

RECLAMATION

Managing Water in the West

**National Environmental Policy Act
Finding of No Significant Impact**

No. 17-SCAO-029-FONSI

Pasadena Non-Potable Water Project
Los Angeles County, California

The Bureau of Reclamation is providing Title XVI funds to the City of Pasadena to construct the first phase of a non-potable water distribution system in Los Angeles County, California.

Based on our review of the Environmental Impact Report for the *Pasadena Non-Potable Water Project* (California State Clearinghouse No. 2014081091), we have determined that the assistance does not constitute a major federal action which would significantly affect the quality of the human environment within the meaning of Section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969. Accordingly, preparation of an environmental impact statement on the proposed action is not required.

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Approved: Jack Simes Date: 12/10/18
Jack Simes, (Acting) Area Manager

Mission Statements

The mission of the Department of the Interior is to protect and provide access to our Nation's natural and cultural heritage and honor our trust responsibilities to Indian tribes and our commitments to island communities.

The mission of the Bureau of Reclamation is to manage, develop, and protect water and related resources in an environmentally and economically sound manner in the interest of the American public.

BACKGROUND

Grant Agreement No. R17AC00095 provides funds to the City of Pasadena to construct Phase 1 of the Pasadena Non-Potable Water Project. A Title XVI Feasibility Study Report was approved by the Director of Policy and Administration on September 19, 2012, pursuant to Directives and Standards WTR 11-01.

The Pasadena Non-Potable Water Project consists of six major construction phases to be implemented over the next 20 years. Phase 1 will install five miles of new pipelines, two reservoir storage tanks, and other features to deliver 700 acre-feet per year (AFY) from the Los Angeles-Glendale Water Reclamation Plant to four customers for landscape irrigation and cooling. Two other non-potable water sources may also be utilized. Phase 1 infrastructure will be sized to provide for the ultimate delivery of 3,100 AFY to 51 customers in Pasadena and the surrounding area. Another 900 AFY will be used for aquifer recharge.

The project is part of Pasadena's long-term strategy to reduce dependence on imported water from the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, and to develop a long term, sustainable water supply for irrigation and other purposes that do not require a potable resource. When completed it will offset about 9% of Pasadena's potable water use by providing non-potable supply for irrigation, cooling, and industrial applications.

An Environmental Impact Report (EIR) prepared under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) did not identify any substantial adverse effects. The EIR concluded that all impacts resulting from the project will be either less than significant or less than significant with mitigation.

PURPOSE AND NEED

Pasadena's water supply reliability is uncertain due to persistent droughts, more stringent environmental and water quality regulations, climate changes, decreasing groundwater levels, and groundwater contamination in the Raymond Basin. Approximately 60% of Pasadena's water supply is imported from the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California and 40% is from local groundwater. The project will help alleviate Pasadena's long-term water supply challenges caused by these uncertainties, provide opportunities to maximize the available local water sources, diversify Pasadena's water supply, and increase overall water supply reliability.

The purpose of the project is to meet a portion of Pasadena Water and Power's non-potable water needs using local water sources. Developing sustainable local water resources is a top priority for Pasadena. Pasadena seeks to become more self-sufficient and to reduce its dependence on imported water sources that are outside of its control. The project is intended to meet about 9% of Pasadena Water and Power's water needs from local, non-potable water sources.

The project objectives are to:

- Maximize the use of local water supplies and the use of Pasadena's existing water rights;
- Reduce reliance on imported water from the Metropolitan Water District;
- Improve water supply reliability by providing a new local, dependable, environmentally sustainable water source that will be available even in droughts for irrigation and other non-potable uses; and
- Develop a new water source that is cost-effective relative to other new water sources.

AUTHORITY

The Reclamation Recycling and Water Conservation Act of 1996 (Public Law 104-266) amended the Reclamation Wastewater and Groundwater Study and Facilities Act (Title XVI of Public Law 102-575). Section 1623 authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to participate in the design, planning, and construction of the City of Pasadena's reclaimed water project to obtain, store, and use reclaimed water in Pasadena and its neighboring communities.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Phase 1 project will construct new non-potable water infrastructure including five miles of distribution pipelines, two reservoir storage tanks, a pressure reducing station, a hydroelectric generation turbine, and a tunnel water pump station. Phase I will supply approximately 700 AFY to four Pasadena customers in the area around Rose Bowl Stadium. Future build-out of the project will supply approximately 3,100 AFY of non-potable water to 51 customers for landscape irrigation, cooling towers, and industrial use.

The project will construct a new non-potable water distribution system to deliver water from three local water sources to customers within the service areas of Pasadena Water and Power, Foothill Municipal Water District and their member agencies (including Lincoln Avenue Water Company, Valley Water Company, Las Flores Water Company, and Rubio Canyon Land and Water Association), and California American Water Company for landscape irrigation, cooling, and other non-potable uses.

The local non-potable water supply sources are:

- Recycled water produced by the Los Angeles-Glendale Water Reclamation Plant
- Tunnel water from Devils Gate and Richardson Springs
- Surface water from Arroyo Seco stream

Build-out of the project will supply about 3,100 AFY of non-potable water to 51 customers. Tunnel water and Arroyo Seco stream water are subject to climatic conditions and may not be available for extended periods of time; when those two supplies are not available, the entire non-potable demand will be met with recycled water from the Los Angeles-Glendale Water Reclamation Plant.

An application for grant and loan funding was also submitted to the California State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) under Proposition 1 and the Clean Water State Revolving Fund.¹ The SWRCB application is still under review pending approval of a wastewater change petition filed by the City of Glendale. The SWRCB will not complete their review until the wastewater change petition is approved.

ADOPTION OF EXISTING ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT

NEPA requires review of a proposed Federal action to determine its impact on the human environment. Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations direct Federal agencies to cooperate with State and local agencies to the fullest extent possible to reduce duplication between NEPA and State and local requirements (40 CFR 1506.2). Department of Interior regulations for implementing NEPA encourage tiering of environmental documents and provide for adoption of existing environmental documents if, upon evaluation by a responsible official, it is found to comply with relevant provisions of the CEQ regulations.

The EIR for the Pasadena Non-Potable Water Project (California SCH No. 2014081091) evaluated all six phases. Phase I was examined at a more detailed, project-level in the EIR, Phases II through VI were examined at a more general, program-level in the EIR. Detailed, project-level environmental review will be completed prior to implementation of future phases.

Reclamation staff reviewed the EIR and concluded that it adequately identifies and discloses the reasonably foreseeable environmental effects of the action. We adopt the document as our Environmental Assessment in accordance with regulations for implementing NEPA promulgated by the CEQ at 40 CFR 1506.3 and by the Department of the Interior at 43 CFR 46.320(a).

¹ The State Revolving Fund program is partially funded by a capitalization grant from the EPA. Issuance of these funds is considered equivalent to a Federal action.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The EIR concluded that the project could result in significant impacts related to aesthetics, biological resources, cultural resources, geology and soils, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, noise, recreation, traffic and transportation, and utilities. Mitigation measures were identified and will be implemented to reduce all impacts to less than significant.

The Pasadena City Council adopted Resolution 9486 on February 22, 2016, certifying that the EIR complies with CEQA, adopting findings, adopting a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program, and approving the project. The CEQA notice of determination was filed with the Los Angeles County Clerk on February 24, 2016 and with the California State Clearinghouse on February 26, 2016.

OTHER FEDERAL CONSIDERATIONS

Clean Air Act

The South Coast Air Basin is designated as "extreme" non-attainment for 8-hour ozone and is designated non-attainment for particulate matter PM-2.5. The air basin is a maintenance area for carbon monoxide and for particulate matter PM-10. Estimated emissions from construction activities are below the thresholds at 40 CFR 93.153(b). No Clean Air Act general conformity determination is required.

Clean Water Act

The Los Angeles-Glendale Water Reclamation Plant discharges treated wastewater to the Los Angeles River, a Traditional Navigable Water, under National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit no. CA0053953. On September 14, 2016, the City of Glendale filed wastewater change petition no. WW0097 under California Water Code section 1211, to use up to 3,500 AFY of tertiary-treated recycled water for irrigation in Glendale and Pasadena. Approximately 7,000 AFY will continue to be discharged to the Los Angeles River.²

Coastal Barrier Resource Act

The federal expenditure will not tend to encourage development or modification of coastal barriers. The project is not within any units of the Coastal Barrier Resources System. The Coastal Barrier Resource Act applies on the Atlantic, Gulf, and Great Lakes coasts. No system units are located along the Pacific coast.

Coastal Zone Management

The project is about 25 miles from the California coastal zone boundary.

Endangered Species Act

The action will not affect any federally-listed species or critical habitat areas. The project includes a pipeline that will be constructed in native scrub vegetation (coastal sage scrub, buckwheat scrub, and mixed chaparral) suitable for coastal California gnatcatcher. About 2.5 acres of scrub vegetation will be temporarily removed over a linear distance of about 1 mile and a width of about 20 to 40 feet. Gnatcatchers were not observed during protocol surveys.

Environmental Justice

The project will not cause impacts to minority or low-income populations that are disproportionately high and adverse, either directly, indirectly, or cumulatively.

Farmland Protection Policy Act

No agricultural land will be converted to non-agricultural use. No prime, unique, state, or locally important farmlands are mapped in the area. The project is within the Los Angeles-Long Beach-Anaheim, CA Urbanized Area mapped by the Census Bureau. Farmland Protection Policy Act regulations do not apply.

² The City of Glendale prepared a CEQA initial study (SCH No. 2018061015) to evaluate the wastewater change petition. On August 14, 2018, the Glendale City Council approved Resolution 18-149, adopting a Mitigated Negative Declaration – a finding that an EIR was not required under CEQA.

Flood Plain Management

The Federal Emergency Management Agency does not designate any portion of the study area within the 100-year flood zone. Small, isolated areas are within the 500-year flood zone. No lands within the Pasadena Water & Power service area are within the 100-year flood zone. The project will not construct housing within a flood hazard area and will not construct structures that impede or redirect flood flows.

Greenhouse Gases

The built-out project, including the Phase I project and future extensions, is anticipated to emit 1,543 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent per year (MTCO_{2e}/year). The South Coast Air Quality Management District threshold of significance is 10,000 MTCO_{2e}/year.

Indian Trust Assets

No Indian Trust Assets are involved.

Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act.

The project is not near the ocean and will not affect species covered by a Fisheries Management Plan.

Migratory Bird Treaty Act

Vegetation clearing will be scheduled outside the bird nesting season. Biological monitoring is required before any construction activities during the nesting season.

National Historic Preservation Act

The Pasadena Arroyo Parks and Recreation District is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and the Arroyo Seco Flood Control Channel is considered National Register eligible. Installation of water system components will not detract from the characteristics that make the Pasadena Arroyo Parks and Recreation District a National Register-listed resource. The historic character of the Arroyo Seco Flood Control Channel will be retained.

Safe Drinking Water Act, Sole Source Aquifer Protection

No sole source aquifers are located within the project area.

Socioeconomic Resources

Adverse socioeconomic impacts are not expected. Implementation of the project will not generate new permanent job opportunities that could attract people to the project area. The project will create some short-term employment opportunities during construction. These jobs will not be of sufficient number or duration to attract people for permanent residence in the area.

The project will provide drought year reliability, improve local water supplies, sustain municipal water demands, and support economic vitality in the area. The project will not induce population growth. No housing or people will be displaced. No communities will be divided. No effects to public health and safety were identified. Economic or social effects are not intended by themselves to require preparation of an EIS (40 CFR 1508.14).

Wetlands

The study area includes a U.S. Geological Survey blueline stream, the Arroyo Seco, a perennial drainage feature channelized throughout most of the study area. The Phase I project will cross a channelized portion of the Arroyo Seco at one location.

Wild and Scenic Rivers

The project does not involve any wild or scenic rivers or any river listed in the National Rivers Inventory.

AGENCY CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service concurred with the SWRCB determination that the action is not likely to adversely affect coastal California gnatcatcher, and also determined that the project is not likely to adversely affect the least Bell's vireo. (ref: FWS-LA-14B0432-17I0066, March 7, 2017).

California State Historic Preservation Officer

The California State Historical Preservation Officer concurred with the SWRCB determination that the project will not adversely affect historic properties (ref: EPA_2016_1223_001, February 3, 2017).

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Pasadena has notified the Army Corps of Engineers Los Angeles District that the pipeline crossing the Arroyo Seco channel will be installed under a nationwide permit (NWP-12) in compliance with section 404 of the Clean Water Act.

California Coastal Commission

Coastal Zone Management Act consistency certification is not required.

U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service

Consultation under the Farmland Protection Policy Act is not required.

National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA-Fisheries)

Consultation under the Magnuson-Stevens Act is not required.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITMENTS

General: Mitigation measures identified in the EIR will be implemented. The mitigations required under CEQA are considered ameliorative design elements per 43 CFR 46.130(b). A Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan was adopted.

REFERENCES

Final EIR for the Pasadena Non-Potable Water Project, RMC Water & Environment, December 2015.

Draft EIR for the Pasadena Non-Potable Water Project, RMC Water & Environment, June 2015.

Glendale 2018 Wastewater Change Petition. Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration, Environmental Science Associates, August 2018