

Facility and Plan Review Subcommittee  
Los Angeles County Solid Waste Management Committee/  
Integrated Waste Management Task Force

**Minutes of August 21, 2014, Meeting**

County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works  
Conference Room C  
900 South Fremont Avenue  
Alhambra, California

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Jeanne Biehler, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Health  
Betsey Landis, Environmental Organization Representative  
Mike Mohajer, General Public Representative  
Carlos Ruiz, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works  
Christopher Salomon, County Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County

OTHERS PRESENT:

Joe Bartolata, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works  
Stephen Beitz, Real Energy, LLC  
Kevin Best, Real Energy, LLC  
Russell Bukoff, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works  
David Coscia, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works  
Anna Gov, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works  
Bahman Hajjialiakbar, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works  
Patrick Holland, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works  
Wayde Hunter, North Valley Coalition/Granada Hills North Neighborhood Council  
Jason W. Jones, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works  
Karlo Manalo, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works  
Saeid Shirzadegan, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works  
Coby Skye, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works  
Bereket Tadele, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works  
Emiko Thompson, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works  
Kawsar Vazifdar, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 11:07 a.m.

**II. APPROVAL OF JULY 17, 2014, MEETING MINUTES**

A motion to approve the Minutes of the July 17, 2014, meeting was made by Mr. Mike Mohajer, subject to the following correction. Add Mr. Gerry Villalobos to the names under “others present” on the first page of the Minutes. The motion was seconded by Mr. Chris Salomon and passed unanimously.

**III. REVISED DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR THE PROPOSED IRWINDALE MATERIALS RECOVERY FACILITY (MRF) AND TRANSFER STATION**

Ms. Kawsar Vazifdar provided a [PowerPoint Presentation](#) on the Revised Draft Environmental Impact Report (RDEIR) for the proposed Irwindale MRF and Transfer Station. This project was presented in detail at the April 17, 2014, Subcommittee Meeting, and the Task Force sent a letter to the City of Irwindale on May 14, 2014. Since that time, the City of Irwindale Revised the Draft Environmental Impact Report and released it for public review from August 8, 2014, to September 22, 2014.

Ms. Vazifdar stated that the only comment from the May 14, 2014, letter addressed in the RDEIR was that odor from waste hauling vehicles was not a problem.

Ms. Vazifdar stated that according to the RDEIR the project will result in significant adverse impacts to air quality. In the RDEIR, the South Coast Air Quality Management District stated that the regional air quality analysis should assume that 100 percent of vehicle trips in the region are new trips. In the previous version of the Draft EIR, the regional air quality analysis assumed that 50 percent of vehicle trips in the region were new trips. Therefore, regional air quality emissions in the RDEIR are estimated to be higher than the regional air quality emissions estimated in the previous version of the Draft EIR.

Ms. Vazifdar stated that although the Task Force’s letter to the City of Irwindale requested that the City reconsider the environmental justice impacts of this project, especially given the significant opposition from residents of the City of Baldwin Park, the environmental justice analysis remained unchanged from the previous version of the Draft EIR.

Ms. Vazifdar stated that according to the RDEIR the project is not expected to generate significant odors. The Task Force's letter of May 14, 2014, to the City of Irwindale requested that the City consider the odor impacts of waste hauling trucks entering the facility.

The RDEIR states the following regarding the impacts from truck traffic:

- All incoming and outgoing hauling vehicles are required to be either fully covered and/or tarped or be a fully enclosed vehicle/trailer.
- Odors from trucks traveling to and from Athens' other MRF sites have not been a source of historical complaints.
- The City has not received odor complaints in the past from residents related to collection trucks using City streets.

Ms. Vazifdar stated that according to the RDEIR, the project will contribute to cumulative impacts to existing and projected deficiencies of the Interstate 210 and Interstate 605 Freeways. She also commented that in the previous version of the Draft EIR, the impacts to traffic would be less than significant with mitigation. The RDEIR states that there will be significant and unavoidable adverse impacts on traffic and circulation.

Ms. Vazifdar commented that according to the RDEIR, implementation of the Traffic Mitigation Program would reduce the impact to a less than significant level, but improvements in the Traffic Mitigation Program are within the purview of Caltrans.

Ms. Vazifdar reported to the Subcommittee that the RDEIR now includes two project alternatives. The first alternative is to reduce the tonnage from 4,500 tons per day (tpd) rather than 6,000 tpd. According to the RDEIR, for this alternative there would be reduced traffic volumes, noise, and air emissions. However, the identified significant and unavoidable impacts (NOx and ROG emissions, project noise, and traffic) would not be reduced to less than significant levels.

Ms. Vazifdar identified the second alternative as the source-separated alternative where the facility would only receive loads of materials that are source-separated.

Ms. Vazifdar informed the Subcommittee that the RDEIR states that readers who previously commented should not repeat those comments and should focus only on any new comments on the revised portions of the RDEIR. She added that staff recommends sending a letter to the City of Irwindale regarding odors from waste hauling vehicles. Ms. Vazifdar added that comments on the RDEIR are due on September 22, 2014.

An extended discussion ensued, covering the following issues on the proposed facility:

#### Environmental Justice

- Siting a convenience store that serves alcohol, food, and fuel on site is not an appropriate environmental justice mitigation measure.
- Considering waste may be coming to the project from all areas of the County, and there is sufficient transfer capacity in the San Gabriel Valley, the siting of a facility in other areas of the County should have been discussed.

#### Air Quality

Mr. Christopher Salomon asked staff to check if the air quality analysis took into account the distances traveled by waste hauling vehicles both to the facility as well as from the facility to other destinations, and the impact to greenhouse gas emissions.

#### Water Quality

As the water table is high in the area, there could be impacts to wildlife and vegetation in the area resulting from contamination in the event the Santa Fe Dam overflows.

#### Biological Surveys

Biological surveys are inaccurate and comments should be made that they do not accurately describe the area. For example, there needs to be discussion on the removal of weeds that tap into the limited ground water we do have, such as tamarisk, and possibly replace them with willows. Sustainable plants that don't need a lot of water should be used. Comments should also be made regarding the preservation of wild life, particularly as it pertained to the natural habitat of birds.

#### Truck Traffic

The Draft EIR's Air Quality Analysis should have factored in the environmental impacts, including odors, from truck traffic traveling through the County to the facility, as well as the truck traffic from the facility to other destinations.

In addition, the potential environmental footprint on climate change, particularly as it would pertain to greenhouse gas emissions resulting from the proposed project should have been discussed, as well as acknowledging the comments

received from the Task Force.

At the conclusion of the discussion, Mr. Mohajer made a motion to request the Task Force to authorize staff to send a comment letter to the City of Irwindale following up on comments previously sent to the City on May 9, 2014. The motion was seconded by Mr. Carlos Ruiz and passed unanimously.

#### **IV. CONSIDERATION OF THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY COUNTYWIDE INTEGRATED WASTE MANAGEMENT FIVE-YEAR REPORT WITH COMMENTS RECEIVED**

Mr. David Coscia provided an update on comments received regarding consideration of the County Countywide Integrated Waste Management Five-Year Report (Five-Year Report). Mr. Coscia reported to the Subcommittee that on June 19, 2014, the draft of the Los Angeles County Countywide Integrated Waste Management Plan Five-Year Review Report was presented to the Task Force for comments. Staff requested comments be submitted to staff in early July 2014. Mr. Coscia commented that staff had planned to provide the revised version to the Subcommittee and the Task Force at the July 2014 meeting; however, due to the significant amount of feedback received, more time was required to make the revisions.

Mr. Coscia commented that major revisions were made to two areas of the Report:

- Revised disposal tonnage and population data from 2012 to 2013 figures.
- Highlighted the Regional and City efforts regarding conversion technology, alternative technology, and household hazardous waste.

Staff recommended that the Subcommittee consider making a motion to recommend to the Task Force to approve the Report, as amended.

Mr. Mohajer made a motion to approve the Five-Year Report, as revised. Mr. Salomon seconded the motion, and it passed with Ms. Jeanne Biehler abstaining.

#### **V. UPDATE ON THE SUNSHINE CANYON CITY/COUNTY LANDFILL**

##### Odor Complaints

Mr. Saeid Shirzadegan provided the Subcommittee with an update on odor complaints at the Sunshine Canyon City/County Landfill for the month of July 2014.

During the month of July, a total of 83 complaints were made to the AQMD hotline. In comparison with June, the number of complaints received in July increased by 196 percent (from 28 to 83 complaints). Compared to July of 2013, the number of complaints this July increased by 28 percent (from 65 to 83 complaints).

Mr. Wayde Hunter indicated that the Sunshine Canyon Landfill-Community Advisory Committee had sent a letter to the Los Angeles Unified School District Board of Education and the Task Force on July 14, 2014, regarding the significant number of odor complaints received at the Van Gogh Elementary School in Granada Hills. Mr. Hunter inquired if the letter had been received by the Task Force. Ms. Thompson responded that upon receiving the letter, staff forwarded it to the Task Force.

#### Update on Meeting Regarding Revegetation

Mr. Russell Bukoff provided an update on the August 12, 2014, quarterly vegetation meeting to discuss revegetation efforts at the Landfill. The meeting was attended by representatives from Public Works, County Department of Regional Planning, the City of Los Angeles Planning Department, UltraSystems, the Task Force, and Republic Services and their contractors, for purposes of discussing revegetation efforts at the Landfill.

Mr. Bukoff reported to the Subcommittee that the meeting was held at the Landfill and included a site visit to the Sage Mitigation Pilot Project Area. He commented that the group was encouraged by how much growth has occurred since the beginning of the pilot study.

Mr. Bukoff reported that during the meeting, the following issues were discussed:

- Based on the first plant sampling taken of the Pilot Project Area, the area consists mostly of saltbush, which provides cover for an understory for sage species to grow. Deerweed is also growing well.
- Potential recommendations to improve the growth of sage include performing ongoing maintenance; selectively pruning plants to open up the understories to encourage growth; reducing the amount of irrigation to limit the growth of saltbush; and reseeding and planting container plants.
- The area is currently being irrigated twice a week. The long range plan is to reduce the amount of irrigation until vegetation can grow independently with no supplemental irrigation.
- The hillside below Flare 8 will be removed to prepare a pad for a future flare station. Republic will perform plant and wildlife surveys before construction begins. It was suggested that before vegetation is removed

from the site, seeds be harvested from the plants, and the plants be used for mulch in other areas of the Landfill.

- Currently, the 2nd Quarter Vegetation report is not yet ready as Republic is finalizing this report. Staff will be distributing this report to the Subcommittee members upon its completion and potentially include an item on the agenda for next month's Subcommittee meeting.

## **VI. UPDATE ON THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY COUNTYWIDE SITING ELEMENT**

Mr. Patrick Holland provided an update on the Los Angeles County Countywide Siting Element (CSE). Mr. Holland stated that the Initial Study and Notice of Preparation have been circulated to Responsible Agencies for review. The comment period ended on July 28, 2014. Six scoping meetings were held throughout Los Angeles County. Comments on the Initial Study and Notice of Preparation have been received from the Task Force in a letter dated July 23, 2014, as well as from the following entities: County of Los Angeles Fire Department, County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Health, City of Los Angeles Bureau of Sanitation, Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority, Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, California Native American Heritage Commission, Southern California Association of Governments, and Southern California Edison.

Mr. Holland commented that Public Works will consider the comments when preparing the Draft EIR, which is currently being developed by the County's consultant HDR Engineering Inc. He also stated that Public Works is planning to update the CSE to change the base year from 2010 to 2013, as well as take into consideration new legislation and regulations that may impact the scenario analyses. Staff will submit the Preliminary Draft CSE and the Draft EIR to the Task Force for review and anticipates releasing these documents for public review in spring 2015.

Mr. Mohajer expressed concern over the impacts of changing the base year from 2010 to 2013 and the legislation, notably AB 1826, which would dramatically reduce disposal of organics at landfills, as well as the extent to which landfill capacity is needed. Mr. Mohajer stated that it might be more appropriate if the preparation of the Draft EIR for the CSE be put on hold until the revision of the Preliminary Draft CSE is completed. However, Mr. Mohajer suggested staff to consult with County Counsel on this matter.

## **VII. OPEN DISCUSSION PUBLIC COMMENT**

At the July 2014 meeting, the Subcommittee requested a map identifying various material type zones at the Azusa Land Reclamation Facility. Ms. Biehler provided a

map of the facility identifying disposal locations for asbestos waste, shredded tires, and inert waste.

#### **VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 12:31 p.m.