

Regional Oversight Committee

Meeting Minutes



Wednesday, February 11, 2026
1:00 – 3:30pm
LA County Public Works Headquarters, Alhambra Room
900 S. Fremont Ave, Alhambra, CA 91803

Zoom Meeting

Committee Members Present:

Maria Mehranian, Cordoba/Former Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board Chair, Vice-Chair
Barbara Romero, City of Los Angeles
Diana Tang, Long Beach Water Department, Chair
Belinda Faustinos, Retired NGO & State Agency Executive
Lauren Ahkiam, LAANE
Charles Treviño, Upper San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District
Diana Mahmud, Former City Councilmember, City of South Pasadena
Carl Blum, Los Angeles County Flood Control District (non-voting member)
Norma Camacho, Former Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board Chair (non-voting member)

Committee Members Not Present:

Kristine Guerrero, League of California Cities

Meeting Summary:

The ROC received a preview of the Initial Watershed Plans and discussed the approach for adaptive management of those plans. The ROC also received updates on the Stormwater School Education & Greening Guidelines under development.

Key Action Items:

- ROC members will receive information to clarify ROC terms and the appointment process.
 - Public Works staff will incorporate requested topics as updates at future ROC meetings, including financial forecasting and fiscal oversight.
 - Public Works staff will consider feedback on the Stormwater School Education & Greening Guidelines and incorporate input into next steps.
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1. Welcome and Attendee Instructions

Diana Tang, Chair of the Safe, Clean Water (SCW) Program Regional Oversight Committee (ROC), welcomed Committee Members and members of the public and called the meeting to order.

2. Roll Call

The Executive Clerk conducted a brief tutorial on Zoom and announced that the meeting was being broadcast live in Spanish.

3. Agenda Review and Meeting Purpose

Chair Tang reviewed the agenda and shared that the purpose of the meeting is to provide an opportunity to preview the Initial Watershed Plans and discuss the approach for adaptive management of those plans. The Committee will also receive updates regarding the Stormwater School Education & Greening Guidelines.

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4. *Ex Parte* Communication Disclosures

There were no ex parte communication disclosures.

5. Approval of January 14, 2026 Meeting Minutes

Chair Tang presented the meeting minutes from January 14, 2026. Member Norma Camacho requested a revision be made under the ROC Member Updates agenda item. Member Belinda Faustinos motioned for the approval of meeting minutes as amended, seconded by Member Diana Mahmud. The January 14 meeting minutes were approved with amendments, with 6 votes in favor, 0 in abstention, 0 opposed, and 1 absent at the time of vote (approved, see vote tracking sheet).

6. Public Comment Period

1 public comment card was submitted prior to the meeting and can be found on the [SCW Program website](#). Virtual attendees, call-in users, and in-person attendees were invited to provide public comment.

Maggie Gardner (Our Water Los Angeles (OWLA)) commented on Watershed Planning and SCW Education Programs. Gardner urged the Committee to advocate for the launch of the K-12 Education Program and Workforce Development Program. Gardner expressed excitement for the release of the final versions of the Initial Watershed Plans and encouraged the Program to include higher greening targets and increase Indigenous engagement in Watershed Planning and implementation. Gardner requested the ROC provide input on how to make thoughtful funding decisions with limited funding and how to balance funding projects of various sizes when the Program favors mid-sized projects.

Francisco Lopez (Environmental Justice Deputy, Office of Los Angeles County Supervisor Holly Mitchell) thanked Public Works staff for their work on the Initial Watershed Plans. Lopez commented that the Watershed Plans will help to prioritize projects in Unincorporated County areas. Lopez urged the Program to continue ongoing outreach with residents in Unincorporated County areas to increase engagement with those who are often underrepresented in these forums.

7. Discussion Item: Preview Initial Watershed Plans & Approach for Adaptive Plans

Public Works staff presented a preview of Initial Watershed Plans and the approach for Adaptive Plans. Presentation slides can be found on the [SCW Program website](#).

Member Barbara Romero asked how to ensure that targets in the Watershed Plans are met. Public Works staff shared that the Watershed Plans have strategies and actions matched to each target to help meet them and a 20th Feasibility Study requirement has been added that will require that applicants demonstrate project alignment with the Watershed Plans.

Member Charles Treviño asked about the types of SCW Program projects that are currently funded and the metrics to measure SCW Program progress. Public Works staff noted that every Regional Program project needs to deliver a Water Quality Benefit in addition to a Water Supply or Community Investment Benefit. Upon inquiry, Public Works staff shared plans to develop standardized reporting for post-construction monitoring. Public Works [currently has data on anticipated project benefits](#) from the SCW Program's first five years, but these new guidelines will clarify monitoring data needs for constructed projects. Chair Tang noted that the SCW Program had to fund several rounds of projects before having enough data to understand delivered benefits. Chair Tang reminded the Committee that the 2026 Biennial Progress Report included a recommendation for the adoption of financial metrics and tracking financials relative to proposed project benefits.

Vice-Chair Maria Mehranian commented that the SCW Program should not be measured against one single set of metrics, but instead against data broken down by each Watershed Area to better understand SCW Program impact.

Member Mahmud noted that the SCW Program Ordinance calls for audits of both the Regional and Municipal Programs and inquired about the status of those audits. Public Works staff shared that more updates on the progress of Regional Program audits will be provided at the March ROC meeting and

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updates on the Municipal Program audits are forthcoming in April. Upon inquiry, Chair Tang clarified that the audits in progress are financial audits. Vice-Chair Mehranian noted that Member Treviño requested more information on Program efficiency, which would not be addressed by financial audits.

Member Carl Blum commented on the importance of collaboration across all aspects of the SCW Program, melding the Regional and Municipal Programs to scale up the SCW Program's impact. Member Blum highlighted Watershed Plans as an essential vehicle to advance large projects and address big Program targets.

Public Works staff noted that the SCW Program's adaptive management processes are being built upon and consistently improving the Program. Public Works staff highlighted that phased Regional Program applications will increase the efficiency of the SCW Program by allowing construction-ready projects to more easily receive funding, which will streamline project implementation.

Upon inquiry, Public Works staff shared that a County-wide interagency task force was created, as a result of Member Faustinos' recommendation, and discussions were held with the County Department of Parks and Recreation to address comments related to park acreage targets and baselines. Public Works staff noted that the targets included in the Watershed Plans represent a baseline and target framework, knowing that the program may exceed these targets over time.

Member Mahmud noted that many schools have modified their policies or campuses due to public safety concerns and asked if greened schoolyards that are not open to the public will count towards Watershed Plan guidelines or be eligible for SCW Program funding. Member Faustinos concurred, commenting that liability and public access must be addressed. Member Romero emphasized the challenge of liability in greening schoolyards, alongside the challenges of maintenance and public access benefits. Member Romero expressed concern that current Watershed Plan goals and greening targets are too conservative. Member Romero noted that workforce development programs can address maintenance issues while also creating service learning opportunities. Member Lauren Ahkiam requested a more focused conversation about school greening be added to a future ROC meeting.

Upon inquiry, Public Works staff clarified that SCW Program Scoring Criteria would be revised in time for implementation in the 2027 Call for Projects. Public Works staff confirmed that the ROC will preview the revised Scoring Criteria in August before it is released for public comment period. The revised Scoring Criteria will go through public comment before Feasibility Study Guideline revisions are finalized.

Member Faustinos recommended that updates to the Scoring Criteria incorporate data from the Metrics and Monitoring Study.

Member Blum asked if Watershed Area Steering Committees (WASCs) have explicitly expressed which types of projects and studies they are looking to fund. Mike Antos, (Regional Coordination) noted that some WASCs have put out suggestions for what they want to see in applications and highlighted the role the Watershed Plans will play in helping WASCs identify good investments.

Member Camacho noted that the Program will be better able to determine monitoring methods and requirements now that Program goals have been defined. Member Camacho urged Public Works to make use of monitoring data available from the Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Board), and noted that more collaboration between the ROC and WASCs would be beneficial. Chair Tang concurred and commented that previous Committee meetings that included engagement with WASC Chairs was helpful.

Member Mahmud inquired about the status of revisions to SCW Program Municipal Reports to allow municipalities to use reporting information that is already required for Regional Board reports for MS4 permits. Member Mahmud suggested that the SCW Program Municipal Program team should align with Watershed Plans. Chair Tang noted that the ROC meeting in April will include an opportunity to see if there are any patterns in how municipalities are spending their SCW Program funds. Public Works staff added that the Municipal Program team is currently reviewing the ability to pool together funds for project implementation.

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Member Faustinos suggested that the ROC look at where the SCW Program can have cumulative impacts. Member Faustinos commented on the idea of large-scale projects and raised questions about feasibility, especially when there is finite land available for large projects in Los Angeles. Member Faustinos noted that data tools can help determine where the opportunities for good projects exist, even if those projects are not large-scale.

Member Romero commented that undeveloped land is scarce and many large projects are proposed by municipalities, using city-owned property. Member Romero additionally reminded the Committee that, due to cost escalations, a larger project cost does not necessarily represent increased project benefits, but more expensive projects. Member Romero emphasized that project size is often limited to cost escalation and highlighted a need to reevaluate how the SCW Program approaches different types of projects.

Chair Tang expressed a desire to see data that would allow comparisons of SCW Program progress by Watershed Area. Chair Tang noted the difficulties of recommending changes without having a baseline to build them on, especially when each Watershed Area has different opportunities and constraints. Chair Tang noted the importance of big projects and highlighted that one way to invest in larger infrastructure might be to focus on pre-treatment for diversion to advanced water treatment.

Member Blum concurred with Chair Tang and Member Romero and noted that while open space is limited, redevelopment opportunities still arise through significant changes in land use, including disastrous events. Member Blum added that these opportunities can only be taken advantage of if proponents are prepared to implement different solutions far in advance of the opportunity arising; otherwise, pressure to build or rebuild immediately will negate the opportunity to think and build differently.

Public Works staff noted that Watershed Plans and the Planning Dashboard incorporate both Municipal and Regional projects. Applicants can use the Dashboard and opportunity maps to identify their highest Opportunity Areas.

8. Discussion Item: Update on Stormwater School Education & Greening Guidelines

Public Works staff and Rosey Jencks (Brown and Caldwell) presented an update on Stormwater School Education & Greening Guidelines. Presentation slides can be found on the [SCW Program website](#).

In response to Member Blum's earlier comment, Public Works staff shared that the WASCs will have an agenda item at upcoming meetings to discuss priorities for the upcoming Call for Projects, consider funding commitments and Watershed Plans, and signal to applicants the WASC's priorities. Public Works staff added that there will be a new section in Stormwater Investment Plan (SIP) transmittals that will describe progress made towards SCW Program targets and priorities for the upcoming Call for Projects. This new section in the SIP transmittal will signal the future investment needs of each Watershed Area.

Vice-Chair Mehranian asked for more information related to creating Los Angeles County Schoolyard Transformation Design Guidelines (hereafter referenced as Schoolyard Design Guidelines) regarding stormwater management sizing methods. Jencks noted this objective aims to help break down how to size projects to reach physical performance standards, depending on how much stormwater the project aims to manage onsite.

Member Faustinos expressed concern that the Schoolyard Design Guidelines seem like a technical product rather than a SCW Education Program effort. Member Faustinos commented that the SCW Program K-12 Educational Program funding should be used for school engagement and curriculum rather than development of design standards and noted concern. Member Faustinos also expressed concerns about the utility of broad guidelines, highlighting how school greening design needs to address site-specific criteria.

Public Works staff referenced a benchmarking study conducted to review existing activities and explained that this effort has two main components. Objective 1, the SCW Program Stormwater School Education Program Vision Document builds on the benchmarking study to help situate later development of curricula that can be feasibly implemented. Public Works staff noted that Objective 2, Schoolyard Design Guidelines,

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is more technical and consists of design guidelines for stormwater features at schools. Both components will enable the full development of school curriculum.

Member Faustinos expressed having envisioned that the SCW Program would develop standard guidelines for an educational program, after which the Program would establish a grant program to be widely available to schools, municipalities, and nonprofits, that would help implement the SCW Educational Program and vision. Member Faustinos remarked that education funding was intended to uplift work already done in communities throughout the County. Member Faustinos expressed concern that while the concept of Schoolyard Design Guidelines is valid, it would be better implemented through a different funding source.

Member Mahmud commented that the ROC made specific comments in the Biennial Progress Report recommending that Public Works staff coordinate with existing educational programs to avoid redundancy, and specifically mentioned Metropolitan Water District of Southern California's (MWD) educational programs as an example of a potential partner. Member Mahmud encouraged Public Works staff to coordinate with MWD and similar organizations.

Public Works staff and Jencks noted that the County has an existing environmental education program, noting collaboration with Generation Earth, which engages students directly.

Member Mahmud encouraged PW to review how the County spreads outreach and awareness about Generation Earth to schools to ensure that all districts have equal access to the program, emphasizing the importance of education in effecting change. Member Mahmud suggested that the SCW Program could fund educational school field trips to the Discovery Cube, as well as transportation. Member Mahmud concurred with Member Faustinos concern that Schoolyard Design Guidelines are funded out of the SCW Education Program budget, suggesting that funding a demonstration project utilizing those guidelines may be more appropriately linked to education.

Upon inquiry, Jencks noted that the intended audience for the Schoolyard Design Guidelines is for community members or design teams that want to help create or inform projects. Member Camacho commented that the SCW Program is a reactive program and that developing a list of interested schools and associated costs would help more proactively foster project ideas. Member Camacho also noted that ongoing training or a roadshow would be important to prevent Schoolyard Design Guidelines from going unused. Jencks shared that the goal is to merge the educational and technical realities by linking education with capital work at school sites. Antos noted that Watershed Coordinators were given a list of schools with high greening needs and are currently investigating how to fold that into their Strategic Outreach and Engagement Plans (SOEP).

Upon inquiry, Public Works staff clarified that there will be an additional round of the Public Education and Community Engagement Grant Program in the future.

Member Ahkiam commented that schools comprise a significant portion of land in the County, and that schools present a wide variety of opportunity types, but stormwater and greening opportunities and enthusiasm from school leaders do not always coexist. Member Ahkiam emphasized the importance of continuing to support individuals who lead existing education programs, concurring with the recommendation to create a grant program for schools and non-profit organizations with school education programs. Member Ahkiam also underlined the importance of guidance to actualize projects at different scales and how to link these projects with educational learning opportunities. Member Ahkiam added that guidelines and curricula should not be overwhelming for teachers and encouraged a future discussion to consider how to ease the application process for schools. Member Ahkiam urged the SCW Program to increase engagement to ensure that schools are aware of existing opportunities.

Member Romero emphasized opportunities with the large amounts of land owned by schools in the County, but highlighted the financial challenges faced by many schools, which may often force them to deprioritize greening. Member Romero commented that making school green spaces publicly accessible remains a challenge and expressed that questions of liability should not be allowed to prevent greening and the education of the next generation of environmental stewards.

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Member Faustinos emphasized the importance of articulating overarching goals and determining what communities are not yet being reached. Member Faustinos highlighted the potential of a grant program to bring those communities in. Chair Tang reiterated that the SCW Program will remain mindful that the funding must be dedicated to education and will consider how to best invest Educational Program funds.

9. Program Administration Updates

Public Works staff provided updates, noting:

- The ROC has one vacant Committee Member seat. Interest forms are available on the [SCW Program website](#). Mid-term appointments are backfilled by the Public Works Director in consultation with the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors (Board) offices.
 - The vacant seat will soon be filled by a mid-year appointment.
 - Once the appointment is confirmed, staff will onboard the Committee Member.
 - A new set of documents guides WASC, Scoring, and ROC Committee Members through the appointment process and have been posted under each respective Committee webpage.
- Lapsed Funding Guidelines are being updated by Public Works staff to compile requirements for Regional and Municipal Program Transfer Agreements in one document. Guidelines will address timely reporting, misalignment of project activities in the Transfer Agreement, and other Program requirements.
- A new contract is underway to develop the nature-based solutions portion of a new addendum to Watershed Plans. This effort is happening concurrently with the Nature-based Solutions County Water Plan Task Force.
- Public Works will be updating Scoring Criteria, which will be incorporated into the Feasibility Study Guidelines. This update will take effect during the 2027 Call for Projects.
- The Community Strengths and Needs Assessment (CSNA) continues to receive survey submissions, currently totaling more than 1,300 responses.
- The 2026 Biennial Progress Report 30-day public comment period was initiated following the January ROC meeting. 2 public comments have been received. The Public Comment Period will close on February 14.
- Regional Program Round 7 Call for Projects Updates for Fiscal Year (FY) 2026-27
 - WASCs are receiving presentations from eligible project and study applicants.
 - In alignment with 2026 Biennial Progress Report recommendations, an 80% cap for each SIP, along with 25% leverage funding, has been included into this year's SIP Programming Guidelines.
 - WASCs are also reviewing and discussing the Regional Program FY2024-25 Annual Report and Project Modification Requests (PMRs) with funding and scope changes
 - Next month, WASCs will begin voting on recommended SIPs and deciding which Infrastructure Program projects, Scientific Studies, Technical Resources Program projects, PMRs, and continuing projects and studies with earmarked funds to fund for this current FY.
 - WASCs will be able to utilize the SIP Tool in preparation for the upcoming SIP deliberations, in addition to the new Metrics and Measures data, CSNA Dashboard, and Watershed Planning Tool.
- Phase 2 of Watershed Coordinator services evaluations are complete. As of today, 10 contracts are finalized and underway. The remaining 2 contracts are moving forward with contract execution.
- Municipal Program
 - All Municipal Program Transfer Agreements, except for one municipality, have been fully executed.
 - 6 rounds of FY 2024-25 (Year 5) annual disbursements were completed as of January 2026, with 84 cities collectively receiving approximately \$100 million in local return funding.
 - The second round of FY2025-26 annual disbursements were completed in January 2026 with 82 cities receiving \$100 million.

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- Disbursements are ongoing and will be completed as municipalities satisfy eligibility requirements.
- Infrastructure Program project highlights:
 - The North Sepulveda Pedestrian Island groundbreaking ceremony took place on February 5. The Project enhances an existing median and will deliver Water Quality Benefits.
- Upcoming Deadlines:
 - Regional Program Mid-Year Reports for FY2025-26 are due February 15. Reports will cover expenditures and progress from July-December 2025.
 - Municipal Annual Plans for FY2026-27 are due April 1.
- Los Angeles County Water Plan is hosting its 2026 Water Resiliency Summit on May 18.

10. ROC Member Updates

Member Faustinos requested that public comments on the Biennial Progress Report be shared with the Committee as soon as possible.

11. Items for Next Agenda / Look Ahead

Public Works staff shared a look ahead of 2026 ROC meetings, which can be found on the [SCW Program website](#). Items for the next agenda include:

- a. Biennial Report Session 5 – Approve Final Report to Submit to Board of Supervisors
- b. Regional Program Update and Call For Projects Preparations
- c. Workforce Development Update

12. Meeting Adjourned

Chair Tang thanked ROC Members and the public and adjourned the meeting at 3:27 PM.