

From: South LA Tree Coalition <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, February 9, 2026 3:25 PM
To: DPW-SafeCleanWaterLA
Subject: 2026 SCWP Biennial Report Public Comment
Attachments: SLATC_ULAR_SCWP_CommentLetter_2026-02-09.pdf

CAUTION: External Email. Proceed Responsibly.

Dear ULAR Watershed Area Steering Committee and SCWP Staff,
The South LA Tree Coalition is submitting the following comments on the Upper Los Angeles River Watershed Biennial Report based on our on-the-ground work with tree-based green infrastructure in South Los Angeles.

Sincerely,
Theresa Maysonet
South LA Tree Coalition
info@southlatrees.org



February 9, 2026
Upper Los Angeles River Watershed
Watershed Coordinators
1000 S. Fremont Ave.
Suite A-9 East, 4th Floor
Alhambra, CA 91803

Re: Community Feedback on ULAR Watershed Biennial Report (SCWP)
Dear ULAR Steering Committee and Safe, Clean Water Program Staff:

The South LA Tree Coalition (SLATC) is a non-profit urban forestry organization working at the intersection of tree canopy, water, and environmental justice. Our work focuses on communities that are frequently identified as “priority” or “disadvantaged” within watershed planning efforts, yet too often experience gaps between planning goals and on-the-ground implementation.

We offer the following comments to help strengthen the report and future SCWP investments:

1. Trees Should Be Treated as Essential Green Infrastructure, Not Supplemental Amenities

While the report appropriately emphasizes multi-benefit green infrastructure, trees are often framed as secondary landscape elements rather than as functional infrastructure that delivers stormwater capture, heat mitigation, air quality, and public health benefits. SLATC encourages ULAR and SCWP

to more explicitly recognize street and parkway trees as critical infrastructure assets whose performance depends on proper siting, long-term care, and protection.

2. Long-Term Maintenance Must Be Central to Project Success

The report highlights project delivery and outcomes, but continued success depends on maintenance beyond initial installation. In South Los Angeles, we routinely see tree planting projects fail not at installation, but quietly in years 3-5, when watering responsibilities become unclear and funding disappears. This pattern is familiar to residents and erodes trust in public green infrastructure investments.

3. South Los Angeles Requires Both Investment and Protection

South Los Angeles communities continue to face cumulative environmental burdens, including canopy loss from infrastructure projects, utility work, and street and sidewalk repair. Government responses to liability and accessibility lawsuits frequently result in tree removals rather than root-friendly design solutions. SCWP investments should be paired with stronger attention to protecting existing green assets so that stormwater and climate benefits are not undermined by ongoing tree damage or removals.

SLATC supports the goals of the Safe, Clean Water Program and appreciates ULAR's efforts to evaluate progress and refine watershed strategies. We look forward to continued dialogue and collaboration to ensure that future SCWP investments fully realize their equity, climate resilience, and environmental justice objectives particularly in communities that have historically been under-resourced.

Thank you for considering these comments.

Sincerely,

Theresa Maysonet

Co-Founder

South LA Tree Coalition

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