

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
REGION 9  
75 HAWTHORNE STREET  
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94105

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT**  
**City of Los Angeles Elysian Park Water Recycling Project**  
**May 2014**

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 9 awarded a planning grant to the City of Los Angeles, California, in accordance with the Department of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act of FY2010 for the Elysian Park Water Recycling Project (WRP). EPA Region 9 intends to amend the grant to include design of the project.

EPA Region 9's authorization to use grant funds for the proposed design 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 proposed action involves the extension of the City's existing recycled water pipeline network to deliver recycled water to Elysian Park. A proposed new 16-inch recycled water pipeline would be constructed totaling approximately 10,800 linear feet beginning just southwest of the Los Angeles River along the Los Angeles River Bike Path, near the northern terminus of Dorris Place in the Elysian Valley neighborhood. The beginning of the pipeline would connect to the termination point of the Taylor Yard WRP on the west side of the Los Angeles River. Taylor Yard receives its recycled water from the Los Angeles-Glendale Water Reclamation Plant. The proposed Elysian Park recycled water pipeline would connect to a proposed new approximately 2 million gallon (MG) recycled water storage tank located on the hilltop near Elysian Fields within Elysian Park supplied by a new recycled water pumping station and non-potable backup pumping station located on the west side of Interstate 5 (I-5, Golden State Freeway) just inside Elysian Park. The proposed route for the recycled water pipeline would roughly follow Stadium Way. The recycled water will be used for irrigation uses in Elysian Park. In addition, approximately 1,000 linear feet of 8-inch potable water pipeline is proposed to be constructed connecting from Park Drive to Grace E. Simons Lodge to provide for the potable water uses within Elysian Park (e.g., restrooms and drinking fountains). Approximately 2,800 linear feet of

2-inch potable water service line with a booster pump housed within an existing pumping station would also be constructed from Grace E. Simons Lodge to Elysian Fields in order to supply the two bathrooms and drinking fountains at Elysian Fields. EPA funds would only be used for the recycled water scope of work; they will not be used for the potable water design or construction.

The proposed action would be located in the City of Los Angeles, primarily within Elysian Park, which is located approximately 1.5 miles north of downtown Los Angeles. Dedicated in 1886 and consisting of 575 acres, Elysian Park is the oldest and second largest park in the City. The park is owned by the City of Los Angeles and maintained by the Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks (LARAP). Elysian Park is bounded by I-5 on the north, State Route 110 (Pasadena Freeway, SR 110) and Solano Canyon on the east, the community of Chinatown on the south, and the community of Echo Park on the west. Access to Elysian Park is provided via Stadium Way, Academy Road, and Solano Avenue.

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

The Elysian Park Water Recycling Project will reduce the dependence on potable water for the City of Los Angeles. The Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP) 2010 Urban Water Management Plan calls for 59,000 acre-feet per year of potable supplies to be replaced by recycled water by 2035. The Elysian Park WRP is part of the effort to maximize the use of recycled water for non-potable uses. It would serve Elysian Park, located in the central region of the City, using recycled water supplied by the Los Angeles-Glendale Water Reclamation Plant. Recycled water can decrease the diversion of freshwater from sensitive ecosystems and save energy from pumping potable water large distances into the City.

### **Environmental Consequences**

The EA examines the potential environmental impacts of the preferred alternative, the Horizontal Directional Drilling (HDD) Alternative and the No Action Alternative. Complete analyses of the preferred alternative, HDD Alternative and the No Action Alternative are included in the EA.

The Consultant to the City 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 November 7, 2013, EPA Region 9 submitted a letter to the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) requesting concurrence with a determination of no adverse effect to historic properties, pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). 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 City developed a Biological Reconnaissance Survey that included a literature review and a field survey on May 30, 2012. The biological reconnaissance survey included a literature review and field survey. The literature review reported one sensitive plant species to have occurred in Elysian Park. Greata's aster (*Symphyotrichum greatae*) is reported from a collection from 1932. No sensitive wildlife is known to occur within Elysian Park. The park is not within any significant ecological areas or designated critical habitat. No threatened or endangered species are likely to be encountered in the project location. On July 9, 2012, EPA Region 9 submitted a letter to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (US FWS) requesting concurrence under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act. The US FWS did not respond to the letter. EPA Region 9 proceeded to make a "no effect to listed species or critical habitat" determination in accordance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act.

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.

The following mitigation measures established in the EA for the proposed project are enforceable under this FONSI:

- N-1** LADWP shall coordinate with the site administrator for Grace E. Simons Lodge to discuss the construction schedule. Construction activity adjacent to the Lodge shall be prohibited during noise sensitive events (e.g., weddings).
- N-2** All construction equipment shall be properly maintained and equipped with mufflers and other suitable noise attenuation devices.
- N-3** LADWP shall endeavor to use quieter equipment as opposed to noisier equipment (such as rubber-tired equipment rather than track equipment). Noisy equipment shall be used only when necessary and shall be switched off when not in use.
- N-4** LADWP shall ensure that all stockpiling and vehicle staging areas are located away from noise-sensitive receivers.
- N-5** A public liaison for project construction shall be identified who shall be responsible for addressing public concerns about construction activities, including excessive noise. The liaison shall determine the cause of the concern (e.g., starting too early, bad muffler, etc.) and shall be required to implement reasonable measures to address the concern.
- N-6** LADWP shall develop a construction schedule to ensure that the construction would be completed quickly to minimize the time a sensitive receptor would be exposed to construction noise.

- N-7** Construction supervisors shall receive training on project-specific noise requirements, noise issues for sensitive land uses adjacent to the pipeline alignment, and/or equipment operations.
- N-8** Construction equipment shall be electric- and hydraulic-powered rather than diesel and pneumatic powered, as feasible.
- N-9** During all construction activities in residential neighborhoods, temporary barriers shall be utilized to the extent feasible around noisy equipment located within 500 feet of a sensitive receptor. Staging sites shall not be located within 500 feet of a sensitive receptor. A temporary barrier shall be employed when staging sites are restricted to residential neighborhoods.
- N-10** Prior to construction work, the public shall be notified of the location and dates of construction. Residents shall be kept informed of any changes to the schedule.
- N-11** Haul routes shall be on major arterial roads within non-residential areas. If not feasible, haul routes shall be reviewed and approved before the haul route can be located on major arterial roads in residential areas.
- N-12** LADWP shall coordinate with the site administrator for Dorris Place Elementary School to discuss construction activities that generate high noise levels. Coordination between the site administrator and LADWP shall continue on an as-needed basis throughout the construction phase of the project to mitigate potential disruption of classroom activities..
- SR-1** The construction contractor would develop and implement an erosion control plan and Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan for construction activities. Erosion control and grading plans shall include, but not be limited to, the following:
- Minimizing the extent of disturbed areas and duration of exposure;
  - Stabilizing and protecting disturbed areas;
  - Keeping runoff velocities low; and
  - Retaining sediment within the construction area.
  - Construction erosion control Best Management Practices shall include, but not be limited to, the following:
    - a. Temporary desilting basins;
    - b. Silt fences;
    - c. Gravel bag barriers;
    - d. Temporary soil stabilization with mattresses and mulching;
    - e. Temporary drainage inlet protection; and
    - f. Diversion dikes and interceptor swales.

- BIO-1** Should vegetation removal or tree trimming occur during the breeding season for migratory non-game native bird species (February 15 through September 15), nesting bird surveys shall be conducted in order to detect any protected native birds nesting within the construction work area. Surveys shall be conducted weekly, beginning no earlier than 30 days and ending no later than 3 days prior to the commencement of disturbance. If an active nest is discovered, disturbance within a particular buffer shall be prohibited until nesting is complete; the buffer distance shall be determined by the biological monitor in consideration of species sensitivity and existing nest site conditions. Limits of avoidance shall be demarcated with flagging or fencing. Once a flagged nest is determined to be no longer active, the biological monitor would remove all flagging and allow construction activities to proceed.
- CR-1** Installation of the booster pump and potable water pipeline within the arboretum shall be designed so as not to require removal of or cause root damage to the tree plantings within the Chavez Ravine Arboretum. LARAP staff with knowledge of the trees and their root systems shall be consulted in order to avoid removal of trees or damage to root systems that may lie within or adjacent to the project area of potential effect (APE). Lawn (grass) to be removed during trenching shall be replaced in the post-construction phase, to the extent feasible.
- CR-2** The forebay tank, and non-potable and recycled water pumping stations shall be designed to be visually consistent with the landscape of Elysian Park and shall be carried out in compliance with the Secretary of the Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.
- CR-3** A qualified archaeological monitor shall be on-site during all ground disturbing activities, including, but not limited to, trenching, grading, and excavation of launching and receiving pits for microtunneling. The location of the launching and receiving pits shall be excavated in a controlled manner with a flat blade for the first 5 feet, under the direction of the archaeological monitor. The qualified archaeological monitor shall work under the direction of a qualified archaeological Principal Investigator.
- CR-4** The archaeological monitor shall conduct worker training prior to the initiation of ground disturbing activity in order to inform workers of the types of resources that may be encountered and apprise them of appropriate handling of such resources.
- CR-5** If any prehistoric archaeological sites are encountered within the APE, consultation with interested Native American parties shall be conducted to apprise

them of any such findings and solicit any comments they may have regarding appropriate treatment and disposition of the resources.

- CR-6** The archaeological monitor, through LADWP's construction manager, shall have the authority to redirect construction equipment in the event that potential archaeological resources are encountered. In the event that archaeological resources are encountered, LADWP shall be notified immediately and work in the vicinity of the discovery shall halt until appropriate treatment of the resource is determined by the qualified archaeological Principal Investigator in accordance with the provisions of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.
- VIS-1** At the completion of construction, LADWP, in coordination with LARAP, shall paint the recycled water tank a neutral color chosen to blend in with the surrounding park setting.
- VIS-2** At the completion of construction, LADWP, in coordination with LARAP, shall install trees, shrubs, or other vegetation between the proposed tank and Angels Point Drive to screen the tank from view from the roadway and Elysian Fields.
- TR-1** LADWP, prior to the start of construction, shall coordinate with Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT) to prepare a Traffic Management Plan (TMP). The TMP, which details construction traffic control and detour (traffic deviations via alternative routes) methods for each phase of construction, shall be prepared by a registered traffic or civil engineer, as appropriate, based on City of Los Angeles permit guidelines. The TMP would be approved by the applicable local jurisdiction(s) for each construction segment prior to the start of work within public roadways along the proposed pipeline alignment. Methods to inform the public regarding project construction and roadway and bike path detours and closures would be implemented as part of the TMP, which shall include the following:
- a. Directional capacity (generally southbound/westbound in the morning peak hour and northbound/eastbound in the evening peak hour) shall be considered in roadway closure planning where work area placement is flexible. The provision of the original one-way capacity of the affected roadway (in number of travel lanes) in the peak direction, while providing a reduced number of travel lanes for the opposite direction of traffic flow, shall be used to alleviate any potential poor level of service conditions. Left-turn lanes and other approach lanes (as feasible) shall be maintained in close vicinity to major intersections along the proposed pipeline routes.

- b. Provide continued through access via detours for vehicles and to provide for adequate pedestrian and transit circulation. Signed detour routes and other potential routes that drivers would utilize during the construction period would become alternate routes for a proportion of the vehicles that would otherwise travel along the corridor where construction would be taking place.
- c. For the project detour routes, wayfinding signs and other relevant traffic control devices shall be placed on all major roadways into the larger area around each construction closure locations, and shall be repositioned for each construction segment (as the construction zones progress along the proposed pipeline alignment). Wayfinding signs shall be placed at major detour decision points to keep vehicles on-track through the detour route, and shall also be placed at the next major intersection location in advance of the first detour decision point.
- d. Consult with local transit agencies to minimize impacts to passenger loading areas and to minimize travel times on scheduled transit routes. All affected transit agencies shall be contacted to provide for any required modifications or temporary relocation of transit facilities.

**TR-2** LADWP shall consult with the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) to obtain permits for the transport of oversized loads, and to obtain encroachment permits for any work along State facilities.

### **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>. To make an appointment to review the EA, contact Mike Lehner at the address given below.

Comments supporting or disagreeing with this FONSI may be submitted, within 30 calendar days of the issuance of this FONSI, to the following via letter, fax, or email:

Mike Lehner  
EPA Region 9  
Tribal Water Office (WTR-10)  
75 Hawthorne Street  
San Francisco, CA 94015-3901  
telephone: 415-972-3083  
fax: 415-947-3587  
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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.