



# Public Comment Form

Name:\* \_\_\_\_\_ Organization\*: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email\*: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone\*: \_\_\_\_\_  
Meeting: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

LA County Public Works may contact me for clarification about my comments

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(ex. "Public Comment: USGR 4/8/20").

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Date: March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2022

To: Lower San Gabriel River WASC Committee Members  
cc: SCWP Staff, Watershed Coordinator

From: OWLA Core Team (Heal the Bay, LAANE, LA Waterkeeper, Nature for All, NRDC, Pacoima Beautiful, SCOPE, The Nature Conservancy and TreePeople)

RE: Input on Project Prioritization for SCWP SIP

OurWaterLA is a diverse coalition of community leaders and organizations from across Los Angeles County united to create a strong water future for Los Angeles. Our goal is to secure clean, safe, affordable, and reliable water for drinking, recreation and commerce now and for the future. We have a deep commitment to uphold the trust that voters had in this program when passing Measure W, that projects which achieve Safe Clean Water Program objectives of water quality, water supply, nature-based solutions, and community investments are prioritized. Your active participation in this body is appreciated and we are excited about the prospects of working together to achieve a better water future for our region.

As we have identified in previous letters to you, this program is dynamic, and based on the first two rounds of project reviews, interested stakeholders such as OWLA, committee members, and staff recognize the need for improvements to program metrics. With contributions from various stakeholders, we are optimistic that future rounds of program funding will yield projects that not only improve water quality and water supply but also provide community investments that are developed with community participation from concept to implementation and operations. The priorities for OWLA have always been clear, community-led project designs using nature-based solutions. These types of designs will not only address MS4 Permit issues but will also result in projects that can meet the multiple priorities for our region including addressing climate change, providing healthy recreational opportunities, and developing engagement tools so that water issues are more broadly understood and supported by our communities.

As has been reported by staff to the committee, there is currently an assessment being conducted to determine how investments and benefits are attributed to disadvantaged communities. The position of OWLA on this issue is very clear; projects must be located in disadvantaged communities in order to be counted. We are expecting that the reports in development by the SCWP staff working with subject matter experts for Round 4 projects will provide us all with the metrics necessary to plan for and achieve our disadvantaged community investment goals. Until that time, we are urging all WASCs to use only the benchmark of projects located in a disadvantaged community to count toward the 110% threshold.

The task before you is to consider the prioritization of projects for funding in this round for the 2022-23 SIP. After careful review of the project submissions, **OWLA strongly recommends** that you approve only those projects that include strong remarks for water quality and water supply and that:

- clearly demonstrate a strong community engagement plan and process took place,
- include a significant community investment element and
- as, applicable, are located in a disadvantaged community.

For this WASC the following projects are recommended for approval:

*Lakewood Equestrian Center*

OWLA supports this project due to:

1. the inclusion of additional native trees, shrubs, and grasses, and natural infiltration cells,
2. the robust community engagement which included incorporating community feedback into the project scope and an additional budget specifically for outreach,
3. the project's potential for diversion and detention capabilities which would reduce potential stress on the local storm drain system,
4. the future possibility of onsite irrigation, to be investigated during the design phase, and,
5. the increased connectivity to nearby Rynerson Park and the San Gabriel River trail system.

Thank you for your consideration of these recommendations. We look forward to continuing our engagement with this committee and the watershed coordinators to ensure a better water future for the region.

Sincerely,  
OurWaterLA Core Team



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To review the guidance documents and for more information, visit [www.SafeCleanWaterLA.org](http://www.SafeCleanWaterLA.org)



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