

# Nature-based Solutions (NbS) Task Force Recommendations Report

## PHASE 1:

### AUGUST 2024

In response to [the County Water Plan's](#) call for clearer guidance around Nature-based Solutions (NbS) and to help achieve the County Water Plan's goal to equitably achieve safe, clean, and reliable water resources for Los Angeles County by 2045, Los Angeles County Public Works "Public Works" convened the Nature-based Solutions Task Force in August 2024.

#### Task Force Charter Priorities

- Develop Countywide definitions and standards for nature-based solutions.
- Prioritize Nature-based Solutions (NbS) in stormwater capture projects.

Build upon the [Safe, Clean Water Program's Metrics & Monitoring Study](#) and [2022 Interim Guidance](#).

## PHASE 2:

### JANUARY 2026

Phase 2 of the NbS Task Force will build on this work by developing metrics aligned with Task Force Recommendations made in Phase 1 and promoting regional coordination.

### DECEMBER 2023

A Los Angeles County [Board of Supervisors Motion](#) established a NbS Task Force with the purpose of establishing standard definitions for Nature-based Solutions for Countywide use, aligned with the goals of the Los Angeles County Water Plan.

### JUNE 2025

Completed Phase 1 Work: Developed a Definition and Standard for NbS, along with criteria adapted from the IUCN to reflect the ecological, urbanization, and priority needs of Los Angeles County.

For a full review of findings, see the completed Nature-based Solutions Task Force Recommendations Report.

### JUNE 2026

Anticipated Completion of Phase 2.

Product

## Key report features from completed Phase 1 work include a Definition, Standard, Criteria, and Recommendations for Nature-based Solutions.

### NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS DEFINITIONS

**NbS Definition:** Nature-based Solutions address societal challenges through sustainable actions that protect and restore living ecosystems and their functions to ensure human well-being and benefit biodiversity by meeting the established NbS standard and associated criteria.

**Water-specific NbS Definition:** Nature-based Solutions address water quality, water supply and stormwater challenges through sustainable actions that protect and restore living ecosystems and their functions to ensure human well-being and benefit biodiversity by meeting the established NbS standard and associated criteria.

### STANDARD

**Standard:** Nature-based Solutions must implement place-appropriate and evidence-backed living processes and infrastructure, such as soil and vegetation, to improve long-term ecosystem function, habitat connectivity, and community health and well-being. Success of Nature-based Solutions should be qualitatively and quantitatively evaluated using the following criteria and indicators (full set of criteria outlined in the Standard, to be read as an integrated framework, can be found in the report).

### CRITERIA

The aforementioned criteria that compose the Standard are adapted from the IUCN but reorganized and updated for Los Angeles County accordingly. Criteria were broken into the following categories:

- **Key Criteria:** Foundational for any project to qualify as NbS
- **Project Guidance:** Strengthens project-level outcomes and is applicable across all projects, whether or not they are a NbS project.
- **Program Guidance:** Ensures long-term governance and institutional alignment with Nature-based Solution projects.

### KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

**Holistic Assessment:** Projects should be designed and evaluated as integrated NbS, not by individual features. Further approaches are outlined in the Recommendations Section.

**Scoring Spectrum:** Projects should be assessed along a spectrum from gray to fully Nature-based Solution, reflecting alignment with the NbS Standard. The Spectrum, drawn from regional case studies, considers site context, ecological opportunity, and system integration, and may evolve into a scoring and benchmarking tool.

**Parallel Tracks for Open Space Acquisition Projects:** Establish dedicated evaluation and funding pathways for open space acquisition, conservation, and restoration projects to ensure they are prioritized as NbS.