

Notice of Determination

Appendix D

To:

Office of Planning and Research
U.S. Mail: Street Address:
P.O. Box 3044 1400 Tenth St., Rm 113
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044 Sacramento, CA 95814

County Clerk
County of: Marin
Address: 3501 Civic Center Drive, Rm 247
San Rafael, CA 94903

From:

Public Agency: County of Marin
Address: 3501 Civic Center Drive, Rm 304
San Rafael, CA 94903
Contact: Ernest Klock
Phone: 415-473-6552

Lead Agency (if different from above):
Marin Emergency Radio Authority (MERA)
Address: 300 Tamalpais Drive
Corte Madera, CA 94925
Contact: Ernest Klock
Phone: 415-473-6552

SUBJECT: Filing of Notice of Determination in compliance with Section 21108 or 21152 of the Public Resources Code.

State Clearinghouse Number (if submitted to State Clearinghouse): 99092073

Project Title: MERA Next Generation Radio Communication System

Project Applicant: Marin Emergency Radio Authority (MERA)

Project Location (include county): Marin and Sonoma Counties

Project Description:

See attached two page project description.

This is to advise that the Marin Emergency Radio Authority (MERA) has approved the above (Lead Agency or Responsible Agency)

described project on 12/11/19 and has made the following determinations regarding the above described project.

- 1. The project will have a significant effect on the environment.
2. An Environmental Impact Report was prepared for this project pursuant to the provisions of CEQA.
3. Mitigation measures were made a condition of the approval of the project.
4. A mitigation reporting or monitoring plan was adopted for this project.
5. A statement of Overriding Considerations was adopted for this project.
6. Findings were made pursuant to the provisions of CEQA.

This is to certify that the final EIR with comments and responses and record of project approval, or the negative Declaration, is available to the General Public at:

Marin County Public Works, 3501 Civic Center Drive, Rm 304 San Rafael, CA 94903 from 8am to 5pm

Signature (Public Agency): [Signature] Title: Operations Officer Governor's Office of Planning & Research

Date: 12/12/19 Date Received for filing at OPR: DEC 13 2019

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

SUMMARY FOR ELECTRONIC DOCUMENT SUBMITTAL

SCH # 99092073

LEAD AGENCY: Marin Emergency Radio Authority (MERA)

PROJECT TITLE: MERA Next Generation Radio Communication System

PROJECT LOCATION: Marin and Sonoma Counties

Project Description

The Marin Emergency Radio Authority's (MERA) proposed project is the Next Generation Radio Communication System, an upgrade to Marin County's existing emergency radio communications system that will improve the County's emergency communication capabilities during daily public service and critical emergencies. The proposed project would replace equipment at currently operating communications sites as well as install telecommunications facilities (towers, microwave dishes, antennae, radio shelter and emergency power generation) at new sites where public and private infrastructure already exists. In total, 10 existing sites would be upgraded, eight new sites would be introduced, and five existing sites would be decommissioned.

The existing MERA system currently includes 16 active communication sites. The existing sites to be retained are: Marin Civic Center, Big Rock Ridge, Mt. Tamalpais, Mt. Barnabe, Point Reyes Hill, Dollar Hill, San Pedro Ridge, Mt. Tiburon, Sonoma Mountain and Stewart Point. The five sites to be decommissioned are Forbes Hill in San Rafael, Mt. Burdell in Novato, Mill Valley City Hall, Mill Valley Public Safety Building and Bay Hill Road in Sonoma County. The eight new sites to be added are the Emergency Operations Facility (Prime Site), Tomales (Parks Ranch), Coyote Peak (Walker Creek Ranch) Skyview Terrace (San Rafael), Muir Beach Water Tank, Wolfback Ridge, Mt. Burdell OTA, and Mill Valley Water Tank. The Next Gen System will have a total of 18 communication sites, two more sites than the existing system. Seventeen of the sites are located in Marin County and one site is in Sonoma County (See Figure 1 in NOC).

Significant or Potentially Significant Impacts and Mitigation Measures

The proposed Next Gen Project would result in significant unavoidable visual/aesthetic impacts at five of the new communication sites: Skyview Terrace, Tomales, Coyote Peak, Muir Beach Water Tank and Mill Valley Water Tank. Visual impact mitigation measures such as fencing, landscape screening and painting would soften the visual impact, but would not reduce the impacts to less-than-significant.

The cultural resource analysis and tribal consultation found that the limited foundation excavations required for new towers and radio buildings could have an impact on currently unknown cultural and tribal resources at all sites. Proposed mitigation measures would require work to be halted if cultural artifacts or human remains were encountered. Any substantial change in design of project would require further consultation with tribal representatives, and a

tribal monitor with stop work authority will be present during excavation. **Implementation of mitigation measures would reduce impacts to less-than-significant.**

The biological resource analysis found that the proposed project could have a potential significant impact on special status plant species at two sites Stewart Point (Marin Manzanita) and Mill Valley Water Tank (Oakland star-tulip), and potential impact on American badger, red-legged frog and burrowing owl at the Tomales site, and potential impact on nesting birds at Point Reyes Hill, Dollar Hill, Mt. Tiburon, Tomales, Muir Beach, and Mill Valley water tank sites. All potential impacts to special status plant and animal species and nesting birds can be mitigated by pre-construction surveys designed to identify the presence of special status species and erection of temporary fencing including limitations on construction during the wildlife nesting season. **Implementation of recommended mitigation would reduce all potential impacts to special status species to less-than-significant.**

Potential construction impacts on air and water quality, and noise will be avoided by implementation of Best Management Practices and adopted community noise standards.

The proposed project was found to comply with all adopted standards for general public radio frequency exposure through elevated placement of antennas on towers and fencing of communications sites. Potential radio frequency exposure impacts to maintenance workers **will be mitigated to less-than-significant** by the posting of warning signs at the Prime Site (EOC), Civic Center and Mt. Tiburon sites.

Potential seismic impacts will be avoided by requiring design level-geotechnical reports prior to new construction and compliance with California's adopted seismic building and construction standards.

Potential Areas of Controversy

Environmental concerns raised during consultation with Responsible and Trustee agencies and the general public included:

- Aesthetic changes associated with modifications to existing towers
- Aesthetic changes associated with the construction of new towers
- Impacts to biological resources while improving the existing road to Coyote Peak
- Alterations to the significance of historic resources at three sites
- Possible alterations to tribal cultural resources at 13 sites
- Radio frequency emissions within controlled spaces with worker access
- Radio frequency emissions in uncontrolled spaces with public access
- Consistency with coastal development standards

Responsible and Trustee Agencies

California Coastal Commission, California Department of Transportation, California Fish and Wildlife, Regional Water Quality Control District, Bay Area Air Quality Management District, California Native American Heritage Commission, and the Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria.

Table 1. MERA Sites and Locations for CEQA Evaluation

Site Name and Number	APN	Jurisdiction	Coordinates	Previous EIR	Comments
1. Prime Site EOF [^]	165-220-11	City of San Rafael	38.019167, -122.541528	N	New site at Sheriff's Dispatch
2. Civic Center	179-270-11	City of San Rafael	37.999056, -122.531306	Y	Upgrades
3. Big Rock	164-300-04	Marin County	38.059194, -122.604250	Y	Upgrades
4. Mt. Tamalpais	197-120-31	Marin County	37.929006, -122.587084	Y	Upgrades
5. Mt. Barnabe	168-240-01	Marin County	38.026751, -122.716321	Y	Upgrades
6. Bolinas Fire Station	193-030-20	Marin County	N/A	Y	Dropped from original system
7. Bolinas Ridge	197-120-30	Marin County	N/A	Y	Dropped from original system
8. Point Reyes Hill	109-160-23	Marin County	38.079836, -122.866944	Y	Upgrades
9. Forbes Hill	010-261-02	City of San Rafael	N/A	Y	Decommission
10. Dollar Hill	011-051-02	City of San Rafael	37.980262, -122.529354	Y	Upgrades
11. San Pedro Ridge	015-250-21	City of San Rafael	37.990205, -122.500139	Y	Upgrades
12. Mt. Burdell	125-180-17	City of Novato	N/A	Y	Decommission
13. Novato PD	153-061-28	City of Novato	N/A	Y	Dropped from original system
14. Mt. Tiburon	058-261-39	Town of Tiburon	37.890440, -122.464796	Y	Upgrades
15. Mill Valley City Hall	028-014-16	City of Mill Valley	N/A	Y	Decommission
16. Mill Valley Police Station*	030-250-01	City of Mill Valley	N/A	Y	Decommission
17. Bay Hill Road	100-190-07	Sonoma County	N/A	Y	Decommission
18. Sonoma Mountain	136-190-09	Sonoma County	38.261015, -122.903629	Y	Upgrades
19. Stewart Point**	188-090-15	Marin County	38.185833, -122.825167	Y	Upgrades
20. Tomales***	100-050-42	Marin County	38.017000, -122.546000	N	New site with cell tower and equipment
21. Coyote Peak	106-110-03	Marin County	37.863289, -122.585512	N	New site with existing water wellheads
22. Skyview Terrace Water Tank	165-220-02	City of San Rafael	37.851085, -122.498376	N	New site with MMWD water tank
23. Muir Beach	199-262-11	Marin County	38.149888, -122.593239	N	New site with local water tank
24. Wolfback Ridge	200-120-02	Marin County	37.902735, -122.558010	N	New site with existing 100' tower
25. Mt. Burdell OTA [^]	125- 120-03	Marin County	38.261015, -122.903629	N	New site with existing structure and tower
26. Mill Valley Water Tank	046-070-03	Marin County	38.185833, -122.825167	N	New site with existing MMWD water tank

* Added to original EIR as an adjustment before its publication so signal from Mill Valley City Hall would be detected.
 ** Added to original EIR with a CEQA Amendment in 2006.
 *** Added to original EIR with a Categorical Exemption in 2012. Incorporated into SEIR to discuss whole action.
[^] EOF = Emergency Operations Facility, OTA = Over-the-Air Broadcasting

Figure 1. MERA Next Generation System Configuration

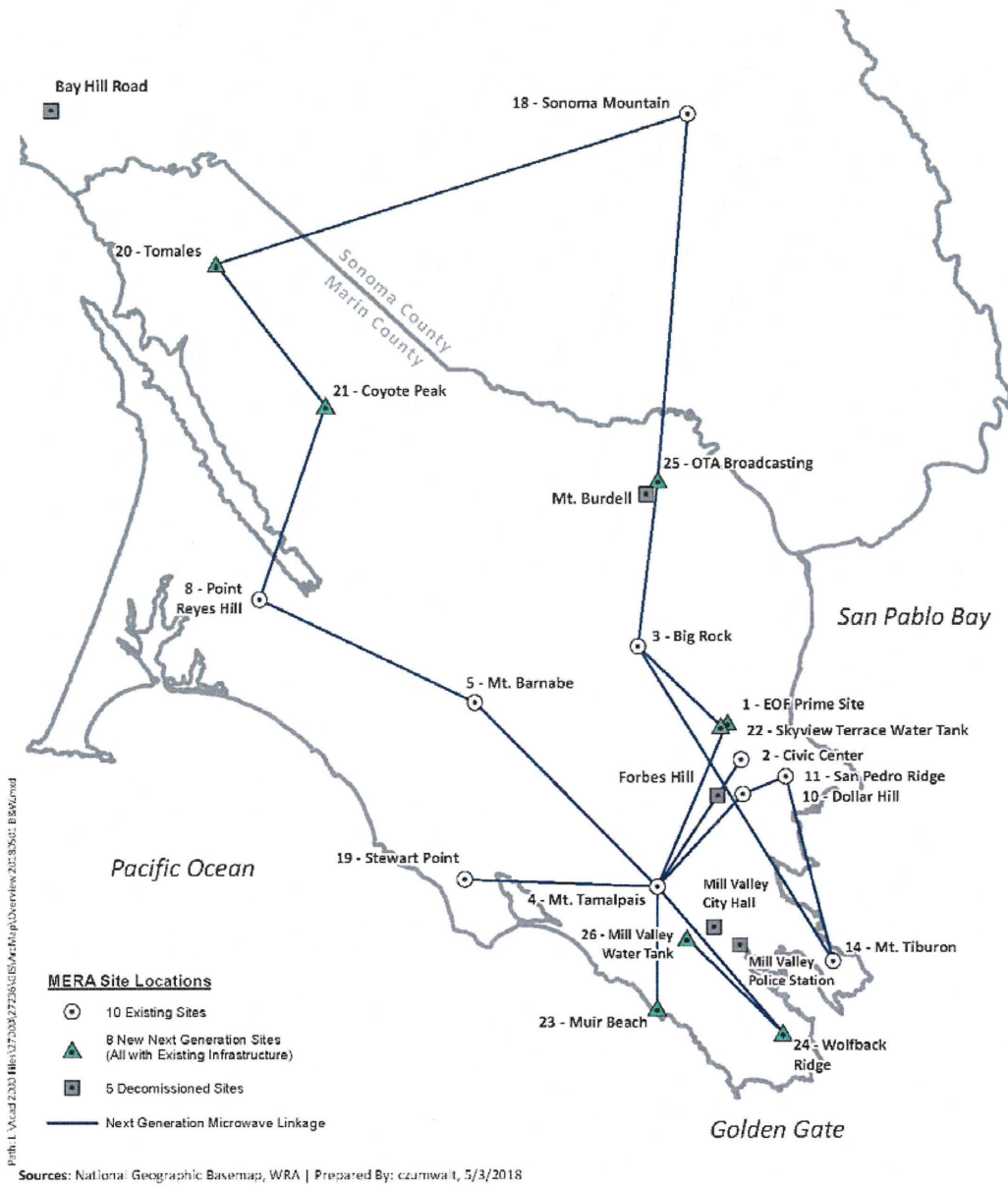
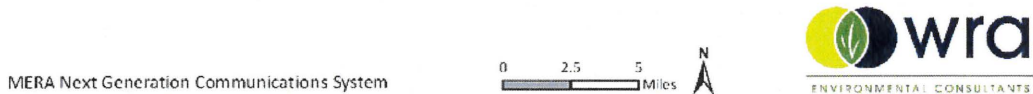


Figure X. MERA Next Generation System Configuration





COUNTY OF MARIN

Raul M. Rojas
DIRECTOR

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

Quality, Excellence, Innovation

Administration
PO Box 4186
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December 12, 2019

State Clearing House
Office of Planning & Research
1400 10th Street, #12
Sacramento, CA 95814

Accounting

RE: TRANSMITTAL – MERA NextGen Project Notice of Determination –
SCH#99092073

Airport

Building Maintenance

To Whom It May Concern,

Capital Projects

Please find the enclosed Notice of Determination for the MERA Next Generation
Radio Communication System Project, State Clearinghouse Number 99092073.

Certified Unified Program
Agency (CUPA)

Also enclosed is a check for the California Department of Fish and Wildlife fee of
\$3,271. Please send a receipt for the CA Dept. of Fish & Wildlife fee payment to:

Communications Maintenance

Attn: Ernest Klock
County of Marin
Department of Public Works
3501 Civic Center Drive, Room 304
San Rafael, CA 94903
(415) 473-6552 direct
EKlock@marincounty.org

County Garage

Disability Access

Engineering & Survey

Flood Control &
Water Resources

Land Development

Sincerely,

Purchasing

Real Estate

Reprographic Services

Road Maintenance

Stormwater Program

Transportation &
Traffic Operations

Waste Management

Ernest Klock
Assistant Director (MERA Operations Officer)
415.473.6552

Governor's Office of Planning & Research
DEC 13 2019
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