SAFE CLEAN WATER PROGRAM

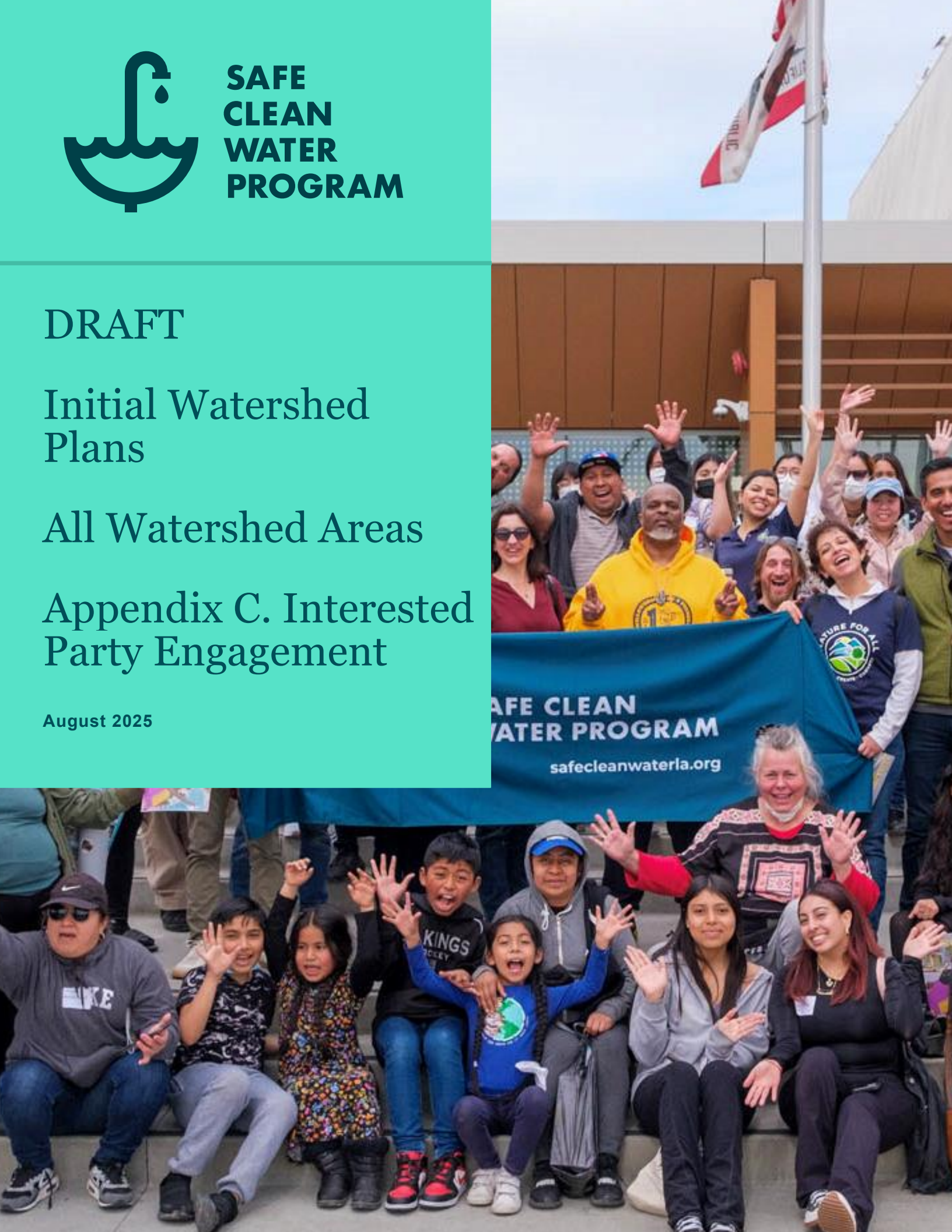
DRAFT

Initial Watershed Plans

All Watershed Areas

Appendix C. Interested Party Engagement

August 2025



SAFE CLEAN WATER PROGRAM

DRAFT Initial Watershed Plan Appendix C

All Watershed Areas

Table of Contents

Appendix C. Interested Party Engagement Memo

C.1 Overview

Following the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors Motion to accelerate watershed planning in the region in July 2023, Public Works initiated the SCW Program's Watershed Planning effort (Watershed Planning). The effort includes the development of nine Initial Watershed Plans, one for each of the SCW Program Watershed Areas. The Initial Watershed Plans include the results of regional and Watershed Area-based planning efforts that identified key opportunities, targets for strategic investments, and indicators for evaluating SCW Program progress. The Initial Watershed Plans are informed by extensive engagement with interested parties and SCW Program Governance Committees. This Interested Party Engagement Memo (memo) describes the engagement approach and summarizes all engagement efforts conducted from 2024-2025 in support of the Watershed Planning process.

Throughout this memo, the Public Works Watershed Planning Section is referred to as Watershed Planning staff, and the larger team that includes consultants is referred to as the Watershed Planning team.

C.1.1 A Commitment to Interested Party Engagement

Public Works initiated a robust engagement process during development of the Initial Watershed Plans. SCW Program Governance Committees and interested parties have valuable experience and unique perspectives on the Program, including expertise on specific topics and/or geographies within the nine SCW Program Watershed Areas. The approach to interested party engagement for the Initial Watershed Plans was structured and focused facilitation sessions with guiding questions. Engagement was grounded in the following general objectives where participants were:

- Introduced to SCW Program Watershed Planning and informed how their input would be considered as part of the process.

DRAFT

- Informed about existing planning efforts or plans and associated datasets relevant to Watershed Planning.
- Asked to contribute knowledge about plans, studies, and datasets for consideration in the Watershed Planning effort.
- Provided opportunities to describe and prioritize strategies to advance the SCW Program regionally and locally.
- Iteratively informed how their contributions influenced the planning process.

C.1.2 Understanding This Report

Engagement methods with each of the interested parties are summarized and the results of engagement are synthesized in later sections of this report.

This section describes the use of the following terms throughout the report:

- Synthesis
- Implications
- Beyond Watershed Planning

The use of “synthesis” in the Initial Watershed Planning engagement efforts borrowed technique from qualitative analyses. Through synthesis of qualitative information, the Watershed Planning team was able to receive input across a broad suite of interested parties and support meaningful impact on the analytical and policy efforts of the Initial Watershed Planning. Interested parties carry diverse expertise, with variable familiarity with the administrative aspects of the SCW Program and the technical analyses being undertaken. The process of “synthesis” allowed input to be aligned (coded) with aspects of the effort where that input would or could have the greatest impact.

As described later in this report, the synthesis was structured around how different input had similar “implications” for the watershed planning effort. By synthesizing the implications of input from interested parties, the Initial Watershed Plans were able to incorporate and benefit from the expertise shared during the engagement effort. In this way, the engagement process resulted in actionable, shared, expertise that informed the opportunity area analyses, the setting of targets, and the development of key strategies for SCW Program Goal attainment.

Given the breadth of expertise, input was often found to be meaningful at a scale “beyond Watershed Planning.” As is shown, these ideas are captured as meaningful input that may impact future work inside, or even beyond, the SCW Program.

This report is being released as a Draft Final during the public comment period of the Initial Watershed Plans. It will be updated based on public comments received during the later months of 2025 to early 2026 and during other engagement efforts planned for the period following public comment.

C.1.3 Report Organization

This report is divided into sections about the different engagements that were undertaken. The first and most extensive section describes engagements with the Watershed Area Steering Committees (WASCs), whose members are important sources of local knowledge and who best understand their respective WA's opportunities, challenges, constraints, and priorities. The final element of the WASC section is a review of items that were frequently shared across all committees and therefore engaged program-wide during the Initial Watershed Plan development.

Following the WASC engagement syntheses is a section about planned engagement with the Regional Oversight Committee and their unplanned formation of two working groups throughout engagement, which contributed to Water Quality and Community Investment Benefit and Benefit Ratio aspects of watershed planning. The Scoring Committee comes next, though at the time of this report planned engagement with the SC is not complete. Lastly, a review of the other interested parties can be found.

C.1.4 Limitations of this Report

Because this report is a companion document to the Initial Watershed Plans, it intentionally does not itemize how specific engagement input impacted individual elements of the Initial Watershed Plans. For that level of detail, readers are directed to Chapter 5 in each of the Initial Watershed Plans that describes how engagement with governance committees and interested parties contributed to the planning effort. Additionally, each of the governance committee meetings described herein were public meetings that produced committee-approved meeting minutes. Table C-1 below provides links to the posted approved minutes, where more in-depth summaries of the meetings can be found.

Lastly, as was highlighted by the Watershed Coordinators, Initial Watershed Planning did not pursue direct engagement with Tribes and Tribal members. During future phases, it is recommended that a unique Tribal Engagement Framework be developed and conducted, in partnership with the Watershed Coordinator Tribal Allyship Working

Group. Work completed in the Metrics and Monitoring Study, and other countywide initiatives[1] , can serve as a starting point.

Table C-1. CSMB Watershed Area Implications for SCW Program Beyond Watershed Planning

Governance Committee Watershed Planning Meeting Minutes				
Governance Committee	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4
Regional Oversight Committee (ROC)	ROC Phase 1	ROC Phase 2	ROC Phase 3	Upcoming
Scoring Committee (SC)	SC Phase 1	Upcoming	N/A	N/A
Upper San Gabriel River (USGR) WASC	USGR Phase 1	USGR Phase 2	USGR Phase 3	Upcoming
Central Santa Monica Bay (CSMB) WASC	CSMB Phase 1	CSMB Phase 2	CSMB Phase 3	Upcoming
Upper Los Angeles River (ULAR) WASC	ULAR Phase 1	ULAR Phase 2	ULAR Phase 3	Upcoming
South Santa Monica Bay (SSMB) WASC	SSMB Phase 1	SSMB Phase 2	SSMB Phase 3	Upcoming
Santa Clara River	SCR Phase 1	SCR Phase 2	SCR Phase 3	Upcoming
(SCR) WASC	RH Phase 1	RH Phase 2	RH Phase 3	Upcoming
Rio Hondo	NSMB Phase 1	NSMB Phase 2	NSMB Phase 3	Upcoming
(RH) WASC	LSGR Phase 1	LSGR Phase 2	LSGR Phase 3	Upcoming
North Santa Monica Bay (NSMB) WASC	LLAR Phase 1	LLAR Phase 2	LLAR Phase 3	Upcoming

[1] See LA River Master Plan, Los Angeles County Ordinance No. 111409, the Lower Los Angeles River Revitalization Plan, and the SCW Program Equity and Stormwater Investments White Paper

C.2 Synthesis of Input by Watershed Area Steering Committees

Watershed Area Steering Committees (WASCs) each have seventeen voting members and at least one non-voting Watershed Coordinator. These members are appointed to represent Agency, Municipal, or Community perspectives, and each is expected to bring relevant professional experience aligned with SCW Program Goals and regional interests. The nine WASCs are comprised of community leaders with varied expertise (i.e., hydrology, water management, environmental management, community engagement) and a strong familiarity with social, infrastructure, and policy dynamics on both a local and regional level, making them primary collaborators in the Watershed Planning effort.

Engagement with WASCs started with identifying key opportunities or constraints in their Watershed Area and in the Program as a whole. The strategies shared in each Watershed Area that WASC members identified as most needed to achieve SCW Program Goals were documented and synthesized by the Watershed Planning team. The engagement strategy for Watershed Planning established a phased approach, summarized below:

Listen & Gather

> Phase 1 – WASC Members were introduced to the SCW Program Watershed Planning effort, how their input could impact the effort, and how establishing targets and performance measures supports improvements to the SCW Program. A facilitated exercise helped WASC Members consider and build consensus within the WASC about how the SCW Program Goals align with Watershed Area characteristics, priorities, and what strategies may be most supportive of achieving the Goals.
>
> Phase 2 – Input received during Phase 1 and the influence that input was having on the planning effort were reviewed with WASC members. Members were given opportunity to affirm or correct how their input was being used. WASC members were also updated on the early draft watershed plan outline, and next phases of the continued development of the Initial Watershed Plans.

Update & Check In

Phase 3 – During this Phase, earlier engagements were reviewed, and members learned how their input influenced the Initial Watershed Planning effort. The WASCs were introduced to the Initial Watershed Plan baselines, strategies, and opportunities, and received a demonstration of the Watershed Planning Tools and the Community Strengths & Needs Assessment (CSNA) Survey and Dashboard.

Phase 4 – After a planned public review period for the Initial Watershed Plans, the Watershed Planning team will re-engage with the WASCs. A high-level synthesis of public feedback within the Watershed Area will be provided. The remainder of workshop will focus on developing WASC input about near-term action items that can strengthen the plans and ideas that may be addressed during future updates of the Watershed Plans.

The tables in each WASC summary include Phases 1-4 of engagement. The left column includes input from the Listen and Gather phases, while the right column indicates the Update and Check In phases. Table C-2 describes how the tables are used below for each WASC.

Table C-2. Layout of Input Summary Tables for each WASC

Phases 1 & 2 – Listen and Gather	Phases 3 & 4 – Update and Check In
• Document input provided about Initial Watershed Planning. • Reveal WASC impressions on the utility of the Initial Watershed Plans for their work, and the efforts by project developers.	• Document input provided about Initial Watershed Planning. • Reveal WASC impressions on the utility of the Initial Watershed Plans for their work, and the efforts by project developers.

C.2.1 Central Santa Monica Bay

C.2.1.1 Phase 1

CSMB WASC recommended potential beneficial strategies for the Watershed Area, including a priority strategy to augment water supply through innovative water capture and reuse projects and programs. The WASC shared that there is potential in the CSMB Watershed Area to develop stormwater capture projects that conserve water through groundwater recharge or that can reuse the water on-site for irrigation. The WASC also shared that the creation of green spaces in disadvantaged communities is a priority because it will address historical disparities. Collaborations with local schools, such as the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD), to integrate green

initiatives into school environments, also present valuable opportunities for community engagement and environmental education that the WASC expressed as a priority.

C.2.1.2 Phase 2

The WASC asked about the limitations of the Watershed Planning effort and requested a comprehensive review of its impact on smaller municipalities, particularly in relation to the regulatory watershed plans related to MS4 compliance. The WASC expressed that the effectiveness of the Initial Watershed Plan will depend on its proper execution, with a cautionary note about the potential pitfalls if the plan and associated Watershed Planning Tool (Planning Tool) are not well designed or easy to use. The WASC also expressed a desire to see the Community Strengths and Needs Assessment shared with and made useful in all the watershed area municipalities. The WASC highlighted the importance of outreach to disadvantaged communities and suggested using "heat maps" for the data visualization of community priorities, such as flood protection, be included in the Planning Tool. The WASC recommended clearly listing any assumptions regarding meaningful engagement when using tools or maps, like the Good, Better, and Best engagement criteria noted in the May 2025 Interim Guidance[2].

The Phase 1 & 2 syntheses are provided in Table C-3 to Table C-5, summarizing inputs that had potential implications for opportunity analysis, target setting, and other topics beyond the Initial Watershed Planning efforts.

Table C-3. CSMB Watershed Area Implications for Opportunity Analysis

Phases 1 & 2 – Listen and Gather	Phases 3 & 4 – Update and Check In
Evaluate the extent of available land for new green space in census tracts considered disadvantaged. Highlight the complexity of addressing [the SCW Program policy about investments in Disadvantaged Communities] in Watershed Areas with disadvantaged communities, noting that the Ballona Creek subwatershed is the only one with disadvantaged communities out of the three regulatory subwatersheds within the CSMB Watershed Area.	Confirm that all graphics and visualizations in presentations are clear and support interpretation of key planning elements. Clarify and communicate that the Watershed Planning Tool will not incorporate unsubmitted projects. Understand the NbS Blue Ribbon Panel and Task Force Recommendations as a result of County Water Plan efforts.

[2] Safe, Clean Water Program 2025 Interim Guidance

Phases 1 & 2 – Listen and Gather	Phases 3 & 4 – Update and Check In
Use spatial data that represents historical disparities for project development and funding prioritization. When considering historical disparities, do not only evaluate the portions of the Watershed Area considered disadvantaged by SCW Program policy, evaluate the entire Watershed Area.	Communicate clearly in the Initial Watershed Plans that the Planning Tool and the CSNA are support tools for targeted engagement, not a replacement for direct outreach. *Phase 4 input to be populated and included in this table upon completion of WASC engagement in Fall of 2025.*
In the different groundwater management areas, evaluate the different geohydrologic and policy implications for pursuing additional groundwater recharge.	
Assess locations of LAUSD and other school district properties and their relationship to regulated runoff. Emphasize the intent to include analysis of all school districts, not just LAUSD.	
Inventory of LAUSD greening policies and prioritization of facilities for retrofit. Engage with the County Office of Education.	
In Phase 2, the WASC recommended that floodplain reclamation be evaluated during Opportunity Analysis. Revisit the Ballona Creek Revitalization Plan, noting its significance as a pre-development floodplain.	

C.2.1.3 Phase 3

The Watershed Planning Team returned to the WASC to give a progress update on the Watershed Planning effort, including discussion on the major components of the Initial Watershed Plans and demos of the companion online Planning Tool and CSNA Survey and Dashboard. Committee members showed strong interest in the Planning Tool's opportunity layers that highlight where potential projects and programs might advance the Goals of the SCW Program. The WASC suggested including reference information about the source of data used in the analysis that produced opportunity layers as an effort to be transparent. There was also a recommendation for Project Developers to align their efforts with specific Watershed Area priorities, especially to

move beyond just water quality regulatory compliance projects and to focus on multi-benefit projects.

Table C-4. CSMB Watershed Area Implications for Target Setting

Phases 1 & 2 – Listen and Gather	Phases 3 & 4 – Update and Check In
Evaluate whether LAUSD and other school district capital improvement plan and greening targets exist and incorporate into plans where applicable.	Evaluate whether LAUSD and other school district capital improvement plan and greening targets exist and incorporate into plans where applicable. Coordinate with SCW Program leadership to determine how or whether to integrate the Planning Tool insights into Scoring Criteria as part of Adaptive Management *Phase 4 input to be populated and included in this table upon completion of WASC engagement in Fall of 2025.*
Incorporate the recommendations from the County Water Plan with respect to groundwater recharge hydrology and policy goals for each groundwater management area.	
Incorporate LA County Parks Needs Assessment Plus targets/goals for the Watershed Area.	

Lastly, suggestions for the CSNA Survey and Dashboard from the CSMB WASC included the potential for offering both short and long versions of the survey and improving visibility through a homepage link. Committee members emphasized the importance of collaboration with community-based organizations (CBOs) for Proponents of the Program.

C.2.1.4 Phase 4

Phase 4 input to be included here upon completion of WASC engagement in Fall of 2025.

Input that is meaningful to the Program at a scale "beyond Watershed Planning" (Table C-5) could inform future Adaptive Management efforts in addition to countywide related programs, measures, and efforts.

Table C-5. CSMB Watershed Area Implications for SCW Program Beyond Watershed Planning

Phases 1 & 2 – Listen and Gather	Phases 3 & 4 – Update and Check In
Standardized ways or methods to quantify secondary benefits such that projects can be compared (e.g., enhancement/creation of open space, recreation, education).	Explore the development of short and long versions of the CSNA Survey for improved public engagement as part of Adaptive Management
Provide technical assistance for applicants to consider green jobs & career pathway implications	

Phases 1 & 2 – Listen and Gather	Phases 3 & 4 – Update and Check In
Consider certain regulatory sub-watersheds in this Watershed Area that do not have disadvantaged communities but do have tight compliance deadlines	*Phase 4 input to be populated and included in this table upon completion of WASC engagement in Fall of 2025.*
Prioritize direct primary benefits, consider racial/ economic equity and historical legacies	
Reassess application questions to make them more accessible for local community groups to allow for variety of scales in project size	

C.2.2 Lower Los Angeles River

C.2.2.1 Phase 1

In Phase 1, the Lower Los Angeles River (LLAR) WASC focused on advancing stormwater improvement strategies for dry and wet weather projects. The WASC highlighted how the LLAR Watershed Area is densely developed, meaning that land rehabilitation will likely be a characteristic of most projects. Similarly, the WASC expressed desire for the development of multi-benefit projects that incorporate best management practices (BMPs) such as dry wells, infiltration galleries, green infrastructure (i.e., bioswales), and green streets to manage stormwater. The LLAR WASC also requested comprehensive operation and maintenance (O&M) planning for projects.

C.2.2.2 Phase 2

The WASC appreciated the clarity of the Watershed Planning synthesis but provided more clarity about the strategy focus they discussed about schools and stormwater compliance. The WASC wanted to affirm effort was put towards understanding the implications of regulated runoff analysis for LAUSD and other school properties, noting past project rejections due to MS4 compliance issues. The WASC noted that Phase 1 had not included discussion about metrics related to disadvantaged and severely disadvantaged communities, emphasizing the importance of equitable project evaluation and funding distribution. The WASC also highlighted the need to understand sewer capacity for stormwater diversion, citing diminishing capacity in LACSD systems, and recommended incorporating local agency data into the Watershed Plans.

The Phase 1 & 2 syntheses are provided in Table C-6 to Table C-8, summarizing implications for Opportunity Analysis, target setting, and other topics beyond the initial Watershed Planning efforts, respectively.

Table C-6. LLAR Watershed Area Implications for Opportunity Analysis

Phases 1 & 2 – Listen and Gather	Phases 3 & 4 – Update and Check In
Analyze dry weather runoff challenges and opportunities	Clarify the duration of data availability in Watershed Planning Tools and the CSNA Dashboard Confirm updates on potential public demonstrations of Watershed Planning Tools and the CSNA Survey and Dashboard *Phase 4 input to be populated and included in this table upon completion of WASC engagement in Fall of 2025.*
Evaluate the potential for distributed BMPs that collectively achieve cost-effectiveness thresholds of the SCW Program	
Describe relationship of regulated runoff to LAUSD and other school district properties	
Inquire about implications of regulated runoff analysis for LAUSD and other school properties	
Evaluate LAUSD and other school greening policies and prioritization of retrofits	
Document and factor existing land remediation efforts and/or plans (i.e., brownfields, parks)	
Public Works could provide more resources to understand the distribution of disadvantaged communities within the Watershed Area	
Proposed using the “severely disadvantaged community” policy used by the State to explore opportunities to overcome environmental injustices	
Visualize funding distribution within the Watershed Area; suggested that a heat map could be used to show fund distribution within communities Fund analyses that quantify the benefits from projects and proximate benefits from projects	

C.2.2.3 Phase 3

In Phase 3, Committee Members shared an interest in seeing the Initial Watershed Plans be driven in-part by the Los Angeles County Parks Needs Assessment (PNA) and City of Los Angeles Parks Needs Plus (PNA+) initiatives, and the 30x30 goal held by the State of California, that aims to conserve 30 percent of lands and coastal waters by 2030 to address climate change and protect biodiversity. The Committee

also inquired about the integration of disadvantaged community data and zoning across different Watershed Areas. The WASC mentioned that a PNA 2.0 report would be released in the summer of 2025 and suggested finding ways to synchronize with its goals and strategies.

Table C-7. LLAR Watershed Area Implications for Target Setting

Phases 1 & 2 – Listen and Gather	Phases 3 & 4 – Update and Check In
Link O&M spending with workforce development	Evaluate the incorporation of Los Angeles County PNA and PNA+ initiatives and track their progress throughout 2025 *Phase 4 input to be populated and included in this table upon completion of WASC engagement in Fall of 2025.*
Consider LAUSD and other school district plans and targets	
Incorporate LA County PNA+ targets, and EPA Brownfields Program targets	
Investigate how distributed projects can collectively achieve the right cost-benefit thresholds	
Recommended incorporating local agencies' project data to understand contributions by non-SCW Program projects towards targets	

Committee Members also emphasized the importance of aligning WASC needs with CSNA results in the Dashboard, highlighting its usefulness during Stormwater Investment Plan (SIP) deliberations. The Committee stressed the importance of making strategic decisions and maximizing the impact of available funds within the watershed area.

C.2.2.4 Phase 4

Phase 4 input to be included here upon completion of WASC engagement in Fall of 2025.

Input that is meaningful to the Program at a scale "beyond Watershed Planning" could inform future Adaptive Management efforts in addition to countywide related programs, measures, and efforts.

Table C-8. LLAR Watershed Area Implications for SCW Program Beyond Watershed Planning

Phases 1 & 2 – Listen and Gather	Phases 3 & 4 – Update and Check In
Leverage Council of Governments (COGs) partnerships	Evaluate the integration of disadvantaged community data and zoning across the Watershed Area
Understand sewer capacity for possible diversion to sewer	

Phases 1 & 2 – Listen and Gather	Phases 3 & 4 – Update and Check In
Recommended developing a capacity analysis of Los Angeles County Sanitation District (LACSD) sewers to aid in developing the Watershed Plans	*Phase 4 input to be populated and included in this table upon completion of WASC engagement in Fall of 2025.*
Partner with the private sector	

C.2.3 Lower San Gabriel River

C.2.3.1 Phase 1

During Phase 1 discussions, the Lower San Gabriel River (LSGR) WASC focused on developing a list of existing planning documents that could influence the Initial Watershed Planning, such as the SCW Program funded *Gateway Area Pathfinding Analysis Scientific Study*. The WASC emphasized a desire to optimize for multi-benefit solutions. LSGR WASC requested the Watershed Planning effort to support those who are developing projects to ensure they complement existing WMPs that were produced in response to MS4 permits[3]. The LSGR WASC also noted a need to enhance collaboration with community members and city officials to optimize water management efforts. This WASC also prioritized discussions about leveraging funding, designing projects to be lower cost for construction and O&M, and finding other programs that could add multi-benefit stormwater management elements to their work, outside of the SCW Program. This discussion centered around the LSGR WASC's recognition that the outcomes sought by SCW Program are often shared by other programs that drive investments in parks or transportation.

C.2.3.2 Phase 2

During Phase 2, the WASC reiterated the proactive project funding approach represented by the WASC Prioritization Criteria[4], which allows the WASC to signal interest to Project Applicants for specific strategies or elements prior to application. The WASC also asked for Watershed Planning efforts to consider how the Orange County boundary, which describes the edge of the Watershed Area but not the edge of the physical watershed, may provide unique opportunities.

[3] Regional Permit Program Page | Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board
[4] LSGR WASC Prioritization Criteria

The Phase 1 & 2 syntheses are provided in Table C-9 to Table C-11, summarizing implications for Opportunity Analysis, target setting, and other topics beyond the initial Watershed Planning efforts, respectively.

Table C-9. LSGR Watershed Area Implications for Opportunity Analysis

Phases 1 & 2 – Listen and Gather	Phases 3 & 4 – Update and Check In
Evaluate how water quality (WQ) compliance pathways proposed by permittees can produce SCW Program outcomes	Use CSNA Dashboard results to inform meaningful engagement strategies from the Program to community members Encourage Project Developers to lead or participate in engagement activities *Phase 4 input to be populated and included in this table upon completion of WASC engagement in Fall of 2025.*
Document priorities for brownfield remediation held by other agencies Cite the Department of Toxic Substance Control, cities, and other entity mandates and resources focused on brownfields, specifically regarding the term "(re)development" as preferred over "remediation" for brownfields, as remediation is at an earlier stage and may not be suitable for implementing stormwater features on contaminated sites	
Identify public or privately managed large land parcels to support SCW Program goals Provide resources about how the Watershed Planning process will map and identify large parcels, as most parks are already identified or evaluated for stormwater management	
Assess the implications of Orange County lands within LSGR watershed delineation Integrate subwatershed analyses in Adaptive Plans	
Identify planned green or complete street plans as opportunities	

Table C-10. LSGR Watershed Area Implications for Target Setting

Phases 1 & 2 – Listen and Gather	Phases 3 & 4 – Update and Check In
Establish targets for leveraging funding	Include or require more detailed data from project applicants via applications to support long-term data collection and Adaptive Management
Incorporate achievements expected from funded planning and implementation projects	
Create prioritized targets for hardscape redevelopment and removal, particularly in disadvantaged communities	

Phases 1 & 2 – Listen and Gather	Phases 3 & 4 – Update and Check In
Evaluate the watershed-housing nexus, consider housing targets	Highlight contributions from non-SCW Program projects that support and align with SCW Program goals Use the CSNA Dashboard to assess investment appropriateness that aligns with areas that optimize multi-benefit solutions Encourage municipalities to host the CSNA Survey on their website *Phase 4 input to be populated and included in this table upon completion of WASC engagement in Fall of 2025.*

C.2.3.3 Phase 3

During Phase 3 of engagement, outreach strategies were discussed, including the suggestion to involve environmental commissioners to ensure appointed officials are well-informed. Questions about data accuracy and long-term management were addressed, with assurances that data will be updated as new projects are added. The Project Application process now requires more detailed data, supporting Adaptive Management planning beyond 2026, and all tools and documents will be updated regularly.

The discussion also touched on the potential to highlight projects outside the SCW Program that align with its goals, aiming to foster synergies that enhance project selection and community engagement.

C.2.3.4 Phase 4

Phase 4 input to be included here upon completion of WASC engagement in Fall of 2025.

Input that is meaningful to the Program at a scale “beyond Watershed Planning” could inform future Adaptive Management efforts in addition to countywide related programs, measures, and efforts.

Table C-11. LSGR Watershed Area Implications for SCW Program Beyond Watershed Planning

Phases 1 & 2 – Listen and Gather	Phases 3 & 4 – Update and Check In
Leverage other non-traditional programs, like affordable housing, to optimize dollars to develop green space and mitigate outdoor water use	Phase 3 did not result in implications beyond Watershed Planning. *Phase 4 input to be populated and included in this table upon completion of WASC engagement in Fall of 2025.*
Coordinate with County Measures H, A, and M	

C.2.4 North Santa Monica Bay

C.2.4.1 Phase 1

The North Santa Monica Bay (NSMB) WASC highlighted opportunities for implementing Nature-based Solutions, as the Watershed Area has a greater proportion of open space as compared to other Watershed Areas in the SCW Program. The WASC expressed that diversion to sanitary sewer, distributed NbS, and stream and wetland restoration are priorities for the Watershed Area. The WASC highlighted how NSMB and SCR watershed areas face similar opportunities and challenges from the large open spaces, often in the upper watershed areas. Regulatory WQ compliance and integrating small-scale stormwater capture solutions like rain gardens and cisterns are BMPs that the WASC would like to be evaluated through the Watershed Planning effort. Additionally, the WASC acknowledged the benefit of engaging local communities and leveraging partnerships during development of these types of projects.

The NSMB Phase 1 meeting included significant public engagement after the watershed coordinator worked to notify people of the opportunity. Unlike the other eight WASCs, the Phase 1 engagement exercise included public participants who were at the meeting. Their contributions were incorporated directly into the synthesis of input and the implications described below.

C.2.4.2 Phase 2

During Phase 2, the NSMB WASC discussed Caltrans' request to partner and receive credit for contributions to SCW-funded projects, noting the logical involvement due to their infrastructure. The WASC considered Caltrans' role in addressing Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) and prioritizing projects, especially for creeks below underpasses. The Committee emphasized the need for Watershed Planning to identify partnerships and model designs. The WASC also discussed public recognition of clean beaches, leveraging grant funding for coastal resilience, and the importance of

beach benefits for Watershed Planning, considering the WASCs' potential for planning for sea level rise. Investments in beaches and open spaces were seen as strategies for cooling and providing open space in NSMB WASC. The Committee also expressed interest in connecting agencies through potable reuse efforts, pending SCW Program authorization.

The Phase 1 & 2 syntheses are provided in Table C-12 to Table C-14, summarizing implications for Opportunity Analysis, target setting, and other topics beyond the Initial Watershed Planning efforts, respectively.

Table C-12. NSMB Watershed Area Implications for Opportunity Analysis

Phases 1 & 2 – Listen and Gather	Phases 3 & 4 – Update and Check In
Investigate how distributed projects can collectively achieve the right cost-benefit threshold	Explore land acquisition opportunities via the County Water Plan NbS Blue Ribbon Panel and Task Force Recommendations and Regional Open Space District (Measure A) leverage funding to the extent possible in the Initial Plans, and center in the Adaptive Plans Confirm data or insights from the Los Angeles County PNA and its associated funding strategies into the NSMB Initial Watershed Plan In future efforts, explore Los Angeles County Measure A as a potential leverage funding source for future planning rounds, particularly for parks, open space, and waterway projects Phase 4 input to be populated and included in this table upon completion of WASC engagement in Fall of 2025.
Assess remaining capacity and identify best opportunities for dry- and wet-weather flows diverted to Las Virgenes Municipal Water District	
Evaluate open space that could be acquired to "[protect] undeveloped mountains and floodplains, creating and restoring riparian habitat and wetlands[5]" in NSMB Watershed Area	
Analyze impacts of sea level rise, open space, beach recreation and relationships to stormwater and urban runoff as project opportunities	
Engage with other capital programs in the region (i.e., Caltrans, LA Metro) and assess their priorities for potential alignment with SCW Program goals via Watershed Coordinators and WASC Members	
Evaluate the Malibu Lagoon Restoration Project, which involves Caltrans reducing stormwater runoff as a potential path to deepen inter-agency relationships and enhance leverage funding opportunities	
Identify successful partnerships and model project designs	

[5] Los Angeles County Flood Control District Municipal Code of Ordinances - Chapter 16.03

Phases 1 & 2 – Listen and Gather	Phases 3 & 4 – Update and Check In
Potential for Caltrans' role in addressing TMDLs and their interest in WASC project prioritization, especially concerning creeks under underpasses	

C.2.4.3 Phase 3

In Phase 3, the NSMB WASC raised concerns about the environmental impact of impervious surfaces and whether open space acquisition for conservation is reflected in Watershed Plan targets. The Watershed Planning team clarified that pollutant load reduction targets do account for impervious surfaces, including those on private property. The Committee emphasized the importance of integrating the Los Angeles County PNA and related funding into the planning process. While current discussions focus on identifying opportunities for park creation or enhancement, budgeting is guided by the assessment methodology. The Committee also highlighted the potential of Los Angeles County Measure A as a funding source for new parks and open space, suggesting it could be leveraged in future planning efforts.

The NSMB WASC further stressed the significance of large-scale projects, particularly in undeveloped areas, and the need to align planning with the region's unique geography and geology. The Committee expressed interest in gaining a clearer understanding of pollutant load reduction targets in future meetings. The Watershed Planning team emphasized the impacts that the Los Angeles County Water Plan's NbS Blue Ribbon Panel will have in defining and guiding best practices for projects in Watershed Areas that center NbS as priority solutions. To support project selection, tools like the CSNA Survey and Dashboard were introduced. An updated planning timeline was shared, and the Committee expressed enthusiasm about using the CSNA Survey and Dashboard to inform future project selection and community engagement.

Table C-13. NSMB Watershed Area Implications for Target Setting

Phases 1 & 2 – Listen and Gather	Phases 3 & 4 – Update and Check In
Adopt or include targets for existing public open space held by government entities	Make clear and accessible the pollutant load reduction targets, especially regarding their application to undeveloped areas and open space
Adopt or include targets for land acquisition for open space held by government entities	
Prioritize stormwater and dry-weather runoff capture for diversion to water recycling facilities over groundwater recharge	

Phases 1 & 2 – Listen and Gather	Phases 3 & 4 – Update and Check In
Incorporate a natural stream condition indicator as part of target setting for WQ, WS, or Community Investment Benefit (CIB)	Promote the use of the CSNA Survey and Dashboard to guide project selection and community engagement throughout the Plans *Phase 4 input to be populated and included in this table upon completion of WASC engagement in Fall of 2025.*

C.2.4.4 Phase 4

Phase 4 input to be included here upon completion of WASC engagement in Fall of 2025.

Input that is meaningful to the Program at a scale "beyond Watershed Planning" could inform future Adaptive Management efforts in addition to countywide related programs, measures, and efforts.

Table C-14. NSMB Watershed Area Implications for SCW Program Beyond Watershed Planning

Phases 1 & 2 – Listen and Gather	Phases 3 & 4 – Update and Check In
Create subcategories for project size and project phase for funding Infrastructure Program projects	Track the County Water Plan Task Forces' recommendations *Phase 4 input to be populated and included in this table upon completion of WASC engagement in Fall of 2025.*
Engage with potable (re)use programs for strategic partnerships	

C.2.5 Rio Hondo

C.2.5.1 Phase 1

During Phase 1, Rio Hondo (RH) WASC placed an emphasis on supporting workforce development initiatives by creating training programs and collaborating with educational institutions. Expanding partnerships and funding opportunities, including engagement with new funding parties, and securing grants, are considered a priority for the RH WASC to maximize project impact. The WASC also shared a desire to focus on downstream effects of projects and to ensure coordination with upstream initiatives to have effective SCW Program-wide stormwater management.

The discussion emphasized the need to synthesize and optimize WQ and WS efforts across the waterbodies in the RH Watershed Area, particularly focusing on Los Angeles County Flood Control District (LACFCD) owned properties. For example, it

was recommended that the Watershed Planning process evaluate potential opportunity areas along Eaton Wash.

WQ compliance is another key topic of interest for the RH WASC. Additionally, community concerns were raised about the Program's distribution of projects, such as potential overconcentration of projects in one portion of the Watershed Area, with little to no projects in other areas.

C.2.5.2 Phase 2

In the Phase 2 discussion, the importance of recognizing the benefits of distributed projects and the need for open space in densely urban areas, particularly in disadvantaged communities, was highlighted. The inclusion of the PNA+ dataset was also mentioned to address regional inequities. Efforts to create new green spaces were recommended by the WASC, including undeveloped city-owned spaces like the Sierra Madre Boulevard median in the City of Pasadena. The WASC also discussed incorporating relevant datasets, such as undeveloped public property data, into the Watershed Planning effort.

The WASC also shared that WQ data, both upstream and downstream of projects, is iterative and updated annually in the Watershed Area, sharing that the current effort of the SCW Program focuses on modeling rather than collected data, which is useful initially but needs to include actual data over time.

The Phase 1 & 2 syntheses are provided in Table C-15 through Table C-17, summarizing implications for Opportunity Analysis, target setting, and other topics beyond the Initial Watershed Planning efforts, respectively.

Table C-15. RH Watershed Area Implications for Opportunity Analysis

Phases 1 & 2 – Listen and Gather	Phases 3 & 4 – Update and Check In
Evaluate which areas of the Watershed Area are not yet sufficiently managed for WQ and/or WS	Continue demonstrations and training on Watershed Planning Tools, including the CSNA Survey and Dashboard Clarify that baseline data is fixed based on the first 3 years of funding Consider adding a strategy for RH WASC to recommend project developers to report progress desired for three years after project
Identify LACFCD properties across the Watershed Area	
Track County Unincorporated Areas with potential projects sites and provide an update to the WASC	
Incorporate understanding of upstream/downstream relationships to support integrated design and prioritization	

Phases 1 & 2 – Listen and Gather	Phases 3 & 4 – Update and Check In
Evaluate other multi-benefit projects planned (i.e., school districts, green streets, flood channel rights of way, US Forest Service, Metro, Caltrans, Emerald Necklace)	implementation and encourage submission of post-project performance data Integrate aspirational green workforce development goals into the RH Initial Plan, referencing the Accelerate Resilience Los Angeles' The Collaborative Advantage: Principles for the Next Generation of Multi-Benefit Projects in Los Angeles County Report. Add the report noted above as a reference for strategies regarding workforce development for RH WASC Express goals as percentages, where appropriate, for improved clarity. *Phase 4 input to be populated and included in this table upon completion of WASC engagement in Fall of 2025.*
Reiterate the importance of the planning for the San Gabriel Valley (SGV) Greenway Network	
Identify candidate large land parcels managed by other government or private to support SCW Program goals	

C.2.5.3 Phase 3

In Phase 3, RH WASC sought clarity on how frequently data in the Watershed Planning Tools would be updated. The RH WASC emphasized the importance of using real WQ data over modeled data for municipal validation. The Watershed Planning Tool was further detailed, distinguishing between funded and completed projects, and requiring developers to report progress for three years post-implementation, with encouragement to include performance data.

Table C-16. RH Watershed Area Implications for Target Setting

Phases 1 & 2 – Listen and Gather	Phases 3 & 4 – Update and Check In
Assess the engagement and CIB delivery by projects planned in other efforts	Consider cost and feasibility concerns when doing subwatershed-scale analyses for Adaptive Plans
Link O&M spending with workforce development	
Communicate a preferred per-applicant leveraged funding target	

Phases 1 & 2 – Listen and Gather	Phases 3 & 4 – Update and Check In
Investigate how distributed projects can collectively achieve the right cost-benefit threshold	Make clear the strategies like interim targets, partial funding, and multi-benefit project identification for RH WASC Initial Plans *Phase 4 input to be populated and included in this table upon completion of WASC engagement in Fall of 2025.*

The Committee also explored broader planning elements, including workforce development, referencing the *Accelerate Resilience Los Angeles* report[6] to highlight the value of a strong green workforce in multi-benefit project design. The Watershed Planning team described the planning approach as a blend of realistic and aspirational strategies, using tools like interim targets and partial funding to maximize SCW Program impact. The Watershed Planning team discussed the use of both top-down and bottom-up[7] methods to set acreage goals and acknowledged the need to incorporate recent changes in the California Toxics Rule. Subwatershed-scale planning was also considered by the WASC, though concerns about cost and feasibility were noted by the Watershed Planning staff. The CSNA Survey and Dashboard were highlighted as key tools for aligning projects with community needs, with the RH WASC expressing interest in revisiting CSNA findings post-SIP approval for Fiscal Year (FY) 25-26 if the Committee had space in future 2025 meetings. The CSNA Survey and Dashboard are supported by a promotional toolkit and are accessible via the SCW Program and municipal websites.

C.2.5.4 Phase 4

Phase 4 input to be included here upon completion of WASC engagement in Fall of 2025.

Input that is meaningful to the Program at a scale “beyond Watershed Planning” could inform future Adaptive Management efforts in addition to countywide related programs, measures, and efforts.

[6] The Collaborative Advantage: Principles for the Next Generation of Multi-Benefit Projects in Los Angeles County
[7] Handbook for Developing Watershed Plans to Restore and Protect Our Waters

Table C-17. RH Watershed Area Implications for SCW Program Beyond Watershed Planning

Phases 1 & 2 – Listen and Gather	Phases 3 & 4 – Update and Check In
Expand definitions of disadvantaged communities beyond economic characteristics	Incorporate recent changes from the California Toxics Rule into the effort and connect with the RH WASC Watershed Coordinators. *Phase 4 input to be populated and included in this table upon completion of WASC engagement in Fall of 2025.*
Identify how CIBs can be felt, documented, and considered, beyond the exact project footprint	
Partner with other capital improvement programs so they provide SCW Program benefits	
Link with transportation efforts to improve urban greening and stormwater capture in relation to complete streets	
Requested a public workshop on Watershed Planning, noting it would be beneficial as not all cities are represented at the WASC, and there is a sizable portion of County Unincorporated Area in the RH Watershed Area	

C.2.6 Santa Clara River

C.2.6.1 Phase 1

During Phase 1, the Santa Clara River (SCR) WASC suggested strategies focused on enhancing stormwater infiltration and optimizing existing green spaces. Projects aimed at improving stormwater capture and integrating NbS into park development (i.e., invasive plant removal, school greening) are preferable. According to the SCR WASC, strengthening community engagement through educational outreach and environmental stewardship programs will further support these efforts.

C.2.6.2 Phase 2

Within Phase 2, SCR WASC highlighted the importance of addressing local issues within watersheds separately rather than clumping them together, which allows for tailored solutions that contribute to Program-wide benefits. Committee Members also advocated for incorporating more recharge areas and wildlife corridors, noting that the SCR serves as a crucial “wildlife freeway” and should be greened, including areas like the Saugus outflow. The WASC inquired about green spaces and undeveloped open spaces, and the Watershed Planning team clarified that these green spaces could be potential parks and other similarly zoned and used areas, like recreational fields.

The Phase 1 & 2 syntheses are provided in Table C-18 through Table C-20, summarizing implications for opportunity analysis, target setting, and other topics beyond the Initial Watershed Planning efforts, respectively.

Table C-18. SCR Watershed Area Implications for Opportunity Analysis

Phases 1 & 2 – Listen and Gather	Phases 3 & 4 – Update and Check In
Evaluate existing green space for ability to support WQ improvements through capture and infiltration	Prioritize and expedite groundwater recharge projects within SCR Watershed Area Note for SCR WASC that the CSNA Survey for the watershed has opportunity for outreach and engagement improvement, and can be particularly useful for SCR WASC rural and County Unincorporated Areas *Phase 4 input to be populated and included in this table upon completion of WASC engagement in Fall of 2025.*
Prioritize groundwater recharge through natural systems (i.e., NbS)	
Identify areas in or near soft-bottom river with invasives species	
Identify river-adjacent locations for community improvement projects	
Emphasize in Initial Plans that SCR Watershed Area is a wildlife corridor	
Incorporate wildlife safety and passage as a priority	
Analyze school district properties and any related school district priorities for their relationship to SCW Program goals	
Evaluate what SCW Program Goals can be achieved in the rural upper watershed	
The Santa Clarita Valley Water Agency is analyzing parcel ownership to identify potential recharge, recycled water, and green space projects along the SCR, and seeks alignment of NbS and Open Space acquisition within SCR Watershed Area Initial Plans	

C.2.6.3 Phase 3

During the SCR WASC Phase 3 engagement, members discussed the recently released Watershed Planning Framework, recognizing its complexity and value while emphasizing the need for timely updates and accessible tools. The SCR WASC expressed appreciation for the effort completed on the draft Initial Plans and prioritized the acceleration of groundwater recharge projects in the Watershed Area. Concerns were raised about the accessibility of infographics, prompting a call for improved data visualization in public meeting slides and on the Program web tools.

Table C-19. SCR Watershed Area Implications for Target Setting

Phases 1 & 2 – Listen and Gather	Phases 3 & 4 – Update and Check In
Evaluate how WQ compliance pathways proposed by permittees can produce SCW Program outcomes	Prioritize and expedite groundwater recharge projects within SCR Watershed Area *Phase 4 input to be populated and included in this table upon completion of WASC engagement in Fall of 2025.*
Incorporate a natural stream condition indicator as part of target setting for WQ, WS, or CIBs	
SCR WASC emphasized the need to use natural stream indicators (i.e., Stream Quality Index, or SQI) to monitor and improve stream conditions	
Align with school district goals for greening and water management	

The WASC also highlighted the potential importance of CSNA Dashboard during and after SIP deliberations. In response, the Watershed Planning staff committed to improving usability through upcoming information sessions. The broader Watershed Planning team conducted a demonstration of the CSNA Survey with the WASC and shared that social media kits for promoting the survey are available online. The CSNA Dashboard is expected to evolve over time, with Watershed Coordinators incorporating periodic summaries into their Strategic Outreach and Engagement Plans (SOEPs). The SCR WASC found the survey particularly well-suited for their rural and County Unincorporated Area communities, reinforcing its value as a tool for inclusive and informed project planning.

C.2.6.4 Phase 4

Phase 4 input to be included here upon completion of WASC engagement in Fall of 2025.

Input that is meaningful to the Program at a scale “beyond Watershed Planning” could inform future Adaptive Management efforts in addition to countywide related programs, measures, and efforts.

Table C-20. SCR Watershed Area Implications for SCW Program Beyond Watershed Planning

Phases 1 & 2 – Listen and Gather	Phases 3 & 4 – Update and Check In
Prioritize meaningful engagement and educational efforts with local schools, which could be supported by Watershed Coordinators or with an engagement grant application	Confirm updates on potential public demonstrations of Watershed Planning Tools and include user experience in public review periods

Phases 1 & 2 – Listen and Gather	Phases 3 & 4 – Update and Check In
Slow the river to benefit habitat, recharge, and hydromodification	Enhance the accessibility and quality of infographics *Phase 4 input to be populated and included in this table upon completion of WASC engagement in Fall of 2025.*

C.2.7 South Santa Monica Bay

C.2.7.1 Phase 1

In Phase 1, the South Santa Monica Bay (SSMB) WASC shared interests in prioritizing greening projects that improve public health, reduce urban heat island effect, and remove hardscape, particularly in communities that face environmental injustices. The WASC also called for improving communication and outreach and other tools to strengthen community involvement, particularly in disadvantaged communities. Prioritizing environmental justice, increasing local job opportunities, and expanding scientific research partnerships were also named as important strategies that would contribute to attainment of SCW Program goals.

C.2.7.2 Phase 2

During Phase 2, the WASC drew attention to the relationship with improving public health across elements of Watershed Planning, particularly aligning with existing tree canopy planning and targets to mitigate urban heat. Additionally, the WASC reinforced the need for planning to incorporate stormwater capture and use, in the absence of significant opportunities to infiltrate to groundwater. It was raised that in late 2024 there remains concern about LA County Department of Public Health regulatory action that may become a barrier to stormwater capture and use as irrigation to otherwise offset supplies treated to drinking water standards. The WASC hoped that engagement around this topic will continue between regulators, municipalities, and advocates.

The Phase 1 & 2 syntheses are provided in Table C-21 through Table C-23, summarizing implications for opportunity analysis, target setting, and other topics beyond the Initial Watershed Planning efforts, respectively.

Table C-21. SSMB Watershed Area Implications for Opportunity Analysis

Phases 1 & 2 – Listen and Gather	Phases 3 & 4 – Update and Check In
Document environmental injustices to encourage projects to support equity	Incorporate WASC feedback throughout engagement and public review period Refine projects funded to-date over time in the Planning Tools Integrate observational data and visual assessment of projects into future iterations *Phase 4 input to be populated and included in this table upon completion of WASC engagement in Fall of 2025.*
Evaluate other capital programs in the region and their project priorities	
Analyze progress towards WQ attainment to prioritize future investments	
Evaluate large lot parcels managed by government or private	
Analyze tree canopy to document urban heat island impacts Consider how municipal tree canopy planning can express opportunities for SCW Program contributions	

Table C-22. SSMB Watershed Area Implications for Target Setting

Phases 1 & 2 – Listen and Gather	Phases 3 & 4 – Update and Check In
Develop a granular focus on specific needs for communities facing environmental injustices	Incorporate data from spreading grounds into stormwater capture targets Clarify definitions and naming conventions for planning Indicators, themes, and other technical terms in Watershed Planning Tool *Phase 4 input to be populated and included in this table upon completion of WASC engagement in Fall of 2025.*
Recognize WS Indicator to geographically differentiate between infiltration, reuse, and diversion of stormwater	
Understand the relationship between regulatory public health actions and their nexus with capture for reuse	
Develop a goal for projects to foster partnerships and leverage funding	
Consider how municipal tree canopy targets can be used to establish SCW Program contribution targets	

C.2.7.3 Phase 3

In Phase 3 the WASC focused on the link between the SCW Program WQ target and the regulated TMDL compliance by 2038, which was a focus created by the work of the Water Quality ROC Working Group, described below.

The SSMB WASC discussed funding strategies, noting that some WASCs are trying to require matching contributions from all project applicants. While early projects are

expected to yield quicker benefits, long-term gains may slow as more funding shifts toward O&M.

Suggestions were made to incorporate observational data from non-SCW Program funded projects into the Watershed Planning effort and integrate spreading grounds data to support the Countywide stormwater capture goal of 300,000 acre-feet per year. The SSMB WASC emphasized the CSNA Survey and Dashboard as foundational tools for community engagement.

C.2.7.4 Phase 4

Phase 4 input to be included here upon completion of WASC engagement in Fall of 2025.

Input that is meaningful to the Program at a scale "beyond Watershed Planning" could inform future Adaptive Management efforts in addition to countywide related programs, measures, and efforts.

Table C-23. SSMB Watershed Area Implications for SCW Program Beyond Watershed Planning

Phases 1 & 2 – Listen and Gather	Phases 3 & 4 – Update and Check In
Engage more community groups throughout all phases of the application process and into project development	Encourage municipalities and Watershed Management Groups to use and share the CSNA Survey and Dashboard *Phase 4 input to be populated and included in this table upon completion of WASC engagement in Fall of 2025.*
Interested in the relationship between air quality, transportation, WQ, and public health Reasserted an interest in the connections between air quality, transportation, WQ, and public health could be explored scientifically, acknowledging that it may fall outside of Watershed Planning	
Continue work by municipalities and advocates with public health and WQ regulators to establish how stormwater capture for use as irrigation can be made feasible	

C.2.8 Upper Los Angeles River

C.2.8.1 Phase 1

In Phase 1, the Upper Los Angeles River (ULAR) WASC identified WS, workforce development, and improved public health as prioritizes. Other elements of the

discussion considered equity and WQ improvements. The WASC underlined the need for future projects to have stronger partnerships and leveraged funding, and that the O&M of the projects remains an uncertain challenge over the long term. Throughout Phase 1 input, the WASC's discussion focused on building resilience to the expected impacts of climate change, acknowledging the SCW Program's role in these efforts.

C.2.8.2 Phase 2

During Phase 2, the Committee inquired about opportunities for project development in densely populated, low-income areas, and expressed interest in exploring opportunities for Tribal engagement. The Committee encouraged that open space assessment includes both public and private open spaces. The Committee requested the inclusion of soil hydrology and flood risks in the Opportunity Analysis.

The Phase 1 & 2 syntheses are provided in Table C-24 to Table C-26, summarizing implications for Opportunity Analysis, target setting, and other topics beyond the Initial Watershed Planning efforts, respectively.

Table C-24. ULAR Watershed Area Implications for Opportunity Analysis

Phases 1 & 2 – Listen and Gather	Phases 3 & 4 – Update and Check In
Link MS4 compliance, groundwater recharge, and water reclamation planning to maximize stormwater capture for WQ and WS	Consider adding a layer to the Watershed Planning Tool to show construction progress and compare projected vs. actual outcomes Use the Watershed Planning Tool to identify high-need areas and align with other agency studies (i.e., Los Angeles County PNA) Encourage youth to participate in the CSNA Survey *Phase 4 input to be populated and included in this table upon completion of WASC engagement in Fall of 2025.*
Align with the aggressive goals of the MS4 permitting process	
Prioritize severely disadvantaged communities and distribute projects among them to overcome historical environmental injustices	
Include Los Angeles County Community Forest Management Plan information on heat island effect, disadvantaged communities, and County Unincorporated Areas	
Document which portions of the Watershed Area are already managed for WQ or WS by projects inside or outside the SCW Program	
Include soil hydrology and flood risks in opportunity areas	
Evaluate and prioritize greening efforts in projects (i.e., encompassing existing public and private green space, tree canopy)	

Table C-25. ULAR Watershed Area Implications for Target Setting

Phases 1 & 2 – Listen and Gather	Phases 3 & 4 – Update and Check In
Differentiate infiltration, reuse, diversion for WS Indicators	Clarify in the Initial Plans that all projects must go through scoring, even if scoring analysis is not integrated into the Watershed Planning Tool Emphasize storage capacity as a key metric, while continuing to track pollutant reduction (i.e., zinc) as a form of accessibility in metrics Address underinvestment (including in County Unincorporated Areas) to improve project readiness *Phase 4 input to be populated and included in this table upon completion of WASC engagement in Fall of 2025.*
Create prioritized targets for hardscape redevelopment and removal, particularly in disadvantaged communities	
Develop partnership targets that include multi-agency, public-private partnerships, labor, and community	
Align project benefits and workforce Indicators in the Watershed Area	

C.2.8.3 Phase 3

In Phase 3, the WASC also asked about outreach, specifically whether high school students attending events with parents should be encouraged to participate in the CSNA. The Watershed Planning team responded affirmatively, encouraging youth to participate in providing knowledge to the Program. The WASC emphasized water supply and storage capacity as a key metric in their watershed area and wants plans to address underinvestment in unincorporated areas of ULAR.

C.2.8.4 Phase 4

Phase 4 input to be included here upon completion of WASC engagement in Fall of 2025.

Input that is meaningful to the Program at a scale “beyond Watershed Planning” could inform future Adaptive Management efforts in addition to countywide related programs, measures, and efforts.

Table C-26. ULAR Watershed Area Implications for SCW Program Beyond Watershed Planning

Phases 1 & 2 – Listen and Gather	Phases 3 & 4 – Update and Check In
Coordinate with wastewater treatment programs	Invite municipalities to an information session before the public review period begins. Allocate time in future WASC agendas for
Demonstrate new technologies (current and proposed)	

Phases 1 & 2 – Listen and Gather	Phases 3 & 4 – Update and Check In
Prioritize public health, cooling, and climate resilience	thorough project review using the planning tool Support strategic funding decisions to meet SCW Program goals *Note: Phase 4 input to be populated and included in this table upon completion of WASC engagement in Fall of 2025.*
Opportunities in the Watershed Area Tribal consultation and engagement with Tribal affiliates	
Resilience and climate response planning in County and City of Los Angeles have targets that can be adopted and/or mirrored (i.e., City of Los Angeles Climate Emergency Mobilization Office and Office of Forest Management)	

C.2.9 Upper San Gabriel River

C.2.9.1 Phase 1

The Upper San Gabriel River (USGR) WASC provided feedback during Phase 1 that centered on community greening as both a WQ strategy and a public health strategy. The WASC shared that there may be potential opportunities to develop these types of projects at schools, and along the flood control channel rights-of-way. The SGV Greenway Network Plan[8] was mentioned as published in Fall 2024, which will provide important project concepts and information. The WASC also expressed interest in a series of application priorities including a more diverse pool of applicants, more leveraged funding and multi-benefit solutions, as well as a commitment to anti-displacement. Finally, the WASC expressed that all urban stormwater runoff is currently managed as a water supply source in the headwaters of their watershed, meaning that new projects are unlikely to produce additional water supplies.

C.2.9.2 Phase 2

During Phase 2, municipal Climate Action Plans were recommended for review, noting that cities in the Watershed Area may have plans that incorporate green infrastructure goals or targets. There was a conversation among the WASC about the need to reassess the capacity of aging stormwater capture projects to perform effectively now and in future climate change scenarios, which would inform replacement, and operations and maintenance strategies to enhance asset management.

[8] San Gabriel Valley Greenway Network Strategic Implementation Plan

The assessment of large public parcels as opportunity areas received positive feedback. There was caution shared about brownfields, emphasizing that brownfield remediation strategy of containing subsurface contaminants rather than cleaning them up may preclude infiltration strategies. Land acquisition combined with infiltration was highlighted as a strategy to expand green space and achieve program goals, particularly in park-poor communities.

The discussion also focused on improved public health outcomes, especially in areas near freeways, suggesting that these areas could be called out as opportunity areas for the Program. It was recommended to revisit and make public health considerations more visible in the synthesis.

Biodiversity and habitat goals were also discussed, emphasizing the importance of habitat connections, and linking projects. This relates to defining the scale of projects and ensuring they are interconnected, which the Committee thought should be explicitly mentioned in the Watershed Area's synthesis and comprehensive engagement outcomes. The Committee reflected that the connection between projects, which to date has mostly been a discussion about water quantity and treatment capacity, should also include habitat and recreation linkages in how they are designed and evaluated.

The Phase 1 & 2 syntheses are provided in Table C-27 to Table C-29, summarizing implications for Opportunity Analysis, target setting, and other topics beyond the Initial Watershed Planning efforts, respectively.

Table C-27. USGR Watershed Area Implications for Opportunity Analysis

Phases 1 & 2 – Listen and Gather	Phases 3 & 4 – Update and Check In
Evaluate school sites, and flood control channel rights-of-way as high priority opportunity areas	Incorporate feedback on legacy versus emerging contaminants and explore biological and soil monitoring Consider community science testing as part of future monitoring strategies *Phase 4 input to be populated and included in this table upon completion of WASC engagement in Fall of 2025.*
Evaluate the potential for distributed BMPs that collectively achieve cost-effectiveness thresholds of the SCW Program	
Evaluate transportation-related planning and implementation efforts for green streets	
Recommended revisiting and making public health considerations more visible in the synthesis	
Document best opportunities for diversion to sanitary sewer for WS	
Integrate an analysis of where infrastructure needs to be upgraded	

Phases 1 & 2 – Listen and Gather	Phases 3 & 4 – Update and Check In
Identify MS4 outfalls as high opportunity sites for projects	

Table C-28. USGR Watershed Area Implications for Target Setting

Phases 1 & 2 – Listen and Gather	Phases 3 & 4 – Update and Check In
Align with targets from SGV Greenway Network Plan	Promote the use of Watershed Planning Tools for integrated cross-program project planning Ensure data accessibility to support planning decisions *Phase 4 input to be populated and included in this table upon completion of WASC engagement in Fall of 2025.*
Recognize that all stormwater runoff from urban surfaces is already managed for WS	
Evaluate how well operated and maintained projects support balancing benefits with long-term costs	
Municipal Climate Action Plans could be source for target alignment	

C.2.9.3 Phase 3

In Phase 3 the WASC affirmed a commitment to NbS, and an eagerness to see how the County Water Plan NbS Blue Ribbon Panel will impact the SCW Program and the Initial Watershed Plans. Committee members noted that the Watershed Planning Tools presentation was complex and recommended simplifying it to improve engagement and understanding.

Concerns were raised about how legacy contaminants are prioritized over emerging contaminants in WQ targets. Suggestions included incorporating biological species monitoring, such as bioaccumulation of methylmercury, benthic macroinvertebrate, and soil monitoring. Community science testing was proposed as a potential approach using the Watershed Planning Tools.

C.2.9.4 Phase 4

Phase 4 input to be included upon completion of WASC engagement in Fall of 2025.

Input that is meaningful to the Program at a scale “beyond Watershed Planning” could inform future Adaptive Management efforts in addition to countywide related programs, measures, and efforts.

Table C-29. USGR Watershed Area Implications for SCW Program Beyond Watershed Planning

Phases 1 & 2 – Listen and Gather	Phases 3 & 4 – Update and Check In
Coordinate with EPA to clean up brownfields and create infiltration and capture opportunities while expanding/adding open space to the Watershed Area	Return to the WASC for continued feedback *Phase 4 input to be populated and included in this table upon completion of WASC engagement in Fall of 2025.*
Support and collaborate with school districts to plan and implement multi-benefit projects while engaging students, teachers, and parents	
Continue efforts at private sector follow-up for California Conservation Corps because they will be tapped out of capacity soon and the program needs expansion	

C.3 Program-wide Implications from Watershed Area Steering Committee Engagement

C.3.1 Phase 1

During Phase 1, the input provided by WASC Members focused on the uniqueness of each Watershed Area and the individual communities and landscapes the Committees represent. There were common ideas contributed by the WASCs that the Watershed Planning effort elected to analyze everywhere, not just in a subset of the Watershed Areas. The program-wide synthesis for Phase 1 opportunity analyses and target setting is presented in Table C-30.

Table C-30. Phase 1 Synthesis for Regional Opportunity Analysis and Target Setting

Phase 1 Synthesis for Regional Opportunity Analysis	Phase 1 Synthesis for Regional Target Setting
Link MS4 compliance, groundwater recharge, and water reclamation planning to maximize stormwater capture for WQ and WS.	Synergize SCW Program targets with other agencies' Climate and Water targets.
Evaluate open space and large lot potential, particularly on school campuses.	Link O&M spending with workforce development targets.

Phase 1 Synthesis for Regional Opportunity Analysis	Phase 1 Synthesis for Regional Target Setting
Incorporate historic land use disparities and environmental justice metrics across the program area.	Define project scale and then evaluate the diversity of project sizes to date, informed by Watershed Area characteristics.
Acknowledge and include, where feasible, other capital improvement programs that can contribute regional outcomes.	

C.3.2 Phase 2

During Phase 2, these Program-wide synthesis ideas were shared with each WASC to generate discussion. A second question asked the WASC Members to consider how the elements of the Initial Watershed Plans may be of use to the Watershed Area, Project Developers, community members, WASCs, and other interested parties. Across the nine Watershed Areas, these Phase 2 discussions produced commonalities for how the WASCs are considering next steps for the Initial Watershed Plans, and for the SCW Program more broadly. These commonalities are summarized in Table C-31.

Table C-31. Phase 2 Synthesis of Regional Implications for Initial Watershed Planning

Phase 2 Synthesis of Facilitated WASC Discussions
All Watershed Areas emphasized the importance of engaging with local communities, particularly Tribal, underserved, and disadvantaged communities.
Watershed Areas prefer to use tools like heat maps and dashboards to visualize data and project impacts.
There is a strong focus on ensuring equitable distribution of resources and benefits, particularly for disadvantaged communities.
Each Watershed Area seeks to prioritize projects that align with their specific goals and needs, such as flood protection, WQ, and open space creation.
All Watershed Areas highlight the need for collaboration with various interested parties, including municipalities, community-based organizations, and other agencies.
Watershed Areas expressed interest in learning about the uniqueness of other WASCs and participating in more knowledge-sharing meetings and exercises for WASCs that are both similar and dissimilar from one another.

C.3.3 Phase 3

Phase 3 of engagement with the WASCs focused on higher level comments about the Initial Watershed Plans and how tools can be best comprehended and used by community members and project proponents. A summary of the Phase 3 engagement is described in Table C-32.

Table C-32. Phase 3 Synthesis of Regional Implications for Initial Watershed Planning

Phase 3 Synthesis of Facilitated WASC Discussions
All WASCs wanted accessible presentations, reading materials, and web tools, which use colors, fonts, images, and sizes that are easy to read and understandable by anyone.
WASCs with significant undeveloped open space want to prioritize the recommendations from the NbS Blue Ribbon Panel and Task Force.
WASCs want more goals and metrics regarding Community Investment Benefits, especially for disadvantaged communities.
All WASCs want to make sure that existing SCW Program Scientific Studies are represented in the Initial Watershed Plans.
All WASCs are enthusiastic about the Community Strengths and Needs Assessment Survey and Dashboard.
WASCs expressed a desire to see the Initial Watershed Plans prior to the public review period.

C.4 Governance Committees: Regional Oversight Committee and Scoring Committee

C.4.1 Regional Oversight Committee

The Regional Oversight Committee (ROC) is comprised of nine voting members who are subject-matter experts in the areas of WQ benefits, WS benefits, NbS and CIBs, public health, sustainability, and/or other fields related to stormwater capture or the reduction of stormwater or urban runoff pollution. The ROC also includes two non-voting members, one representing the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Board) and one representing the Los Angeles County Flood Control District (District). Through the work on the 2023 Biennial Progress Report and Watershed Planning engagements, the ROC has provided oversight about issues central to the Watershed Planning effort.

The ROC made an instrumental recommendation in the *2024 Regional Oversight Committee Biennial Safe, Clean Water Program Progress Report*[9] that in-part led to the Initial Watershed Planning effort within the SCW Program. The Watershed Planning team created an engagement approach for the ROC, which initially included three Phases:

> Phase 1 intended to review the broader approach of Watershed Planning at the Program-wide scale. At the Phase 1 session, the ROC elected to form two advisory working groups, the Water Quality Working Group and Community Investment Benefits and Benefits Ratio Working Group, to better inform the Watershed Planning process. Two summary memos, and a document produced by one of the Working Groups, are appended in their respective sections of this report.
>
> Phase 2 served as a progress check-in and to answer any questions on the ROC had about the planning effort.
>
> Phase 3 summarized the process to date and communicated how the Initial Watershed Plans will be adaptive to changing conditions and managed over the long term to support goal attainment.

Additional phases have been completed with the ROC, with more planned following the submission of this report. In each, progress of the planning effort is shared, and the ROC members asked questions and encouraged particular aspects of focus, or additional engagement efforts.

C.4.1.1 Phase 1

This phase had two objectives:

1. Introduction to SCW Program Watershed Planning and discussion on how input would be considered in the process.
2. Facilitated discussion to solicit feedback on recommendations about specific definitions to consider in the Watershed Planning effort.

To achieve these objectives, Watershed Planning staff presented on the Watershed Planning framework and Planning Tools, and the outline for the Initial Watershed Plans. The ROC was provided details on the proposed engagement process with

[9] 20240201-SCWP-Final-ROC-Biennial-Report.pdf

interested parties and shown how the effort was aligned with the actions identified in the 2023 SCW Program Biennial Progress Report related to Watershed Planning.

A facilitated roundtable discussion occurred during the ROC meeting, allowing individual and collective contributions, and focused on how the first steps of the process aligned with prior statements and efforts by the ROC.

Members of the Committee suggested the California Water Plan's recommendations as a useful resource for Watershed Planning, emphasizing the importance of self-determined priorities, measurable milestones, resource identification, and collaboration. The Committee also highlighted the significance of co-benefits, such as climate resilience and equity.

Committee Members discussed leveraging existing plans and tools, like the PreSIP and Gateway Area Pathfinding (GAP) Analysis Scientific Studies funded through the SCW Program. The Committee also discussed funding, specifically the differences between capital and O&M funding, and the potential use of bond financing for SCW Program projects. The Committee suggested collaboration with other County community engagement initiatives, such as InfrastructureLA and efforts led by the Chief Sustainability Office.

The Committee also considered the timeline for revising the Scoring Criteria for the next Call for Projects.

C.4.1.2 Phase 2

The Phase 2 meeting was rescheduled due to the January 2025 wildfires that devastated portions of Los Angeles County. These tragic fires also led to the ROC Working groups, described below, retracting draft materials and conducting additional meetings to consider how the fires themselves, and the climate-driven risk of fire more generally, may influence the watershed planning effort and the SCW Program.

At the Phase 2 meeting, a presentation refreshed members on the Watershed Planning effort, summarized the work and results of the Phase 1 meetings with the WASCs, and shared an update on the progress of technical analyses of the Watershed Planning effort.

The objectives of the second phase meeting with the ROC were to:

1. See and understand how Phase 1 efforts were summarized and included in the Watershed Planning effort, and to

2. Be introduced to the Watershed Plan draft outline and provide feedback through a facilitated discussion.

Watershed Planning staff presented the approach taken to establish the Watershed Planning Framework, Initial Watershed Plans, and Watershed Planning Tools. The objective was to review each of the three key topics (i.e., WS benefits, WQ benefits, and CIBs) and discuss:

- Related SCW Program goals,
- Current definitions/practice,
- Potential recommendations,
- Considerations,
- SCW Program target setting process,
- Other related efforts, and
- Next steps/tentative SCW Program Adaptive Management timeline.

During the public comment period of the ROC meeting, a representative from the City of Los Angeles encouraged the ROC to engage with WASC Chairs and the SC to better support Watershed Planning.

The Committee also discussed the importance of tracking progress toward WQ goals and the need for collaboration across various entities.

The Committee then transitioned to WS discussions, highlighting challenges in securing new WS and the need for infrastructure to move captured water to areas of need. The Committee also discussed water capture for environmental benefits and whether these should be classified under WS or CIBs.

CIBs were also a key topic, with the Committee expressing interest in reviewing summaries of benefits realized through SCW Program funded projects. The importance of integrating workforce development and green jobs into Watershed Planning was highlighted, with the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District cited as a successful example.

C.4.1.3 Phase 3

In May 2025 Watershed Planning staff summarized the process to date and communicated how the Initial Watershed Plans will evolve and be adapted in the future.

The objectives of the third phase meeting were:

1. ROC Members and participants were shown elements of the Initial Watershed Plans, Watershed Planning Tool elements, and discussed the output from the two ROC Working Groups.
2. ROC Members and participants provided valuable feedback on the adaptive development of future Watershed Plans.
3. ROC Members will discuss Watershed Plans in relation to the Biennial Report.

The Watershed Planning team provided a presentation sharing an example Initial Watershed Plan, and new tools like the Planning Tool and CSNA that have been established that will benefit SCW Program participants. A facilitated discussion allowed the ROC members, and public attendees to reflect on the effort to date, and their perspectives on the processes or systems that are being established to periodically update the Watershed Plans.

To achieve the third objective, Watershed Planning staff presented an overview of current efforts, noting that ROC Working Groups parallel those formed for the 2023 Biennial Progress Report.

Findings from the Water Quality and CIB and Benefit Ratio Working Group (CIB & BR Working Group) were shared and discussed.

The CIB & BR Working Group highlighted a focus on increasing open space, prioritizing the creation of new parks, and integrating fire resiliency into park enhancements, recreational opportunities, and school greening. Municipal representatives noted that they play a key role in project implementation and that they should be actively engaged to ensure progress and support. The CIB & BR Working Group’s recommendations were encouraged for use during SIP deliberations.

The ROC emphasized the importance of considering population density and broader programmatic strategies, like district-wide school greening, when evaluating community benefits. The Committee encouraged clearer articulation of CIBs in project applications and recommended early engagement from project proponents with community-based organizations. They also discussed redefining project benefits to include direct community input, such as through the CSNA Survey. The ROC highlighted the need for efficient use of SCW Program funds amid limited federal and municipal resources and proposed leveraging existing tools like WMPs and Initial Watershed Plans.

The ROC had extensive discussion about the SCW Program’s role in relation to the MS4 permits held by the county and cities. The Water Quality Working Group

produced a policy memo (Attachment 1) that encompassed recommendations into broader planning efforts and to develop a unified regional strategy for water quality improvement.

The Committee unanimously approved a motion to adopt and disseminate the ROC WQ Working Group's Revised March 28, 2025, memo, including adopting interim and final targets for achieving water quality compliance, to key stakeholders and to reflect its recommendations in the Initial Watershed Plans. A second motion was also unanimously approved to include the ROC Working Group's meeting summaries in the draft 2025 Biennial Progress Report.

Meeting minutes[10] posted on the SCW Program website can be referenced for more information.

C.4.1.4 Phase 4

This section will be filled out after the fourth engagement with the ROC planned for September 2025.

C.4.1.5 Future Phases

This section will be filled out if additional substantive engagements take place with the ROC during the Initial Watershed Planning effort.

C.4.2 Scoring Committee

The Scoring Committee (SC) is made up of six members with specific expertise in areas related to WQ Benefits, WS Benefits, and CIBs. The SC is responsible for evaluating Regional Program Infrastructure Program project applications, using the Scoring Criteria of the SCW Program Feasibility Study Guidelines, which are recommended for evaluation by the WASCs. The SC uses the Scoring Criteria rubric and their expertise to confirm the number of points a project receives in the different benefit categories; all projects must meet the threshold score to be eligible for SCW Program funding consideration. Additionally, the SC produces an annual memo that describes specific areas of improvement for the SCW Program that is relevant to the Committee's responsibilities.

[10] May 14,2025 ROC Meeting Minutes

C.4.2.1 Phase 1

Watershed Planning staff and teams presented at a normally scheduled Scoring Committee Meeting in August 2024. Phase 1 focused on definitions that are central to the Watershed Planning effort:

- Wet vs. Dry weather projects
- Local Water Supply
- Impermeable Area Removal
- Leveraged Funding

The Committee added an exploration about definitions related to Disadvantaged Community Benefits, WQ, and local WS. In response to how projects should describe their intended WQ outcomes, members highlighted the challenge of classifying large watershed projects that do not neatly fit into the dry or wet weather categories of the Scoring Criteria. The SC emphasized the need for load-based scoring to better reflect pollutant removal, particularly for projects that treat flows with substantial amounts of sediment and suggested aligning project goals with TMDL requirements. The Committee also discussed the importance of understanding how WQ benefits intersect with green space and recommended that the ROC explore these issues further through its working groups.

Regarding the quantification of local WS benefits, SC members called for a clearer definition of what constitutes “new” water and how downstream recharge should be accounted for, especially when political boundaries or adjudications complicate benefit attribution. The SC proposed developing a list of example projects to help clarify which types produce WS benefits. On the topic of impermeable surface removal, the Committee debated the merits of using percentage versus total area removed, referencing reports from the Pacific Institute and OurWaterLA. Finally, in discussing cost-benefit calculations, members raised equity concerns about disadvantaged communities being penalized for lacking leveraged funding. They suggested that SCW Program funds should serve as anchor investments to attract additional state and federal resources, rather than requiring leveraged funds as a prerequisite for scoring points.

C.4.2.2 Phase 2

This section will be filled out after engagement with the SC planned for winter 2025-2026.

C.5 Regional Oversight Committee Working Groups

Below are descriptions of the process to engage the two Working Groups and meeting summaries.

C.5.1 Water Quality Working Group

C.5.1.1 Phase 1

In October 2024, the Water Quality (WQ) Working Group was refreshed on the Initial Watershed Planning approach shown at the September 2024 ROC meeting including presentations on WQ Opportunity Analysis and targets. Working Group members raised concerns about potential confusion if different WQ targets are established and tracked as part of the Watershed Planning effort instead of the MS4 permit's compliance targets and requirements, particularly if the Watershed Planning targets are met while the MS4 permit requirements are not.

It was highlighted that while good projects are being submitted, their cumulative WQ benefits are not being tracked in relation to regulatory WQ compliance. The need for future investments to prioritize regulated contaminants was emphasized. It was acknowledged that the SCW Program alone will not achieve regulatory WQ compliance but is a crucial catalyst. The Working Group emphasized the importance of leveraging funding from state and federal levels to enhance expenditures both within and outside of the SCW Program.

The Working Group emphasized that Watershed Area targets should incorporate relevant information from the regional Watershed Management Plans (WMPs). The Working Group suggested that legacy organic pollutants (DDTs and PCBs) and trash be added as WQ targets, noting that very few WMPs list organic pollutants as limiting pollutants and despite trash being managed outside of WMPs in the MS4 permit.

The WQ Working Group shared that integrating ongoing monitoring data with SCW Program efforts is crucial, and noted the importance of planning, modeling, and designing effective metrics. They also acknowledged that there is a gap in consistency

and integration between SCW Program goals and MS4 Permit, and avoiding duplicative or conflicting reporting by the MS4/WMP and SCW Programs is important.

Following the meeting, a memorandum, now part of a series of documents called the ROC WQ Working Group Compendium[11], was shared with the Watershed Planning team by members of the Working Group and amended over the duration of the Working Group's engagements.

C.5.1.2 Phase 2

In November 2024, the Watershed Planning staff and team emphasized the importance of anchoring WQ targets to SCW Program Goal A in the Los Angeles County Flood Control District Municipal Code to "contribute to" attainment rather than setting targets that suggest the SCW Program is wholly responsible for attainment[12]. With this approach, the WQ targets can mimic the WS targets and establish a SCW Program contribution to the Countywide targets while also estimating the additional reductions that would be needed by other programs to achieve the Countywide targets.

The WQ Working Group recognized that the SCW Program is not solely responsible for achieving water quality compliance and acknowledged the Initial Watershed Plans' role in identifying Countywide targets and evaluating SCW's contribution toward those goals. The Working Group emphasized the need for better coordination across County water planning efforts and reiterated the importance of including DDTs and PCBs, despite the difficulty in quantifying them as indicators, while noting that trash is managed separately under the MS4 permit.

The Working Group recommended shifting the focus from "compliance" to "attainment" and emphasized that project reporting should be performance-based to better reflect progress toward SCW Program goals. The Initial Plans intend to include the pollutants as reduction targets. On implementation, the Planning Team explained that Initial Watershed Plans will align with SIPs to support informed decision-making by WASCs, offering opportunity areas and targets rather than specific projects. The Working Group expressed interest in stronger guidance for WASCs and suggested developing full Adaptive Plans and a Countywide Implementation Plan to clarify actions needed for water quality attainment. They also stressed the importance of consolidating the nine Initial Plans into a Countywide summary and identifying additional efforts beyond

[11] See Water Quality Working Group Compendium here
[12] See Los Angeles County Flood Control District Municipal Code Ch. 18.04

the SCW Program to present a comprehensive public vision of water quality needs. For Program assessment, the group advocated for using both modeling and monitoring, with modeling forming the basis of Initial Plans and monitoring integrated during adaptive management phases. Existing monitoring efforts were acknowledged, and the potential need for additional stations to support target evaluation was discussed.

C.5.1.3 Phase 3

In March 2025, the WQ Working Group reviewed the final policy memo with the Watershed Planning team and expressed this alternative approach for developing water quality targets for the Program as aimed at establishing overarching goals, objectives, and priorities for WQ within the SCW Program.

The WQ Working Group stressed the importance of including SCW Program-funded and other relevant projects since 2000 in the Planning Tool. They also advocated spatial prioritization of projects, inclusion of project-specific maintenance costs, and consideration of wildfire resilience. The group emphasized the need for a phased approach to implementation, stronger alignment with the LA County Water Plan, and the potential to incubate larger projects. The final policy memorandum from the WQ Working Group is in Attachment 1.

C.5.2 Community Investment Benefits and Benefit Ratio Working Group

C.5.2.1 Phase 1

The Community Investment Benefits and Benefit Ratio (CIB & BR) Working Group discussed how tracking CIBs in the Watershed Planning effort could influence project scoring, raising questions about whether all metrics are weighted equally and how scoring current relates to addressing park needs. They emphasized that Urban Heat Island Reduction requires tree planting, which may affect project eligibility, and noted that WASCs may use quantitative data as a resource rather than a direct scoring influence. The group highlighted the importance of distinguishing targets for new green spaces from those for enhanced park space, especially given the region's needs. Greening at schools was also discussed, with a recommendation to include public, private, and youth-based educational programs in infrastructure projects. The group emphasized that vegetation and greening can sequester carbon and should be prioritized along common school walking routes. Greenhouse gas emissions reduction

was suggested as a potential CIB, and the County's canopy cover targets—15% for Unincorporated Area residents and 20% overall—were cited as key equity goals under the Community Forest Management Plan. The group clarified that "accessible" CIBs should go beyond ADA compliance to include physical access, appropriate languages and language levels, public use, and enjoyment. They referenced existing plans, such as the Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission's stream enhancement efforts and Pasadena's Climate Action Plan, which include mobility, greening, and water management targets. Recognizing the complexity of tracking meaningful CIB progress, the group reviewed a proposal to use distance buffers to identify beneficiaries, agreeing that benefit types and scales should have differentiated service areas (e.g., pocket parks vs. regional parks). They also noted challenges with distance requirements and stressed the importance of community acknowledgment and documentation, such as community benefits agreements. The group emphasized the need for sustained involvement from active organizations, including CBOs and parks and recreation directors, and agreed that user input from the CSNA Survey and community benefits agreements is valuable but must be supplemented with project-specific engagement.

C.5.2.2 Phase 2

The CIB & BR Working Group elected to engage via email about Watershed Planning performance measures and targets. Participants mentioned the County's Community Forest Management Plan, the City of Pasadena's Climate Action Plan, the Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission's stream enhancement plans, and the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) greening resolution.

Other plans the CIB & BR Working Group noted should be included in preliminary analysis included the:

- Los Angeles County Parks Needs Assessment
- City of Los Angles Parks Needs Assessment +
- County Climate Ready Communities Initiative & Climate Heat Action Plan
- SGV Greenway Network Plan; Los Angeles & San Gabriel River Master Plans

The Working Group emphasized the importance of aligning SCW Program targets with existing local plans, which, despite multiple plans having older data, still offer valuable insights. Commenters stressed that the Program should reflect the unique needs of each Watershed Area and use available data, such as tree canopy coverage, park access, and heat impacts; to guide community-identified benefit targets. Targets should also consider population size and per capita cost, and where applicable, align

with existing plans to ensure consistency. The term “population served” was recommended to be replaced with “population benefited” for greater precision, and “community acknowledgement” should come from locally based organizations with at least three years of service to a particular community. Some members of the Working Group felt it was important that community acknowledgement can come from elected leaders acting as a body via a public meeting. There was a split in opinion regarding who should determine Disadvantaged Community Benefits: some members supported the Scoring Committee for consistency, while others favored WASCs for their local knowledge, with a compromise allowing Scoring Committee review only in cases of concern. Additional comments highlighted the value of schools as unique public spaces in urban areas, suggesting that upstream drainage areas be considered part of their service area. Lastly, the complexity of tracking community benefits was acknowledged, with support for using differentiated distance metrics based on benefit type and scale, and a call for stronger community engagement and documentation, such as benefits agreements and input from active local organizations.

The Working Group highlighted that the Climate Ready Communities effort described in previous engagements is underway and should be considered as a resource during future Watershed Planning efforts.

C.5.2.3 Phase 3

In March 2025, the Watershed Planning staff, team, and CIB & BR Working Group held a comprehensive discussion focused on the role of CIB, particularly considering January 2025 wildfires, and the need for more inclusive, resilient planning. They also discussed the value of meaningful community engagement, noting that deep, ongoing involvement—rather than a single letter of support—should be prioritized in project scoring. The group encouraged leveraging Watershed Coordinators and CBOs to support smaller, locally impactful projects, especially in fire-affected areas where land acquisition and restoration could serve both WQ and community goals.

The conversation also addressed the need for clearer guidance for Project Developers, emphasizing a continuum from engagement to ownership and the importance of selecting partners with proven success within the community. The Working Group highlighted the work of MMS and Infrastructure Justice LA in breaking down engagement into measurable outputs and suggested integrating these insights into Watershed Planning. They also discussed the role of elected officials and municipal departments in community engagement, advocating for stronger cross-sector collaboration. Examples like the Rio Hondo partnership with the SGVCOG were cited as models for integrated outreach. The Working Group proposed categorizing

successful engagement examples by city size and project type and emphasized the need to elevate CIB through green infrastructure that supports wildfire resilience. The CIB & BR Working Group concluded by recommending that wildfire resilience be formally recognized as a CIB, suggesting a memo to update the definition and align it with broader multi-benefit planning efforts such as safe routes to schools and green streets.

C.6 Other Interested Party Engagement

Interested party engagements focused on meeting with 'aggregators', for instance, with the League of California Cities (aggregator of municipalities), and OurWaterLA (aggregators of NGO/CBO). This was an effort to listen to the broadest group of perspectives, while making efficient use of the time available. Examples of other interested parties are described in Table C-33.

Table C-33. Other Interested Party Engagement

Organization	Expertise
Los Angeles County MS4 Permit Group	Regional understanding of WQ, municipal project delivery, and permit compliance timelines
OurWater Los Angeles (OWLA)	Extensive presence in the program as an advocacy group with expertise in multi-benefit projects and engaged planning
Schools	Representatives from schools and community-based organizations that collaborate with schools, and how to increase school greening across the County in alignment with NbS and other stormwater infrastructure
Rebuild Southern California Coalition	Workforce development, job pathways, regional economic growth
League of California Cities	Municipal planning, project delivery, financial capacity, and regional and local plans and relationships
Watershed Coordinators	Consultants to the Program that are non-voting WASC members, and experts of the communities represented in each of the nine Watershed Areas

C.6.1 Los Angeles County MS4 Permit Group

Key staff from municipalities and the County, and their consultants, meet routinely about efforts to fulfil the MS4 permit conditions from the LA Regional Board. SCW Program Watershed Planning was invited to be the main agenda item at one of the regular meetings. At that meeting, after an overview presentation by the Watershed Planning team, members of the LA Permit Group shared that regional projects involve discussions with multiple cities. Many of these projects are developed with SCW Program goals in mind, considering blending WQ, WS, and CIBs.

The group was concerned that more WQ requirements from the SCW Program could conflict with the mandates of the permit and cause vital funding in the SCW Program to be diverted away from the compliance pathway that all are following.

The group acknowledged that the permit-driven Watershed Management Plans, originally developed in 2014 but iteratively updated since, were created to identify projects that contribute to water quality attainment and therefore compliance, and only secondarily (if at all) issues of water supply and community investment. The group further reflected how central the Watershed Management Modeling System (WMMS) is to their process, which is itself not designed to pursue multi-benefit project identification, and how this leads to significant effort and cost associated with adapting a Water Quality compliance project to be a successful SCW Program project. The MS4 Permit Group would like Watershed Planning to help identify Opportunities for WS and CIB, as that will help overcome this stated challenge.

C.6.2 OurWaterLA

OurWaterLA (OWLA) Coalition played a key role in supporting the passage of Measure W that created the SCW Program. In advance of the meeting with Watershed Planning, OWLA prioritized goals B, C, D, G, J, F, and K from within Los Angeles County Flood Control District Municipal Code Chapter 18[13]. The nature of the facilitated meeting led to a list of ideas that participants shared with the Watershed Planning team as key items to prioritize:

[13] Los Angeles County Flood Control District - Chapter 18 - Safe, Clean Water Program Implementation Ordinance

- Community-wide benefits over individual ones, considering who is affected, such as those experiencing extreme heat for cooling benefits
- Projects that align with community needs and scale, differentiating between direct and indirect impacts
- Projects that provide benefits that are recognized by community members driven by authentic engagement
- Education as necessary to explain funding and changes. Achieving community-wide acknowledgment is difficult, but education programs can bridge gaps and work with local groups (Watershed Coordinators, CBOs, WASCs)
- Recognition that communities care about seeing real change and yet are sometimes averse to it, so an educational program is needed to fill this gap.
- Greening serves broader benefits like carbon mitigation and heat reduction, while habitat focuses on creating spaces for species based on their ecological requirements.
- Existing County initiatives with the County Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO), including wage standards and training programs, should be explored
- Indicators that include Project Labor Agreements, career pathway quality, local hire compliance, and low-barrier entry jobs
- Public sector maintenance jobs are preferable to private sector roles
- NbS should mimic or restore natural processes, using natural materials whenever possible. Engineering can be involved, especially in urban areas, without necessarily defaulting to gray infrastructure.
- The spectrum of “natural processes” may require human intervention, but mimicking nature should aim for self-sustainability. Guidance like the US Army Corps of Engineers’ “Engineering with Nature” is helpful.
- Clarification on whether artificial materials like astroturf are included under nature-mimicking definitions.

C.6.3 Schools & School Greening

The Schools & School Greening meeting attendees discussed aligning goals with the SCW Program, highlighting the LAUSD Greening Board Resolution’s[14] valuable information for achieving greening goals, though more funding is needed. LAUSD aims for 30% green campuses but needs targets for stormwater management. Smaller districts are emerging as leaders in school greening and workforce development.

[14] Greening at LAUSD — A4GS

Equity in resource distribution and sustainable funding are crucial. Attendees emphasized integrating greening into various subjects and programs. Green Schoolyards America aligns with Los Angeles County's 30% tree canopy target for underserved communities and tracks policy language. Strategies for the next five years include phasing in greening initiatives, aligning state-level targets, and enhancing coordination between agencies. Barriers include policy gaps, funding constraints, and site conditions, with a need for tailored standards and ADA compliance integration.

Meeting attendees shared that there are also project management barriers, noting that the schedule and sequencing of capital projects on campus is crucial. The group shared that there are bungalow removal projects in the queue that often transform into outdoor classrooms, which can be a great use of space but may require additional planning for ADA compliance and greening efforts.

While the group noted that LAUSD master plans may not be up to date, they can still provide a framework for current and future projects. Attendees added that it will be important to cross-reference these plans with current needs and regulations. The group noted that increasing the technical capacity within the district can help manage and execute these projects more efficiently, reducing costs and liabilities.

C.6.4 Rebuild Southern California

Watershed Planning staff provided a presentation on Watershed Planning and shared the difference between the Public Works' Watershed Planning staff and the SCW Program Administration Team (SCW Program staff).

The discussion by Rebuild Southern California Partnership (Partnership) focused on streamlining project delivery and promoting jobs and pathways. The organization was less focused on defining "green jobs" and cared about increasing "jobs."

A significant challenge identified by the Partnership was ensuring that projects are delivered in a reasonable timeframe. Concerns were raised by the Partnership about funds accumulating without projects being completed, with questions about the total amount collected under SCW Program, the number of projects delivered, and the funds awaiting approval.

When asked about Disadvantaged Community Benefits, the Partnership noted the importance of considering the benefits of labor contracts for low-income communities and ensuring that investments are directed towards disadvantaged areas.

The Partnership also touched on the complexity of estimating job creation from NbS compared to traditional infrastructure projects. The Partnership emphasized the need for adaptive management and regular reviews of project progress. The Partnership shared that their goal is to expedite project delivery and hoped that the Initial Watershed Plans will support project development and progress.

C.6.5 League of California Cities

The Watershed Planning team provided an overview presentation, after which questions asked were about the relationship between the SCW Program Initial Watershed Plans and the MS4 compliance program. Participants stressed the importance of not linking Watershed Planning targets too closely to MS4 compliance, as SCW Program alone will not be sufficient to fully achieve compliance.

The attendees were then asked the following discussion question:

- How do you see these plans, tools, and capacities helping you do your work?

The discussion centered on the CSNA Survey and included stories of community engagement and planning efforts that have led to projects that align with community preference.

C.6.5.1 Watershed Planning Action Items

- Watershed Planning team to follow up with the City of Los Angeles will share a delineation study dataset with the Watershed Planning team
- Watershed Planning team to follow up with the City of Los Angeles highlighted Caballero Creek, a project with the Mountains and Recreation and Conservation Authority, as a potential case study for the Watershed Planning team

C.6.6 SCW Program Consultants: Watershed Coordinators

C.6.6.1 Phase 1

The Watershed Coordinators reflected on the Watershed Planning workshops conducted at their WASC meetings. The Watershed Coordinators shared that input

across all nine WASCs highlighted several themes, and synthesized the following items from their shared perspectives:

- With respect to park amenities, there were calls for safer, walkable green streets, more games in parks, better lighting, cleaner restrooms, and improved park maintenance.
- In terms of schools as green hubs, suggestions included sensory playgrounds, green schools, and easier collaboration with LAUSD.
- Education on One Water emphasized community cleanup and keeping cats indoors to improve WQ.
- Addressing nuisance flooding and reducing trash as a visual Indicator of WQ Benefits were also important.
- Safety in public spaces was another key theme, with suggestions for improved lighting, safe recreational spaces, and better access to nature.
- There were also calls for project completion and maintenance, especially in preparation for the 2028 Olympics, and concerns about drinking WQ and reducing heat.
- Sustainability efforts focused on anti-displacement strategies and green gentrification, while One Watershed Strategies included daylighting streams and removing invasive species.
- Finally, there were opportunities for connection through jobs and economic opportunities, with the County DEO working on workforce development.

C.6.6.2 Future Phases

Watershed Coordinator Meeting 2 content will be added.

C.7 Conclusions

[To be developed following the planned future engagements.]

Attachment 1: Regional Oversight Committee Water Quality Working Group Memorandum

Alternative Approach for Developing Water Quality Targets for Safe Clean Water Program Watershed Planning | March 28, 2025

This memo represents the recommendation for water quality targets from the ROC Water Quality Workgroup. Water quality targets provide an opportunity for Countywide assessment of SCWP efficiency. They also offer a way to center water quality regulations, which were the impetus for the SCWP, when making watershed planning decisions. The Workgroup's recommendations for water quality targets are intended to help realize these possibilities.

Importance of Water Quality Targets

Specific, measurable targets that are clearly linked to water quality in receiving waters are necessary to focus municipalities' limited resources on priority water quality issues. Although SCWP does not provide adequate resources to meet Water Quality Standards attainment, it will serve as a catalyst to cleaner and safer water for people and aquatic life. There are a variety of sources that affect the quality of receiving waters, but WASCs need to understand the progress SCW projects have made in attaining water quality standards in their watersheds. This assessment is critical in helping the WASC set water quality improvement priorities for projects. Specifically:

- Targets that are set with the goal of attaining water quality standards in receiving waters will help WASCs strategically prioritize projects during planning, as well as measure success after implementation. Focusing on water quality standards attainment will also help leverage resources from other funding sources.
- Targets that are developed and expressed spatially, with clear deadlines based on water quality regulations such as the MS4 Permit, will help WASCs prioritize projects in critical areas that will have the most impact on water quality.
- Targets and watershed planning that consider the work of previous efforts, such as the LA County Water Plan, MS4 WMPs, and the City of Los Angeles'

DRAFT

Watershed Investment Strategic Plans, will ensure project benefits are cumulatively assessed for more efficient disbursement of SCWP funding.

The following proposed water quality targets are intended to assess progress under the SCWP for watershed planning purposes and are not meant to determine compliance with the MS4 Permit or as criteria to receive ongoing funding under the SCWP. The County would not be held accountable for not meeting the targets. Rather, the targets are a way to provide direction and a common goal to strive towards.

Proposed Alternative Water Quality Targets Approach

This proposal attempts to include parallel language to the existing Watershed Planning Process and Structure presented at the December 11, 2024, ROC meeting so that the proposal can be considered for incorporation into the existing framework.

Overarching Goal (Countywide Target) – Meet water quality standards in all receiving waters directly impacted by dry weather and stormwater runoff **by 2038**.

Objective 1 (Develop Watershed Area Interim Targets) – Attain interim load reduction targets in each of the nine Watershed Areas.

Achieve interim watershed-specific percent load reductions by 2032. Watershed-specific pollutants include zinc, E. coli, nitrogen, and PCBs/DDT. The advantage of the indicators is their simplicity and interim use; their purpose is not to demonstrate compliance with the MS4 Permit or attainment of final 2038 Countywide Target. It is merely an indicator to ensure that there is progress in the next few years towards reaching WQS attainment.

Action 1.1 – The County will establish Watershed Area load reduction targets based on estimates provided in MS4 Watershed Management Programs by end of 2025 (a 50% reduction can be assumed as default but should be adjusted for watershed-specific reduction needs). The method outlined in the October 7 Water Quality Workgroup presentation can be used, but at this time the targets will not be adjusted for SCWP contribution until data on efficacy by project type and costs is obtained.

Action 1.2 – The County, in coordination with the LA Water Board, will develop a method to directly measure attainment of interim load reduction targets that is based on modeled/estimated load reductions from projects as well as data from actual projects implemented.

Objective 2 (Priority Strategies) – Attain interim project-based performance targets in each of the nine Watershed Areas

Action 2.1 - Initial Watershed Plans should be modified by June 2026 to include priority strategies based on their ability to meet interim load reduction targets (in Objective 1). The Opportunity Analysis should prioritize strategies by land-use and geographic area, using existing WMPs and other relevant agency stormwater planning documents, when identifying opportunity areas to achieve load reductions.

Action 2.2 - The County's Watershed Area Planning Tool (Planning Map) should show where all SCWP-funded and other relevant projects have been or will be constructed (both regional and municipal funding) and present the pollutant load reductions designed to be achieved by these projects. Other relevant projects include all past constructed stormwater quality projects completed by agencies and other parties (e.g., Proposition O, CBO/NGO projects completed before and outside of the SCWP) since 2000.

Action 2.3 - The LA Water Board will develop guidance for WASCs, based on existing WMPs and the County's summary from Action 2.2, on how to select priority strategies to achieve interim load reduction targets and final water quality standards.

Objective 3 - Countywide Assessment and Adaptive Management Implementation Plan

The County should develop a Countywide Adaptive Management Implementation Plan within 2-3 years. This Countywide plan is in addition to the proposed "Adaptive Watershed Plans" due in 2026 under the current framework. The Countywide plan should be designed to achieve the Countywide Target of meeting all water quality standards in receiving waters by 2038. The implementation plan will identify specific projects which align with the prioritized strategies to achieve this target, how progress will be assessed, and how progress will be reported back to the ROC.

Action 3.1 – Planning. The plan will include an initial assessment of existing data and quantitatively link the Watershed Area Targets (load reduction targets) and Priority Strategies (project-based targets) to the Countywide Target (all receiving water quality standards by 2038) so that correlations can be established between watershed area targets and receiving water quality standards to inform adaptive management at the County and watershed scale.

Action 3.2 – Assessment. The plan will include monitoring to assess project efficacy (using metric from Action 1.2), as well as receiving water quality (using MS4 and other data), to assess progress towards meeting interim load reduction targets and final water quality standards.

Action 3.3 – Reporting. The plan will include a procedure for reporting progress back to the ROC. The progress reports could be a synthesis of WARPs and other existing planning documents, including municipal program reports and dashboards. The reporting could also be integrated with WRAMPS to ease reporting burdens and avoid duplication of effort.

Action 3.4 – The LA Water Board will work with the County to provide MS4 and other relevant effluent and receiving water quality monitoring data to help with planning, assessment, and reporting.