Regional Oversight Committee
Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, September 9, 2026
1:00pm – 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, LA City Resident
Bruce Reznik, Los Angeles Waterkeeper
Diana Tang, Long Beach Water Department, Chair
Dave Pedersen, Las Virgenes Municipal Water District
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)
David Nahai, Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board Chair (non-voting member)

Meeting Summary:

The ROC received updates about the District Program, 2026 Biennial Progress Report Interagency Task Force, and the Ad Hoc Workforce Development Subcommittee's Report of Findings & Recommendations.

Key Action Items:

- Public Works will consider feedback provided by the ROC about increasing opportunities for inter-agency collaboration in the Regional and District Programs.
- Public Works will review ROC feedback on the District Program
- Public Works will review recommendations to manage late or missing required audits from Program participants and the request to provide the District Program audit for ROC review and comment.
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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 was to receive District Program Report Summaries and Updates, 2026 Biennial Progress Report Interagency Task Force Updates, and the Ad Hoc Workforce Development Subcommittee's Report of Findings & Recommendations.

4. *Ex Parte* Communication Disclosures

Member Belinda Faustinos disclosed a recent discussion with LA Waterkeeper.

5. Approval of August 12, 2026 Meeting Minutes

Chair Tang presented the August 12, 2026 meeting minutes. Member Dave Pedersen motioned to approve the August 12 meeting minutes, seconded by Vice-Chair Maria Mehranian. The motion was approved with seven votes in favor, one in abstention, and one absent at the time of voting (approved, see vote tracker).

6. Public Comment Period

No public comment cards were submitted prior to the meeting. Virtual attendees, call-in users, and in-person attendees were invited to provide public comment. The Executive Clerk invited those who submitted public comment cards and were present virtually or online to provide a comment.

Yael Pardess (Save San Pascual Park, Sierra Club/Water Committee) provided comment opposing the Arroyo Seco Water Reuse Project and asked the ROC to take action to halt the Project.

A call-in user did not identify themselves and provided comment inquiring how to request documentation regarding the Arroyo Seco Water Reuse Project. Chair Tang noted that the ROC does not answer questions during a public comment period per procedure and directed staff to follow up with the caller offline. The caller asked about funding sources for another project near the Arroyo and agreed to follow up outside of the meeting. Chair Tang gave a reminder that the public can email SafeCleanWaterLA@pw.lacounty.gov to contact Public Works staff.

Member David Nahai noted that the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) requires public comments to be submitted at least 10 days in advance of a given meeting, so that Members have time to review the comments. Member Nahai asked the ROC to consider extending the amount of lead time required to submit written public comment. Public Works staff shared that the day-before deadline has been standard SCW Program procedure for years, although it is not a requirement in the Ordinance. Member Barbara Romero commented on the importance of allowing the public enough time to develop and submit their comments. Chair Tang noted that investigating other oversight bodies' guidelines for public comment would be helpful. Member Charles Treviño agreed with Member Nahai, commenting that 24 hours is insufficient for the ROC to review written public comments with the care they deserve. Member Faustinos commented that moving up the public comment timeline would necessitate moving up the timeline for release of other meeting materials, particularly the agenda. Member Reznik agreed with Member Nahai that public comments merit more extensive review and emphasized that implementing this schedule change would require other schedule changes as well.

7. Program Administration Updates

Public Works staff provided updates on SCW Program Regional, Municipal, and District Programs. Presentation slides can be found on the SCW Program website.

Public Works staff provided the following updates:

- The October ROC meeting has been cancelled due to a light agenda; items planned for October will be consolidated with the November meeting.
- The Program Highlights slide will be updated twice a year.
- Over 2,200 responses to the Community Strengths and Needs Assessment (CSNA) have been received to date. Upcoming Watershed Area Steering Committee (WASC) meetings will review Watershed Area-specific CSNA feedback.
- The nine Fiscal Year 2026-2027 (FY26-27) Stormwater Investment Plans (SIPs) have advanced to the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors (BOS). The BOS is tentatively scheduled to take up this year's SIPs on October 20.
- The SCW Program is now offering regional project partnership services to cities with updated service contracts. The County has seen high interest in these services and is continuing to roll them out.
    - At 10AM on September 29, the County will host a workshop giving an overview of the SCW Program's Municipal Reporting Module.

- The SCW Program Scientific Advisory Panel will host a workshop from September 16 to September 18 to help lay out where pressing gaps in current stormwater science exist and inform the development of future studies.
- District Program Highlight: The City of Arcadia Baldwin Lake and Tule Pond Restoration Project held a groundbreaking on September 2.
- Upcoming Program deadlines:
  - The annual application deadline for the Credit Trading Program is at the end of September. This program provides important information for those interested in purchasing or selling SCW Program tax credits.
  - Project Modification Requests (PMRs) must be submitted before the October 31 deadline to be considered for the inclusion in the current SIP.
  - Municipal Program Annual Reports are due on December 31.

Member Mahmud noted that slide 9 covered Municipal Program activity from FY23-24, but Regional Program activity up to FY25-26, and asked what caused the discrepancy. Public Works staff clarified that the Municipal and Regional Programs are on different reporting cycles; the slide includes the best available data from the end of 2025. Public Works staff confirmed that Municipal projects funded after FY24 are not reflected in the slide, which accordingly understates SCW Program accomplishments to date.

Member Nahai asked for clarification about the 46 constructed projects noted in slide 10 and whether the benefits shown reflect both constructed and planned projects. Public Works confirmed that these metrics represent constructed projects.

In response to a question about Municipal Program audits, Public Works staff explained that municipalities are responsible for finding an auditor and submitting the resulting report to the SCW Program. Chair Tang added that Program Audits will be covered more in-depth at an upcoming meeting, and as the ROC moves into next Biennial Progress Report (BPR) period.

Public Works staff confirmed with Member Faustinos that the reported information changes month by month as projects are constructed but also as new information is submitted for designated reporting deadlines. Metrics reported to the ROC can include an “as of” date.

a. 2026 Biennial Progress Report Update – Interagency Task Force

Public Works staff shared that the Interagency Task force held its second meeting at the end of July. LA County Department of Parks and Recreation, Public Health, Department of Economic Opportunity, and the Department of Regional Planning were in attendance. The meeting included discussion about incorporating agencies into Watershed Planning processes and introduced participants to the Watershed Planning Tool.

Member Faustinos flagged that the Interagency Task Force collaboration was not listed as a priority issue. Member Faustinos noted that Infrastructure LA has focused on public agencies within the County but has not included several key organizations in the Santa Monica or San Gabriel areas, such as the United States Forest Service. Member Faustinos encouraged the Program to invite these agencies to the table, especially around water quality and SIP deliberation discussions.

8. Information Item: SCW District Program Focus and Updates

Public Works staff presented District Program Updates. Presentation slides can be found on the SCW Program website.

Tara Dales (Regional Coordination, Stantec) presented on the role of Regional Coordination in the Regional Program. Presentation slides can be found on the SCW Program website.

Public Works staff noted the intention to have one high-level District Program review shared with the ROC each year. Additionally, many District Program-related items are tied to the BPR process and will be discussed further at future meetings.

Member Lauren Ahkiam requested more information on the effort to integrate regional monitoring across the SCW Program and its connection to operations and maintenance (O&M) guidance and training needs. Public Works staff noted that the previous ROC meeting included an update on the recently released Post-Construction Monitoring Guidance.

Member Mahmud asked about monthly Watershed Coordinator meetings, noting the importance of assisting municipalities without stable Public Works departments, to small, Disadvantaged Community cities with high staff turnover who have been less able to participate in the SCW Program. Member Mahmud recommended that at every monthly Watershed Coordinator meeting, there be dedicated discussion about Coordinator outreach to those municipalities.

Member Mahmud noted new awareness of District Projects and their capital costs. Member Mahmud asked what the criteria are to fund a District Project, whether such projects are required to be built on Flood Control District or County-owned property, and whether they are funded with District or Regional Program funds. Public Works staff shared that District Program funds are prioritized first for Program Administration followed by District Education Programs and finally District projects. These funds represent unexpended District Program funds accumulated in the early years of the SCW Program. Some projects, like Baldwin Lake & Tule Pond Restoration Project, also leverage the competitive Regional Program dollars.

Public Works staff shared that District Projects must advance SCW Program goals, which may include education and workforce development. Public Works staff confirmed that District and Municipal Program projects do not go through the Scoring Committee. District Projects are not required to be on County-owned land, but often many have been. Chair Tang noted that it would be helpful to look at the Ordinance to understand District Projects' eligibility, evaluation criteria, and accountability consistent with other program-funded projects. Vice-Chair Mehranian recalled discussions during the development of Measure W about allowing funding for District Projects and determining that these projects would not be subject to Scoring. Public Works staff noted that a minimum of 20% of District funds must be allocated to the Education Program.

Member Faustinos also expressed new awareness about some of the capital projects funded by the District Program and requested more information on how eligibility for these projects appears in the Ordinance. Member Faustinos expressed concern that Education Program funds have not been allocated through FY26-27, despite the requirement to set aside those funds, and requested the opportunity to discuss this more before year's end.

Public Works staff confirmed with Member Mahmud that unincorporated County areas receive Municipal Program funding. Member Mahmud suggested that projects funded by the District Program should go through the Scoring Committee.

Member Mahmud expressed surprise that the Construction High Road Training Program (HRTP) would have a higher target for number of participating students than the O&M HRTP. Member Mahmud suggested that the O&M HRTP should take on more students, given that the construction industry is cyclical and dependent on funding availability, and that construction jobs are shorter in duration.

Member Mahmud suggested that the ROC consider how to manage late or missing required auditing from Program participants, including ability to withhold SCW Municipal Program funds. Upon inquiry, Public Works staff explained that the District Program audit will be provided to the ROC, although the ROC is not responsible for approving the audit. Member Mahmud and Chair Tang recommended that the District audit be submitted to the ROC for discussion.

Public Works staff confirmed with Member Ahkiam that the $3M allocated in FY26-27 for the Grants Program 2.0 is a placeholder amount, as the scope of work has not yet been developed and funding allocations are not finalized. Member Faustinos suggested that the ROC should be involved in the process of education dollar allocations and choosing District Projects, emphasizing the urgency of granting awards. Member Faustinos noted that having Interagency collaboration in the District Program would be beneficial.

Upon inquiry, Public Works staff confirmed that in November the ROC will receive an update on the Municipal Program fund carryover policy that was prompted by a prior ROC discussion. Public Works staff shared that the next ROC meeting to focus on the Municipal Program will take place in March of 2027.

Member Nahai noted that although the Regional Program benefits from highly visible and publicly vetted oversight through the WASCs and Scoring Committee, the Municipal Program also warrants thorough ROC review so the public can better understand its outcomes and receive informed answers to questions.

Member Carl Blum noted that the Municipal Program was driven by the need to address pollution and expressed the need to review metrics that demonstrate progress in pollution reduction. Member Blum suggested that the next BPR investigate overall SCW Program efficacy, potentially partnering with the RWQCB to do so. Vice-Chair Mehranian added that discussion about the Municipal Program should not be limited to Water Quality benefits alone, and asked whether administrative costs are consistent year over year.

Public Works noted that the District Program funds staff resources and reiterated that Administration and Education Programs take funding priority, after which remaining funds are allowed at District discretion to advance SCW Program goals.

Public Works staff noted that staff and the Executive Clerk are available to direct ROC Members to needed resources. Public Works staff added that the countywide benefits from constructed projects are included in meeting slides to demonstrate how projects are moving the needle and reflect both the Municipal and Regional Programs.

9. Information Item: Ad Hoc Workforce Development Subcommittee – Report of Findings & Recommendations

Member Romero, Chair of the Ad Hoc Workforce Development Subcommittee, presented a Report of Findings & Recommendations. The Subcommittee Memo can be found on the SCW Program website.

Member Romero emphasized the importance of workforce development to both built and human infrastructure. The SCW Program has historically elevated Water Quality and Water Supply as strategic priorities, but workforce development has become increasingly visible and important. The Subcommittee found and appreciated that many workforce development resources already exist and considered how to supplement existing efforts while avoiding redundancy. Member Romero emphasized that the Subcommittee's goal is to operationalize workforce development issues and strategies. The Subcommittee investigated how cities or NGOs can learn from LA County and develop their own workforce development programs. Member Romero expressed appreciation for Member Ahkiam, Member Faustinos, Chair Tang, and staff for their work with the Subcommittee.

Member Ahkiam shared that in the County's thinking about how to connect workforce development with existing County efforts and the HRTPs, clear pathways between O&M training and permanent jobs have not yet taken shape. Member Ahkiam shared that the potential for caretaking positions is exciting to the ROC and noted that the Regional Program offers an opportunity to implement workforce development through relationships with project developers.

Member Mahmud noted a missed opportunity to tie in Project Labor Agreements (PLAs) that include commitment to hire locally for projects above a certain threshold. Member Mahmud suggested that the PLA language could specify outreach requirements and local hire commitments and recommended incorporating the suggestion into the Memo.

Member Romero shared that the Watershed Planning Documents underwent public review, so amending them would be a lengthy and complex endeavor. Additionally, the memo is intended to capture ROC recommendations to get staff started on the process of incorporating future amendments.

Member Mahmud commented that the supportive services recommended in the memo would be beneficial, but that they should remain secondary to the primary goal and expense of providing direct training. Chair Tang and Member Ahkiam agreed that while the majority of workforce development dollars should be invested in training, supportive services such as stipends and supplies are less available but nonetheless essential to helping participants secure actual jobs and function most effectively. Member Ahkiam noted that supportive services are also crucial in advancing equity in workforce development, helping place more women and more unhoused participants.

Member Ahkiam asked for clarification on Member Mahmud's recommendation regarding PLAs. Member Mahmud suggested that unions could have some kind of affirmative obligation to look first at local participants and graduates of workforce development programs when hiring. Member Romero noted that the topic of PLA thresholds could be incorporated into the memo, recognizing that PLAs can often increase project costs.

Member Pedersen shared that the water and wastewater sectors benefited from training certification programs because the programs created clear pathways to a career. Member Pedersen emphasized that a stormwater operations and maintenance certificate program could be similarly beneficial, noting that while such programs need not be mandatory, a certificate could increase a trainee's chance of securing an agency position.

Chair Tang thanked the Subcommittee for their efforts and the report.

10. ROC Member Updates

Member Mahmud announced stepping down from the ROC after this meeting and expressed deep appreciation for the ROC and the opportunity to serve.

Chair Tang thanked Member Mahmud for serving on the ROC and expressed appreciation for Member Mahmud's tenacity and attention to detail.

11. Items for Next Agenda/Lookahead

Chair Tang reminded the ROC that the October meeting has been cancelled. Chair Tang shared items for the November agenda, which can be found on the SCW Program website.

12. Meeting Adjourned

Chair Tang thanked ROC Members and the public and adjourned the meeting at 3:34pm.