



Public Comment Form

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Meeting: Regional Oversight Committee Meeting Date: 12/10/2025

LA County Public Works may contact me for clarification about my comments
 *Per Brown Act, completing this information is optional. At a minimum, please include an identifier so that you may be called upon to speak.

Phone participants and the public are encouraged to submit public comments (or a request to make a public comment) to SafeCleanWaterLA@dpw.lacounty.gov. All public comments will become part of the official record.

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Comments

My name is Kaitie Evers, and I manage the Clean Water Certificate Program at the Center for Watershed Protection. Speaking directly to something that everyone here understands: maintenance is the backbone of effective stormwater management. It's easy to celebrate the installation of a brand-new green infrastructure project, the ribbon cuttings, the renderings. But the real work, the real impact, comes years later, when that practice is still functioning, still capturing runoff, and still protecting downstream communities. That only happens with consistent, skilled maintenance. National research shows that for every 1 million invested in stormwater, an average of 13 jobs are created. Pasadena itself has already invested over 900 million on green infrastructure in the past 6 years and with project expansion comes maintenance expansion. That's where our partnership comes in with the Clean Water Certificate Program. We have a training pathway designed to make maintenance knowledge accessible to every learner. Participants are evaluated on their ability to perform, communicate, and problem-solve, not just take a test. Our learners report not only a deep understanding of how stormwater plays a role in their own communities, but they leave with the confidence to step into the workforce prepared and capable. No GED or prior experience needed, participants receive a nationally accredited certificate with no continuing education requirements. It is built to open doors, remove employment barriers and provide pathways to living wage jobs. By partnering with Pasadena, we are excited not only to bring this pathway to local residents but to develop the next level of training specifically tailored to LA regional maintenance needs. This is an opportunity to strengthen local workforce development, support long-term compliance, and ensure every project built in the region continues to deliver clean water benefits for decades. We are committed to being a partner in expanding stormwater workforce capacity in LA, and we welcome the



Public Comment Form

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Meeting: Regional Oversight Committee Date: 12/10/2025

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Comments

Hello. My name is Amanda Pollack, PE, and I'm the Director of Training and a Senior Water Resources Engineer at the Center for Watershed Protection. The Center was founded in 1992, and for more than 30 years we have been a national leader in stormwater management and professional training. We are a nonprofit organization dedicated to advancing clean water and healthy ecosystems through responsible land and water management. Our programs focus on Training, Stormwater Consulting, and Research. Today, I'm here to highlight the workforce development component of our training program.

The Center developed the Clean Water Certificate, or CWC Program, which is a workforce development initiative that provides a nationally accredited credential for entry-level professionals in the stormwater industry. The program is accredited through the American National Standards Institute's National Accreditation Board, meaning it meets rigorous, internationally recognized standards.

The CWC program teaches practical, hands-on skills in green infrastructure and stormwater construction and maintenance. CWC provides fair, equitable assessment for all participants. No prior experience is required—the curriculum is designed specifically for individuals entering the field with no background in stormwater.

Participants who successfully complete the program receive a certificate that does not expire and does not require continuing education. Our goal is to build career pathways by connecting trained graduates with public, private, and nonprofit employers offering living-wage jobs. We operate across the country, training both CWC participants and new instructors so the program can be delivered locally and sustainably.

We are excited to partner with the City of Pasadena as the first West Coast community to adopt and adapt this program to meet local needs and support bilingual communities. This is an important step in expanding a national training network and ensuring the Los Angeles region has access to the same high-quality, accredited workforce development opportunities available elsewhere in the country. Thank you.



Public Comment Form

Name:* Sherreeta White Organization*: City of Pasadena, MASH Program
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Meeting: Regional Oversight Meeting Date: 1/14/2026

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Comments

For more than forty years, MASH has served as one of the region's most effective municipal workforce development programs, providing full-time, paid, hands-on training to residents who are under- or unemployed seeking municipal career pathways. Our program is open across LA County and our mission is to open doors, build skills, and create long-term employment pipelines that strengthen our community and regional workforce. We have a 90% success rate in trainees transition into stable, long-term careers—in Pasadena and county-wide. We have a proven record of ensuring participants gain both income stability and real-world experience while developing the technical skills needed for long-term employment in areas such as landscaping and essential municipal services. Green infrastructure maintenance is a natural extension of this work. It is hands-on, field-based, and deeply rooted in public service—the kind of training environment where MASH excels. Yet today, there is no standardized curriculum, no recognized credential, and no formal regional training pathway to prepare workers for this rapidly growing field. Pasadena's proposed Study would change that. It would allow MASH to integrate the Clean Water Certificate program into our existing training model and expand our curriculum to include training for infrastructure the Program is investing in, promoting real green careers. This training directly supports clean water regional initiatives. By equipping trainees with the skills to maintain green infrastructure we are strengthening the workforce responsible for safeguarding our waters, which aligns with Program Goals M and N, because a trained workforce is essential to keeping projects operational long term. This is a rare opportunity to connect environmental goals with economic mobility—something MASH has delivered 40+ years. While the District has deemed the study ineligible, Pasadena will continue moving forward and remains committed to working to build a green-infrastructure workforce program that supports the needs of our region. Thank you.



Public Comment Form

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Meeting: Regional Oversight Meeting Date: 1/14/2026

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Comments

I'm here regarding Pasadena's Scientific Study, Building a Green Infrastructure Workforce for the LA Region—a study that was uploaded to the project portal and invited to present at the CSMB WASC, where we received strong support, before the District deemed it ineligible. I am respectfully asking this body—the ROC—to exercise its oversight role and request that our Study be allowed to present so the WASCs and ROC can evaluate its merit openly and in alignment with the ordinance. Pasadena's MASH Program is a 40-plus-year municipal workforce development system, one of the longest-running in California. It brings in participants from across the region and places trainees into multiple cities, including Los Angeles and LA County. MASH is a functioning, regional workforce engine already embedded in municipal operations. By contrast, the County's proposed workforce program—while valuable—is not GI-specific, not operations-based, and will take years to develop, assuming it is ever fully realized. After six rounds of SCWP implementation, there is still no GI workforce pathway, no curriculum, and no system to meet the long-term O&M obligations that this Program depends on. Our Study fills that gap now. It builds on MASH's 40-year legacy and on our partnership with the CWP and their Clean Water Certificate to create the first region-scalable GI O&M training model. I want to emphasize there is no such thing as too much workforce development. This Program should be championing every credible workforce initiative, not limiting them. SCWP needs all hands building equitable, skilled, local pathways into this field. Finally, I want to acknowledge this Committee's role, which is charged with ensuring fairness, consistency, transparency, and ordinance alignment across the Program. The Ordinance assigns the evaluation of Scientific Studies to the WASCs, with ROC oversight—not to the District. ULAR and USGR WASCs have already acted to reclaim that authority. I respectfully urge the ROC to do the same.



Public Comment Form

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Meeting: Regional Oversight Meeting Date: 1/14/2026

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Comments

Hello. My name is Jeff Khun, Landscape Architect with the City of Pasadena. For many years, I've designed and helped implement many of Pasadena's green-infrastructure and urban greening projects. Pasadena, like all Agencies, struggle with maintenance after the projects are completed as municipal staff lack the training to effectively maintain these systems. Even the best-designed projects fail without proper, standardized maintenance training. Across Pasadena and cities throughout the region—we see recurring issues: basins draining poorly because staff wasn't trained in pretreatment maintenance, native vegetation pruned incorrectly which compromises pollutant removal, infiltration systems clogged because maintenance teams lack correct inspection techniques. These challenges are not the result of neglect—they're the result of a systemwide lack of training and education. There is a clear need for consistent, regional training and a specialized workforce. Our study builds on Pasadena's long standing workforce development program's success, and CWP's Clean Water Certificate program, adapting to the specific needs of the region. This ensures the training reflects real local conditions and regional investment. Pasadena is committed to advancing this work. We have dedicated \$500,000 of local funds to support the study to ensure the success of our projects—but this is a regional gap, not just a Pasadena need. We are continuing this effort, despite the District's decision to eliminate support and funding, though we may need to scale the study to fit our resources. We are committed to coordinating with local partners so that this becomes a resource accessible beyond Pasadena. Thank you.



Public Comment Form

Name:* Jessica Rivas Organization*: City of Pasadena
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Meeting: Regional Oversight Meeting Date: 1/14/2026

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Comments

Good afternoon, members of the WASC. My name is Jessica Rivas, Program Coordinator with Pasadena and the lead for the City's proposed Regional Workforce Development Study. Our team has conducted broad outreach—locally, regionally, and statewide—to understand the gaps in green-infrastructure maintenance training. What we heard was remarkably consistent: green infrastructure is being built at a rapid pace, but the trained workforce needed to maintain it is not keeping up. That gap puts the community, municipalities and the Program at risk. This is not only a professional concern—it's also a personal one. I volunteered with Outward Bound Adventures in Pasadena. Through that work, I've spent time with youth and young adults who are deeply interested in environmental careers. I've also seen how few clear, accessible career pathways exist in green maintenance. From my City perspective, we are investing in more nature-based and stormwater-focused infrastructure than ever before, yet our staff lacks the training required to maintain these systems effectively. There is a real, urgent regional need for a trained, local workforce that reflects these emerging careers. Despite the District's deeming our study ineligible, it directly advances two of Program's goals by ensuring long term maintenance and creating meaningful green-job pathways—especially for underserved communities. Moreso, proper maintenance is essential to water-quality performance, infiltration capacity, and resiliency. Workforce development is our region's biggest need, and our outreach makes that clear. The Program is losing a significant opportunity by eliminating our study, as Pasadena is committed to moving forward, committing \$500K of our local dollars, and regional and state partners have expressed strong support and interest in adopting the curriculum once developed. Pasadena is committed to pursuing regional collaboration absent of District program funding and support. Please reach out if interested in staying engaged with Pasadena's workforce. Thank you.



Date: January 9, 2026

To: Regional Oversight Committee

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

RE: 2025 Biennial Review Public Input

On behalf of OurWaterLA (OWLA), thank you for the opportunity to provide initial comments as the Biennial Review public comment period begins. OWLA will submit more detailed and comprehensive comments during the formal comment period, but given the significance of this review cycle, we want to highlight several high-level concerns and priorities.

We want to reiterate our top priorities from our previous comment letters submitted this year:

Top Priorities from Public Input

1. Adopt clearer, more consistent **metrics and definitions** for community investment benefits, community engagement and community support, nature-based solutions, disadvantaged community benefits, and workforce impact and PLA compliance. These definitions are essential for evaluating progress, comparing watershed plan outputs, and making equitable funding decisions.
2. Maximize hardscape removal and **prioritize new green space**—particularly in schools, park-poor neighborhoods, and communities that have historically lacked access to nature. Current watershed planning targets for new green space amount to only 2% of countywide greening needs, far below levels needed to advance climate, public health, and equity goals.
3. **Advance long-promised but not yet implemented programs**, specifically K–12 school programs, and workforce development programs.
4. Investigate ways to **streamline applications for smaller, more community-based projects**, which currently face disproportionate administrative burdens.
5. **Integrate Watershed Plans** into SCWP decision making. The draft watershed plans offer important insights but lack a defined path for integration into SCWP funding and governance. The ROC should clearly articulate how these plans will inform program implementation.

Strategic Planning Recommendations:

1. Community engagement is essential for ensuring that Safe Clean Water Program investments are equitable. For this reason, OWLA recommends that the ROC **establish a minimum level of community engagement as a mandatory eligibility requirement for Regional Program funding**. This requirement must be set well before the 2045 target identified in the draft watershed plans, as early and consistent engagement is necessary to build public trust, secure long-term support, and deliver projects that genuinely meet community needs.

2. OWLA also urges the ROC to direct each Watershed Area Steering Committee (WASC) to **develop a comprehensive 20-year investment plan**. These plans should outline the total funding available over the next two decades, set a cap on annual allocations to promote long-term financial stability (ideally no more than 80 percent), and identify target proportional investments across project sizes, ranging from large regional-scale efforts to small and distributed projects such as landscape transformations and schoolyard greening. Additionally, each plan should include expectations for leveraged funding to ensure that SCWP dollars are maximized through partnerships and co-investment opportunities.

3. We believe **continued dialogue and watershed planning are essential to a proactive path forward for the SCWP**. We encourage the ROC to do what they can to encourage discussion of these topics (and more):
 - a. How to navigate thoughtful and **strategic investment** when we have lofty goals and more projects than funding available.
 - b. How to better capture **interactions and connectivity between projects** rather than looking at projects in isolation.
 - c. How to better balance a **robust mix of project sizes** when SCWP eligibility requirements and funding resources tend to favor mid-sized projects.
 - i. This could include identifying **creative funding mechanisms** to fund very large, expensive projects like potential spreading grounds or regional parks as well as ways to support projects on the smaller end of the project size spectrum such as residential landscape transformation, like through project bundling.
 - d. How to **take advantage of certain land use types** identified as prime opportunity areas such as utility right of ways, brownfields/superfund sites, and places where existing infrastructure is aging and potentially transitioning to alternatives.

4. Given the technical complexity of the nine watershed plans recently released, OWLA strongly recommends that the County **contract with an independent third-party reviewer to validate the underlying calculations, assumptions, and data**. An unbiased technical review will help ensure accuracy, strengthen confidence in the plans, and support transparent decision-making.

5. The ROC should review the watershed plan targets and identify where lack of clear definitions and differing interpretations¹ renders numbers provided, almost meaningless. Without clear, consistent and agreed upon definitions and data, it is impossible for the ROC to fulfill its duty to determine whether the SCWP is achieving its goals.

Program-Specific Recommendations:

1. Regional Program
 - a. **Set aside funding for small-scale projects**, following the model of the Lower San Gabriel River WASC, to improve equity and expand community access.
 - b. **Group complementary small projects**, such as green streets, to achieve water quality improvements at scale, following the example of the South Santa Monica Bay WASC.
 - c. **Prioritize scientific studies to answer key questions** and guide decision-making, as successfully demonstrated by the North Santa Monica Bay WASC.
 - d. **Consider sunset dates** for funding allocations, with extensions granted when justified, and encourage applicants to pursue cost-sharing when seeking additional funding.
 - e. **Allocate a portion of TRP funds directly to applicants** to support project development and engagement.

2. Municipal Program
 - a. Require **transparent reporting on municipal SCWP spending**, including detailed expenditures and outcomes, and clarify whether SCWP funds supplement or replace existing stormwater investments.

¹One such example is “habitat created, enhanced, restored, or protected,” where one project (Ballona Creek TMDL) accounts for 577 acres of Central Santa Monica Bay’s 607 acres baseline total (95%). To our understanding, this is indicating that all of the Ballona Wetlands is enhanced because water quality is improved downstream of the project. We do not agree this is what is intended by creating or enhancing habitat.

Similarly, we believe there is some disagreement or confusion over what should be included in the 300,000 AFY of new stormwater capture.

- b. Address the significant capacity gap within the City of Los Angeles that is delaying project review and approvals when City support letters are needed (particularly for LAUSD proposals) by encouraging municipalities to **use their SCWP funds creatively to bolster staffing and technical capacity**, alongside other innovative uses such as wildfire-related water quality monitoring.
3. District Program
- a. Ensure the **effective rollout of the workforce development and K–12 education programs**, including providing sufficient resources and maintaining support for existing public education and engagement efforts.
 - b. **Ensure staffing levels are adequate** to manage SCWP implementation, stakeholder engagement, and oversight.
 - c. **Expand and standardize translation services** across all WASCs, and clearly post translation availability online.

Thank you for considering these initial comments. OWLA is committed to advancing a Safe Clean Water Program that delivers on its promises of climate resilience, clean water, equity, and community benefit. We look forward to providing detailed technical and policy recommendations during the official comment period and continuing our engagement with the Safe Clean Water Program to ensure a better water future for the region.

Sincerely,

The OurWaterLA Coalition

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