
Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board

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Governor's Office of Planning & Research

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STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

Comments on the Initial Study and Notice of Intent to Adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration for Capital Improvement Project No. BM19-125 – New 1 MG Reservoir, City of Victorville, San Bernardino County, State Clearinghouse Number 2020039077

This Letter replaces the previous comment letter dated April 24, 2020, with the only substantial change made to specific comment No. 2, regarding surface waters.

Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board (Water Board) staff reviewed the draft Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) for the planned construction of a one million-gallon (1MG) water storage reservoir at Southern California Logistics Airport (Project). The IS/MND was prepared by the City of Victorville, Victorville Water District (VWD), and submitted in compliance with provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

The Water Board, acting as a CEQA responsible agency, provides these comments related to our statutory responsibilities pursuant to CEQA Guidelines, California Code of Regulations, title 14, section 15096. We thank the VWD for providing Water Board staff the opportunity to review and comment on the draft IS/MND and for taking the initiative to identify potential effects on water quality.

Based on our review of the IS/MND, we recommend that the City identify a method of discharging water during hydrostatic testing and disinfection of the proposed new 12-inch water main and 1MG tank. We recommend that VWD consider our comments and value our mission to protect waters of the State and maintain water quality in the Lahontan Region.

Project Description

The Project will entail constructing a reclaimed water storage tank located at the SCLA, located east of Westwind Road and south of Montana Street within the abandoned

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former George Air Force Base housing area. The Project will consist of replacing the existing 0.6 Million Gallon (MG), in-ground lined storage pond, with a new 1 MG prestressed circular reservoir and relocating underground appurtenances as necessary. After putting the new 1MG reservoir in service, the existing in-ground lined storage pond will be backfilled and abandoned. No additional flow to the sanitary sewer line is proposed. The existing in ground lined pond overflow piping will be repurposed to accept overflow from the new tank. The tertiary treated recycled water stored in this tank will meet California Code of Regulations title 22 Water Recycling Criteria. The treated recycled water uses of the water stored in this Project are separately regulated and sourced from the Victor Valley Wastewater Reclamation Authority's Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant and on occasion, from SCLA's Industrial Wastewater Treatment Plant. The end users of recycled water from this Project will continue to be the industrial tenants of the SCLA that are separately regulated under Board Order No. R6V-2014-0002. The recycled water uses include irrigation and other non-domestic industrial uses.

Authority

All groundwater and surface waters are considered waters of the State. Surface waters include streams, lakes, ponds, and wetlands, and may be ephemeral, intermittent, or perennial. All waters of the State are protected under California law. State law assigns responsibility for protecting water quality in the Lahontan Region to the Lahontan Water Board. Some waters of the State are also waters of the United States (U.S.). The Federal Clean Water Act (CWA) provides additional protection for those waters of the State that are also waters of the U.S.

The *Water Quality Control Plan for the Lahontan Region* (Basin Plan) contains policies that the Water Board uses with other laws and regulations to protect the quality of waters of the State within the Lahontan Region. The Basin Plan sets forth water quality standards for surface water and groundwater of the Region, which include designated beneficial uses as well as narrative and numerical objectives which must be maintained or attained to protect those uses. The Basin Plan can be accessed via the Water Board's web site at http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/lahontan/water_issues/programs/basin_plan/references.shtml.

Specific Comments

1. The IS/MND did not discuss impacts related to discharge of hydro-static testing water or water used for disinfecting the proposed 12" pipeline and new tank at start-up of the project and for future operations. These activities have the potential to generate wastewater and may require separate permits (see Permitting Requirements below).
 - The IS/MND should identify methods and procedures for managing water discharges from the tank during testing, cleaning, or disinfection that will occur at start up and future operations.

- For the initial tank disinfection phase, Water Board staff recommends the VWD consider using the existing in-ground storage pond or existing overflow piping to the sanitary sewer system for discharging test water.
2. The IS/MND states that the project will not violate any water quality standards. But, the IS/MND does not identify the applicable water quality standards for affected waters within the Project area. These standards are identified in the Basin Plan. The only means of accurately making an assessment as to whether the Project will affect or violate those standards is to first identify the applicable water quality standards.
- Identify and describe the applicable water quality standards for receiving surface and groundwaters in the Project area. Water Quality Standards are a combination of beneficial uses described in Chapter 2 of the Basin Plan and water quality objectives described in Chapter 3 of the Basin Plan.
 - For groundwater in the Project area, Beneficial Uses are defined in the Basin Plan, Table 2-2, for the Upper Mojave River Valley (DWR Basin no. 6-42) as Municipal (MUN), Agricultural (AGR), Industrial (IND), Freshwater Replenishment (FRSH), and Aquaculture (AQUA).

Water Quality Objectives to protect those uses include standards for coliform bacteria, chemical constituents, radioactivity, and taste and odor.

- For surface water in the Project area, Beneficial Uses are defined in the Basin Plan, Table 2-1, for the Upper Mojave Hydrologic Area (DWR Basin No. 628.20), as Minor Surface Waters. The Beneficial Uses are Municipal (MUN), Agricultural (AGR), Groundwater Recharge (GWR), Hydropower Generation (POW), Water Contact Recreation (REC-1), Noncontact Water Recreation (REC-2), Commercial and Sportfishing (COMM), Warm Freshwater Habitat (WARM), and Cold Freshwater Habitat (COLD), Wildlife Habitat (WILD).

Water Quality Objectives to protect those uses include standards for ammonia, coliform bacteria, bio-stimulatory substances, chemical constituents, chlorine, color, dissolved oxygen, floating materials, oil and grease, non-degradation of aquatic communities and populations, pH, radioactivity, sediment, settleable materials, taste and odor, temperature, toxicity, and turbidity.

Permitting Requirements

Activities associated with the proposed Project appear to have the potential to impact waters of the State and, therefore, may require permits issued by either the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) or Lahontan Water Board. The required permits may include:

1. Land disturbance of more than 1 acre requires coverage under a CWA, section 402(p) stormwater permit. The current National Pollutant Discharge Elimination

System permit is the State Water Board's General Construction Stormwater Permit, Water Quality Order (WQO) 2009-0009-DWQ. Coverage is obtained from the State Water Board, or an individual stormwater permit obtained from the Lahontan Water Board.

2. Streambed alteration and/or discharge of fill material to a surface water may require a CWA, section 401 water quality certification for impacts to federal waters (waters of the U.S.), or dredge and fill waste discharge requirements for impacts to non-federal waters, both issued by the Lahontan Water Board.
3. Clear-water discharges to surface waters of the U.S., including hydrostatic pipeline and tank testing discharges to the onsite ephemeral drainages, may be subject to discharge and monitoring requirements under an NPDES General Permit. The current Lahontan permit, Limited Threat Discharges to Surface Waters, Board Order R6T-2014-0049, has expired and no new enrollees are authorized. We recommend the IS/MND identify potential discharge scenarios that do not involve discharges to surface waters of the United States.
4. Clear-water discharges to land and groundwater of the State, including hydrostatic pipeline and tank testing discharges to ground, may be subject to waste discharge requirements under the Statewide General Waste Discharge Requirements for Discharges to Land With A Low Threat To Water Quality, Water Quality Order No. 2003-003-DWQ.

Please be advised of the permits that may be required for the proposed Project, as outlined above. We request that specific Project activities that may trigger these permitting actions be identified in the appropriate sections of the environmental document. Should Project implementation result in activities that will trigger these permitting actions, the Project proponent should consult with Water Board staff. Information regarding these permits, including application forms, can be downloaded from our web site at <http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/lahontan/>.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the IS/ND. If you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact me at (760) 241-3408, mark.lemus@waterboards.ca.gov, or Jehiel Cass P.E., Senior Water Resource Control Engineer, jehiel.cass@waterboards.ca.gov.

Please upload all future correspondence regarding this Project to the Water Board's GeoTracker database at <https://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/>. Please be sure to include the State Clearinghouse No. (2020039077) and Project name (New 1 MG Reservoir) in the subject line.



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Victor Fajardo

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