

Bureau of Reclamation

Mid-Pacific Region
Sacramento, California

Finding Of No Significant Impact

Airport Main Pipeline Extension
South Bay Water Recycling

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Background

The City of San Jose (City) has planned and implemented the San José Nonpotable Reclamation Project, now known as the South Bay Water Recycling Program (Program), to provide recycled water from the San Jose/Santa Clara Water Pollution Control Plant for industrial and a variety of irrigation uses, including agriculture and landscaping in institutional, commercial, and residential areas. The Program includes installing pipelines, pump stations, storage tanks, and appurtenant facilities. The Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation), pursuant to funding provided through Title XVI of Public Law 102-575, has been providing up to 25 percent of the total project cost to the City to help fund the Program.

The City certified a final environmental impact report (EIR) for the Program in November 1992. Reclamation released a final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Program in May 1996 and issued a record of decision in July 1996. The EIR and the EIS evaluated both project-level effects for those pipelines and users that had been identified at that time, and programmatic-level analysis for the rest of the Program.

Subsequently, the City expanded the service area and slightly revised the distribution facilities. Reclamation prepared an environmental assessment (EA) and signed a finding of no significant impact on December 3, 1996 for these changes.

The City has continued to design additional pipelines and associated facilities within the Program area. For all of these additional projects, the City has adopted addenda to the Program EIR, as required by the California Environmental Quality Act. Reclamation has continued to provide funding for these projects under Title XVI and has prepared EAs and categorical exclusion checklists, tiering off of the original EIS, as required by the National Environmental Policy Act.

Project Description

The Airport Main Extension (SJ-19) Project (Proposed Action) is located within the City and will provide recycled water to the airport and businesses located across Interstate 880 along Ruff Drive. The extension includes a total of about 4,500 feet of 12-inch pipeline. The pipeline will be connected to the existing recycled water system on West Hedding Street and run behind businesses located on Ruff Street, under Interstate Highway 880 on an existing bike trail, and along Airport Boulevard ending prior to Skyport Drive.

The additional users will help fulfill the Program's goal of diverting an additional 20 mgd of effluent from discharge to the South San Francisco Bay to beneficial reuse in the Program area. The project area is urbanized, with land uses including commercial and industrial.

Proposed recycled water users are consistent with those described in the 1992 EIR and 1996 EIS. Operation of the pipelines will be the same as described in previous environmental documents and will be similar to operation of the existing potable water distribution system, with the addition of safeguards for use of recycled water. Signs will be posted to notify the public of areas where recycled water is being used. Pipelines and taps supplying recycled water at user sites will be identified.

Findings

Reclamation has adopted an addendum to the EIR for the Program prepared in January 15, 2010 by the City. Based on the addendum, the Division of Planning of the Mid-Pacific Region of Reclamation has found that the Proposed Action is not a major Federal action that will significantly affect the quality of the human environment. Therefore, an environmental impact statement is not required for carrying out the Proposed Action. The EA complies with the Council of Environmental Quality's National Environmental Policy Act Regulations and other requirements such as the Endangered Species Act, the National Historic Preservation Act, and local and State requirements. It meets Reclamation's public involvement requirements.

Following are the reasons why the impacts of the Proposed Action are not significant:

1. The Proposed Action will not significantly affect surface water hydrology and water quality. No aboveground facilities are proposed in areas subject to flooding. Recycled water quality is acceptable for use in landscape irrigation. Monitoring and management of recycled water quality and control of irrigation will avoid surface runoff from excessive irrigation. A Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan will ensure that there are no adverse effects on water quality during pipeline construction.
2. The Proposed Action will not affect groundwater hydrology and water quality. The Proposed Action does not involve extraction or use of groundwater and thus will not cause subsidence of land. The area served by this pipeline extension is already being irrigated, so irrigation with recycled water will not affect groundwater levels or gradients. The Groundwater Monitoring and Mitigation Plan for the South Bay Water Recycling Program will protect groundwater during construction.
4. The Proposed Action will not significantly affect land use. The area of this pipeline extension is commercial and industrial. Construction impacts of a buried pipeline will be temporary.
5. The Proposed Action will not significantly affect air quality. The Proposed Action will comply with construction-period mitigation measures which follow the Bay Area Air Quality Management District's Basic Control Measures for construction air quality impacts. There are no sensitive receptors such as residences, churches, or schools along the pipeline corridor.

6. The Proposed Action will not significantly affect traffic. Before the start of construction, a traffic management plan will be prepared for the pipeline extension. There will be time of day restrictions and temporary detours for any areas requiring lane closures.

7. The Proposed Action will not affect biological resources. The proposed pipeline will follow the levee along the west side of the Guadalupe River avoiding removal of trees or other riparian vegetation. The construction area will be confined to the levee and bike path areas and would not occur within the banks of the river. Silt fences would be used to prevent sedimentation in the river.

8. The Proposed Action will not significantly affect noise. Land uses along the pipeline routes include heavy and light industrial facilities including the San Jose International Airport. Short-term construction-related noise impacts will be minimized by implementation of noise controls and limited hours of construction.

9. The Proposed Action will not significantly affect public health. Previous environmental documentation determined that the use of recycled water for industrial and irrigation uses does not pose significant public health risks. The Proposed Action will comply with previously identified measures, including Regional Water Quality Control Board general requirements and Title 22 requirements for water reclamation.

10. The Proposed Action will not significantly affect cultural resources. A single historic era archaeological site (CA-SCI-799H) was identified via archival investigation and pedestrian survey within the Area of Potential Effects (APE). This site consists of a buried historic debris scatter. Reclamation consulted with the California State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) under the 36 CFR Part 800 regulations that implement Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) and obtained a consensus determination that the site is ineligible to the National Register of Historic Places and that the Proposed Action will result in "no historic properties affected".

The Proposed Action includes environmental commitments that address unanticipated discoveries of cultural resources or human remains during construction. Given the implementation of these environmental commitments, no significant impacts on cultural resources will occur.

11. The Proposed Action will not affect any Indian Trust Assets.

12. The Proposed Action will not disproportionately impact minority and disadvantaged populations or communities.

13. The Proposed Action will not have significant cumulative impacts.

14. There is no potential for the effects to be considered highly controversial.