financial interest in a program or project proposed by their employer. In addition, such employees are generally considered to have a personal financial interest in any program or project which they or their employer had provided services for in the past or which they or their employer might be hired to work on in the future.

D. Officers or employees of a non-profit organization, whether paid or volunteer, are generally NOT considered to have a personal financial interest in a program or project proposed by the non-profit organization solely because of their employment with that organization.

Section 8. Compensation for Participation

Committee Members who are not otherwise compensated to participate may qualify for a stipend in the amount of one hundred dollars ($100) per meeting attended. Committee Members shall annually submit to the Executive Clerk a signed certification statement from their employer, or a self-certification if self-employed, that compensation is not provided for Regional Oversight Committee meetings to be considered for a stipend.

ARTICLE X. STORMWATER INVESTMENTS PLANS (SIPs)

Section 1. Overview

The SIP is an annual five (5) year plan developed by each WASC that recommends funding allocations for Projects and Programs in the Regional Program's Infrastructure Program, Technical Resources Program, and Scientific Studies Program.

The purpose of SIPs is to capture recommended programming for the upcoming fiscal year (to be approved by the Board) as well as anticipated recommendations for the next four subsequent years. The SIP projection for the subsequent four years should remain fluid/open. A typical Project included on a SIP for any phase prior to operations and maintenance will also subsequently be funded for operations and maintenance for the lifetime of the project or for the duration of available funding, whichever ends first. Therefore, the operations and maintenance for the completed project must be accounted for and earmarked in the SIPs for the lifetime of the project.

For a multi-year project, the Project Developer must either present the project in phases that can be funded annually, demonstrate the capacity and acknowledge the risk of performing the work without encumbering the entirety of funds in advance (with earmarked future funding subject to WASC annual confirmation of budget, scope, and schedule, and ultimate Board approval), or accrue approved budget recommendations of multiple years in order to encumber the required funding in advance.

The ROC reviews each SIP from a programmatic perspective, determines whether, and the extent to which, each SIP achieves the SCW Program Goals, and provides its findings to the Board with recommendations regarding whether each SIP should be approved. Before providing a finding to the Board that a SIP is not achieving the goals of the SCWP to the desired level, the ROC shall provide its findings and recommendations on each such SIP to the respective WASC such that the WASC can reconsider their proposed SIP. The ROC does not have line-item veto power, but the WASCs will consider the findings and recommendations from the ROC as guidance to potentially enhance future SIPs and/or revise current SIPs prior to Board consideration. ROC feedback to WASCs – and the subsequent revisions, if any – will be included in the transmittal of SIPs to the Board for approval.

ARTICLE XI. AMENDMENTS

Prior to making any amendment to the ROC Charter and Operating Guidelines, the Chief Engineer or their designee shall discuss and consider input on the proposed amendments from the ROC members.

Section 9:
Scoring Committee Operating Guidelines

Safe, Clean Water Program

Scoring Committee
Operating Guidelines

FOR Chief Engineer of the
Los Angeles County Flood Control District

9/19/19
Date Adopted

Safe, Clean Water Program Scoring Committee Operating Guidelines

ARTICLE I. PURPOSE

The purposes of these Safe, Clean Water Program Scoring Committee Operating Guidelines ("SC Operating Guidelines") are to establish procedures, requirements and recommended protocols for the members of the Scoring Committees (SC) and the conduct of SC business.

ARTICLE II. DEFINITIONS

The definitions set forth in Chapter 16 Section 3 and Chapter 18 Section 2 of the Los Angeles County Flood Control District Code shall apply to the SC Operating Guidelines.

ARTICLE III. MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS

The SC consists of six (6) members that are subject matter experts in Water Quality Benefits, Water Supply Benefits, Nature-Based Solutions, and Community Investment Benefits. The committee shall be comprised of at least two subject matter experts in Water Quality Benefits, not less than one subject matter expert in Nature-Based Solutions/Community Investment Benefits, and not less than one subject matter expert in Water Supply Benefits.

ARTICLE IV. TERM LENGTHS AND VACANCIES

Section 1. Serving on Multiple Committees

A person on the SC may also serve on a Watershed Area Steering Committee (WASC) or the Regional Oversight Committee (ROC) provided they can demonstrate the capacity to do so effectively. If the person is appointed by the Board to more than one committee of the Regional Program, it shall be deemed that the person has the required capacity.

The roles and responsibilities of committee members are described in ARTICLE V below. Should a member's performance suffer as a result of multiple memberships, the members of the SC are encouraged to address the member's performance with the member and decide if potential action is warranted. Withdrawal or removal of members and the filling of membership vacancies is discussed in ARTICLE IV Sections 3 and 4, below.

Section 2. Member Term Lengths

Members shall be appointed or selected according to the schedule shown in Table 1 below. Members may serve multiple terms if reaffirmed through the appointment or selection process. SC term length is typically four (4) years. After the initial 4-year term, new members will be appointed in a rotating schedule (3 members every 2 years) to keep continuity of information and

knowledge in the SC. Each term appointment will include at least one water quality expert, one water supply expert, and one community investment/nature-based solutions.

District staff for the SC will track the expiration of all members' terms of service, notify the SC of upcoming term expiration dates, and facilitate any necessary appointments and selections.

Table 1. SC Appointment/Selection Schedule

Scoring Committee Appointment Schedule											
Subject matter experts have expertise in the following categories: Water Quality Benefits (WQ), Water Supply Benefits (WS), Nature-Based Solutions (NBS)/ Community Investments Benefits (CIB)											
	2019	**2020**	**2021**	**2022**	**2023**	**2024**	**2025**	**2026**	**2027**	**2028**	**2029**
Scoring Committee					X (6)		X (3)		X (3)		X (3)

**** X denotes when the members will be appointed (#) indicates the number of seats to be appointed.***
**** Note: In 2023, 3 members may be appointed to 2-year terms and 3 members to 4-year terms to initiate the staggered appointment cycle going forward.***

Section 3. Withdrawal and Removal of Members

A member may withdraw from participation as a member of the SC by providing sixty (60) days' prior written notice to the District.

A member may be removed from the SC if the Chief Engineer determines that the member is no longer able to serve on the SC, the member fails to comply with these Guidelines, or fails to regularly attend meetings as described in ARTICLE V, Item C. The removal of the member shall be effective as of the date of written notice to the member from the Chief Engineer.

Section 4. Vacancies

During a SC term, if a member withdraws or is removed from the SC, the vacancy will be filled with someone having similar subject matter expertise by the Chief Engineer or their designee for the remainder of the term.

ARTICLE V. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

SC members have the responsibilities identified in Chapter 18 of the Los Angeles County Flood Control District Code and the following additional responsibilities:

A. Select a Chair, Co-Chairs, and/or Vice-Chair as deemed prudent;

B. Work with District staff to schedule and commit to meetings in advance.

C. Regularly attend SC meetings and conduct other SC business. An absence of two consecutive meetings or more than five meetings within the SC term will be considered failure to attend meetings making the member eligible for removal as a member of the SC;

D. Communicate regularly with District staff via phone, electronic messaging, email, or other means of communication;

E. Meet, confer, coordinate, collaborate, and cooperate with one another, in good faith, to carry out the responsibilities of the SC;

F. Share expertise and provide guidance, and information on those matters for which it has specific expertise;

G. Use discretion and good business judgment in discussing the affairs of the SC with Non-SC-related parties – any media related inquires shall be directed to the District;

H. Serve as the third-party appeal panel for Credit Program applicants that have appealed the credit determination for their Parcel in accordance with ARTICLE VIII below;

I. Serve as the third-party appeal panel for Credit Trading Program applicants that have appealed the credit determination for their Parcel in accordance with ARTICLE IX below; and

J. If intending to claim a stipend for attended meetings, submit certification that he/she is not otherwise being compensated per ARTICLE VI, Section 8.

ARTICLE VI. MEETINGS

Section 1. Frequency & Schedule

The SC shall hold public meetings at a frequency and schedule to be determined by the members, in coordination with District staff, but no less than 4 times per year. Meetings may occur in higher frequency, as needed depending on number and timing of projects submitted following each call for projects in each WASC, in order to accomplish the goals of the SC. Due to the highly technical nature of the meetings, in person attendance is mandatory.

Additionally, hearings will be scheduled and held as needed to serve as the third-party appeals panel for the Credit Program and Credit Trading Program.

Section 2. Chair

The SC may elect a Chair, Co-Chairs, and/or Vice-Chair to help direct meetings and processes. In the absence of a Chair, Co-Chairs or a Vice-Chair, District staff will facilitate SC meetings. The election of any Chair, Co-Chairs, and Vice-Chair should be revisited on an annual basis. District staff will support and Chair, Co-Chair, and/or Vice-Chair as needed and be available to address and coordinate SC and SC meeting logistics.

Section 3. Facilitator

The facilitator or Chair(s) shall open the meeting, announce activities according to the agenda, recognize members, state questions and put to a vote, refuse to recognize dilatory motions, enforce order and decorum, expedite business, decide all questions of order, respond to inquiries, clarify items for future action, facilitate public comment, and close meeting.

Section 4. Minutes

Minutes of SC meetings, including votes taken, shall be kept by District staff and made available to the public for review on the SCW Program website at www.safecleanwaterla.org.

Section 5. Quorum

A quorum shall consist of a simple majority of the non-vacant member seats are in attendance. If a quorum is present at a meeting, the SC may approve any item of business by a simple majority vote.

Section 6. Brown Act

The SC's meetings are subject to the Brown Act. This means, among other things, that:

- An agenda for each meeting will be posted at least 72 hours prior to the meeting;
- The SC may only take action on items that appears on the agenda for that meeting;
- Members should not discuss agenda items with other committee members outside of the meeting;
- Each meeting will include an opportunity for public comment.

Section 7. Conflict of Interest

Members of the Regional Program committees shall be governed by and comply with State conflict of interest laws (e.g., Government Code sections 1090 et seq. and 87000 et seq.) and the following guidelines. Additionally, committee members may be required to file a Statement of Economic Interests ("Form 700"), and the District will provide the necessary guidance and corresponding County Model Disclosure Categories, as applicable.

Prohibited conflicts may arise where it is reasonably foreseeable that a Committee's decision could affect the personal financial interests of a Committee member. As such:

A. Once it's determined that a Committee member has a conflict of interest as to any item before the Committee for decision, that Committee member must disqualify themselves from voting on that item, participating in any Committee discussion of that item, or attempting to influence in any other manner, the Committee's decision on that item.

B. Employees and/or elected officials of Municipalities or other public agencies are NOT considered to have a personal financial interest in a program or project proposed by their employer.

C. Employees of private consulting firms or other private business entities are generally considered to have a personal financial interest in a program or project proposed by their employer. In addition, such employees are generally considered to have a personal financial interest in any program or project which they or their employer had provided services for in the past or which they or their employer might be hired to work on in the future.

D. Officers or employees of a non-profit organization, whether paid or volunteer, are generally NOT considered to have a personal financial interest in a program or project proposed by the non-profit organization solely because of their employment with that organization.

Section 8. Compensation for Participation

Committee Members who are not otherwise compensated to participate may qualify for a stipend in the amount of one hundred dollars ($100) per meeting attended. Committee Members shall annually submit to the District a signed certification statement from their employer, or a self-certification if self-employed, that compensation is not provided for SC meetings to be considered for a stipend.

ARTICLE VII. SCORING INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM PROJECTS

Section 1. Stormwater Investment Plan

The Stormwater Investment Plan (SIP) is a five (5) year plan developed by Watershed Area Steering Committees that recommends funding allocations for Projects and Programs in the Regional Program's Infrastructure Program, Technical Resources Program, and Scientific Studies Program. The purpose of SIPs is to capture recommended programming for the upcoming fiscal year (to be approved by Board) as well as anticipated recommendations for the next four subsequent years.

When reporting scores, the SC will inform the WASC which of the projects, feasibility studies, and project concepts are eligible for selection into the Infrastructure Program and which do not meet the Threshold Score in the Feasibility Study Requirements document and are therefore candidates for the Technical Resources Program.

Section 2. Process for Scoring Projects

The SC will be informed by each WASC of which potential projects and feasibility studies will be evaluated and scored.

The information to score projects and feasibility studies submitted by the Infrastructure Program Project Applicant (IPPA) will be provided by District staff from the Project Scoring Module. The SC, with assistance and support from District staff, will:

1. Review the IPPA inputs into the Project Scoring Module and the resulting preliminary scores;
2. Request additional information, utilize technical reference documents, and consider Watershed Area-specific concerns as deemed necessary,
3. Utilize the Infrastructure Program Project Scoring Criteria contained in the Feasibility Study Requirements to evaluate projects and feasibility studies and determine scores;
4. Apply the Threshold Score;
5. Inform the WASC of the scored projects and feasibility studies; and

6. Inform the WASC of the projects that have been scored but do not reach the Threshold Score.

The SC will provide the WASCs with scores and additional as needed information to inform the SIP selection process.

District staff will track and facilitate report submissions as well as organize and distribute reports to WASCs.

ARTICLE VIII. CREDIT PROGRAM APPLICANT HEARINGS

The SC will serve as the third-party appeal panel for Credit Program applicants who have filed for an appeal. The Credit Program application will initially be reviewed and approved for credit by the District. Applicants that have been denied, or whose approved credit is a lesser percentage than what was applied for and disagree with the determination, may file an appeal. The applicant will present the information and case to the SC for independent consideration based on the Scoring Committee's technical expertise, professional judgment, and experience with similar components in the Infrastructure Program Project Scoring Criteria. The SC will seek additional information as necessary and ultimately vote to either uphold the credit determination or require the District to reconsider the credit determination based on appropriate findings and recommendations.

ARTICLE IX. CREDIT TRADING PROGRAM APPLICANT HEARINGS

The SC will also serve as the third-party appeal panel for Credit Trading Program applicants who have filed for an appeal. The Credit Trading Program application will initially be reviewed and approved for credit by the District. Applicants that have been denied, or whose approved credit is a lesser percentage than what was applied for and disagree with the determination, may file an appeal. The applicant will present the information and case to the SC for independent consideration based on the Scoring Committee's technical expertise, professional judgment, and experience with similar components in the Infrastructure Program Project Scoring Criteria. The SC will seek additional information as necessary and ultimately vote to either uphold the credit determination or require the District to reconsider the credit determination based on appropriate findings and recommendations.

ARTICLE X. AMENDMENTS

Prior to making any amendment to the SC Operating Guidelines, the District's Chief Engineer shall solicit input on the proposed amendments from the SC and shall consider all input received from the other committees of the Regional Program and the public.

Section 10:
Conflict of Interest

SAFE CLEAN WATER

County of Los Angeles

Conflict of Interest

Presented by the Office of the Los Angeles County Counsel, 2019

SAFE CLEAN WATER

County of Los Angeles

- Conflict-of-interest laws are grounded on the notion that government officials owe paramount loyalty to the public, and that personal or private financial considerations on the part of government officials should not be allowed to enter the decision-making process.

2

General Ethical Principles

- Beyond the laws is the public's perception as to whether the public official's conduct is ethical. ("How would the newspaper headline read?")
- The ethics laws create minimum standards for ethical conduct by public officials.
- The public's expectations often create a higher standard of behavior.
- Avoid prohibited activities.
- Comply with disclosure, disqualification and other affirmative ethics obligations.
- Consult with counsel if there is any doubt.

3

Laws Governing Public Officials

- The Political Reform Act
- Penal Code Section 68
- Government Code Section 1090

4

Conflicts Involving Personal Financial Interests/Obligations (Political Reform Act)

- Government Code §§87100, 87103 & 87200 et seq.
- Basic Obligations
  - Disqualification
  - Disclosure

5

Disqualification

- Do not make, participate in the making, or in any way attempt to use your official position to influence a governmental decision in which you know, or have reason to know, that you have a personal financial interest.

6

Five Disqualifying Financial Interests

- Real Property- Investment of $2,000 or more
- Business Entity- Investment of $2,000 or more
- Source of Income of $500 or more provided, promised, or received within 12 months of decision
- Business entity where official is Director, Officer, Partner, Trustee, Employee or Manager
- Gifts

7

Acceptance of Gifts

- Government Code §§82028, 86203, 89503, 89506; Title 2 CCR §§18940-18946.5
- A gift is any payment or other benefit received by a public official unless the official provided something of equal or greater value in return.

8

Acceptance of Gifts (con't.)

- A gift includes a rebate or discount in the price of anything of value unless the rebate or discount is made in the regular course of business without regard to an individual's status as a public official.

9

Acceptance of Gifts (cont'd)

- Gifts aggregating $50 or more from a single source in a calendar year must be reported.
- $500 annual gift limit.

10

Disclosure Rules

- Each agency develops a conflict of interest code:
  - Designates positions involved in making decisions.
  - Designates disclosure categories and enumerates types of financial interests to be disclosed.
  - Designated positions must file an assuming, annual, & leaving office statement of economic interests (Form 700).

11

Penalties for Violating Political Reform Act

- Knowing or willful violations are a misdemeanor
- Criminal and civil fines
- Administrative action
- Disciplinary action

12

SAFE CLEAN WATER

Do Not Accept Bribes

County of Los Angeles

- Penal Code §68
- A public official is prohibited from asking for, receiving, or agreeing to receive, anything of value in exchange for his vote.

13

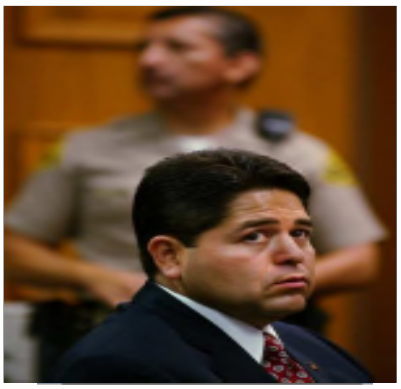
SAFE CLEAN WATER

County of Los Angeles

THE DAILY NEWS

www.dailynews.com THE WORLD'S BEST ETHICS NEWSPAPER - Since 1879

City of South Gate Public Official Gets 10 Years for Bribery



LOS ANGELES – Former city treasurer of South Gate, Albert Robles, 41 was taken into custody today.

Robles was sentenced to 10 years in prison for extracting nearly $2 million in bribes from contractors in violation of Penal Code section 68.

He was also ordered to pay back more than $600,000 to the city in southeast Los Angeles County.

Robles was convicted in July 2005 of five counts of bribery from his activities as City Treasurer.

Robles solicited bribes from city contractors in exchange for promises of favorable treatment.

The illegally obtained money paid for Robles' lavish lifestyle including a seaside condo for his mother and an exclusive club membership run by motivational speaker Tony Robbins authorities said.

When asked for comment regarding his recent arrest, Robles responded by saying that his activities "were not illegal."

14

Contractual Conflicts of Interest

- Government Code §§1090, 1091, & 1091.5
- A public official shall not be financially interested in any contract made by him in his official capacity.

15

Contractual Conflicts of Interest (cont'd)

The concept of "making a contract" applies to <u>all</u> aspects of the contracting process:

- Determination to contract
- Drafting solicitation documents
- Selecting contractor
- Monitoring contract
- Decision to terminate contract

16

Contractual Conflicts of Interest (cont'd)

- Your abstention may not be enough.
- The entire commission may be precluded from acting on the contract.
- Limited exceptions.

17

Penalties for Violating § 1090

Penalties for Violating section 1090

- Willful violations are a felony
- Criminal fines and imprisonment
- Disqualification from ever holding public office in California again
- Contracts entered into are **voided**

18

Brown Act Requirements

Committee meetings are subject to the Brown Act. This means, among other things, that:

- An agenda for each meeting will be posted at least 72 hours prior to the meeting;
- The committee may only take action on items that appears on the agenda for that meeting;
- Members should not discuss agenda items with other committee members outside of the meeting;
- Each meeting will include an opportunity for public comment.

19

Additional Information

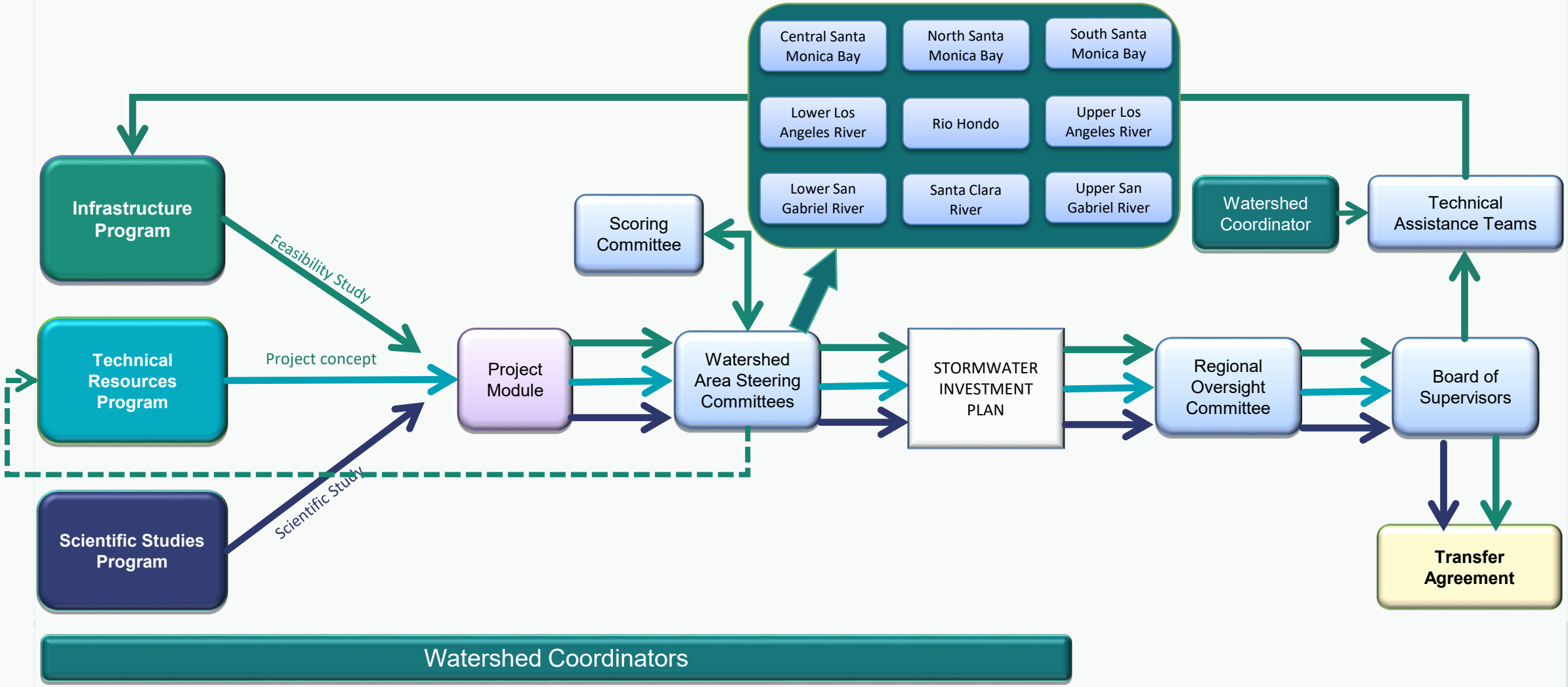
- California Attorney General
  - http://ag.ca.gov/ethics/index.htm
- California Fair Political Practices Commission
  - http://www.fppc.ca.gov/index.html?id=466
- Institute for Local Government
  - http://www.ca-ilg.org/ethicsfaqs

20

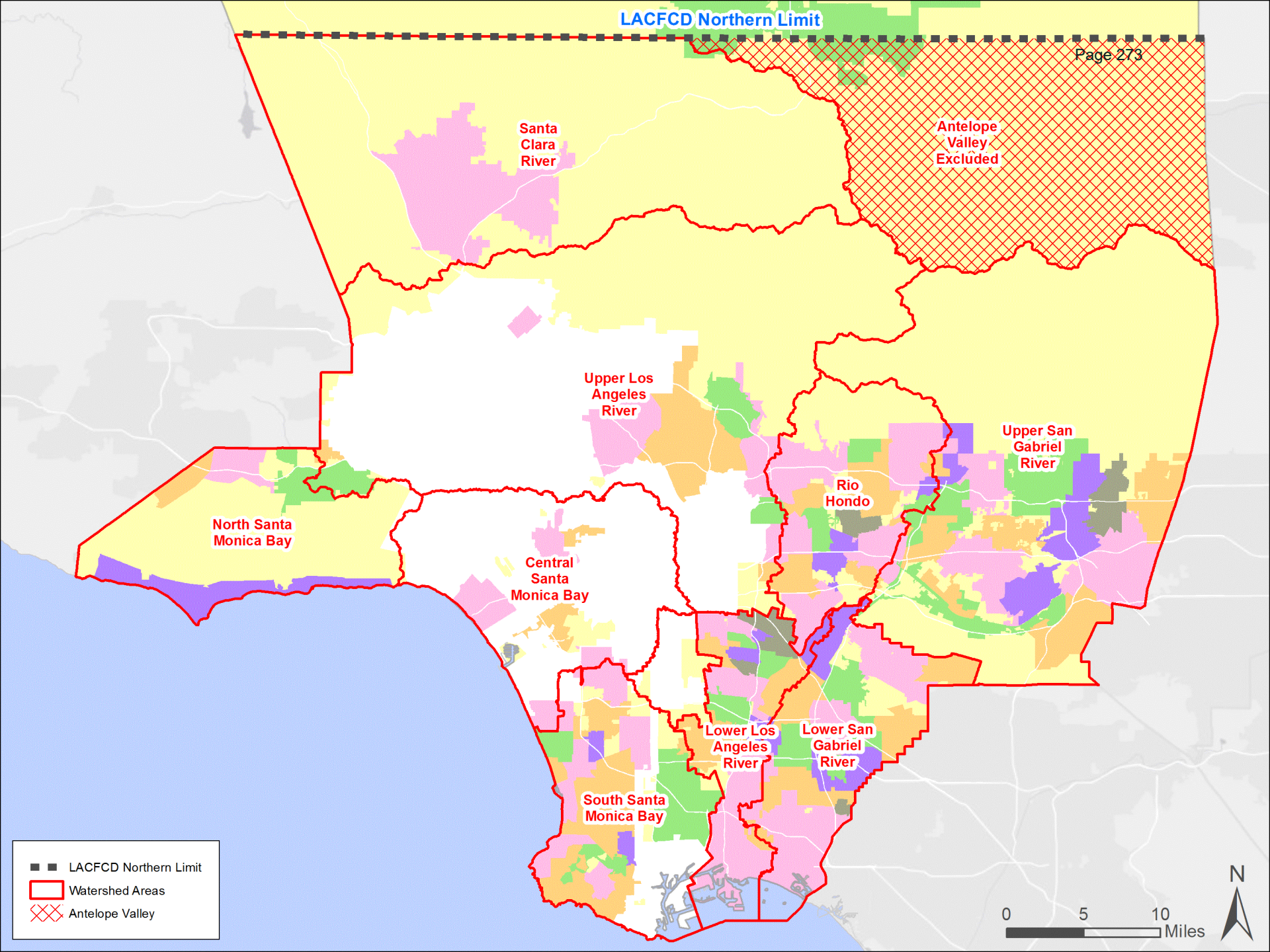

For questions or more information, contact us at:
www.SafeCleanWaterLA.org
SafeCleanWaterLA@pw.lacounty.gov
1-833-ASK-SCWP (1-833-275-7297)

Section 11:
Committee Structure and Flowchart

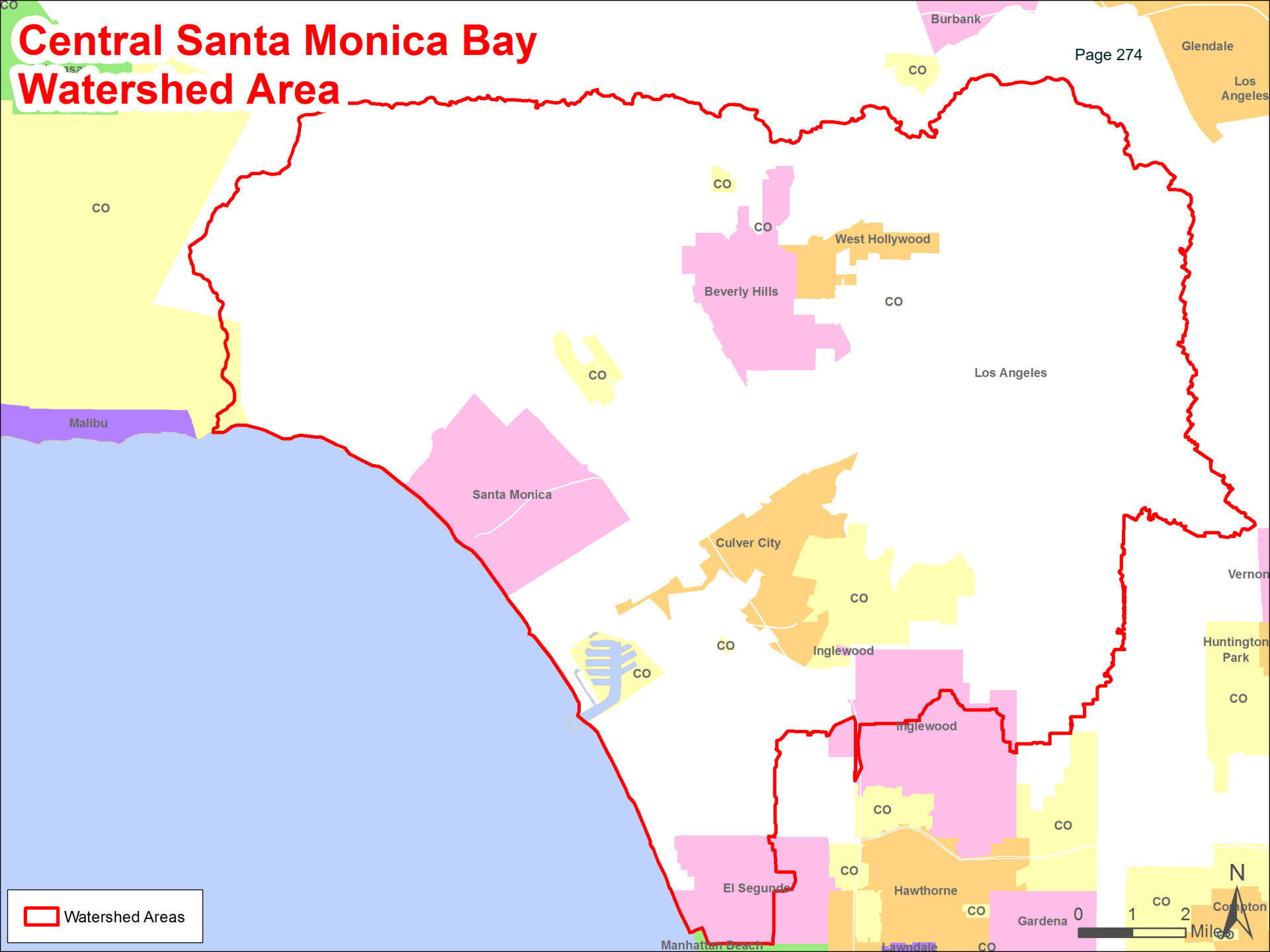
Typical Process for Regional Program



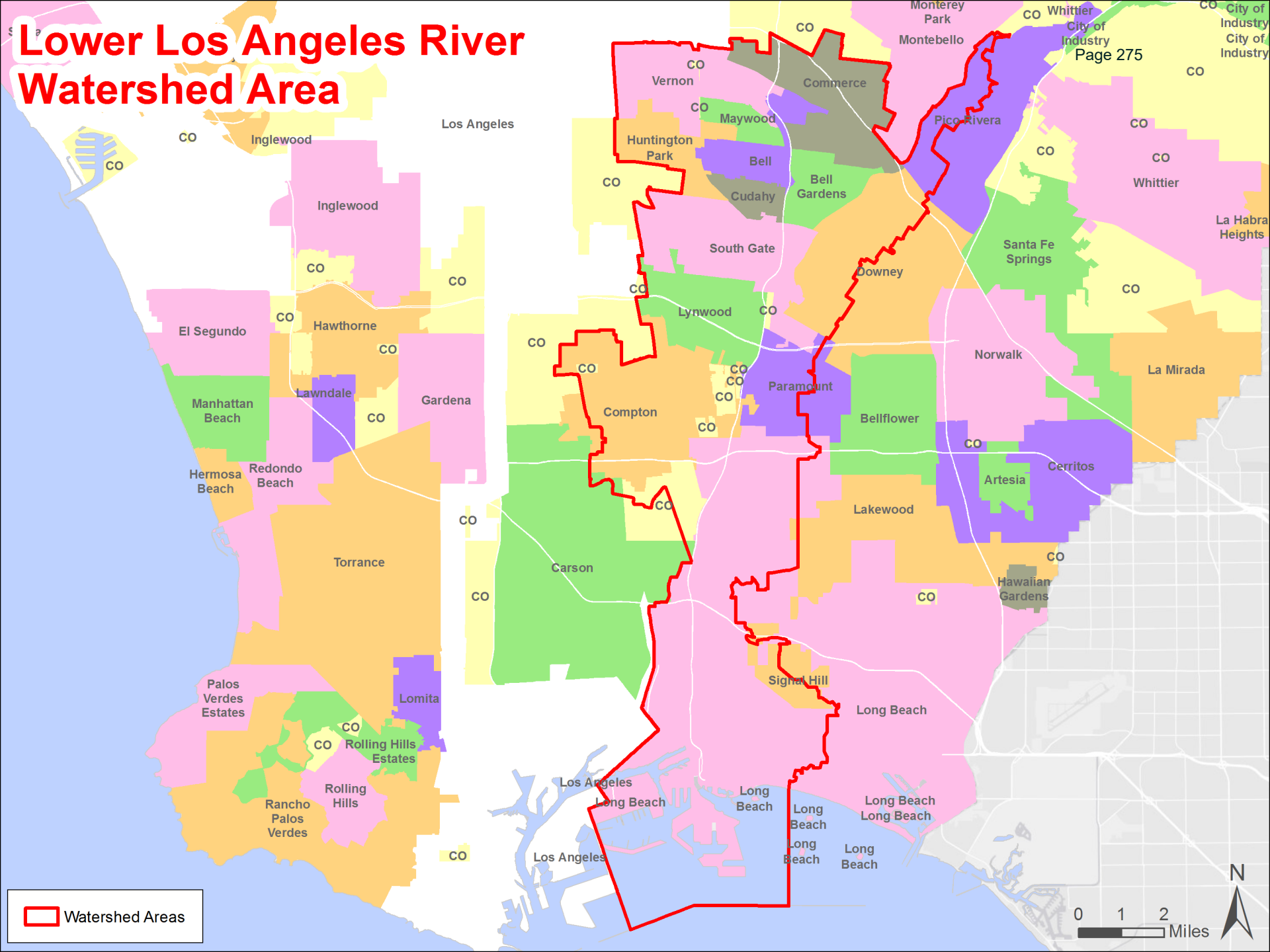
Section 12:
SCW Watershed Area Maps


LACFCD Northern Limit
Santa Clara River
Antelope Valley Excluded
Upper Los Angeles River
Upper San Gabriel River
Rio Hondo
North Santa Monica Bay
Central Santa Monica Bay
Lower Los Angeles River
Lower San Gabriel River
South Santa Monica Bay
LACFCD Northern Limit
Watershed Areas
Antelope Valley
0
5
10
Miles
N

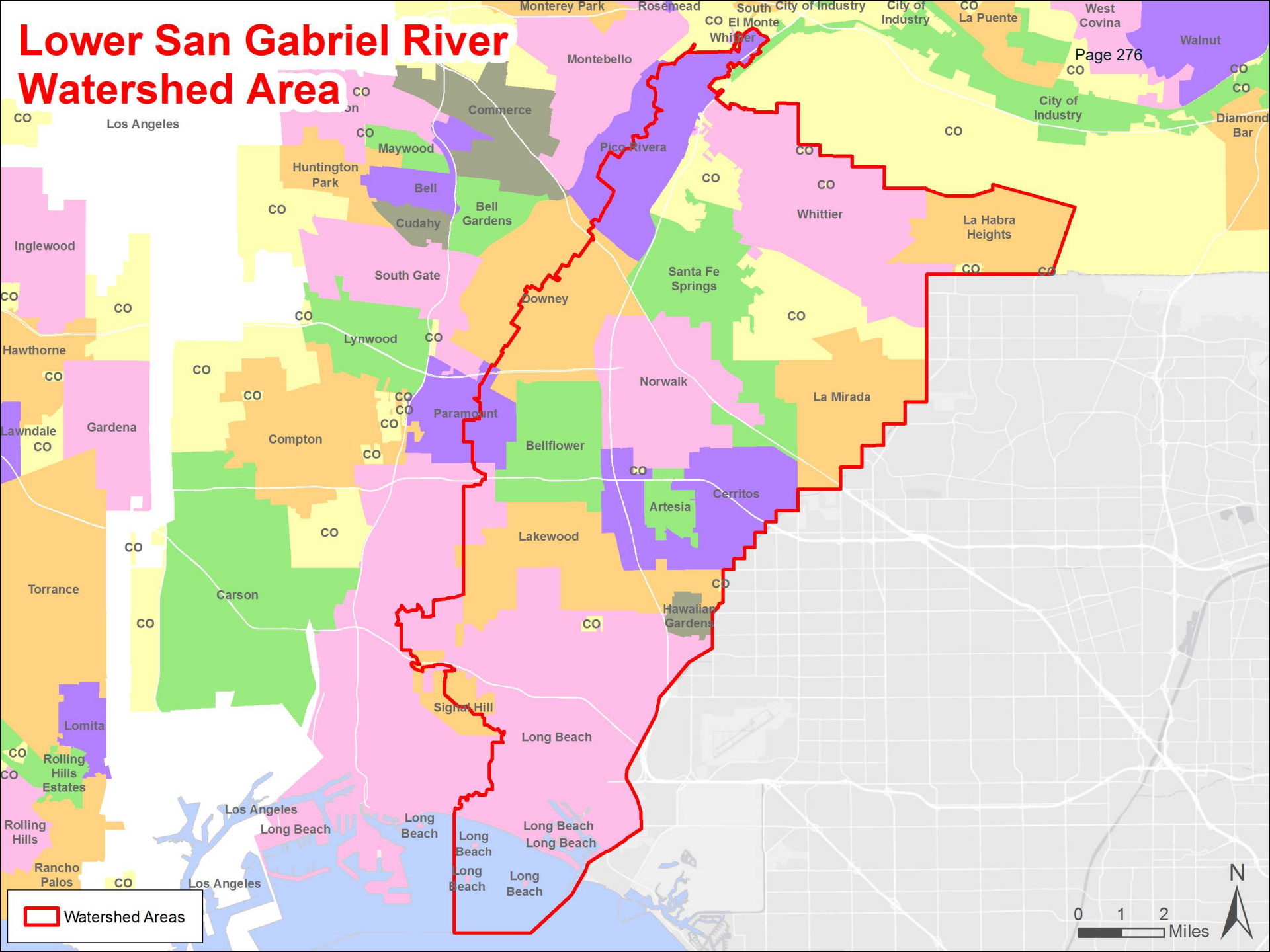
Central Santa Monica Bay Watershed Area



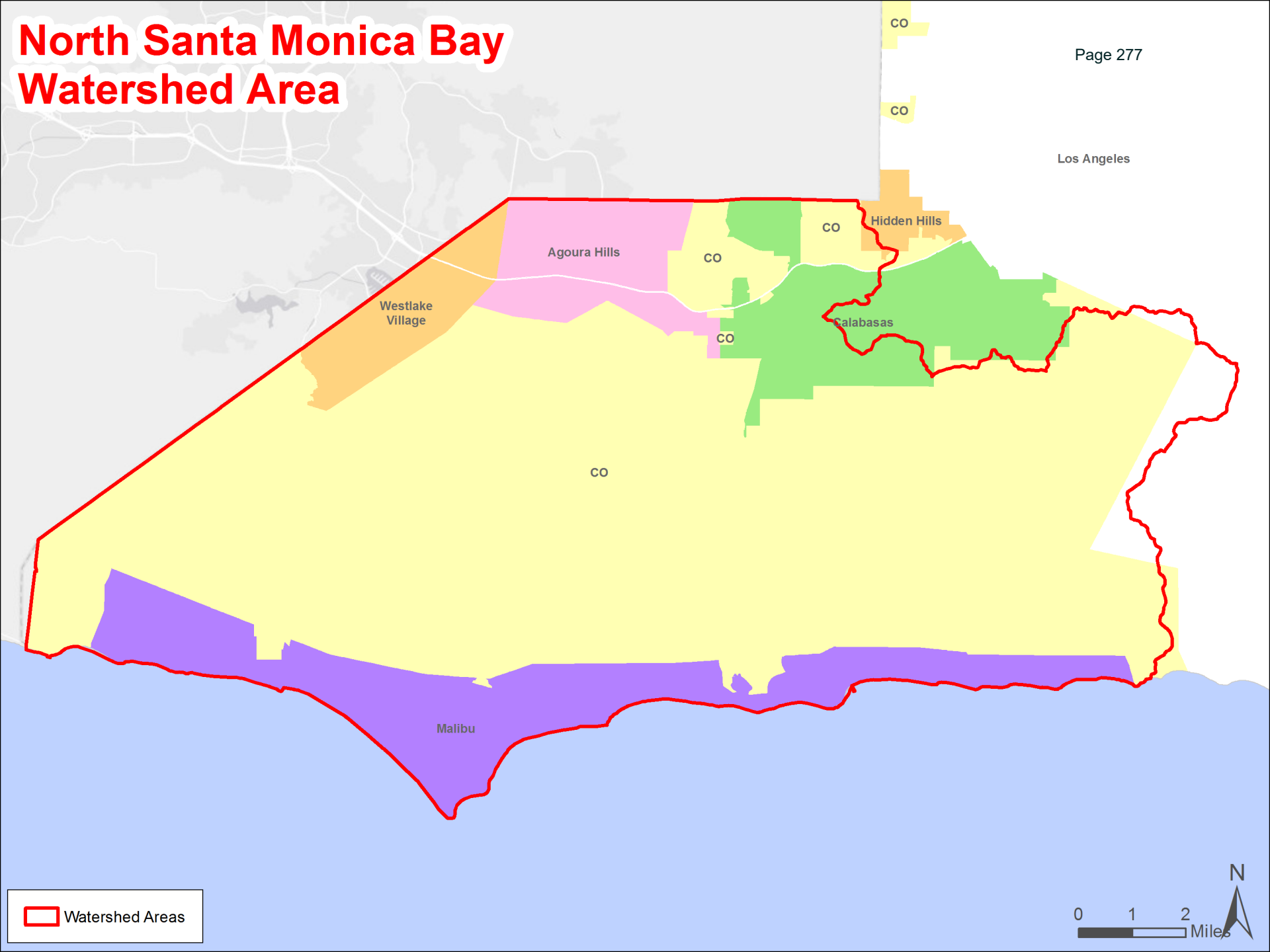
Lower Los Angeles River Watershed Area



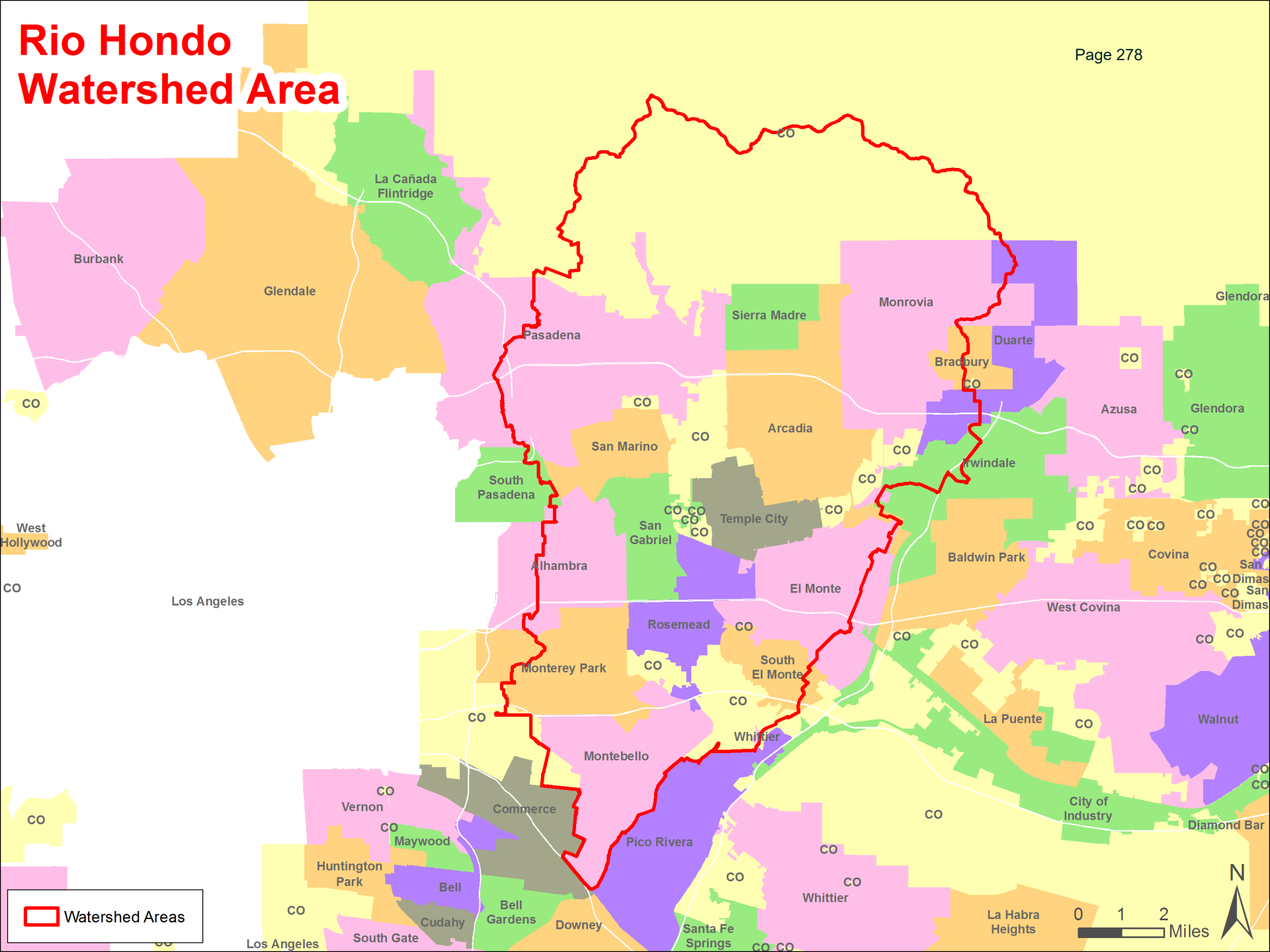
Lower San Gabriel River Watershed Area



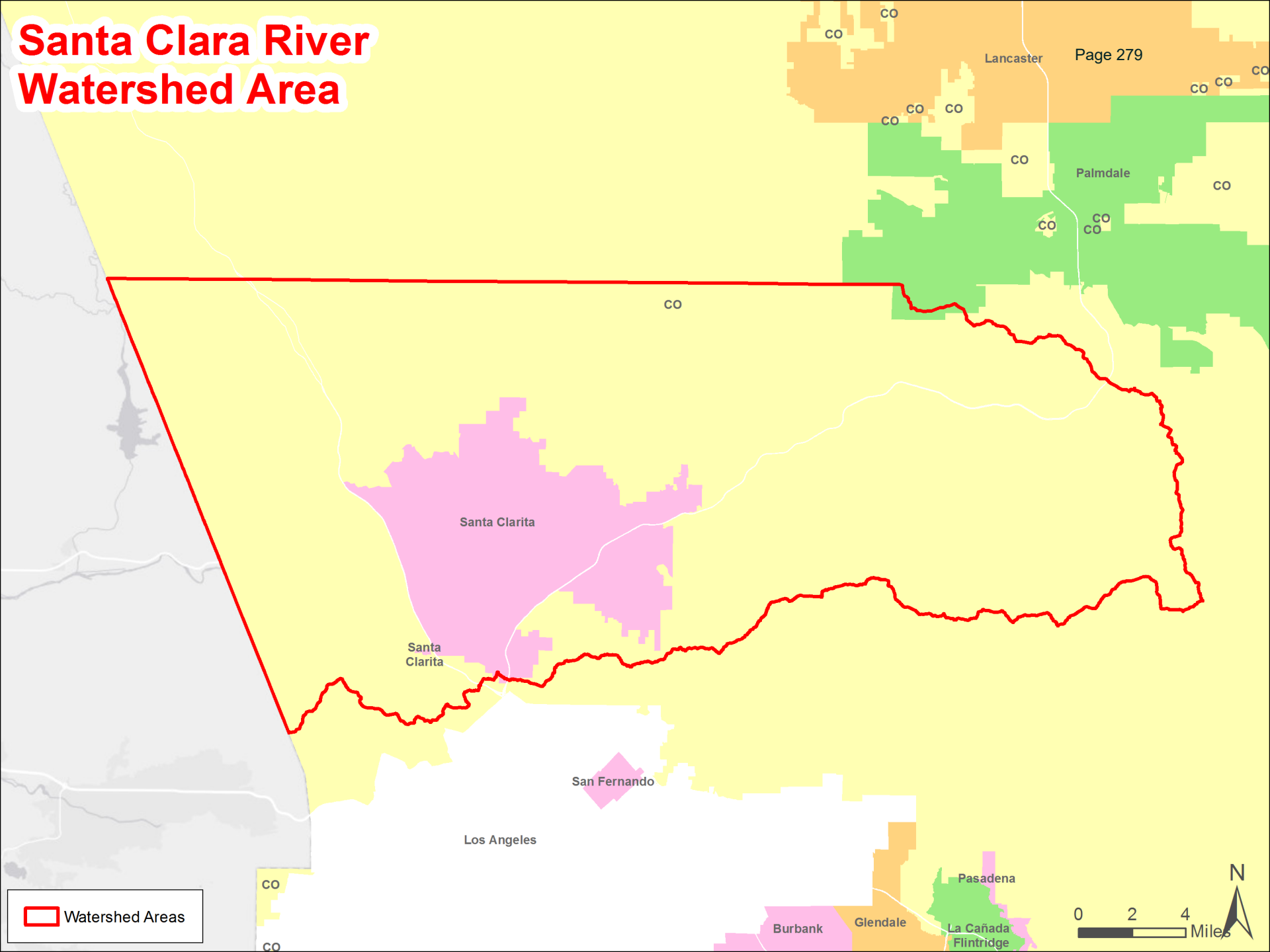
North Santa Monica Bay Watershed Area



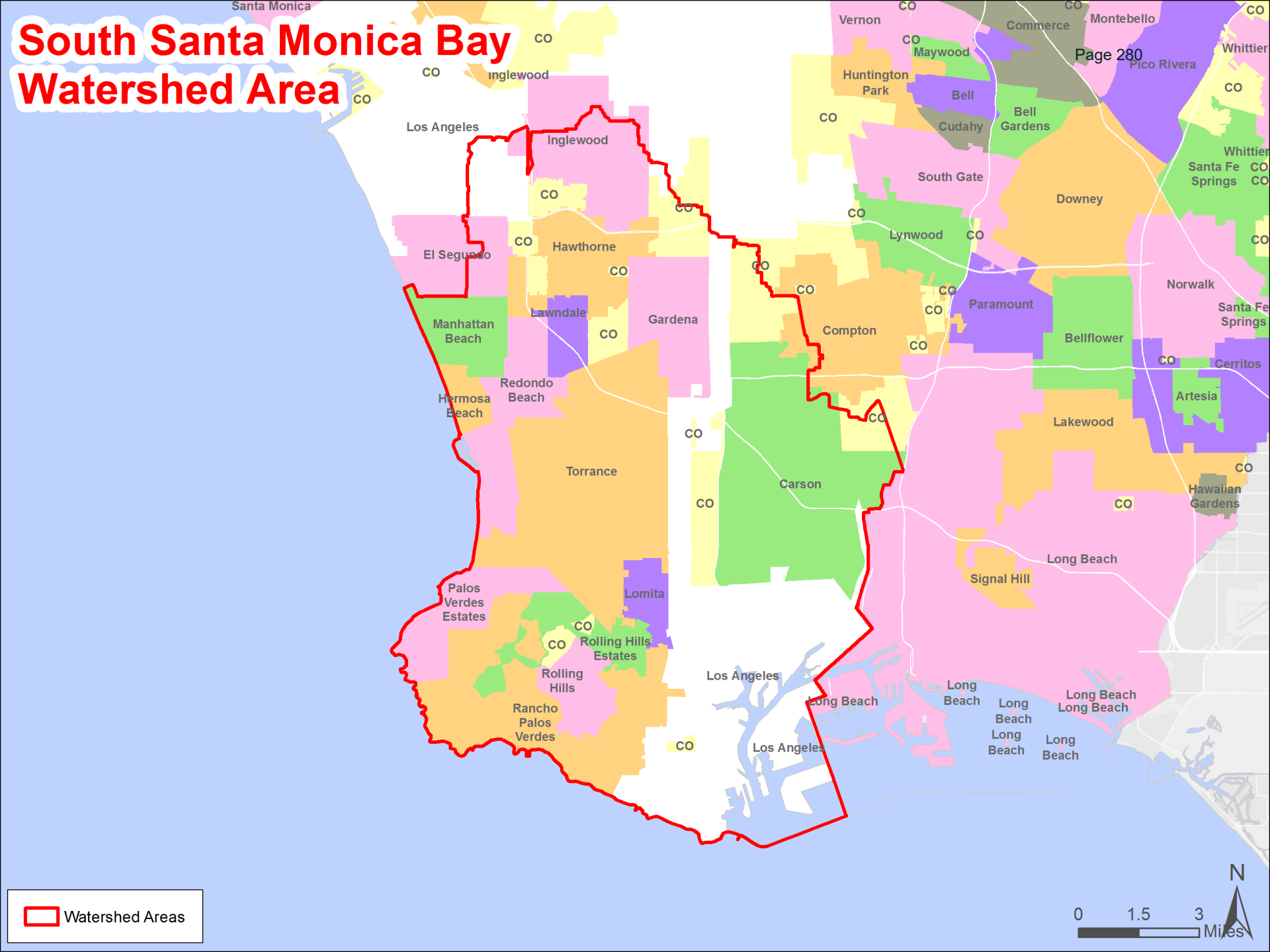
Rio Hondo Watershed Area



Santa Clara River Watershed Area



South Santa Monica Bay Watershed Area



Upper Los Angeles River Watershed Area

Watershed Areas

Upper San Gabriel River Watershed Area