

# Safe, Clean Water Program

## Call for Projects Round 3 Information Session Questions & Answers

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### General Questions

How does the CEQA provision (Exhibit C) in the Regional Program Fund Transfer Agreement impact disbursement of Safe, Clean Water (SCW) program funds?

According to the SCW Program Transfer Agreement Exhibit C: Special Conditions, for Infrastructure Projects or a Scientific Study that has been selected for inclusion in the Stormwater Investment Plans (SIPs), are required to submit CEQA determination to the District under CEQA. The Project Developer acting as or with the CEQA Lead Agency, shall comply with the current [CEQA guidelines](#).

The Los Angeles County Flood Control District (District) **will not** disburse the SCW Program Contribution for any activities that meet the definition of a Project under CEQA [[Section 15378\(a\)](#)] until the Fund Recipient has provided such documentation, analysis and other work to the District and the District has complied with its obligations as a Responsible Agency under CEQA.

For Infrastructure Projects or Scientific Studies that meet the definition of a Project under CEQA, a CEQA determination by the District is required prior to disbursement of funds.

Funded Activities that require a CEQA determination by the District includes but is not limited to projects with SCW funds tied to construction activities during the disbursement year (even if construction is not planned in that current year), operations and maintenance activities, and scientific studies that make changes to the environment. Project applicants are encouraged to request funds that closely align with the completion of the project's CEQA documentation and schedule.

How will the District address Infrastructure Program (IP) projects already in the Stormwater Investment Plans (SIP) that have cost increases?

Per Ordinance section [18.07.F.5](#) it states, "The Watershed Area Steering Committees shall review the Infrastructure Program Project Developers' quarterly progress and expenditure reports and the annual summary reports to evaluate whether the schedules, budgets, scopes and expected benefits have significantly changed and remain consistent with the SCW Program Goals. Programs and Projects that are over budget or behind schedule, or that demonstrate reduced or revised scope or benefits, may be adjusted or removed from future SIPs." If more funding is requested through Safe, Clean Water (SCW), the project may need to be re-scored and Watershed Area Steering Committee (WASC) approval. Otherwise, the project developer would need to provide leveraged funds to address the funding gap.

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Will the District be preparing a separate set of requirements for operation and maintenance (O&M) applications?

The District intends to explore this topic in the future.

If a project abuts two different watershed areas, which watershed coordinator should the project applicant contact?

The project applicant should contact all watershed coordinator(s) assigned to the respective watershed areas.

For "Vector Minimization," are project applicants required to consult with the local vector control district regardless of project type?

The IP and Technical Resources Program projects are subject to a Vector Minimization Plan. However, the Scientific Studies Program projects are likely not subject to a Vector Minimization Plan.

Are there any changes to the Scientific Studies Program compared to the previous round? If a scientific study applies to all WAs, should the project applicant apply to all WAs within the same proposal?

There are no changes to the Scientific Studies Program. The Scientific Studies applicant should apply to the WA(s) relevant to the study.

Where is the interim guidance being posted?

Disadvantaged Community (DAC), Nature-Based Solutions (NBS), and partial funding Interim Guidelines are available on the Call for Projects webpage (<https://safecleanwaterla.org/call-for-projects/>) under Application References & Resources (scroll to the bottom).

What is an example of the kind of monitoring required for IP projects?

As one of the 19 Feasibility Study requirements, the project's Monitoring Plan should include details which will demonstrate how the Stormwater/Urban Runoff improvements have met the intended goals (i.e., improved water quality, no impacts to the local groundwater).

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Is there a plan for the Regional funds to be distributed proportionately to municipalities?

The ordinance states that Fifty percent (50%) of the collected SCW funds are allocated to the Regional Program. Each of the nine Watershed Area Steering Committees (WASC) have discretion on which projects are recommended for SIP inclusion. Please note that project applicants can include individuals, municipalities, joint power authorities, special districts, etc.

LACFCD Code Section 18.07.B.2.d (and 18.05.K, where same thing is stated as a “goal”) states that “Each Municipality shall receive benefits in proportion to the funds generated within their jurisdiction, after accounting for allocation of the one hundred ten percent (110%) return to DACs, to the extent feasible, to be evaluated annually over a rolling five (5) year period.”

As such, the WASCs are asked to target a proportional distribution (as feasible) of **benefits**, not dollars. If it were simply based on dollars, it’d essentially just be an extension of the Municipal Program local return. Therefore, while dollars to date is one metric of consideration, it’s an inaccurate picture of the full program intent. The District intends to develop some additional guidance that will help quantify and track municipal benefits and their distribution.

Is there an automated email for Program updates?

Yes. In addition to requesting inclusion by emailing [safecleanwaterla@pw.lacounty.gov](mailto:safecleanwaterla@pw.lacounty.gov), there are two formal ways to sign up for overall Program updates or Watershed-specific updates, respectively: 1) by visiting the main SCW site (<https://safecleanwaterla.org/>) and submitting your email address at the bottom of the webpage; and 2) by visiting a specific Committee page (e.g., the ULAR Watershed Area Steering Committee page <https://safecleanwaterla.org/upper-los-angeles-river-watershed-area/>), and submitting your email address in the middle of the Committee’s webpage.

Can an IP project apply for construction and O&M? Or just one or the other?

A project can apply for both construction and O&M funding. However, projects should consider that each WA has limited funding, and that SCW program encourages (and awards points for) use of leveraged funds.

Are the 19 Feasibility Study requirements included in the SCW Projects Module, i.e., if we fill out the SCW Projects Module, we will cover all necessary elements?

Yes, all 19 Feasibility Study requirements are addressed and answered through the fields in the SCW Projects Module application. Depending on the scope of the project, attachments of plans, analyses, and other items will be necessary, however.

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Where can I find the District Watershed Manager for my project site?

Follow this link (<https://safecleanwaterla.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/SWPD-Watershed-Managers.pdf>), which can also be found on Slide 24 of the presentation located within the Call for Projects webpage (<https://safecleanwaterla.org/call-for-projects/>).

If an application is for funding only design, should the schedule as required in #3 of the Feasibility Study guidelines only include the design phase (not construction)?

Correct, the schedule associated with the funding request should only be associated with the project phase making the funding request. However, additional information may prove as valuable context for WASCs and others.

If a project's construction extends more than 1 year, does the project developer need to submit an agreement every year to the SCW Program?

The application must include the project schedule and show the requested funding within each fiscal year. For multi-year projects, the project developer and the District will need to execute the Regional Program Fund Transfer Agreement to receive the 1<sup>st</sup> year disbursement. For the subsequent year, an addendum will need to be executed to receive the next disbursement. Please refer to the template Regional Program Fund Transfer Agreement posted here (<https://safecleanwaterla.org/regional-program-2/>)

Can you please clarify if the SCW Program is now limiting O&M funding requests to 5-year increments? How will this impact entities that do not receive municipal funds or other funding sources for O&M?

Since each approved SIP covers a 5-year period, O&M funding requests are currently limited to 5-year incremental requests. However, there are no limits on a project applying for additional 5-year incremental O&M requests and WASCs are instructed to consider long term O&M needs when programming and planning for Stormwater Investment Plans.

Does the website provide the same results as would be obtained using the full WMMS model program?

This is correct. It is advised to upload all the supporting documents to support your own generated values.

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For project activities included in an approved SIP for a subsequent fiscal year that have changes to the Scope of Work, Budget Plan or any other portions during that fiscal year, will a revised addendum or application need to be re-submitted as part of the addendum to this Agreement for that fiscal year?

For each funded project, no significant unauthorized changes can be made to the scope of work, the project budget, or the intended schedule, etc. The SCW Program understands that unforeseen project delays occur and a project may need a portion of the funds in a following fiscal year instead of the originally intended year. Ultimately, the project must fulfill its activities with the associated approved funding, unless additional funding were to be approved in subsequent SIPs. As the applicant, you are required to submit Quarterly Reports on your project schedule, budget, scope, and benefits provided. The WASC will review those reports annually to make sure it is consistent to your original proposal. Projects that have major inconsistencies (such as being over budget, behind schedule, or provide a reduced scope or benefits) may be subject to loss of funding.

Is it appropriate to reach out to the respective WASC about a project now to make them aware and discuss?

Coordination with the watershed coordinator (not the WASC) is encouraged early in the project's development. When the WASC is considering the project for SIP inclusion, the project proponent can and should relay any coordination that has progressed with the watershed coordinator as well as applicable community engagement to date.