



AGENDA STAFF REPORT

Control: 26001135

MEETING DATE: 05/19/2026

LEGAL ENTITY TAKING ACTION: Board of Supervisors

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS DISTRICT(S): All Districts

SUBMITTING AGENCY/DEPARTMENT: OC Public Works

DEPARTMENT CONTACT PERSON(S): Amanda Carr, 714-955-0601
James Fortuna, 714-955-0680

SUBJECT: Approve Southern California Coastal Water Research Project Member Agreement

CEO CONCUR	COUNTY COUNSEL REVIEW	CLERK OF THE BOARD
Concur	Approve agreement to form	DISCUSSION
		3 Votes Board Majority

Budgeted: N/A	Current Year Cost: N/A	Annual Cost: FY 2026-27
		\$350,000
		FY 2027-28 \$354,500
		FY 2028-29 \$359,000
		FY 2029-30 \$364,000
		FY 2030-31 \$368,750

Staffing Impact: No

Current Fiscal Year Revenue: N/A **Funding Source:** See Financial Impact Section

Sole Source: No

County Audit in Last 3 years: No

Levine Act Review Completed? N/A

Prior Board Action: 5/25/2021 #57, 5/9/2017 #13, 6/25/2013 #15, 5/19/2009 #12

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

1. Approve the Associate Commission Member Agreement between the Southern California Coastal Water Research Project Authority and the County of Orange for Associate Commission Membership, effective July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2031, in an amount not to exceed \$796,250.
2. Authorize the Director of OC Public Works or designee to execute separate agreements with the Southern California Coastal Water Research Project Authority for water quality research and special studies, effective July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2031, in an amount not to exceed \$200,000 per fiscal year, for an aggregate total amount not to exceed \$1,000,000.
3. Appoint the OC Public Works, Deputy Director of OC Environmental Resources as the Associate Commission Member Representative to the Southern California Coastal Water Research Project Authority Commission.

SUMMARY:

Approval of the Associate Commission Member Agreement with the Southern California Coastal Water Research Project Authority will support the County of Orange's continued associate membership and participation in regional research project decisions to address water quality issues.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The Southern California Coastal Water Research Project Authority (SCCWRP) is a Joint Powers Authority (JPA) established in 1969 to advance scientific understanding of the relationships among human activities, natural processes and the health of Southern California's coastal environment. SCCWRP conducts collaborative research that supports regional coastal water quality management and watershed protection.

SCCWRP is governed by a Commission composed of representatives from regional sanitation districts and state and federal regulatory agencies, including the California Regional Water Quality Control Boards, State Water Resources Control Board and the United States Environmental Protection Agency. SCCWRP later expanded its research focus to include stormwater impacts on coastal waters and established associate memberships for urban stormwater agencies.

The County of Orange (County), on behalf of the cities of Orange County and the Orange County Flood Control District (collectively the Orange County Stormwater Program), became an associate member in 2005. The Board of Supervisors (Board) has since approved successive agreements on May 19, 2009; June 25, 2013; May 9, 2017; and May 25, 2021, to continue participation. Associate membership allows stormwater agencies to participate in research planning with reduced obligations and lower membership fees compared to full members.

Participation in SCCWRP enables the Orange County Stormwater Program to help shape regional research priorities and collaborate with regulators, scientists and partner agencies on issues critical to stormwater compliance. This coordination supports development of cost-effective, science-based solutions and helps ensure regulatory strategies are consistent across jurisdictions. Current research areas include beach water quality monitoring, sources and transport of stormwater pollutants, watershed and wetland management, nutrient impacts to estuaries, marine debris and evaluation of stormwater treatment practices.

Associate membership also provides access to leading technical expertise, training and data resources for special studies that support the County's regulatory programs. The Agreement contains provisions which would allow the County to contract with SCCWRP for specialized technical studies and scientific support services of up to \$200,000 per fiscal year, for an aggregate total amount not to exceed \$1 million over the five-year term.

OC Public Works recommends Board approval of a new Associate Commission Member Agreement MA-080-21011357 (Agreement) with SCCWRP to continue the County's participation on behalf of the Orange County Stormwater Program, effective July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2031, in an amount not to exceed \$796,250. OC Public Works also recommends authorizing the Director of OC Public Works or designee to execute separate agreements with SCCWRP for water quality research and special studies, effective July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2031, in an amount not to exceed \$200,000 per fiscal year, for an aggregate total amount not to exceed \$1 million, as provided in the Agreement. Additionally, OC Public Works recommends appointing the OC Public Works, Deputy Director of OC Environmental Resources as the Associate Commission Member Representative to the SCCWRP.

Compliance with CEQA: This action is not a project within the meaning of CEQA Guidelines Section 15378 and is therefore not subject to CEQA, since it does not have the potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment. The approval of this agenda item does not commit the County to a definite course of action in regard to a project since it is limited to regional research project planning cooperation for water quality management and watershed protection. This proposed activity is therefore not subject to CEQA. Any individual, specific work authorized pursuant to future agreements will be reviewed for compliance with CEQA.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

Appropriations for this Agreement will be included in the FY 2026-27 Recommended Budget and will be included in the budgeting process for future years.

Funding is provided through the Orange County Stormwater Program, which is shared among 36 Permittees. Cost sharing is as follows:

Fund 400, OC Flood	10%
Fund 100, Budget Control 034	80.6% (75.9% Permittee Cities and 4.7% and Budget Control 034 GF)
Fund 115, OC Road	4.7%
Fund 405, OC Parks	4.7%

The Agreement may be terminated by the County upon giving the SCCWRP a 30-day written notice of termination; however, the County will not be entitled to a prorated refund of any sum it has paid as consideration of its Associate Membership. The Agreement may be terminated by the SCCWRP upon giving the County a 30-day written notice of termination in the event the County fails to pay the required Associate Membership fee to the SCCWRP.

STAFFING IMPACT:

N/A

REVIEWING AGENCIES/DEPARTMENTS:

N/A

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment A - Agreement No. MA-080-21011357 with the Southern California Coastal Water Research Project Authority