



Antelope Valley-East Kern Water Agency
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Notice of Intent to Adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration and Notice of a Public Hearing

Eastside Water Bank Expansion Project

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Antelope Valley-East Kern Water Agency (AVEK) is proposing to expand the existing Eastside Water Bank facility to include three recharge basins east of the existing recharge ponds, three 18-inch turnout pipes, and a single 24-inch delivery pipeline. Specifically, the three recharge basins would encompass 74 acres located on a 160-acre parcel east of the existing recharge ponds. The project site is in the Antelope Valley region of unincorporated Los Angeles County, California, between the communities of Pearblossom and Littlerock, east of the City of Palmdale. Specifically, the project site is north of East Avenue U, south of East Avenue T8, east of the existing Eastside Water Bank facility, and west of 106th Street East.

Operation of the project would involve the storing of surplus State Water Project (SWP) raw water, which would be recharged into the local groundwater basin. Recharge is estimated to occur at a rate of 8,900 acre-feet (AF) in 8 months. Excavations would be required to create the basins; excavated material would be used as fill material to construct berms approximately three feet tall surrounding each basin. There would be approximately one foot of freeboard between the water level and the top of the berm. A concrete emergency spillway would be constructed along the west side of the recharge basins to divert overflows and each of the new recharge basins would be connected to the concrete spillway by a corrugated metal pipe.

A new 24-inch delivery pipeline that would connect to the existing 24-inch pipeline at the existing operations and control (OC) building located south of the existing recharge ponds would accommodate gravity flow to the new basins. The 24-inch pipeline would exit the OC building in the south and traverse eastward, paralleling East Avenue U towards the new recharge basins. As such, this pipeline configuration would bypass pre-treatment infrastructure at the existing facility and the existing recovery ponds. Individual inlets to each of the three recharge basins would be through 18-inch pipes that connect to the 24-inch delivery pipeline. The 18-inch diameter basin inlets each would be piped with a box inlet structure surrounded by grouted rip rap keyed into the basin floor for erosion control.

Access to the new facilities would be provided from East Avenue U via a 20-foot-wide road that would encircle the recharge basins and connect to the existing road that provides access to the Eastside Water Bank facilities. The road would be constructed with a Class 2 aggregate base surface. Additionally, the entire perimeter of the project site would be enclosed with chain link fencing. Security lighting similar to the lighting at the existing Eastside Water Bank would be installed. In accordance with the Los Angeles County Rural Outdoor Lighting District Ordinance, lighting would be directed toward the project site and designed not to create light trespass. Maintenance activities would consist of a few monthly trips concurrent with maintenance of the existing facility.

Project construction is anticipated to start as early as August 2021 and occur over an approximately five-month period. Construction of the access road circling the proposed basins would require the import of approximately 25 truckloads of aggregate from a quarry approximately two miles west of the project site. All grading and soil moving cut/fill activities would be balanced on site (i.e., no import or export of soil). Equipment would include typical construction equipment such as a grader, dozer, excavator, and vibratory roller. Worker activities at the site are anticipated to require up to 10 trips per day for clearing and grubbing and grading activities, and 20 trips per day for fencing and pipeline installation activities.

Additionally, during both construction and operation all developed areas would be stabilized. The project contractor would prepare and implement a Fugitive Dust Plan per Antelope Valley Air Quality Management

District (AVAQMD) guidelines

SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS: AVEK has studied the effects of the proposed project on the environment. The results of these studies are detailed in a draft Mitigated Negative Declaration and Initial Study. The analysis finds that all potential environmental effects are less than significant or, as identified for biological resources and cultural resources, can be mitigated to less than significant levels by incorporation of mitigation measures.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD: Beginning on February 10, 2021 and ending March 12, 2021.

AVAILABILITY OF THE MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION: Copies of the Mitigated Negative Declaration and Initial Study may be obtained at AVEK's office: 6500 West Avenue N, Palmdale. Office hours are 8:00 A.M. – 5:00 P.M. Monday through Friday, excluding holidays.

COMMENTS ON THE MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION MUST BE RECEIVED BY 5:00 P.M., March 12, 2021. Send comments in writing to Mr. Dwayne Chisam, P.E., General Manager/Chief Engineer, Antelope Valley-East Kern Water Agency, 6500 West Avenue N, Palmdale, CA 93551. If you have comments, you also may attend the public hearing described below.

PUBLIC HEARING: A public hearing to consider the adoption of the Mitigated Negative Declaration will be held on April 13, 2021 at 5:30 p.m. The hearing will be held via a teleconference link, which will be posted on the AVEK website by April 9, 2021. Please visit www.avek.org.

Attachments:

Figure 1, Regional Location

Figure 2, Site Location

Figure 3, Site Plan