

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
REGION IX  
75 Hawthorne Street  
San Francisco, CA 94105

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT**  
**Los Angeles County Department of Public Works**  
**Los Angeles County Waterworks District 40**  
**Regional Recycled Water Project Phase 2**  
**May 2014**

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 9 intends to award a grant in the amount of \$873,000 to the Los Angeles County Department of Public Works, in accordance with Fiscal Year 2009 Omnibus Appropriation Act for the Antelope Valley recycled water project. The proposed project includes the design and construction of recycled water conveyance pipelines, a pump station, and a recycled water storage tank.

EPA Region 9's intention to award a grant for the proposed project is a federal action requiring compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), 42 USC §§4321-4370f. In accordance with NEPA, Council of Environmental Quality Regulations at 40 CFR §§1500.1-1508.28, and EPA NEPA regulations at 40 CFR Part 6, EPA Region 9 has prepared an environmental assessment (EA) describing the potential environmental impacts associated with, and the alternatives to, the proposed project. This finding of no significant impact (FONSI) documents EPA Region 9's decision that the proposed project will not have a significant effect on the environment.

**Project Description**

The Los Angeles County of Department of Public Works (LACDPW) proposes to implement Phase 2 of the North Los Angeles/Kern County Regional Recycled Water Project. Phase 2 of the project would include the design and construction of recycled water conveyance pipelines, a pump station, and a recycled water storage tank. The District proposes to construct 41,710 linear feet of 24-inch pipeline, 4,855 linear feet of 16-inch pipeline, a pump station capable of pumping 9,200 gallons per minute of recycled water, and a 3.0 million gallon storage tank. The proposed project would be part of a regional system that would allow for the distribution of recycled water in the Antelope Valley to offset potable demand for non-potable applications.

**Project Location**

The propose project would be located in the Antelope Valley, which encompasses approximately 2,400 square miles in northern Los Angeles County, southern Kern County, and western San

Bernardino County. The pump station will be located at 39300 East 30<sup>th</sup> Street and the recycled water storage tank will be adjacent to northbound State Route 23, the Antelope Freeway. The physical improvements associated with implementation of the recycled water project will be located within the City of Palmdale. The project is comprised of three components; 1) a pump station located at 39300 30<sup>th</sup> Street East; 2) a steel storage tank located adjacent to northbound State Route 23, between 10<sup>th</sup> Street West and Amargosa Creek; and 3) the recycled water conveyance pipelines. The pipelines would be constructed primarily within the public right-of-way of City and County streets. The pipeline alignment would make two crossings at the Metrolink and Union Pacific Railroad as it runs parallel to Sierra Highway and would cross the Amargosa Creek just northeast of the new storage tank. A map of the pipeline route is attached for review.

### **Purpose and Need for Proposed Project**

The purpose of the proposed project is to create a recycled water conveyance system in Antelope Valley. The distribution of recycled water will be used as an alternative supply for non-potable water uses such as irrigation and other uses at municipal, commercial, and industrial facilities. The proposed project will reduce the dependence of potable water in the project area. This will reduce the environmental costs associated with treatment and distribution of potable water for non-potable uses.

### **Environmental Consequences**

The EA examines the potential environmental impacts of the proposed project. In addition, the EA examines the proposed project and a no action alternative. Alternatives eliminated from further consideration were based on the recommendations in the 2008 Final Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) for the Regional Recycled Water Project Phase 2. Based on the PEIR, the criteria considered for the recycled water pipelines included (1) minimizing the distance between the Palmdale Water Reclamation Plant (PWRP) and the Lancaster Water Reclamation Plant (LWRP); (2) minimizing the distance between the recycled water pipelines and the customers that will be using the recycled water; (3) optimizing existing utility easement corridors; and (4) optimizing the use of existing recycled water pipes and routes. Based on these factors, the proposed project was selected and the other alternatives were eliminated from detailed analysis. Additionally, the proposed project is identified to meet the criteria to develop an integrated water system between the LACWWD40, Palmdale Water District, Quartz Hill Water District, and Rosamond Community Service District. Alternatives of having each district develop its own recycled water systems were also eliminated from detailed analysis. The PEIR can be found at <http://dpw.lacounty.gov/wwd/web/Forms/peir.aspx>. Complete analyses of the proposed alternative and the no action alternative are included in the EA.

The Consultant to the County developed a Cultural Resource Assessment that included a California Historical Records Information Systems search, a Sacred Land Files search, and communication with Tribal Representatives. On May 29, 2012, EPA Region IX submitted a letter to the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) requesting concurrence with a determination of no effect, pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. SHPO did not respond to the determination within the 30-day regulatory period. SHPO's failure to respond allowed EPA to proceed with the finding under 36 CFR Part 800.3(c)(4) in accordance with the NHPA.

The consultant to the County developed a Biological Resources Technical Report. The consultant reviewed the California Natural Diversity Database and conducted a biological resources reconnaissance survey to identify threatened or endangered species. The recommendations in the biological resources technical report were incorporated in the mitigation measures for the proposed alternative. On August 24, 2012, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service concurred that the project may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect the least Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*) and the California red-legged frog (*Rana draytonii*). The Mitigation measures that specifically address avoiding impacts to biological resources are found on pages 6-2 to 6-7 of the EA. Additionally, the complete list of mitigation measures established in the EA for the proposed alternative are enforceable under this FONSI as set forth on pages 6-1 to 6-20 of the EA.

After carefully considering the regulatory, environmental (both natural and human) and socio-economic factors as described in the EA, EPA Region 9 has not identified any significant impacts to the environment that would result from implementation of the proposed project.

### **Public Review**

The EA is on file and available for public review at the EPA Region 9 office and online at <http://www.epa.gov/region9/nepa/epa-generated.html>. To make an appointment to review the EA, contact Howard Kahan at the address given below.

Interested parties may submit comments on the EA and this unsigned FONSI to EPA Region 9 within 30 calendar days of the public notice of the EA. Comments via letter, fax, or email should be sent Howard Kahan at the following address:

Howard Kahan  
EPA Region 9  
Water Tribal Office, WTR-10  
75 Hawthorne Street  
San Francisco, CA 94015-3901  
telephone: 415-972-3143  
fax: 415-947-3537  
email: kahan.howard@epa.gov

EPA Region 9 will not take administrative action on the proposed project prior to the close of the comment period. If, after considering public comments, EPA Region 9 concludes the proposed project will not have significant environmental impacts, EPA Region 9 will revise this FONSI by adding a summary of the comments received and EPA Region 9's responses. The revised FONSI will be forwarded to the Water Division Director for review and signature. The FONSI will be final upon signature. EPA Region 9 will not recirculate the signed FONSI for public review, but will make it available to any individual upon request.