

**WATER RESOURCES AND FACILITY
MANAGEMENT
COMMITTEE MEETING
AND
SPECIAL MEETING OF THE
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**Tuesday, January 16, 2024
4:00 p.m.**

Committee Members:

Charles M. Treviño, Chair
Katarina Garcia, Vice-Chair



248 E. Foothill Blvd, Room 103
Monrovia, CA 91016

(626) 443-2297
www.upperdistrict.org

*The Water Resources and Facility Management Committee meeting is noticed as a joint committee meeting with the Board of Directors for the purpose of compliance with the Brown Act. Members of the Board who are not assigned to the Water Resources and Facility Management Committee may attend and participate as members of the Board, whether or not a quorum of the Board is present. In order to preserve the function of the Committee as advisory to the Board, members of the Board who are not assigned to the Water Resources and Facility Management Committee will not vote on matters before the Committee.

Communications

1. Call to Order
2. Public Comment

Discussion/Action

3. MWD Updates
 - Pure Water Southern California Update
 - CAMP4W Update
4. Safe Clean Water LA Update
5. Building Update

Oral Reports

6. Water Supply Update

Other Matters

- 7.

Adjournment

Next Meeting: Wednesday, February 7, 2024 at 4:30 p.m.

American Disabilities Act Compliance *(Government Code Section 54954.2(a))*



To request special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the Upper District office at (626) 443-2297 or venessa@usgvmwd.org at least 24 hours prior to meeting.



Introduction

In November 2018, the voters of Los Angeles County approved Measure W, known as the Safe Clean Water Program (SCWP or Program). The Program funds stormwater initiatives that improve water quality, increase our local water supply, and provide community benefits, like green spaces and parks. The program cultivates regional and community partnerships and prioritizes historically underserved communities.

The SCWP receives approximately \$280 million per year and consists of three major programs which each receive a proportional share of the funds: the Regional Program (50%), Municipal Program (40%), and LA County Flood Control District (District) Program (10%).

This Draft biennial SCWP Progress Report (Report) by the Regional Oversight Committee (ROC) provides an update on SCWP progress, assesses the extent to which SCWP Program Goals are being achieved, and provides findings and recommendations to the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors (Board) for adaptive management of the program. This is the first Biennial Report since the establishment of the SCWP. It covers the substantial efforts of the Program's initial five years getting a very large and complex program underway (and includes data from the first two years of reports that are now available).

Some key accomplishments and metrics for the Program to date include:

- **Regional Program:** The Board of Supervisors has approved four annual Stormwater Investment Plans (SIPs; 36 SIPs in total for 9 watersheds), programming \$513.5M for:
 - 126 Infrastructure Program Multi-benefit Projects that are anticipated to capture stormwater from over 265,000 acres spanning 50 different municipalities. These projects will provide an increase in local water supply of over 59,000 acre-feet per year and remove 47 acres of impervious area.
 - Of these, 12 projects are already completed and are capturing stormwater from 25,480 acres spanning 8 municipalities. These completed projects are able to provide an average increase in local water supply of over 2,550 acre-feet per year and removed 25 acres of impervious area.
 - 38 Scientific Studies to further understanding of local conditions and project potential¹
 - 37 Project Concepts via the Technical Resources Program (TRP)
 - 12 Watershed Coordinators who educate and build capacity in communities and facilitate community and stakeholder engagement, working with and participating on Watershed Area Steering Committees (WASCs).

¹ Note some special studies are counted more than once if funded in more than one watershed/SIP

- **Municipal Program:** \$446.2M (approximately \$111M annually) has been committed to 85 municipalities and the Unincorporated County for the first four years. In the first two years, disbursements were used to fund over 360 Projects and Programs that are not also funded by the Regional Program.
- **District Program:** \$111.5M has been allocated to the District over the first four years of the Program for administering the Program, technical assistance, regional coordination of the 12 Watershed Coordinators, and initial work related to District Education Programs that include investments in workforce development, K-12 education programs, and general outreach, education, and engagement.
- **Adaptive Management:** Many program elements have already been adapted through the development and implementation of guidelines, new programming and mapping tools, the online application Portal and data solicitation and tracking enhancements, and studies. Additional efforts are also underway, which are expected for further inform the adaptive management of the SCWP.

Details of progress made to date and ongoing efforts will be found in the various Appendices of this report.

- Appendix A: Safe, Clean Water Program Overview
- Appendix B: Regional Program Summary
- Appendix C: Municipal Program Summary
- Appendix D: District Program Summary
- Appendix E: Adaptive Management of the SCWP
- Appendix F: Project Highlights

Los Angeles County has nine major watershed areas that are delineated in this Program, each of which have their own opportunities and limitations. The Observations/Findings and the subsequent Recommendations herein must be explored both Program-wide and in the context of each watershed area.

Observations/Findings

The ROC began meeting in June 2023 to discuss and initiate this Report, and to hear from the District, stakeholders, and the public on Program progress and potential areas for improvement. Some of the ROC's key observations and findings include:

1. The Program has successfully launched. A significant amount of effort has gone into launching this large and complex program including numerous sub-programs, governance committees, guidance documents, tools, and processes.
2. The Program needs to transform into a forward-looking pro-active program. The program has largely been reactive to date, responding to proposals submitted for funding rather than pro-actively seeking projects that best meet specific goals (which have yet to be clearly defined).
3. The Program should consider watershed-specific needs and capabilities in planning. A one-size-fits-all approach is inadequate, and watershed specific considerations should be included in the Regional Program.
4. The Program needs precise metrics to better quantify program success and demonstrate progress towards established goals. Refinements are needed to clarify definitions, create more precise metrics, and establish scoring criteria that better align with all the SCWP goals – especially related to Community Investment Benefits, Disadvantaged Community Benefits, Equity, Community Engagement, and Nature Based Solutions.
5. The Program needs strategies to improve inclusive community engagement. The Program still faces lingering challenges in obtaining and effectively incorporating meaningful community input from certain groups and demographics.
6. The Program needs to streamline the project approval process. The Regional Program application process is complicated and should be simplified, if possible, for different types of projects and project phases.
7. The Program should revise the review and approval timelines to ensure adequate time for meaningful committee review. Refinements to governance processes and timelines are needed to provide sufficient time for decision making.
8. The Program should prioritize the District Education programs. These programs have been slow in getting off the ground.
9. The Program needs to improve transparency. Greater transparency is needed for spending and investments in the Municipal and District Programs.
10. Results of approved/funded Scientific Studies are not currently being broadly disseminated.

Recommendations

The ROC has developed recommendations that have been thoughtfully prioritized to reflect ROC discussion and deliberation, input from diverse stakeholders, as well as from subject-specific focus groups on the topics of water supply, community investment benefits, disadvantaged community benefits, and community engagement.

The ROC requests that these recommendations be considered by the Board of Supervisors and the District, and that the District establish an expedited timeline/pathway to implement these recommendations, pending any legal reviews and available resources, and regularly communicate any applicable progress and limitations.

The ROC's key recommendations are:

1. Expedite watershed planning efforts, including consideration of previous and concurrent studies, working with Watershed Area Steering Committees (WASCs), regional agencies, and community groups related to watershed-specific priorities (to also help inform Municipal Program planning and tracking) by doing the following:
 - a. Obtain additional dedicated resources to provide pro-active leadership and adaptive management of the SCWP and its numerous goals.
 - b. Conduct a strategic goal setting process to be completed with the Director of Public Works
 - c. Establish watershed specific goals, objectives, metrics, and timelines, that would allow project applicants to focus on projects that would meet goals and objectives of each watershed.
 - d. Establish Water Quality quantitative goals and develop a plan with timelines to accomplish these goals. Ensuring that these goals and planning efforts are developed to build upon established regional water quality programs and projects (e.g. Municipal Separation Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit) and include characterization of upstream and downstream program interactions.
 - e. Establish Community Investment Benefit quantitative goals, including the development of a plan with timelines to meet these goals.
 - f. Set a region wide water supply target of 300,000 acre-ft of additional storm water capture by 2045. This acre-ft target deadline should be temporarily aligned with the 80% local water by 2045 target in LA County's OurCounty Sustainability Plan and draft LA County Water Plan.

- g. Clarify that claiming Water Supply Benefits requires an applicant to demonstrate that the storm water capture is “new” water and will be available for regional water supply.
 - h. Develop guidelines/criteria to incentivize large infrastructure projects and investments.
 - i. Develop guidelines/criteria to streamline applications for various sized projects and various stages of development.
 - j. Create/strengthen collaborative planning and co-funding with other agencies/organizations to maximize the benefits to LA County.
 - k. Coordinate between the Regional and Municipal programs to better meet established goals.
2. Establish Disadvantaged Community investment quantitative goals and develop a plan with timelines to meet these goals.
 3. Make strategic investments in workforce development programs for skills related to SCWP programs and projects in the short and long term, and ensure workforce-related elements are reflected in procedures, guidelines, and reports as appropriate.
 4. Revise Regional Program quarterly reporting to twice yearly in conjunction with Project Modification Reports (Ordinance change, Board Approval)
 5. Revise the process and timeline for the ROC to evaluate whether Program Goals are being accomplished at the Program and watershed levels per the Ordinance, including bringing Storm Water Investment Plans (SIPs) to the ROC as they are approved by the WASC’s to allow for a more timely review and deliberation, and developing a dashboard to assess Program-wide benefits (Regional, Municipal, and District) over time.
 6. Evaluate recommendations that will result from the in-process Metrics and Monitoring Study and recommend changes, if and when appropriate, to the procedures, guidelines, and scoring criteria currently used to manage the various goals/programs of the SCWP.