

NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

DATE: November 21, 2022

TO: Responsible Agencies, Trustee Agencies, Interested Parties

LEAD AGENCY: Eastern Municipal Water District

PROJECT TITLE: Pettit Water Storage Tank Expansion and Transmission Pipeline Project

PUBLIC REVIEW PERIOD: November 21, 2022 through December 21, 2022

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: This Notice of Preparation (NOP) has been prepared to notify agencies and interested parties that Eastern Municipal Water District (EMWD), as the lead agency pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), is preparing an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Pettit Water Storage Tank Expansion and Transmission Pipeline Project (proposed project). The proposed project would involve installation of two new 4.5 million-gallon (MG) storage tanks on the project site and demolition of an existing 2 MG storage tank. The new tanks would be fed by approximately 4,000 linear feet of proposed transmission pipeline to connect to the Cactus II Feeder. The proposed project would be implemented in phases: the first phase would involve construction and operation of one 4.5 MG storage tank and associated pipeline; the second phase would involve demolition of the existing 2 MG storage tank and installation of a second 4.5 MG storage tank in its place. The proposed project would support planned development in east Moreno Valley. A brief, initial discussion of potential environmental impacts is included in **Attachment A** to this NOP.

PROJECT LOCATION: The proposed water storage tanks would be constructed on parcels owned by EMWD located on the western side of Moreno Beach Drive in Moreno Valley. Appurtenant facilities would be installed just east of Moreno Beach Drive within the roadway right-of-way. The pipeline would be installed within rights-of-way within Moreno Beach Drive and Alessandro Boulevard. Proposed project facilities are shown on **Figure 1**.

PUBLIC REVIEW AND COMMENTS: EMWD is soliciting comments from responsible and trustee agencies as well as interested parties as to the scope and content of the environmental information to be included in the EIR. In accordance with CEQA, agencies are requested to review the project description provided in this NOP and provide comments on environmental issues related to the statutory responsibilities of the agency. The EIR will be used by EMWD when considering approval of the proposed project as well as any related discretionary approvals. All comments to the NOP are due no later than **4:00 p.m. on December 21, 2022**. Please send your comments to the mailing address or email address shown below. Include a return address or email address and a contact name for your agency or party with your comments.

CONTACT PERSON:

Eastern Municipal Water District
2270 Trumble Road or P.O. Box 8300
Perris, CA 92572-8300
Attn: Joe Broadhead, Principal Water Resources Specialist
broadhej@emwd.org
Phone: 951-928-3777 ext. 4545

DOCUMENT AVAILABILITY: Copies of the NOP are available at EMWD's office, located at 2270 Trumble Road, Perris, CA 92570, as well as at the Moreno Valley Public Library located at 25480 Alessandro Boulevard, Moreno Valley, CA 92553. The NOP is also available online at the EMWD Web Site (<https://www.emwd.org/public-notice>).



SOURCE: ESA (2022)

EMWD Pettit

Figure 1
Project Location



ATTACHMENT A

Potential Environmental Impacts

The EIR will assess and disclose the reasonably foreseeable direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts that would likely result from the construction and operation of the proposed project. Potential impacts to resources listed in Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines are summarized below. The EIR will identify mitigation measures if necessary to avoid, minimize, and offset potentially significant impacts of the project. The EIR also will evaluate alternatives to the proposed project that would avoid, minimize, and offset potentially significant impacts of the project while attempting to meet the objectives of the proposed project.

Aesthetics

Views in the project area consist mainly of residential land uses and open space with distant mountain vistas in the background. There are no officially designated California State Scenic Highways within the project area and local roadways are not considered scenic. Implementation of the proposed project would require demolition of an existing storage tank and construction and operation of two 4.5 MG storage tanks, along with an underground 4,000 linear foot transmission pipeline. The EIR will evaluate the potential for construction and operation of the proposed project to affect aesthetic resources, including potential impacts to scenic vistas and views, impacts to the visual character and public views of the project area, and potential impacts related to new light or glare sources.

Agriculture and Forestry Resources

The proposed project area includes lands primarily classified as “urban and built-up land,” and land designated as “other” by the California Department of Conservation. There are no active Williamson Act Contracts, forestland, or timberland within the project area. The EIR will evaluate whether the proposed project would impact Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program-designated farmland, or whether any agricultural or forestry land would be converted to non-agricultural or non-forestry uses.

Air Quality

Construction and operation of the proposed project could create air emissions that would result from construction equipment exhaust, ground disturbance during construction, material hauling, construction employee-commute travel, vehicle operational maintenance trips, and vehicle trips associated with any increases in employment. The EIR will estimate pollutant emissions from construction and operational activities.

Biological Resources

The proposed project could result in changes to wildlife habitat and disturbance of sensitive species during construction and operation. Site grading and introduction of new storage and transmission facilities could impact existing floral and faunal species or their habitats. The EIR will discuss local ordinances and state and federal regulations governing biological resources, and will evaluate the

potential for construction and operation of the proposed project to affect special-status species, riparian habitat or sensitive natural communities, wetlands, wildlife movement corridors, plans or ordinances, and conservation plans.

Cultural Resources

The proposed project would require ground disturbing activities during construction that could unearth known or unknown archeological and historic sites, as well as human remains. Additionally, operation of project facilities could affect the integrity of historical or archaeological resources. The EIR will assess the potential effects of the proposed project on cultural resources during construction and operation.

Energy

The proposed project could require generation of energy during construction and operation of the proposed project. The EIR will evaluate energy demand from construction equipment, haul trucks, vendor trucks, and construction workers, and will assess the project's anticipated operational energy needs. The EIR will assess the potential effects of consumption of energy resources during project implementation as well as any conflicts the project may have with existing energy efficiency policies.

Geology and Soils

The proposed project is located in Riverside County, which is a seismically active region in California. The construction of new facilities could be subject to potential seismic hazards including ground shaking. In addition, construction activities could expose soils to storm water erosion. The EIR will evaluate geologic hazards in the region and in the project area, such as the potential for ground shaking, liquefaction, expansive soils, soil erosion and landslides, as well as the likelihood that the project would destroy a unique paleontological resource or unique geologic feature.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Implementation of the proposed project would result in the generation of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions associated with construction and operation. The EIR will estimate construction-related emissions and long-term operational emissions, including total CO₂-equivalent emissions for evaluating the effects of GHGs. The EIR will examine the project's effects on global climate change and evaluate consistency of the project with the State's GHG emissions reduction goals.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials

Excavation activities during construction of the proposed storage tanks and transmission pipeline could uncover contaminated soils or hazardous substances that pose a substantial hazard to human health or the environment. The EIR will assess the potential for the public or the environment to be affected by routine use and accidental release of hazardous materials due to project construction and operation. Additionally, the EIR will assess the potential for the project area to be located within a hazardous material site, the potential for the project to result in safety hazards associated with a nearby airport or school, interference with an emergency response plan, or exposure of people or structures to an increased wildfire risk.

Hydrology and Water Quality

Construction and operation of the proposed project could affect water quality and drainage patterns, particularly if excavation activities result in sediment or spills runoff. The EIR will identify all impacts to water quality, erosion, drainage patterns, surface runoff, groundwater resources, and flood zone impacts as a result of project implementation, and will assess the project's compliance with water quality control or sustainable groundwater management plans.

Land Use and Planning

The proposed project would construct facilities within the City of Moreno Valley in a rural residential area zoned as Residential Agriculture 2 DU/AC (RA2). The project's infrastructure would be installed within public rights-of-way or on property owned by EMWD. The EIR will evaluate the compatibility of the proposed projects with surrounding land use, and will assess whether the proposed project will divide an established community.

Mineral Resources

The proposed project would involve ground-disturbing activities that could impact the availability of known mineral resources. A majority of the project area is within Mineral Resources Zone 3, where the significance of mineral deposits is undetermined or within "Urban Areas." There are isolated areas designated as Mineral Resource Zone 2 throughout the City of Moreno Valley, which are areas underlain by mineral deposits where geologic information indicates that significant inferred resources are present. The EIR will identify if impacts to mineral resources or mineral resource recovery sites would result from implementation of the proposed project.

Noise

Implementation of the proposed project would require construction and operation of project elements that would generate noise and vibration. Construction activities that could be a significant source of noise and vibration include trucking operations and use of heavy construction equipment (e.g., graders, cranes, frontend loaders, and blasting equipment). During project operation, it is unlikely that project facilities could generate permanent sources of noise. The EIR will describe the City of Moreno Valley noise policies and ordinances, and assess potential noise and vibration impacts associated with an increase in ambient noise or vibration levels, and excessive noise generated near airports.

Population and Housing/Growth

Implementation of the proposed project would expand EMWD's potable water system and accommodate planned growth in the area. The proposed project would not build new housing or otherwise have a direct impact on population growth in the project area, nor would it require displacement of existing residents. The EIR will evaluate the potential for the proposed project to indirectly induce growth and result in secondary environmental effects associated with growth.

Public Services

Implementation of the proposed project is unlikely to affect demand for public services, or require new or expanded facilities for public service providers. The EIR will include an assessment of the project's

potential to affect existing police and fire protection services, schools, parks, or other facilities during construction and operational activities.

Recreation

The EIR will identify existing recreational areas within the project area and will analyze potential effects to existing local recreational resources or the need to construct/expand additional recreational resources.

Transportation

Construction of the proposed project could affect traffic on local roadways as a result of hauling of material and equipment, road detours, and an increase in traffic hazards caused by construction activities. Additionally, the construction of the proposed transmission pipeline would occur within the established right-of-way of Moreno Beach Drive, which could impact local circulation patterns in the City of Moreno Valley. It is not anticipated that operation of the project would result in significant traffic impacts once all facilities are installed. The EIR will evaluate whether the project conflicts with applicable circulation system plans and policies, be inconsistent with regulations related to vehicle miles traveled, substantially increase geometric design-related hazards, or result in inadequate emergency access the project area.

Tribal Cultural Resources

Pursuant to AB 52, EMWD will conduct consultation with Native American Tribes who have requested to be informed of activities initiated by EMWD. There is a potential for the proposed project to affect tribal cultural resources during ground-disturbing activities associated with construction of the proposed project. The EIR will evaluate potential impacts to tribal cultural resources and incorporate the results of AB 52 consultations into the analysis.

Utilities and Service Systems

The proposed project could result in the relocation or temporary disruption of existing water, wastewater, stormwater, electricity, telecommunications, gas utilities, and solid waste facilities serving the project's local community. Existing and projected regional utility supplies, demands, and facilities will be described along with any constraints or service deficiencies in the region. The EIR will evaluate the project's potential to affect these utilities and service systems in the project area.

Wildfire

The project site is located within rural residential area in the City of Moreno Valley. The project site is located within a Local Responsibility Area and within a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone. During construction, equipment and on-site diesel fuel could pose a risk to wildfire with possible ignition sources such as internal combustion engines, gasoline-powered tools, and equipment that could produce a spark, fire, or flame. The use of spark-producing construction machinery within fire risk areas such as the project area could expose temporary project workers and contractors to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of wildfire. The EIR will evaluate potential impacts of wildfires due to implementation of the proposed project.