

RECLAMATION

Managing Water in the West

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT, 14-27-MP

Santa Barbara County Water Agency WaterWise Landscape Rebate Program

Mid-Pacific Regional Office, Sacramento, California

Recommended by:


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Date: November 6, 2014

Concurred by:

 (acting for Lee Mao)
Lee Mao
Chief, Program Management Branch
Mid-Pacific Regional Office

Date: 11/10/2014

Approved by:


Richard Woodley
Regional Resources Manager
Mid-Pacific Regional Office

Date: 11/10/2014



U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Reclamation

November 2014

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

In accordance with Section 102(2)(c) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), as amended, the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) has prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) in accordance with NEPA, Council on Environmental Quality regulations (40 CFR 1500-1508), and Department of the Interior (DOI) Regulations (43 CFR Part 46) to provide a DOI WaterSMART Water and Energy Efficiency grant to the Santa Barbara County Water Agency (SBCWA) for its WaterWise Landscape Rebate Program.

This Finding of No Significant Impact is supported by Reclamation's EA Number 14-27-MP, and is hereby attached and incorporated by reference. The EA was available for public review from October 31, 2014 to November 6, 2014. No comments were received.

Alternatives Including Proposed Action

No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, Reclamation would not contribute any financial funding to the SBCWA for the project. The SBCWA may find other sources of money, may proceed with part of the project, or may not proceed with the entire project.

Proposed Action

Reclamation would contribute \$396,310 to the SBCWA's Project through a WaterSMART Program grant. The SBCWA would also receive \$179,000 from non-federal sources. The SBCWA and local Participating Purveyors will offer rebates to all non-agricultural customers in Santa Barbara County for a variety of landscape-related water efficient upgrades. The Participating Purveyors include water purveyor service areas of the City of Santa Barbara, Goleta Water District, Carpinteria Valley Water District, Vandenberg Village CSD, and the cities of Solvang, Buellton and Lompoc. The Project will be modeled after a prior successful program, the *Smart Landscape Rebate Program*, and aims to improve upon this program by adding a design component to give customers a starting point from which they can plan a water wise landscape. Rebates would be awarded for 50 percent of the cost of approved equipment and materials for residential and commercial facilities. Customers would receive partial rebates on landscape design costs and receive expert advice to plan and design their landscape. Replacing turf lawns and outdated sprinkler systems with water efficient plants, materials and technologies would reduce the demand for water as well as for energy associated with treating and transporting water. A projected 121 acre-feet per year of water savings and 353,199 kilowatt-hours per year would result from increasing the WaterWise Landscape rebate in Santa Barbara County.

Findings

In accordance with NEPA, the Mid-Pacific Regional Office of Reclamation has found that the approval of the Proposed Action is not a major federal action that will significantly affect the quality of the human environment. Consequently, an environmental impact statement is not required.

The following are the reasons why the impacts from the proposed action are not significant:

1. The proposed action will not significantly affect public health or safety (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(2)).
2. The proposed action will not significantly impact natural resources and unique geographical characteristics such as proximity to historic or cultural resources; parks, recreation, and refuge lands; wilderness areas; wild or scenic rivers; national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands (Executive Order (EO) 11990); flood plains (EO 11988); national monuments; migratory birds; and other ecologically significant or critical areas (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(3) and 43 CFR 46.215(b)).
3. There is no potential for the effects to be considered highly controversial (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(4)).
4. The proposed action will not have possible effects on the human environment that are highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(5)).
5. The proposed action will neither establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects nor represent a decision in principle about a future consideration (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(6)).
6. The proposed action will not have cumulatively significant impacts (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(7)).
7. The proposed action has no potential to affect historic properties (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(8)).
8. The proposed action will not affect listed or proposed threatened or endangered species (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(9)).
9. The proposed action will not violate Federal, state, tribal or local law or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(10)).

10. The proposed action will not affect any Indian Trust Assets (512 DM 2, Policy Memorandum dated December 15, 1993).
11. Implementing the proposed action will not disproportionately affect minorities or low-income populations and communities (EO 12898).
12. The proposed action will not limit access to, and ceremonial use of, Indian sacred sites on Federal lands by Indian religious practitioners or significantly adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites (EO 13007 and 512 DM 3).