



Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District

NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF A DRAFT EIR FOR PUBLIC REVIEW

Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District has released a Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the project listed below:

PROPOSED PROJECT: Regional San BioGeneration Facility Project (State Clearinghouse No. 2021050080)

PUBLIC REVIEW AND COMMENT PERIOD: March 29, 2023 to May 12, 2023

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The proposed project would include construction and operation of a new biogeneration facility including a cogeneration engine system to use biogas onsite to produce electricity and heat for the Sacramento Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant (SRWTP). Regional San has been in partnership with Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD) for nearly 30 years. Under this partnership, Regional San delivers renewable biogas generated by the SRWTP wastewater treatment process to SMUD, and SMUD delivers electricity, steam for digester heating, and revenue to Regional San in accordance with the Commodity Agreement terms. With the Commodity Agreement expiring in 2025, Regional San is pursuing the project described below as an alternative use for its biogas.

The goal of the project is to design and construct a biogas cogeneration facility before the Commodity Agreement expires in October 2025 that meets the following objectives:

- ▲ make the best use of biogas (highest economic and environmental value, greatest overall efficiency);
- ▲ minimize operations and maintenance costs;
- ▲ integrate into the existing SRWTP facilities;
- ▲ reduce emissions associated with use of biogas venting and flaring compared to existing conditions; and
- ▲ protect the environment through responsible stewardship of natural resources.

The proposed project would include up to six internal combustion engine generators, engine exhaust treatment (oxidation catalyst and selective catalytic reduction), a biogas conditioning system (as part of the gas management system), a hot water boiler (standby), and a new building. Several underground utility lines connecting the SRWTP to the Carson Cogen Plant would be abandoned or demolished.

Construction of the project would last between 18 and 24 months and is anticipated to begin in 2024. Typical construction activities would include earthwork such as grading, excavation, trenching, backfilling, hauling, and compaction. Additionally, underground piping and utilities would be constructed. In total, up to 5.6 acres would be disturbed by project construction and staging. Construction would require between 15 and 20 construction workers per day during construction of the new facilities. Typical work hours would be Monday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. (construction noise is exempt from noise ordinances between 6:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. on weekdays within Sacramento County). No nighttime work is anticipated.

PROJECT LOCATION: The SRWTP is located at 8521 Laguna Station Road in Elk Grove and is surrounded by approximately 2,150 acres of open space owned by Regional San and known as the Bufferlands. The entire SRWTP site and Bufferlands are located north of Laguna Boulevard and lie predominantly within the unincorporated area of Sacramento County, between Franklin Boulevard and

Interstate 5. The biogeneration project area (area of disturbance) would be located within the SRWTP site in a previously disturbed area north of the existing digesters. The project area is bordered by Digesters Way/Oregon Trail to the south and Septage Way to the north. The staging area would be immediately east of the proposed biogeneration facility site.

ALTERNATIVES: The State CEQA Guidelines (Section 15126.6) require that an EIR evaluate a range of reasonable alternatives to the project, which would feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project but would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project. The EIR includes a comparative analysis of the alternatives. The EIR addresses a reasonable range of potentially feasible alternatives that would meet most project objectives and provide for informed decision making and public participation. Section 15126.6(e) of the State CEQA Guidelines requires an assessment of a no project alternative, as one of the alternatives considered, to allow decision makers to compare the environmental effects of taking an action with those associated with not taking it.

In addition to the proposed program, the EIR includes analysis of the following alternatives:

- ▲ **Alternative 1: No Project – No Action Alternative** assumes the proposed biogeneration facility would not be constructed. The project area would remain in its current condition and biogas generated at the SRWTP would be used to fuel boilers, with the rest being flared.
- ▲ **Alternative 2: No Project – SMUD Agreement Extension Alternative** assumes the biogeneration facility would not be constructed. The project area would remain in its current condition, and Regional San would continue to deliver renewable biogas generated at the SRWTP to SMUD, and SMUD would continue to deliver electricity, steam for digester heating, and revenue to Regional San in accordance with the Commodity Agreement terms. The existing Commodity Agreement would be extended beyond 2025 under this alternative.
- ▲ **Alternative 3: Trigeneration Alternative** would include use of fuel cells to convert biogas from the SRWTP to heat and power. Heat and power would be used onsite for the SRWTP. In addition, this alternative would be designed to allow for generation of renewable hydrogen in the future.

SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS: The Draft EIR identified significant or potentially significant effects associated with biological resources and cultural resources. These impacts would be mitigated to a less-than-significant level. The project would not result in any significant and unavoidable impacts.

PUBLIC MEETING: A public meeting will be held on May 3, 2023, from 3:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. to receive comments on the Draft EIR. The public meeting will be held virtually via Zoom webinar. Participants must register in advance at the following link:

https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_dRa7zITCTIe41uviEGU85q

After registering, participants will receive the meeting link via email to log into the webinar on May 3, 2023.

WHERE DRAFT EIR MAY BE REVIEWED: The Draft EIR is available for review during normal business hours at the Valley Hi-North Laguna Library (7400 Imagination Parkway, Sacramento) and Regional San's offices in Sacramento (10060 Goethe Road, Sacramento). The Draft EIR is also available online at:

<https://www.regionalsan.com/biogas-recycling>

SEND COMMENTS TO: Steve Nebozuk, Senior Civil Engineer, Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District, 10060 Goethe Road, Sacramento, CA 95827; or nebozucs@sacsewer.com no later than 5:00 p.m. on May 12, 2023. For more information on the project, please contact Steve Nebozuk at (916) 876-6118 or nebozucs@sacsewer.com.