FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Additional Storage Reservoir for the Non-Potable Water Supply System
City of Santa Monica, California, United States

September 2011

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) Region 9 is considering authorizing the award of a grant to the City of Santa Monica, California to improve the City's non-potable water supply system.

EPA Region 9's award of 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 U.S. EPA NEPA regulations at 40 CFR Part 6, U.S. 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 U.S. EPA Region 9's decision that the proposed project will not have a significant effect on the environment.

Project Location and Description

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) Region 9 is considering authorizing the award of a grant to the City of Santa Monica, California, for a feasibility study, project design, and a portion of construction costs related to improvement to the City's non-potable water supply systems. Santa Monica is located in western Los Angeles County, about 10 miles west of downtown Los Angeles. The proposed project would be located within Memorial Park which is located between Olympic Boulevard and Colorado Avenue, and between 14th and 16th streets in Santa Monica. The proposed project consists of a 1-million gallon (MG) non-potable water reservoir, a non-potable water pumping station, and supporting pipelines at a site within Memorial Park and immediately adjacent the park to the west at the Fisher Lumber property. The water reservoir and supporting pipelines will be located underground so existing and/or improved park facilities can be located at grade above the buried reservoirs and pumping facilities. Within Memorial Park, the proposed underground reservoir would be located beneath the existing tennis courts along the northeast side of 14th Street. A pump station would be located north and west of the reservoir in an area occupied by a parking lot. The pump station would be above ground in a masonry block building located immediately adjacent the park in an existing parking lot on the western most edge of the Fisher Lumber property.

Purpose and Need for Proposed Project

The purpose of the proposed project is to provide more reliability for the City's non-potable water supply systems. The City's non-potable water supply system would be provided with more flexibility and reliability. Currently, the City has a greater need for additional recycled water storage than for potable water storage. Providing additional storage for non-potable water will make it possible to more efficiently serve existing and new customers.

Environmental Consequences

In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), U.S. EPA has prepared an EA that analyzes the environmental impacts of the proposed action. After considering a wide range of regulatory, environmental (both natural and human) and socio-economic factors, the EA did not identify any significant impacts to the environment that would result from the implementation of the proposed project. However, mitigation measures were established in the EA for the proposed project

and are enforceable under this FONSI. A copy of the mitigation measures are attached to this FONSI. After carefully considering the regulatory, environmental (both natural and human) and socio-economic factors as described in the EA, U.S. 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 U.S. EPA Region 9 office. To make an appointment to review the EA, contact Ephraim D. Leon-Guerrero at the address given below. 'The EA can be viewed on the EPA website at: http://www.epa.gov/region09/nepa/epa-generated/santamonica or the City website at: http://www.smgov.net/Departments/PublicWorks/ContentCivEng.aspx?id=9673. Interested parties may submit comments on the EA and this unsigned FONSI to U.S. EPA Region 9 by 5:00 p.m. on October 2, 2011. Comments via letter, fax, or email should be sent to Ephraim D. Leon-Guerrero at the following address:

U.S. EPA Region 9 WTR-3
75 Hawthorne Street
San Francisco, California 94105-3901
Telephone: at (415) 972-3444
Fax: 415-947-3537
Email: leon-guerrero.ephraim@epa.gov

U.S. 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, U.S. EPA Region 9 concludes the proposed project will not have significant environmental impacts, U.S. EPA Region 9 will revise this FONSI by adding a summary of the comments received and U.S. 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. U.S. EPA Region 9 will not recirculate the signed FONSI for public review, but will make it available to any individual upon request.

Summary of Potentially Significant Environmental Impacts, Mitigation Measures, and Residual Impacts.

Impact	Mitigation Measures	Significance After Mitigation
Biology		
The proposed project has the potential to impact nesting birds as a result of tree removal. The proposed project would remove three existing trees located south of the existing tennis courts within the public parking lot. The existing trees, a magnolia tree and two pine trees, may support birds that are protected by the MBTA and the Fish and Game Code of	**BIO-1 Nesting Bird Surveys and Avoidance.** Tree pruning and removal shall be conducted outside of the bird breeding season (February 15 through August 31). If vegetation clearing (including tree pruning and removal) or other project construction is to be initiated during the bird breeding season, pre-construction nesting bird surveys shall be conducted by a qualified biologist. To avoid the destruction of active nests and to protect the reproductive success of birds protected by MBTA and the Fish and Game	With implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-1, impacts to nesting birds would be reduced to a less than significant level.

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California (3503, 3503.5, 3511, 3513 and 3800). The impact to nesting birds as a result of tree removal would be potentially significant unless mitigation is incorporated.	Code of California, nesting bird surveys shall be performed twice per week during the three weeks prior to the scheduled felling of the trees on the site. The surveys shall be conducted by a qualified biologist approved by the Community Development Director. If any active non-raptor bird nests are found, the tree(s) or vegetation shall not be cut down and a suitable buffer area (varying from 25-300 feet) depending on the particular species found is established from the nest, and that area is avoided until the nest becomes inactive (vacated). If any active raptor bird nests are found, a suitable buffer area of typically 250-500 feet from the nest is established, and that area is avoided until the nest becomes inactive (vacated). Limits of construction to avoid a nest should be established in the field with flagging and stakes or construction fencing. Construction personnel shall be instructed on the sensitivity of the area.	
The project has the potential to conflict with a local tree preservation policy. The project would removes three existing trees (one magnolia tree and two pine trees) located south of the tennis courts in the public parking lot. Removal of existing public trees that are deemed to be site appropriate may conflict with policies contained in the City's pending Long Range Forest Master Plan. As such, impacts would be potentially significant unless mitigation is incorporated.	**BIO-2 Temporary Relocation and Reestablishment.** During the demolition and excavation phase of the project, the three public trees currently located in the parking lot south of the tennis courts shall be temporarily removed from their existing location, boxed according to standards approved by a certified arborist, and stored within a suitable location in Memorial Park. Upon completion of construction activities, the three trees shall be relocated and replanted in their current locations.	With implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-2, impacts related to removal of trees onsite would be reduced to a less than significant level.
Construction Effects		
The proposed project would have construction-period impacts due to the scope, or	**CON-1(a) Construction Impact Mitigation Plan.** The applicant shall prepare, implement and maintain a	Implementation of mitigation measures CON-1(a-g) would ensure that impacts related to

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location of construction activities. The proposed project would result in temporary impacts to air quality, noise and traffic as a result of construction activities. The impacts would be potentially significant unless mitigation is incorporated.	Construction Impact Mitigation Plan which shall be designed to: • Prevent material traffic impacts on the surrounding roadway network. • Minimize parking impacts both to public parking and access to private parking to the greatest extent practicable. • Ensure safety for both those constructing the project and the surrounding community. • Prevent substantial truck traffic through residential neighborhoods. • Coordinate with the Light Rail Transit (LRT) construction schedule The Construction Impact Mitigation Plan shall be subject to review and approval by the following City departments: Public Works, Fire, Planning and Community Development and Police to ensure that the Plan has been designed in accordance with this Mitigation Measure. This review shall occur prior to commencement of any construction staging for the project. It shall, at a minimum, include the following: <u>Ongoing Requirements Throughout the Duration of Construction</u> • A detailed traffic control plan for work zones shall be maintained. At a minimum, this shall include: parking and travel lane configurations; warning, regulatory, guide and directional signage; and area sidewalks, bicycle lanes and parking lanes. The plan shall include specific information regarding the project's construction activities that may disrupt normal pedestrian and traffic flow and the measures to address these disruptions. Such plans shall be reviewed and approved by the Transportation Management Division prior to commencement of construction	traffic, air quality, and noise impacts generated by construction of the proposed project would be less than significant.

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	and implemented in accordance with this approval. • Work within the public right-of-way shall be performed between 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. This work includes dirt and demolition material hauling and construction material delivery. Work within the public right-of-way outside of these hours shall only be allowed after the issuance of an after-hours construction permit. • Streets and equipment shall be cleaned in accordance with established Public Works requirements. • Trucks shall only travel on a City-approved construction route. Truck queuing/staging shall not be allowed on Santa Monica streets. Limited queuing may occur on the construction site itself. • Materials and equipment shall be minimally visible to the public; the preferred location for materials is to be onsite, with a minimum amount of materials within a work area in the public right-of-way, subject to a current Use of Public Property Permit. • Any requests for work before or after normal construction hours within the public right-of-way shall be subject to review and approval through the After Hours Permit process administered by the Building and Safety Division. • Provision of off-street parking for construction workers, which may include the use of a remote location with shuttle transport to the site, if determined necessary by the City of Santa Monica. <u>Project Coordination Elements That Shall Be Implemented Prior to Commencement of Construction</u> • The City shall advise the traveling	

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	public of impending construction activities (e.g., information signs, portable message signs, media listing/notification, implementation of an approved traffic control plan). • The City shall obtain a Use of Public Property Permit, Excavation Permit, Sewer Permit or Oversize Load Permit, as well as any Caltrans Permits required, for any construction work requiring encroachment into public rights-of-way, detours or any other work within the public right-of-way. • The City shall provide timely notification of construction schedules to all affected agencies (e.g., Big Blue Bus, Police Department, Fire Department, Public Works Department, and Planning and Community Development Department) and to all owners and residential and commercial tenants of property within a radius of 500 feet. • The City shall coordinate construction work with affected agencies in advance of start of work. Approvals may take up to two weeks per each submittal. • Transportation Management Division approval of any haul routes for earth, concrete or construction materials and equipment hauling shall be obtained. **CON-1(b) Diesel Equipment Mufflers.** All diesel equipment shall be operated with closed engine doors and shall be equipped with factory-recommended mufflers. **CON-1(c) Electrically-Powered Tools.** Electrical powered shall be used to run air compressors and similar power tools. **CON-1(d) Restrictions on Excavation, Pile Driving and Foundation/Conditioning.** Excavation,	

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	pile driving, foundation-laying, and conditioning activities (the noisiest phases of construction) shall be restricted to between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, in accordance with Section 4.12.110(d) of the Santa Monica Municipal Code. Pile driving activities at the site shall not cause a peak particle velocity exceedance of more than 0.05 in/s at the nearby sensitive receptors. This level of vibration may be achieved using equipment that produces a peak particle velocity of less than 0.1 in/s at a distance of 25 feet. The compaction roller used at the site shall not cause a peak particle velocity exceedance of more than 0.05 in/s at the nearby sensitive receptors. This level of vibration may be achieved using equipment that produces a peak particle velocity of less than 0.1 in/s at a distance of 25 feet. **CON-1(e) Additional Noise Attenuation Techniques.** For all noise- generating construction activity on the project site, additional noise attenuation techniques shall be employed as necessary to reduce noise levels to City of Santa Monica noise standards. Such techniques may include the use of sound blankets on noise generating equipment and the construction of temporary sound barriers between construction sites and nearby sensitive receptors. This may include the installation of temporary walls or panels, enclosures and/or sound absorbing and barriering materials to reduce the noise levels experienced at the gym/PAL center and baseball fields. **CON-1(f) Construction Sign Posting.** In accordance with Municipal Code Section 4.12.120, the project applicant shall post a	

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	sign informing all workers and subcontractors of the time restrictions for construction activities. The sign shall also include the City telephone numbers where violations can be reported and complaints associated with construction noise can be submitted. **CON-1(g) Fugitive Dust Control Measures.** The following shall be implemented during construction to minimize fugitive dust and associated particulate emissions: • All material excavated or graded should be sufficiently watered to prevent excessive amounts of dust. Watering should occur at least three times daily with complete coverage, preferably at the start of the day, in the late morning and after work is done for the day • All grading, earth moving or excavation activities shall cease during periods of high winds (i.e., greater than 20 mph measured as instantaneous wind gusts) so as to prevent excessive amounts of dust • All material transported on and off-site should be securely covered to prevent excessive amounts of dust • Soils stockpiles shall be covered • Onsite vehicle speeds shall be limited to 15 mph • All haul roads shall be paved to reduce dust when vehicles and equipment is transported on and off site • Install wheel washers where vehicles enter and exit the construction site onto paved roads or wash off trucks and any equipment leaving the site each trip • All off road grading equipment including graders, rubber tired dozers, tractors/loaders/backhoes, and water trucks shall be installed with a Diesel	

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	Particulate Filter (DPF) to reduce diesel particulate matter during grading activities. • Appoint a construction relations officer to act as a community liaison concerning onsite construction activity including resolution of issues related to PM10 generation • Sweep streets at the end of the day using SCAQMD Rule 1186 certified street sweepers or roadway washing trucks if visible soil is carried onto adjacent public paved roads (recommend water sweepers with reclaimed water) • All active portions the construction site shall be sufficiently watered three times a day to prevent excessive amounts of dust.	
Cultural Resources		
Excavation and grading activities has the potential to impact as-yet-discovered paleontological resources. Therefore, the impacts are potentially significant unless mitigation is incorporated.	**CR-1 Paleontological Monitoring.** The following general guidelines for paleontological monitoring set by the Society of Vertebrate Paleontologists (1991) shall be implemented during grading and excavation activities: • During an excavation project of greater than 5 feet of depth the project shall retain a qualified project paleontological manager. • In areas of known or potential paleontological resources a qualified paleontological monitor shall be present during excavation of greater than 5 feet of depth into previously undisturbed soil during 100% of the earth-moving activities. • If after 50% of the grading or excavation is completed, it can be demonstrated that the level of monitoring should be reduced, the project paleontological manager may amend the monitoring and mitigation schedule. • A paleontologist who monitors	Implementation of mitigation measures CR-1 would ensure that potential paleontological resources uncovered during construction activities are not damaged but rather collected and assessed by a certified paleontologist. This mitigation would also apply to the project alternatives. Impacts would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

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	excavation must be qualified and experienced in interpreting geological formations, in salvaging fossils and have the authority to temporarily divert equipment while removing fossils. • Removal of fossils specimens should be done using the proper equipment and supplies and in such a manner that excavation work can be resumed as quickly as possible.	