



**SAFE
CLEAN
WATER
PROGRAM**

**Initial Watershed Plan
Executive Summary
Safe, Clean Water
Program-Wide**

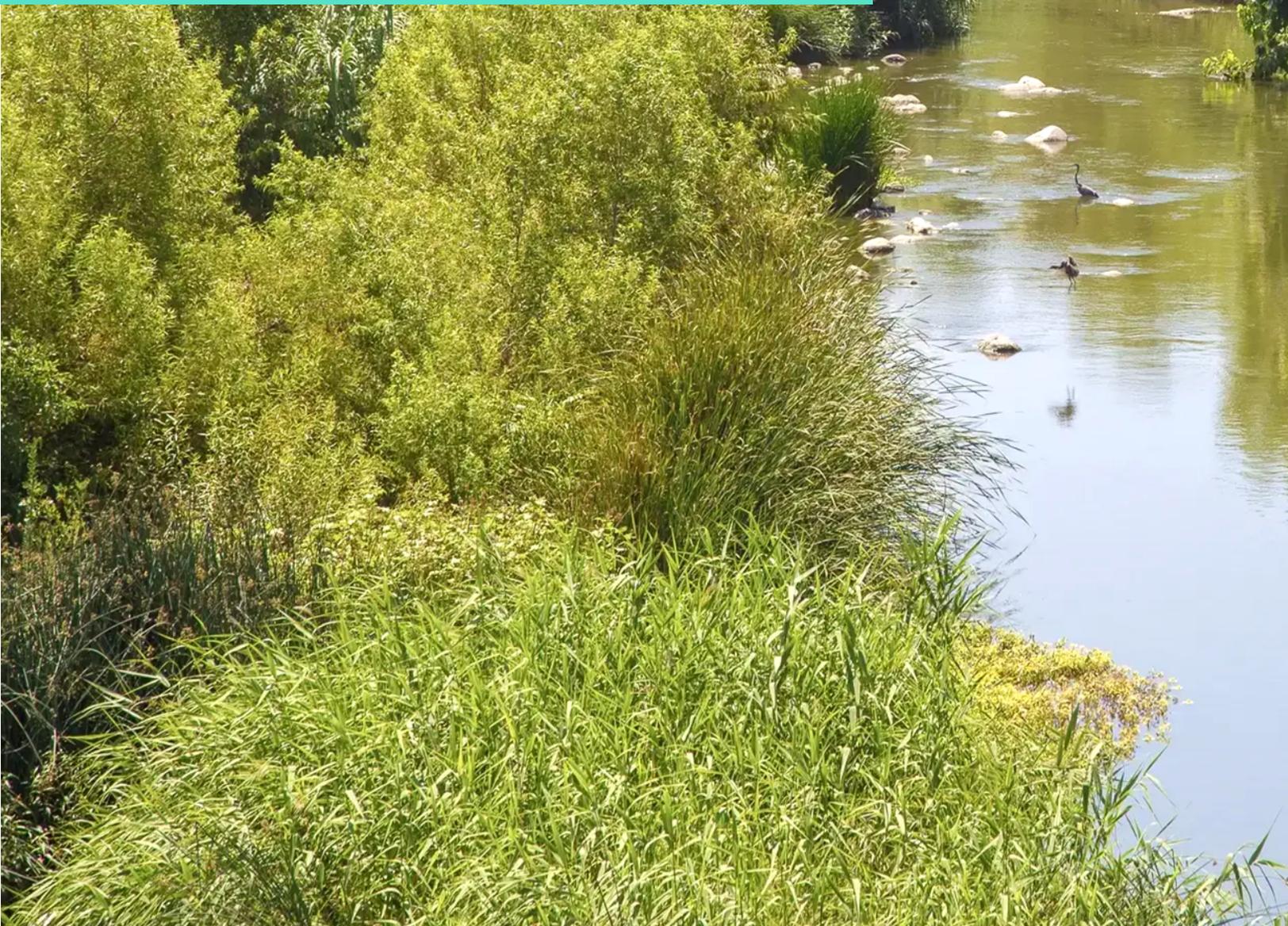




Table of Contents

Initial Programmatic Executive Summary Overview.....	2
What is the Watershed Planning Initiative?.....	2
Initial Watershed Plans and Planning Tool.....	3
Initial Watershed Plans	3
Watershed Planning Tool.....	3
Using the Initial Watershed Plans and Planning Tool.....	3
Program-Wide Watershed Planning Outputs.....	5
Program-Wide Benefits, Baselines, Targets, and Cumulative Watershed Area Needs	5
Program-Wide Strategies and Actions	9
Program-Wide Opportunities.....	10
Next Steps and Recommendations for Watershed Planning	12

Initial Programmatic Executive Summary Overview

The following **Initial Watershed Plan Programmatic Executive Summary** provides:

- A summary of the Safe, Clean Water Program's (SCW Program) Watershed Planning Initiative
- Access to and information on the Initial Watershed Plans (Plans) and Watershed Planning Tool (Planning Tool)
- Program-wide findings, targets, and strategies

What is the Watershed Planning Initiative?

The SCW Program funds stormwater Projects and Programs that improve water quality, increase our local water supply, and provide community benefits, like green spaces and parks. It works directly with communities, Municipalities, agencies, and individuals to create projects that capture and clean stormwater, while also providing quality-of-life improvements.

The Safe, Clean Water Program's Watershed Planning Initiative was established in 2023 to advance and track SCW Program progress. It does this by:

- Reviewing and incorporating key information and targets from other efforts.
- Compiling and integrating community input through the Community Strengths and Needs Assessment (CSNA) [Survey](#) and [Dashboard](#).
- Establishing aspirational targets tailored for each Watershed Area (WA).
- Developing strategies and actions that support progress toward those targets.
- Identifying meaningful opportunities for multi-benefit investments in each WA.
- Proactively guiding SCW Program implementation.

Overall, the Watershed Planning Initiative supports the SCW Program to make informed decisions, reduce redundancies, and enhance accountability across the region.

Initial Watershed Plans and Planning Tool

The SCW Program Watershed Planning Initiative has released nine Initial WA-specific Plans and a companion [Planning Tool](#) to inform SCW Program implementation.

Initial Watershed Plans

The Plans provide detailed information on Program-wide and WA-specific targets, needs, strategies, and opportunities within the scope of the SCW Program. The Plans are adaptive and will be updated as new findings arise. They are not for all-purpose watershed management and do not prescribe specific Projects.

The Plans are accessible via the links below and through the Watershed Planning page on the Safe, Clean Water Program website (safecleanwaterla.org/what-we-do/watershed-planning/).

- [Central Santa Monica Bay Initial Watershed Plan](#)
- [Lower Los Angeles River Initial Watershed Plan](#)
- [Lower San Gabriel River Initial Watershed Plan](#)
- [North Santa Monica Bay Initial Watershed Plan](#)
- [Rio Hondo Watershed Initial Watershed Plan](#)
- [Santa Clara River Initial Watershed Plan](#)
- [South Santa Monica Bay Initial Watershed Plan](#)
- [Upper Los Angeles River Initial Watershed Plan](#)
- [Upper San Gabriel River Initial Watershed Plan](#)

Watershed Planning Tool

The [Planning Tool](#) serves as a live, interactive version of the Plans. It communicates and tracks progress toward SCW Program Goals and highlights strategies and opportunities to support their achievement.

The Watershed Planning Tool may be accessed at portal.safecleanwaterla.org/planning-tool.

Using the Initial Watershed Plans and Planning Tool

The Watershed Planning Initiative supports a range of interested parties across the SCW Program and LA County. The following parties should expect to engage with the Watershed Planning Initiative and Plans in the following ways:

- **Los Angeles County Public Works (Public Works)** will continue to integrate strategic planning, new findings, and tools across the Safe, Clean Water Program to better advance SCW Program Goals.

- **Public Works, Regional Oversight Committee (ROC), Scoring Committee, and Watershed Area Steering Committees (WASCs)** will use the Initial Watershed Plans to make more informed decisions on strategic investments. The Plans will be used to assess Projects and Programs, ensure Projects and Programs contribute to SCW Program Goals, and assess progress toward SCW Program Goals.
- **WASCs** will also reference the Plans in the annual recommended Stormwater Investment Plans (SIPs) and flag key areas of interest for proposers to target in subsequent Calls for Projects.
- **Municipalities and Project, Program, Project Concept, and Scientific Study Proponents** will use these tools to develop strategic, multi-benefit Projects, Programs, and Studies that align with the needs identified in this Plan. When applying for Infrastructure Program funding, Proponents are required to demonstrate Project alignment with the Plan.
- **Community members and other interested parties** may explore local project benefits, and advocate for priorities through the Community Strengths and Needs Assessment (CSNA) [Survey](#) and [Dashboard](#).
- **Watershed Coordinators** will support implementation of the Initial Watershed Plans by supporting proponents in aligning applications and reports accordingly.

Program-Wide Watershed Planning Outputs

Program-Wide Benefits, Baselines, Targets, and Cumulative Watershed Area Needs

Benefits from SCW Program Projects funded to date (Fiscal Years 20-21 to 24-25) were evaluated to establish the 2025 Constructed Baseline and 2025 Total Benefits. The 2025 Constructed Baseline represents anticipated benefits by constructed Projects and provides a reference point for tracking future investments and measuring progress over time. Total Benefits include benefits from anticipated, planned, and constructed projects plus future reported project benefits that will be based on project monitoring. The 2025 Total Benefits provide a snapshot of SCW Program Project benefits at the start of the Watershed Planning process and inform target setting, quantifying WA Needs, and identifying strategies and opportunities. Targets are aspirational, calibrated to the scope of the SCW Program, and tailored to each WA.

Figure ES-1 provides a snapshot of benefits to date by SCW Projects and a look ahead at the targets and WA Needs established at the start of the Watershed Planning Initiative in 2025. It is a conceptual illustration of how benefits and baselines are assessed for target setting. A revised snapshot and look ahead reflective of progress made will be released during future Adaptive Management.

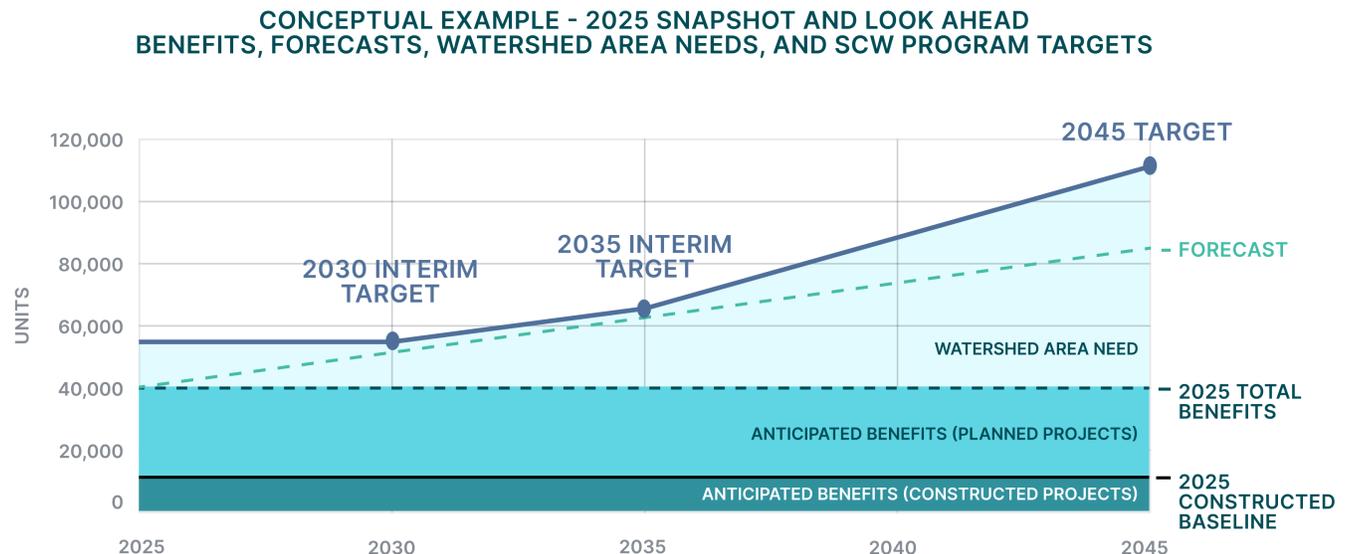


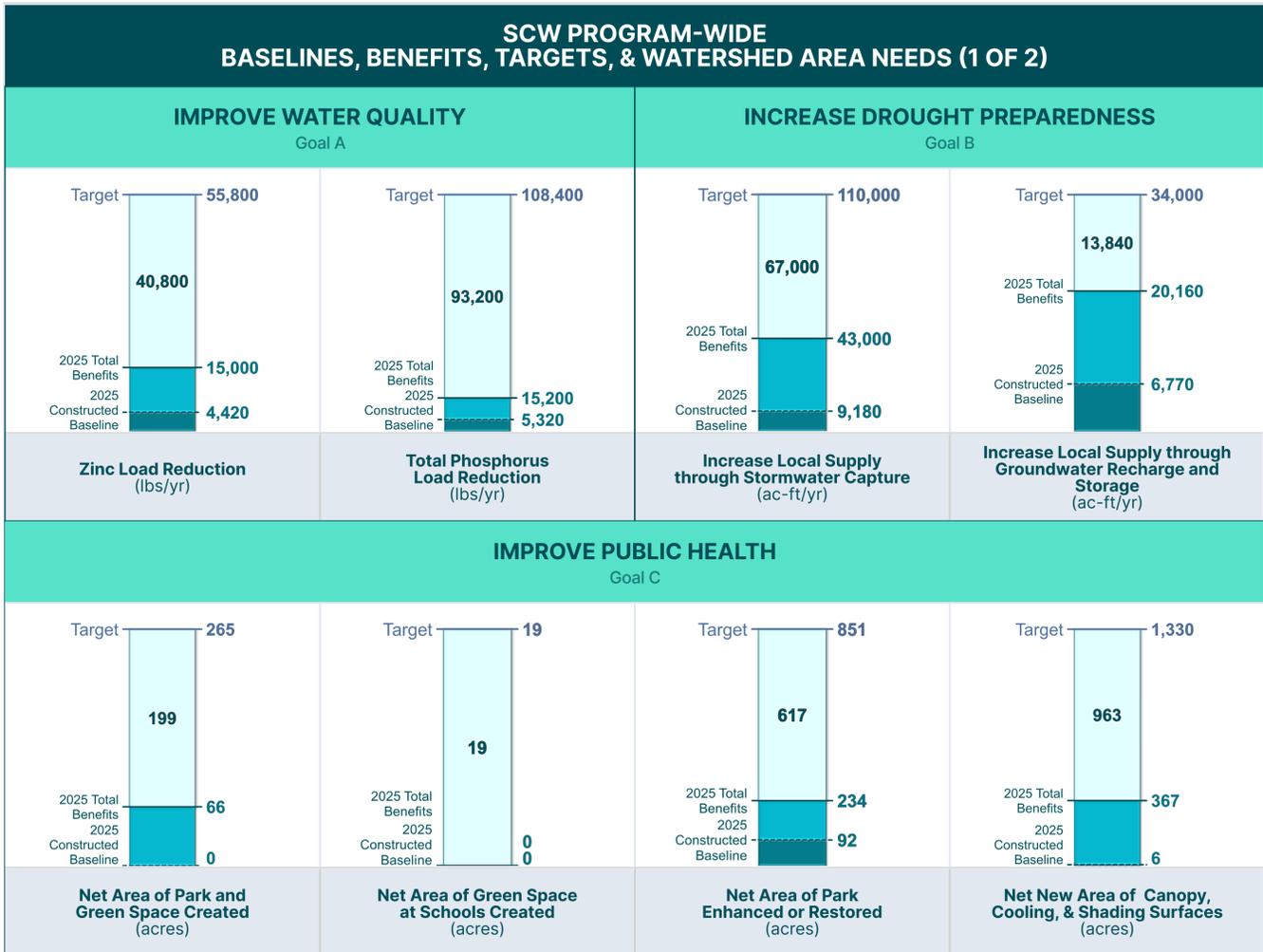
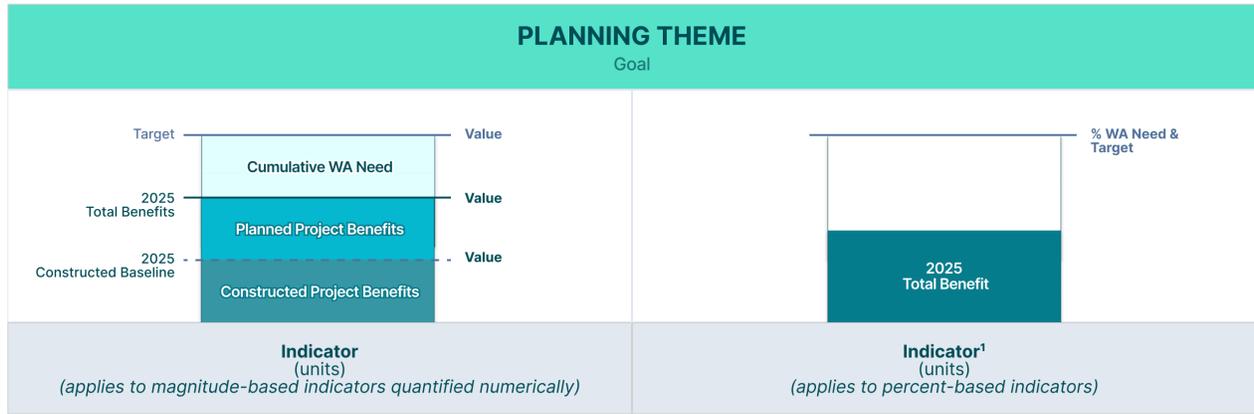
FIGURE ES - 1

See Chapters 3, 4, and 5 in each of the Initial Watershed Plans for an overview of the methods for establishing benefits, baselines, targets, and WA Needs. More detailed methods and data sources are available in Appendix H.

To track progress, the Plans use metrics called Indicators. Indicators are used to sum Project benefits and enable progress tracking across large spatial scales, such as the SCW Program region or per WA. Each Indicator correlates to a target and aligns with one of the 14 SCW Program Goals.

Program-wide 2025 benefits, baselines, targets, and cumulative WA Needs for each Indicator are summarized below. Please reference Chapter 4 and Appendix G for additional details on Indicator development and quantification methods.

LEGEND: This legend outlines the visual format used throughout these charts to communicate benefits, baselines, targets, and Watershed Area (WA) Needs. All indicators have a target benchmark year of 2045, except for the WQ indicators which have a benchmark year of 2038.



¹ Percentage-based Indicators do not accrue benefits in a linear or additive manner. Instead, they reflect cumulative progress over time. As a result, their benefit values may fluctuate, either decreasing or increasing from year to year, depending on the evolving proportion of benefits realized throughout the lifetime of the SCW Program. To ensure consistent long-term progress toward targets, WA Needs for percentage-based Indicators are set at their respective targets. This means that the specified percentage or higher one, must be achieved and sustained to demonstrate continued progress toward targets.

FIGURE ES - 2



² Per Goal J, the required DAC benefit ratio is determined as 110% of the proportion of the DAC population relative to the total population within the WA.

FIGURE ES - 3

Program-Wide Strategies and Actions

Many strategies and actions are tailored to each WA, but several are universal across all WA. These have been identified as Program-Wide Strategies and Actions. A subset of these strategies have been identified as Priority Strategies. The strategies and actions are intentionally high-level, providing broad direction.

Program-wide strategies are outlined below:

SCW PROGRAM-WIDE STRATEGIES	
IMPROVE WATER QUALITY Goal A	
1.1	Prioritize high performance Projects and Programs in areas with the highest pollutant loads
INCREASE DROUGHT PREPAREDNESS Goal B	
2.1	Link MS4 compliance and water supply planning to maximize stormwater capture for water quality and water supply*
IMPROVE PUBLIC HEALTH Goal C	
3.1	Evaluate open space and large lot potential, particularly on school campuses*
3.2	Create, enhance, and restore park and green space, especially in high-need communities
3.3	Help communities most affected by extreme heat mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change
DELIVER MULTI-BENEFITS WITH NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS & DIVERSE PROJECTS Goal E, F,G	
4.1	Acknowledge, where feasible, other capital improvement programs that can contribute to regional outcomes*
4.2	Deliver nature-based, multi-benefit Projects and Programs that improve water quality while addressing community priorities and concerns
LEVERAGE FUNDING & INVEST IN RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT Goal D, H, I	
5.1	Bolster SCW Program and regional coordination to support identification and communication of alternative funding sources and opportunities
5.2	Bolster the Scientific Study Program through enhanced review, coordination, and dissemination of results
EQUITABLY DISTRIBUTE BENEFITS Goal J, K	
6.1	Consider historic land use disparities and environmental justice metrics across the SCW Program area*
6.2	Advance equity and prioritize new investments particularly in communities not currently served by a SCW Program Project or Program
PROMOTE GREEN JOBS AND CAREER PATHWAYS Goal M	
7.1	Prioritize smaller Projects for which construction and maintenance jobs are more likely to come from a local labor force
7.2	Invest in research and Programs that promote permanent career pathways
7.3	Coordinate job placement and partner with workforce training and pre-apprenticeship programs
ENSURE ONGOING OPERATIONS & MAINTENANCE FOR PROJECTS Goal N	
8.1	Maintain a skilled, local workforce to ensure quality construction and comprehensive operations & maintenance (O&M)
8.2	Ensure sufficient resources are set aside for Project O&M and monitoring
8.3	Promote wildfire resilience through fire-resilient O&M protocols for Projects
8.4	Integrate post-construction monitoring data into O&M plans
PRIORITIZE MEANINGFUL ENGAGEMENT	
9.1	Promote meaningful and sustained outreach and engagement through regional coordination and expertise
9.2	Ensure sufficient resources are set aside for Project O&M and monitoring
9.3	Promote fire-adapted communities through enhanced education and outreach

*SCW Program-wide Priority Strategy based on WASC engagement

Note: While some strategies may not explicitly reference water quality, in accordance with the SCW Program Implementation Ordinance, all SCW Program Projects and Programs are required to include a Water Quality Benefit.

FIGURE ES - 4

Program-Wide Opportunities

Strategies are designed to be implemented synergistically to maximize co-benefits in addition to Water Quality Benefits. To support this integrated approach, the Initial Watershed Plans identify composite opportunities. Composite opportunities serve as a strategic foundation for prioritizing investments that combine multiple strategies to deliver multi-benefit Projects and Programs that address multiple SCW Program Goals.

Figure ES-5 outlines Program-wide opportunities to improve Water Quality and increase Water Supply. Opportunity layers in the Planning Tool serve as a dynamic, data-driven resource to identify needs and opportunities across the WAs. Browse the [Planning Tool](#) to explore more.

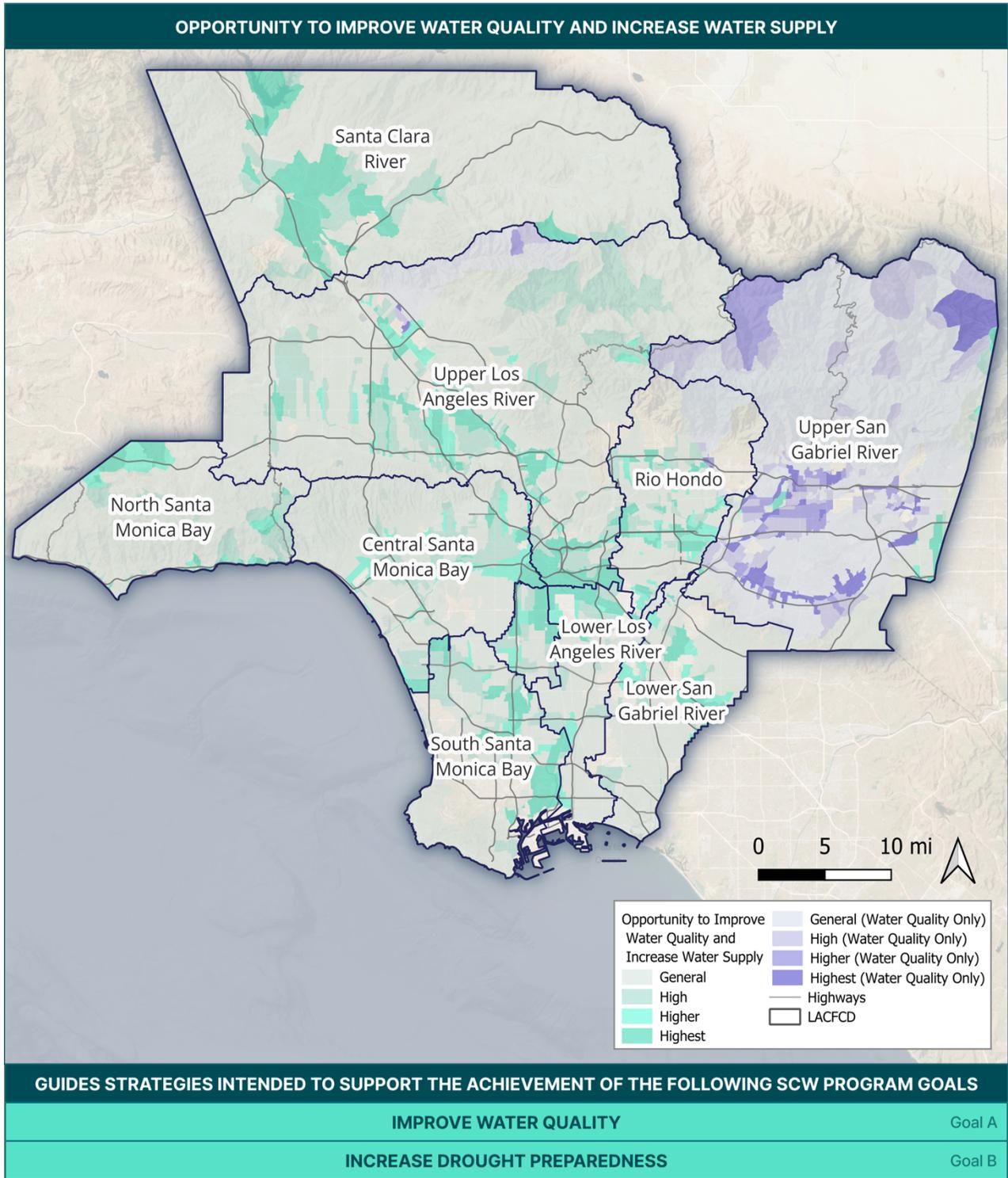


FIGURE ES - 5

Next Steps and Recommendations for Watershed Planning

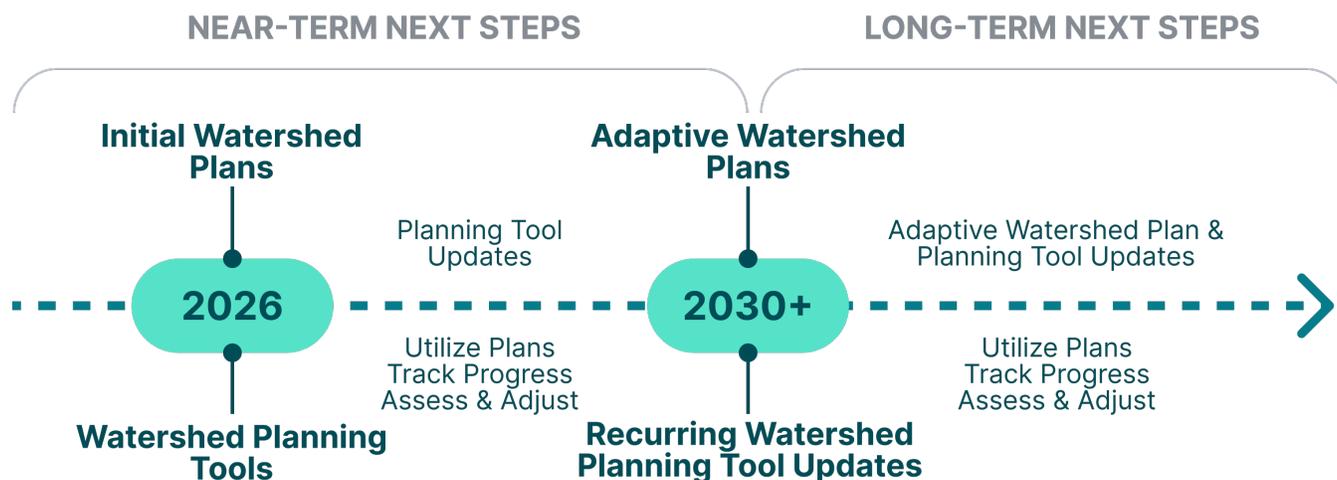


FIGURE ES - 6

The Initial Watershed Plans were adopted by the Los Angeles County Flood Control District (LACFCD) Chief Engineer in February 2026 to serve as SCW Program guidance documents and support future decision-making by the Regional, Municipal and District Programs.

Following adoption of the Initial Watershed Plans in 2026, near-term next steps for Watershed Planning include addressing key planning gaps through engagement, data collection, new guidance and guidelines, Scientific Studies, and updates to the SCW Program Portal. Gaps will be addressed through Adaptive Management efforts (e.g., new guidance, data collection, studies) and incorporated into future Adaptive Watershed Plans and the Planning Tool.

In the long term, the Watershed Planning Initiative will execute annual updates to the Planning Tool to ensure Project data and opportunities remain current. Adaptive Watershed Plans, developed roughly every five years or as needed, will assess the Plans' impact and use, incorporating new planning elements and data to reflect ongoing progress, emerging priorities, and evolving WA conditions.