

NOTICE OF INTENT TO ADOPT A SUBSEQUENT MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

East County Advanced Water Purification Project

DATE: April 26, 2022

TO: State Clearinghouse; Responsible, Trustee, and Other Jurisdictional Agencies; and Other Interested Organizations/Individuals

LEAD AGENCY: East County Advanced Water Purification Joint Powers Authority
9300 Fanita Parkway
Santee, CA 92071

Notice is hereby given that the East County Advanced Water Purification (AWP) Joint Powers Authority (JPA), as the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), has prepared and plans to consider adopting a Subsequent Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for the East County AWP Project (Project).

Project Background

The Project is a partnership between the Padre Dam Municipal Water District (District), Helix Water District, County of San Diego, and City of El Cajon for the purpose of creating a new local, sustainable, and drought-proof water supply using state-of-the-art technology. The District previously adopted the Project MND (SCH No. 2018091029), approved a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP), and approved the Project in 2018. In February 2020, the JPA approved a resolution considering the Project MND under CEQA, adopting the approved MMRP and approving the Project. The JPA is now implementing the Project in east San Diego County. The approved Project will recycle East San Diego County's wastewater locally, purify the water at an Advanced Water Treatment Plant, and transport the purified water to Lake Jennings for surface water augmentation. The Project is an element of the Comprehensive Facilities Master Plan approved by the District through the 2017 Program Environmental Impact Report. The District is a member of the JPA and the Administrator of the Project. The JPA is the CEQA lead agency for the Project.

The Project will capture and treat approximately 15 million gallons per day (mgd) of wastewater generated within the East County area to produce an annual average of approximately 11.5 mgd of new local drinking water supply. Byproducts from the Project's solids handling and AWP facilities will include brine and centrate, collectively referred to as residuals. The approved Project includes a residuals bypass system that will convey brine from the AWP facility, and centrate from the solids dewatering process of the solids handling facility, to an existing regional sewage pipeline (the gravity line) owned and operated by the City of San Diego for treatment and disposal.

Project Modifications

In coordination with the City of San Diego, the JPA is currently evaluating a modification of the approved Project to construct and operate a regional brine line (RBL) to convey the residuals generated by the Project around the City of San Diego's Pure Water Program facilities. In lieu of discharging the residuals into the existing gravity line

as described in the previously approved Project, the RBL would consist of a pipeline built within the existing East Mission Gorge Force Main (EMGFM) pipeline and extending from the existing East Mission Gorge Pump Station (EMGPS) to the City of San Diego's South Mission Valley Trunk Sewer. The JPA is also evaluating other minor modifications to the approved Project to avoid existing utilities, avoid rocks and hard surfaces, minimize impacts to sensitive biological resources, accommodate alternative construction methodologies, and address new information. The Subsequent MND evaluates the environmental impacts of the Project modifications under consideration by the JPA.

Potential Environmental Effects

The Project modifications would result in potential impacts in the following issue areas: aesthetics; air quality; biological resources; cultural resources; geology and soils; hazards and hazardous materials; hydrology and water quality; land use and planning; noise; recreation; transportation; tribal cultural resources; utilities and service systems; and wildfire. However, based on the Subsequent MND prepared for the Project modifications, it has been determined that the Project modifications would not have a significant effect on the environment with the implementation of mitigation measures.

There are numerous locations listed on hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 within 50 feet of the Project modifications. All but one case associated with these sites are closed. Mitigation identified in the Subsequent MND would address potential effects associated with the one open case site, which is associated with Former Arco #1790, located at 6110 Mission Gorge Road, San Diego, CA 92120.

Draft Subsequent MND Availability

The Draft Subsequent MND is available electronically for review on the JPA's website at: www.eastcountyawp.com/2022mnd. A paper copy of the Draft Subsequent MND is available at the District's office at 9300 Fanita Parkway, Santee, California 92072-9003.

Responses and Comments

The JPA is soliciting comments during the 30-day public review period for this Draft Subsequent MND from April 27, 2022 to May 26, 2022. Comments shall be focused on the environmental analysis of the proposed modifications to the Project. All mailed comments must be postmarked by May 26, 2022. All emailed comments must be received no later than 5:00 p.m. on May 26, 2022. Please send responses to:

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A Final Subsequent MND, incorporating public input, will be prepared for consideration by the JPA at a future public meeting. Information on future public meetings can be found at the JPA's website at: <https://www.eastcountyawp.com/179/Board-Agendas-and-Minutes>.

We appreciate your review of the Draft Subsequent MND. If you have any questions regarding the project, please contact the JPA using the information above.