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June 11, 2024

State Water Resources Control Board
1001 I St, 24th Floor
Sacramento CA 95814

Sent Via E-mail

Re: Reaffirmation of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Compliance for the Matheny Tract Wastewater System Project Funded

Tulare County has applied for and anticipates funding for the Matheny Tract Wastewater System Project through the State Water Resources Control Board (Water Boards) State Revolving Fund (SRF) Grant Program. However, the requested funding has not been secured within five (5) years of adoption and certification of the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and filing of the Notice of Determination (NOD) for the project. Also, the project was revised after adoption of the EIR and a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) was prepared to address those changes. As discussed below, the County has re-evaluated the project scope, Area of Potential Effect (APE), impact evaluation, and findings and has decided to reaffirm the project as consistent with the EIR and subsequent MND.

An initial Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Matheny Tract Wastewater System Project Feasibility Study (SCH# 2017011028) was prepared for the project and circulated for public review in June 2017. The EIR identified four (4) alternatives for the project. Two (2) additional alternatives were identified and a Recirculated Draft EIR (RDEIR) was prepared and circulated for public review in October 2017. The Final RDEIR for the project consists of and incorporates by reference the initial EIR, the RDEIR, the Technical Appendices thereto, the Comments received on the Draft EIR and RDEIR, and the Responses to Comments and related appendices thereto. The Tulare County Board of Supervisors adopted and certified the Final RDEIR on December 19, 2017.

A subsequent Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) (SCH# 2023010516) was prepared to address new project design elements not previously addressed in the RDEIR. The MND was circulated for the requisite 30-day public review period and the Tulare County Board of Supervisors adopted and certified the MND on February 28, 2023.

The proposed project consists of the construction of a gravity collection system through lateral collection lines from each home or business within Matheny Tract. These collection lines would then inter-tie to the sewer mains that would deliver the wastewater to the lift station and force main connection. The force main would connect to the City of Tulare Domestic Wastewater Treatment Plant (DWWTP). The proposed community wastewater collection system will be designed to handle 130,000 gallons per day. Project components include the following:

- Sewer Mains: New gravity wastewater collection system composed of a combination of 8-inch and 10-inch PVC sewer mains within the community;
- Lateral Connections: New 4-inch polyvinyl chloride (PVC) sewer lateral service connections to each existing residence or business. This includes a total of 296 laterals connections;
- Lift Station: New lift station in proximity to the community along Pratt Street, at the intersection of Wade Avenue;
- Force Main: Approximately 10,700 feet of new 4-inch high density polyethylene (HDPE) sewer force main connecting the Matheny Tract collection system to the City's DWWTP; and,
- Connection and Consolidation: Connection of the new force main to the City of Tulare DWWTP headworks.

The project elements have been adequately evaluated in the RDEIR and MND as follows:

- The gravity wastewater collection system within Matheny Tract was addressed in the EIR, specifically as part of Project Alternative 2; however, this alternative also included a connection to the City of Tulare wastewater collection system. The gravity collection system with connection to a new sewer force main is addressed in the MND.
- In-place abandonment of existing septic systems and leach fields will occur as each residence or business connects to the new laterals. The Matheny Tract community and parcel boundaries are addressed in both the EIR and the MND.
- The lift station is addressed in both the EIR and MND, with the location of the lift station at Pratt Street and Wade Avenue addressed in the MND.
- The new force main line was not an alternative identified in the EIR, but is the project addressed in the MND.
- Construction of the new force main line was addressed in the MND. However, the schematic layout of the City's DWWTP was included in Appendix K of the Feasibility Report (Appendix D of the Draft EIR). The need for the City of Tulare to update their Report of Waste Discharge (RWD) was also included in the project description of the EIR.

Tulare County has reviewed the project for consistency with the RDEIR and the MND and finds and reaffirms that no project or regulatory changes have occurred and there are no new potential impacts since the original RDEIR and MND posting dates in December 2017 and February 2023, respectively.

The RDEIR documents are available on the Tulare County website at:

<https://tularecounty.ca.gov/rma/planning-building/environmental-planning/environmental-impact-reports/matheny-tract-wastewater-system-project/>

The MND is available on the Tulare County website at:

<https://tularecounty.ca.gov/rma/planning-building/environmental-planning/mitigated-negative-declarations/matheny-tract-wastewater-collection-system-and-pipeline-inter-tie-project/>

Attached is the Notice of Determination (NOD) reaffirming that the project is consistent with CEQA.

Best Regards,



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Attachment: Notice of Determination

Cc: State Clearinghouse via upload to CEQA Submit