

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

## FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

### **Regional Brineline Extension Project for the Yucaipa Valley Water District, San Bernardino and Riverside Counties, California, United States**

November 2011

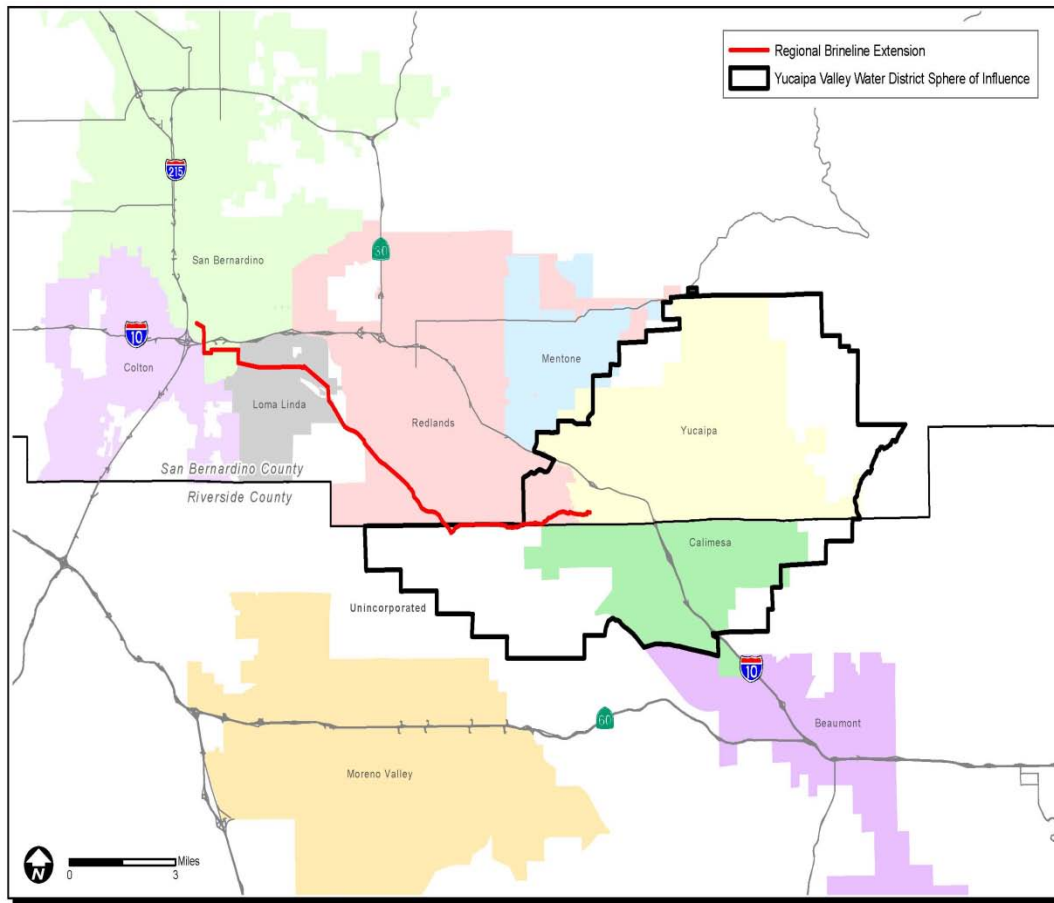
The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 9 is considering authorizing the use of Special Appropriation grant funds to the Yucaipa Valley Water District for the Regional Brineline Extension Project.

EPA Region 9's authorization to use grant funds 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 Location and Description**

The Yucaipa Valley Water District (YVWD) is a special governmental district formed in 1971 and encompasses an area of approximately 50 square miles (see Figure 1). The District supplies water, wastewater, and recycled water services to the Cities of Yucaipa and Calimesa and unincorporated areas of Riverside and San Bernardino Counties. The District currently meets the water supply needs of its service area using a combination of local groundwater sources, surface water and imported water.

The proposed project involves the installation of a reverse-osmosis facility at the District's Wochholz Regional Water Recycling Facility (WRWRF). The purpose of the reverse-osmosis facility is to extract waste brine and industrial wastewater from the wastewater conveyed to the WRWRF for treatment. Once extracted, the waste brine and industrial wastewater would be conveyed through a proposed 14 mile pipeline to the City of San Bernardino where it would connect to the Santa Ana Regional Interceptor (SARI). The SARI is a regional pipeline which transports waste brine to the Orange County Sanitation District for additional treatment and disposal.



Yucaipa Valley Regional Brineline Extension Project - EA  
**Yucaipa Valley Water District (YVWD) Sphere of Influence**

FIGURE  
**1**

**Purpose and Need for Proposed Project**

The District’s service area lies within the upper watershed of the Santa Ana River where stringent water quality objectives have been established to protect downstream beneficial uses. As a result, the District may be restricted from the use of recycled water that exceeds water quality objectives for Total Dissolved Solids (TDS) and nitrogen. In order to comply with water quality objectives and to achieve advanced fresh water as a renewable resource, the District intends to utilize reverse-osmosis at the WRWRF to remove excess TDS and nitrogen from its water supplies.

A byproduct of reverse-osmosis is waste brine, comprised of highly concentrated minerals and salts, which must be disposed of in order to protect basin water. In order to provide disposal of waste brine and excess non-reclaimable wastewater, the District is proposing to extend the

existing Santa Ana Regional Interceptor (SARI) pipeline into the Yucaipa Valley. This is referred to as the District's Yucaipa Valley Regional Brineline Extension Project (proposed action), and will allow waste brine and excess non-reclaimable wastewater to be conveyed directly to the Orange County Sanitation District's (OCSD) treatment plant for treatment and eventual disposal into the Pacific Ocean.

### **Environmental Consequences**

In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), 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.

The California State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) was consulted on the proposed project and concurred with the finding of No Adverse Effect pursuant to 36 CFR Part 800.5(b). Additionally, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service was also consulted and concurred with the determination that the proposed project may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect listed species. The Fish and Wildlife Service agreed that no direct effects would occur to listed species and any indirect effects to the flycatcher, vireo, and gnatcatcher in adjacent habitat areas would be adequately minimized or avoided through the proposed mitigation measures.

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. To make an appointment to review the EA, contact Elizabeth Borowiec at the address given below. The EA can also be viewed at: <http://www.epa.gov/region9/nepa/epa-generated>.

Interested parties may submit comments on the EA and this unsigned FONSI to EPA Region 9 by 5:00 p.m. on December 20, 2011. Comments via letter, fax, or email should be sent to Elizabeth Borowiec at the following address:

EPA Region 9 WTR-4  
75 Hawthorne Street  
San Francisco, California 94105-3901  
Telephone: 415-972-3419 Fax: 415-947-3537  
Email: borowiec.elizabeth@epa.gov

