

What We Heard

STORMS Capture and Use Board Workshop

State Water Resources Control Board • November 18, 2025

On November 18, 2025, the State Water Resources Control Board held an informational workshop on *Turning Local Stormwater Successes into Solutions for California's Water Future* (youtube.com/watch?v=6ghzIGq8Nfk&t=14580s), highlighting examples of Stormwater Capture and Use projects and funding approaches that can help advance the Water Supply Strategy's 2040 stormwater goals while improving water quality, reducing flood risks, and supporting community benefits. This summary synthesizes themes from presentations, public comments, and written input to inform STORMS program planning.

Key themes heard

- **Schools as a promising context:** Schoolyard projects were presented as a high-potential setting for multi-benefit outcomes. Workshop insights came from nonprofit and research partners.
- **Regulatory pathways are fragmented for capture and use:** Participants described difficulty navigating overlapping requirements and asked for clearer alignment and predictability, especially around uncertainties related to nonpotable uses such as irrigation.
- **Constrained sites often steer projects toward reuse:** Presenters highlighted how site constraints can limit infiltration and make reuse the practical option, with a need for clearer expectations on backflow protection, monitoring, and operations and maintenance (O&M) for these configurations.
- **Long-term O&M planning and funding can be a limiting factor:** Presenters emphasized that capture and use systems are most successful when O&M is planned from the start, including trained operators, monitoring and instrumentation support, and a clear, reliable approach to covering ongoing costs.
- **Technical and financial assistance gaps can hinder projects:** Participants noted that limited local staff capacity and limited access to technical support can prevent planning and delivery of capture and use projects, especially for smaller agencies, school districts, nonprofit partners, and partners working in disadvantaged communities.

- **Education builds buy-in:** Commenters emphasized outreach and education as essential to public understanding and support.
- **Source control protects outcomes:** Commenters emphasized litter reduction and upstream practices as core to stormwater strategy.

Near-term next steps STORMS plans, beginning in early 2026

- **Develop a workplan:** Prepare a concise workplan that defines key questions, scope, and an engagement approach for a State-led framework on market-based stormwater solutions, building from existing foundational work.
- **Begin voluntary listening sessions on school-site opportunities:** Hold voluntary conversations with interested education partners and local stormwater practitioners to understand priorities and constraints for stormwater capture and use at school sites and to inform future STORMS planning.
- **Convene a cross-program public-lands stormwater irrigation workgroup** to document lessons learned and produce a short issue summary to inform potential future policy discussions.

This summary reflects the themes and input raised during the November 18 workshop. STORMS will continue to consider additional topics as part of future planning and engagement.