

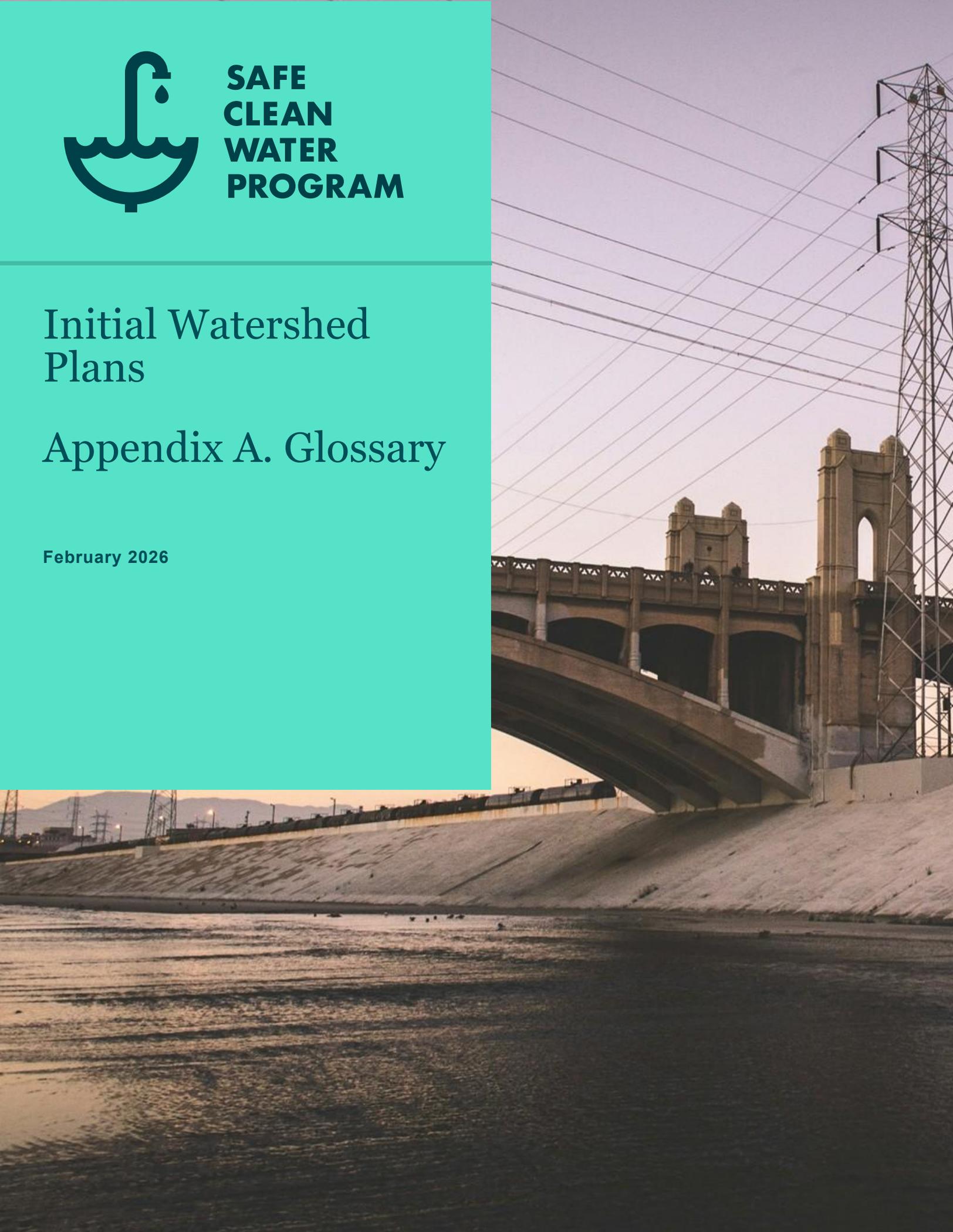


**SAFE  
CLEAN  
WATER  
PROGRAM**

**Initial Watershed  
Plans**

**Appendix A. Glossary**

**February 2026**





# Initial Watershed Plans: Appendix A. Glossary

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# Appendix A. Glossary

Terms and definitions presented here are intended to support a shared language and understanding of concepts used in this Initial Watershed Plan. Some definitions presented here are derived from the Los Angeles County Flood Control District (LACFCD) Municipal Code Safe, Clean Water Program (SCW Program) Implementation Ordinance (LACFCD Code §16).

**2025 Total Benefits:** Reflect the sum of anticipated and reported benefits of all SCW Program Projects funded to date (FY20-21 to FY24-25) using the most up-to-date estimates or data for each Project regardless of stage including planned and constructed Projects. This benefit subtype provides a snapshot of SCW Program Project benefits at the start of the Watershed Planning process. These results inform key Initial Watershed Plan elements, including target-setting (Chapter 4), the quantification of Watershed Area Needs (Chapter 5), and the identification of strategies to address those needs (Chapter 5).

**2025 Constructed Baselines:** Reflect anticipated benefits of SCW Program Projects with a constructed status based on Regional Program FY24-25 Midyear Reports and Municipal Program FY23-24 Annual Reports.

**24-hour, 85<sup>th</sup> percentile Design Storm Event:** This event represents the rainfall depth that is equaled or exceeded in only 15% of all recorded 24-hour storm events in a given year. It serves as the standard design storm for the majority of SCW Program wet-weather stormwater capture Projects because studies across urbanized regions, including Los Angeles County, have shown that the majority of total annual stormwater runoff volume is generated by relatively frequent, smaller storms. Designing infrastructure to this design storm capacity provides sufficient capture and addresses a large portion of annual pollutant loads while avoiding significantly higher costs and footprint requirements associated with sizing infrastructure for rare, higher-intensity storm events.

**Adaptive Management:** an iterative, incremental approach to making decisions and adjustments in response to new learnings.

**Actions:** general types or areas of Projects, Programs, and/or Scientific Studies to implement to support a strategy.

**Anticipated benefits:** Reflects benefits anticipated from SCW Program Projects in planning, design, construction or post-construction phases based on modeling, conceptual plans, and/or design plans.

**Community Investment Benefit (CIB)<sup>1</sup>:** a benefit created in conjunction with a Project or Program, such as, but not limited to: improved flood management, flood conveyance, or flood risk mitigation; creation, enhancement or restoration of parks, habitat or wetlands; improved public access to waterways; enhanced or new recreational opportunities; and greening of schools. A CIB can also help support public health efforts. For example, reducing heat island effect and increasing shade or planting of trees or other vegetation that increase carbon reduction/sequestration and improve air quality.

**Community Strengths and Needs Assessment (CSNA):** a repeatable [survey](#) created to support Watershed Planning by gathering input from community members about strengths to be reinforced and wants to be addressed.

**Countywide targets:** targets developed by parallel or prior Los Angeles region planning efforts, such as those within the OurCounty Sustainability Plan, the Los Angeles County Water Plan, Vision 2045, and the 2016 Parks Need Assessment.

**Disadvantaged Community (DAC)<sup>1</sup>:** Census Block Group that has an annual median household income of less than 80% of the Statewide annual median household income (as defined in California Water Code section 79505.5).

**District Program<sup>1</sup>:** one of three sub-programs within the SCW Program. Public Works Program funds and facilitates program administration, as well as District Projects, education and curriculum programs, and local workforce job training. Ten percent of the revenue from the annual Special Parcel Tax shall be allocated to the Public Works Program.

**Dry-weather Project:** Designed to capture and treat non-stormwater runoff. These Projects are typically designed to capture and treat 100% of the non-stormwater runoff generated within their capture areas.

**Dry-weather Project with wet-weather Water Quality Benefits:** Project types under the Regional Program have historically been used for scoring purposes; so, while some Projects may be labeled as 'dry-weather' for scoring purposes, such Projects may also provide some wet-weather runoff capture or treatment. Dry-weather Projects that capture and treat wet-weather runoff typically manage less than 50% of the design storm event.

**Eligible Expenditures<sup>1</sup>:** Expenditures eligible for SCW Program funds include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Infrastructure development tasks including design and planning, preparation of grant applications, preparation of environmental documents, obtaining permits, construction, operations and maintenance, and inspection;
- Real property acquisition, including fee title, leases, easements, and right-of-entry permits, necessary to implement Projects selected for funding under the SCW Program;
- Scientific and technical studies, and Stormwater or Urban Runoff modeling and monitoring;
- Water quality or regional water resilience planning;
- Stormwater or Urban Runoff residential and/or commercial retrofits;
- Projects or studies to pilot or investigate new technologies or methodologies to increase or improve Stormwater or Urban Runoff capture or reduce Stormwater or Urban Runoff pollution for improving water quality, increasing local water supplies, or improving the quality of life for communities;
- Development of Feasibility Studies to enable Infrastructure Program Project Applicants to submit Projects for consideration for SCW Program funds;
- The modification, upgrade, retrofit, or expansion of an existing Project to incorporate new elements to increase Stormwater or Urban Runoff capture and reduce Stormwater or Urban Runoff pollution to provide an additional Water Quality Benefit, Water Supply Benefit, or Community Investment Benefit;
- Debt financing, should Public Works or a Municipality determine that bonds or loans are prudent and necessary to implement Projects or Programs;
- Stormwater or Urban Runoff Programs such as, but not limited to, school education and curriculum, public education, watershed coordination efforts, regional water quality planning and coordination, and local workforce job training;
- Incurred on or after November 6, 2018 to be considered eligible;
- Administration and implementation of the SCW Program; and
- Payments pursuant to an incentive program, as may be established by the Board.

**Environmental Justice:** defined by California state law as “the fair treatment of people of all races, cultures and incomes with respect to the development, adoption, implementation and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations and policies.”

**Forecast:** projected benefits that can be measured, such as zinc load reduction, increase local water supply through stormwater capture and groundwater recharge/storage, net area of park and green space created or enhanced/restored, and net new area of canopy, cooling, and shading surfaces, provided by SCW Program Regional and Municipal Program Projects. Forecasts estimate the potential trajectory of SCW Program Project benefits to provide context for target-setting. Forecasts are a linear projection of benefits based on the rate of benefit accrual over the past three fiscal years (FY22-23 through FY24-25) from the current date through 2045 (2038 for Improve Water Quality Indicators). *See Appendix H for more information on benefit forecasts*

**Goals:** the 14 SCW Program implementation Goals (A-N) outlined in SCW Program Implementation Ordinance (LACFCO Code §18):

- A.** Improve water quality and contribute to attainment of water-quality requirements.
- B.** Increase drought preparedness by capturing more Stormwater and/or Urban Runoff to store, clean, reuse, and/or recharge groundwater basins.
- C.** Improve public health by preventing and cleaning up contaminated water, increasing access to open space, providing additional recreational opportunities, and helping communities mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change through activities such as increasing shade and green space.
- D.** Leverage other funding sources to maximize SCW Program Goals.
- E.** Invest in infrastructure that provides multiple benefits.
- F.** Prioritize Nature-Based Solutions.
- G.** Provide a spectrum of project sizes from neighborhood to regional scales.
- H.** Encourage innovation and adoption of new technologies and practices.
- I.** Invest in independent scientific research.
- J.** Provide DAC Benefits, including Regional Program infrastructure investments, that are not less than one hundred and ten percent (110%) of the ratio of the DAC population to the total population in each Watershed Area.
- K.** Provide Regional Program infrastructure funds benefiting each Municipality in proportion to the funds generated within their jurisdiction, after accounting for allocation of the one hundred and ten percent (110%) return to DACs, to the extent feasible.
- L.** Implement an iterative planning and evaluation process to ensure adaptive management.
- M.** Promote green jobs and career pathways.
- N.** Ensure ongoing operations and maintenance for Projects.

**Green Infrastructure:** methods for naturally managing rain and flood water to reduce and treat stormwater runoff while also improving the local environment by mimicking natural processes.

**Indicator:** a metric that measures progress toward achieving Goals. Indicators summarize Performance Measures by Watershed Area and on a SCW Program-wide scale to quantify cumulative benefits of SCW Program funded Projects to communicate and track progress toward Goals. Future Watershed Planning efforts may similarly quantify benefits by other SCW Program investments and activities.

**Infrastructure Program<sup>1</sup>:** part of the Regional Program, this program shall implement multi-benefit watershed-based Projects that have a Water Quality Benefit, as well as, either a Water Supply Benefit or Community Investment Benefit, or both.

**Initial Watershed Plan outputs:** tasks to be conducted and Projects and Programs to be developed that will optimize Watershed Planning benefits that were identified during the development of the Initial Watershed Plans. These outputs will contribute to targets and Goals.

**Interested Party:** any individual, group, or organization that participates in, contributes to, or is affected by the SCW Program. Interested parties include SCW Program governance bodies (e.g., Watershed Area Steering Committees, Scoring Committees, and the Regional Oversight Committee), Municipalities, SCW Program Watershed Coordinators, community members, community-based organizations, Los Angeles County Public Works staff, subject matter experts, and SCW Program consultants.

**Multi-Benefit Project<sup>1</sup>:** a Project that has: (1) a Water Quality Benefit, and (2) a Water Supply Benefit or a Community Investment Benefit, or both.

**Municipal Program<sup>1</sup>:** one of three sub-programs within the SCW Program. The Municipal Program distributes funds across the 86 Los Angeles region Municipalities to fund Project initiatives that include a Water Quality Benefit within those Municipalities and create benefits for the communities they serve.

- Revenue from the annual Special Parcel Tax (40%) shall be allocated for the Municipal Program. Each Municipality shall receive a proportional share of these Municipal Program funds based on the Special Parcel Tax revenues collected within each Municipality.
- A Municipality must spend at least 70% of its Municipal Program funds annually on eligible expenses related to Projects or Programs implemented on or after November 6, 2018, which also includes operations and maintenance of Projects built to comply with the MS4 Permit, so long as the Project complies with Municipal Program requirements.
- Up to 30% of a Municipality's Municipal Program funds may be used to pay for costs and expenses incurred on or after November 6, 2018, related to the continuation of Programs implemented or the maintenance of Projects implemented prior to November 6, 2018.

**Nature-Based Solution (NBS)<sup>1</sup>:** a Project that utilizes natural processes that slow, detain, infiltrate or filter Stormwater or Urban Runoff. These methods may include relying predominantly on soils and vegetation; increasing the permeability of Impermeable Areas; protecting undeveloped mountains and floodplains; creating and restoring riparian habitat and wetlands; creating rain gardens, bioswales, and parkway basins; and enhancing soil through composting, mulching, and planting trees and vegetation, with preference for native species. NBS may also be designed to provide additional benefits such as sequestering carbon, supporting biodiversity, providing shade, creating and enhancing parks and open space, and improving quality of life for surrounding communities. NBS include Projects that mimic natural processes, such as green streets, spreading grounds and planted areas with water storage capacity.

**Net Countable Supply:** The portion of runoff that would not have already been captured downstream of a Project by an existing water recharge/treatment facility.

**Opportunities:** physical or conceptual areas with the most potential for Projects and Programs to address Watershed Area Needs and support achievement of Goals.

**Performance Measure (PM):** metric that quantifies benefits provided by individual Projects and Programs.

**Planning Themes:** categories for organizing Watershed Planning discussion, concepts, and associated Goals, Indicators, and Performance Measures.

**Priority pollutant for Watershed Planning:** A pollutant for which its load reduction was identified through Watershed Planning as a key Indicator for quantifying SCW Program Project Water Quality Benefits and for tracking SCW Program progress. Priority pollutants for each Watershed Area are selected based on those identified as limiting pollutants in the Watershed Management Programs located within the respective Watershed Area.

**Priority Strategies:** are determined through interested party engagement and describe the preferred means for addressing Watershed Area Needs and achieving Goals.

**Program<sup>1</sup>:** a planned, coordinated group of activities related to increasing Stormwater or Urban Runoff capture or reducing Stormwater or Urban Runoff pollution in the SCW Program Watershed Areas.

**Program Project:** a Regional Infrastructure Program Project funded through an approved Stormwater Investment Plan during fiscal years 2020-2025 or a Municipal Program Project with reported expenditures in fiscal years 2020-2024 Annual Reports or allocations in the fiscal year 2024-2025 Annual Plan. Anticipated and realized benefits by these Projects are compiled and summarized by Indicator in the Initial Watershed Plans to establish 2025 Total Benefits.

**Project<sup>1</sup>:** the development (including design, preparation of environmental documents, obtaining applicable regulatory permits, construction, inspection, and similar activities), operations and maintenance (including monitoring), of a physical structure or facility that increases Stormwater or Urban Runoff capture or reduces Stormwater or Urban Runoff pollution in the SCW Program Watershed Area. Projects may be described as:

- Large Project: diverts from a nearby stormwater conveyance.
- Small Project: captures localized surface runoff.

**Project proponent:** the entity that has primary responsibility for the specific SCW Program Project. This could be the Project designer(s), developer(s), and/or investor(s). These individuals or organizations are responsible for the Project's overall control and success.

**Regional Oversight Committee (ROC) <sup>1</sup>:** the body created by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors whose responsibilities include, but are not limited to, assessing

and making recommendations to the Board regarding whether the SCW Program Goals are being achieved.

**Regional Program<sup>1</sup>:** one of the sub-programs within the SCW Program. The Regional Program receives 50% of the annual revenues from the Special Parcel Tax to fund the "Infrastructure Program," a "Technical Resources Program," and a "Scientific Studies Program." Watershed Areas shall be established to facilitate implementation of the Regional Program. Each Watershed Area shall be overseen by a Watershed Area Steering Committee that includes Municipalities, agencies, community stakeholders, and other interested parties.

**Reported Benefits:** Reflect post-construction or operational benefits supported by monitoring, reporting, or performance data. Note that metrics for reported benefits are not included or quantified in the Initial Watershed Plans. SCW Program guidance for Project monitoring and post-performance metrics is expected to be published in 2026.

**Scoring Committee<sup>2</sup>:** a group of six subject-matter experts in Water Quality Benefits, Water Supply Benefits, Nature-Based Solutions, and Community Investment Benefits created by the Board to review and score Projects and Feasibility Studies in connection with the Infrastructure Program.

**Special Parcel Tax (Measure W):** a special tax on private properties that cause runoff pollution, which funds the three subprograms of the SCW Program.

**Targets:** numeric value of achievement for Indicators for the SCW Program and each Watershed Area. Targets describe the cumulative benefits that are hoped to be achieved by SCW Program funded Projects by 2045. However, targets for the pollutant reduction Indicators under the Improve Water Quality Planning Theme are set for 2038, to align with regulatory water quality standards and Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) milestones. Watershed Area targets quantitatively and qualitatively describe the cumulative benefits to be provided by SCW Program funded Projects by 2045 (or 2038), passed by each WA.

**Stormwater Investment Plan (SIP)<sup>1</sup>:** a five-year plan developed by a Watershed Area Steering Committee that allocates funding for Projects and Programs in the Regional Program's Infrastructure Program, Technical Resources Program, and Scientific Studies Program for the ensuing fiscal year and includes funding that has been earmarked for four subsequent years. SIPs will be approved by the Board on an annual basis.

**Strategies:** describe the means through which SCW Program Goals can be achieved and Watershed Area Needs are addressed. Strategies are determined by working backwards from the desired outcomes to identify the necessary actions to achieve them. The Initial Watershed Plans establish strategies to support progress toward a given target and the achievement of SCW Program Goals. Priority Strategies, synthesized through Watershed Area Steering Committee engagement, focus on preferred actions for the respective Watershed Area or SCW Program-wide.

**Watershed Planning:** a dynamic process by the SCW Program involving establishing targets to quantify progress towards SCW Program Goals, incorporating evolving interested party and community priorities, and identifying opportunities for multi-benefit Projects and Project concepts, Programs, and Studies intended to guide prospective applicants, Municipalities, and Los Angeles County Public Works in developing Projects and Programmatic investments that will best serve the nine SCW Program Watershed Areas.

**Water Quality Benefit<sup>1</sup>:** means a reduction in Stormwater or Urban Runoff pollution, such as improvements in the chemical, physical, and biological characteristics of Stormwater or Urban Runoff in the SCW Program Watershed Areas. Activities resulting in this benefit include but are not limited to: infiltration or treatment of Stormwater or Urban Runoff, non-point source pollution control, and diversion of Stormwater or Urban Runoff to a sanitary sewer system.

**Water Supply Benefit<sup>1</sup>:** means an increase in the amount of locally available water supply, provided there is a nexus to Stormwater or Urban Runoff capture. Activities resulting in this benefit include, but are not limited to, the following: reuse and conservation practices, diversion of Stormwater or Urban Runoff to a sanitary sewer system for direct or indirect water recycling, increased groundwater replenishment or available yield, or offset of potable water use.

**Watershed Area Needs:** represents progress needed to meet a given target and support the achievement of SCW Program Goals. For magnitude-based Indicators, this is the difference between the Total Benefits of an Indicator and the Watershed Area target for that Indicator.

**Watershed Area Steering Committee (WASC)<sup>1</sup>:** means a body created by the Board of Supervisors, one for each Watershed Area, for the purpose of developing Stormwater Investment Plans and recommendations for other activities to be funded through the Regional Program.

**Watershed Coordinator<sup>1</sup>:** one or more persons assigned to assist a Watershed Area Steering Committee with community and stakeholder education and engagement and to perform other activities.

**Wet-weather Project:** Designed to capture and treat stormwater and non-stormwater runoff. These Projects are typically designed to capture and treat 100% of stormwater runoff generated within their capture area during the 85th percentile, 24-hour storm event and treat at least 50% of influent pollutant loads.

1: As defined in Chapter 16 of the Los Angeles County Flood Control District Code for the SCW Program Implementation Ordinance ([LACFCD Code §16](#)).

2: As defined in Chapter 18 of the Los Angeles County Flood Control District Code for the SCW Program Implementation Ordinance ([LACFCD Code §18](#)).