

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

Minutes for February 21, 2019

Los Angeles County Public Works
900 South Fremont Avenue
Alhambra, CA 91803

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Dorcas Hanson-Lugo, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Health
Betsey Landis, Chair, Environmental Organization Representative
Mike Mohajer, General Public Representative
Carlos Ruiz, Los Angeles County Public Works
Sam Shammass, County Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS NOT PRESENT:

Reyna Pereira, City of Los Angeles

OTHERS PRESENT:

Maria Carlson, Los Angeles County Public Works
Wayde Hunter, North Valley Coalition of Concerned Citizens
Dennis Montano, Republic Services
Dave Nguyen, Los Angeles County Public Works
Margarita Quiroz, Los Angeles County Public Works
Saeid Shirzadegan, Los Angeles County Public Works
Carol Oyola, Los Angeles County Public Works
Vu Truong, Los Angeles County Public Works

I. CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Landis called the meeting to order at 11:15 a.m.

II. APPROVAL OF JANUARY 17, 2019, MEETING MINUTES

A motion to approve the Minutes from the January 17, 2019, Subcommittee Meeting was made by Mr. Mohajer, as amended, and seconded by Mr. Ruiz. The motion passed with one abstention.

III. UPDATE ON SUNSHINE CANYON CITY/COUNTY LANDFILL

Odor Complaints

Mr. Truong provided an update on the Sunshine Canyon Landfill (SCL) odor complaints from the South Coast Air Quality Management District (AQMD) for the month of January 2019 ([Link](#)).

- During the month of January, a total of 17 complaints were made to the AQMD hotline and 11 of them were listed as “No Field Response”.
- In comparison to December 2018, the number of complaints received in January decreased from 36 to 17 complaints.
- The total number of complaints received by AQMD since 2009, is 11,226 and the total number of complaints received this year, is 17.
- The total number of Notices of Violation (NOVs) issued by AQMD since 2009, was 215. As of February 5, 2019, AQMD has not issued any Odor Complaint NOV to SCL for the month of January 2019.
- At the last subcommittee meeting, staff reported one NOV issued on December 18, 2018, by the AQMD. Staff was informed that the NOV was issued due to odor complaints received on December 14, 2018. There was a total of 15 odor complaints made on that day and 8 of them were field verified.

Fourth Quarter 2018 Independent Monitoring Report

Mr. Shirzadegan provided an update regarding the Fourth Quarter 2018 Independent Monitoring Report submitted by SCL.

UltraSystems prepared the Fourth Quarter 2018 Independent Monitor Quarterly Site Monitoring Status Report dated January 9, 2019. The Report provided a status of the Mitigation Measures Monitoring for the Fourth Quarter of 2018.

Erosion and Dust Control

- The rains in late November and early and mid-December caused a significant amount of erosion on the County cut slopes adjacent to CC-4 Part 1 and Part 2, and Part 3 buttress.
- Throughout the Fourth Quarter, there were numerous dirt access roads that were used daily, but infrequently. When used, blowing dust was a concern. The use of a soil sealant or limiting the use of dirt roads to those that are watered should be considered.
- Similarly, the use of water trucks was not effective in controlling dust on the main dirt haul road on the east side of C-3A. Dust clouds occurred in between water truck water applications. As the result, the use of recycled asphalt and soil binder should be considered for this area.

Drainage

- The rains in late November and early December had minimal impacts on Basins B and D. Basin A had the outlet blocked and filled to near capacity. The water was being pumped into a truck and used for onsite dust control and buttress compaction. The terminal basin had approximately five feet of sediment against the south end of the gabion wall.
- In the Fourth Quarter, the high-flow spillway for Basin D into the westside drainage had cracks and spalling that should be repaired. The Basin B high-flow outlet spillway was cracked in multiple places.

Oil Wells/Oil Field Gate

- The two old-oil well steel casings in the area north of the landfill offices were located in the Cell CC-4 Part 3 buttress grading area. These wells have been uncovered and marked with orange paint. These wells will need to be re-abandoned after grading has been completed.
- None of the “old abandoned oil well casings adjacent to the new secondary access road from the Flare 11 site” were leaking oil or gas, nor posed a hazard.

Ms. Landis asked if the landfill filled the re-abandoned wells with cement. Mr. Montano, a Republic Services staff, stated that the wells are capped with cement and the Landfill followed procedures in accordance with the Department of Conservation’s Division of Oil, Gas, and Geothermal Resources (DOGGR)’s laws and regulations. Mr. Mohajer asked if Republic Services received a certification from the DOGGR that the well was re-abandoned. Mr. Montano responded that this action is in the process. Mr. Mohajer stated that the gas problem at Porter Ranch was caused by wells belonging to Southern California Gas Company. These wells were not certified as abandoned wells by DOGGR, and that certifications of abandonment are very important document.

Mr. Nguyen, staff to the FPRS, asked Mr. Mohajer if the certifications that he has been asking for pertained to all abandoned wells at the landfill. Mr. Mohajer responded that he was only asking for certifications for the two subject wells being discussed. Mr. Nguyen said staff will work on acquiring copies of certifications.

Ms. Landis commented that those wells are in the active landfill area and something more should be done than simply capping the wells because any movement of earth around them may affect pressures on that well. Capping does not ensure that leakage will not happen.

Mr. Mohajer commented that the perimeter monitoring well was reading in excess of what is allowable by CalRecycle and SCS Engineers claims that the methane emission detected, was from an oil well. He continued that the Local Enforcement Agency (LEA) is telling SCS Engineers that their assessment is not correct, and more study needs to be done for conclusion. Mr. Mohajer further clarified that the certifications he is asking about are for the oil wells.

Perimeter Monitoring Well 205R

Mr. Shirzadegan provided an update regarding Perimeter Monitoring Well 205R.

As requested by the subcommittee at the January 17, 2019, subcommittee meeting regarding perimeter mitigation monitoring well 205R at SCL, Staff reached out to the landfill's operator and the Local Enforcement Agency (LEA) to obtain more detailed information, as well as the DOGGR's for certification of abandonment.

The LEA has been in contact with the landfill's operator regarding the increase levels of methane identified in the perimeter mitigation monitoring well 205R. In a report dated October 25, 2018, SCS Engineers concluded that the methane detected in well P-205R did not originate from the landfill.

The LEA, upon their review of the report, sent a letter to the landfill operator dated January 9, 2019, stating that the justification and support for SCS conclusion is not adequate, and that the LEA does not agree with the conclusion, and has the following main concerns:

- The letter did not specify whether or not SCS has performed any gas sampling and testing from the nearby oil fields to determine the nature and characteristics of the gas from it.
- There was no indication that SCS had taken samples from the landfill gas control system (GCCS) to determine the baseline characteristics of the LFG

being generated from the landfill and compare it with gas detected from compliance well 205R.

The LEA further suggests the operator collect samples and perform testing from the landfill gas control system, as well as the oil field, and then compare the results from Probe 205R to these two sources. To adequately perform such a comparison, a one-year study of both sources should be conducted. Staff will monitor the progress of the study and will provide updates as needed.

Ms. Landis asked why the LEA is requesting a one-year study. Ms. Hanson-Lugo of the LEA responded that she could not comment on the requirement for the one-year sampling period. However, she informed that the LEA did consult with CalRecycle's engineers and they suggested the study be done for a one year.

Mr. Landis pressed that if there is a leak occurring at the well, it should be addressed, and not simply have it been monitored for a year. In responding, Ms. Hanson-Lugo informed that the particular well's methane levels identified are still below the regulatory threshold of 5 percent by volume. She mentioned that the LEA is noting the areas of concern and making sure they are addressing any possible issues that could arise. She further added if SCS Engineers are blaming the oil wells for causing the problem with the methane emission, then the operator or consultant should perform the study to substantiate their claim.

Ms. Landis asked if the consultant would perform the study and Ms. Hanson-Lugo responded that the LEA has not heard back from the landfill operator. Mr. Nguyen stated that staff has spoken with Chris Coyle, the General Manager at the SCL, and that SCL did receive a letter from the LEA and they are planning to have a meeting with the LEA to go over the findings. Ms. Landis asked if they have communicated with the SCS Engineers. Mr. Nguyen responded that he expects that SCL has coordinated with the consultant to respond to the LEA request.

Ms. Landis made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Mohajer, for staff to follow-up with SCS Engineers for monthly update on the progress regarding this study on the gas emissions at Monitoring Well 205R.

Mr. Mohajer stated that throughout the 4th Quarter, there were numerous dirt access roads that were used daily, and blowing dust was a concern. The use of a soil sealant or limiting the use of dirt roads to only those that were watered should be considered. He continued that in the report, a recommendation was made that on the dirt roads; asphalt, broken asphalt, or concrete should be used to prevent dust. He inquired as to which agency enforcing the dust control conditions. Ms. Hanson-Lugo stated she was unaware of the dust problem.

Due to the recommendations by the consultant and considering the duration of problems with dust, Mr. Mohajer motioned for a letter to be sent to Republic Services, referring to the conditions of the Finding of Conformance (FOC) which was granted to the operator, directing them to comply with all regulations, permit, and requirements in the landfill's CUP regarding dust control, and since the dust problems have continued within the last fourth quarter of 2018, the recommendation from the Independent Monitor Report should be implemented immediately. Mr. Ruiz seconded the motion.

Mr. Mohajer commented that during the 4th Quarter 2018 also reported that the high-flow spillway for Basin D into the westside drainage had cracks and spalling that should be repaired. He asked that if it had been repaired and Mr. Shirzadegan responded that he contacted UltraSystems and they informed us that no actions have been taken yet. Mr. Montano stated that Republic Services will commence the channel repairs once the rain season is over.

Status of Public Health Department's NOV referral to Department of Regional Planning

Ms. Carlson gave an update on Department Public Health (Public Health) NOV referral to the Department of Regional Planning (DRP).

On August 30, 2018, the Task Force sent a letter to the DRP, requesting semi-annual status updates regarding the Public Health's referral to DRP for the issuance of an NOV to Republic Services for odor nuisance at SCL. DRP responded to the Task Force in a letter dated September 5, 2018, which was disseminated to the committee members on September 6, 2018.

On January 23, 2019, staff reached out to the DRP requesting status update. DRP states the case is still open and there are no intentions of moving forward at this time.

Mr. Mohajer asked if DRP is to respond in writing within six months or does staff have to follow-up on the phone. Mr. Nguyen commented that they responded to the Task Force letter and said they would provide updates when asked. Mr. Mohajer requested an email from DRP with their response.

Fourth Quarter 2018 SCL Vegetation Update

Ms. Carlson gave an update on the 4th Quarter 2018 SCL Vegetation Report at the SCL. Republic Services submitted the Third Quarter 2018 Vegetation Project Status Report on January 31, 2019. The meeting with the Vegetation group at

SCL was canceled due to the heavy rains last week. Once the weather is stable, the quarterly meetings will resume.

City Side Sage Mitigation Area - Deck C

- Selective thinning of saltbush plants has occurred to encourage more native plant growth.
- Low quantities of weeds are sprouting on the Lower Deck.
- Wildlife observed include a lizard, rabbit, and bird species during the assessment.

City Side Sage Mitigation Area - Deck B

- It underwent a leaching schedule, additional soil amendments, and resampling due to the low pH and high salinity in the area.
- Approximately 60 percent of the deck has been tiled in preparation for planting native seeds, the planting of the seeds will be focused on areas where the native species have not been established yet.
- Large boulders have been strategically positioned within the planting area and straw wattles have been installed to control erosion and to save as basins to establish seed.
- Weed coverage is low because of the tiling, however there are new sprouts of annual non-native grasses emerging within the vegetated areas.

City Side Sage Mitigation Area – Deck A

- It continues to be sparsely covered with native vegetation, due to poor soil conditions. In the areas north of the central access road, the soil is heavily compacted and gravelly, and evidence of previous seeding is no longer discernible in these areas.
- Weeds continue to grow without any level of control within Deck A. These weeds consist of Russian thistle, wild oats, brome grasses, and mustard. These weeds are especially prevalent where the soil is less compacted.
- Buckwheat is the dominant native plant, most prevalent in the southwestern portion of Deck A.
- Overall natural recruitment is low, due to the poor soil conditions.

Hydroseeding Trial Project

- In December 2017, 57 acres of the intermediate slope area was established through of the initial hydroseeding trial. Currently this area is in a dormant state. Watering will commence once the rainy season has passed.

- 15 acres were hydroseeded with the approved seed mix at the end of the fourth quarter.

County Side Sage Mitigation Pilot Project Area

- No revegetation activities took place during the fourth quarter. Conditions in the mitigation area have remained unchanged for some time.
- The southern portion has a greater density of vegetation consisting of mostly the California buckwheat species. The northern portion of the slope is bare and problematic due to steep slopes, soil erosion, and toxic soils. Soil samples indicate low pH, high salinity, and Boron present in native soils.
- The native plant coverage is assumed to be the direct result of hydroseeding, however, some natural recruitment is apparent.

Ms. Landis commented that Buckwheat is a natural pioneer that can handle a lot of soil conditions. She has seen many slopes disturbed and Buckwheat is what helps hold the slopes in place while other things seed around it.

Ms. Landis also commented on the Mitigation Area of Deck A, where weeds continue to grow without any level of control. These weeds consist of Russian thistle, wild oats, brome grasses, and mustard. She stated that these plants all do very well when blown around by the wind, and that if it rains, and these plants look like they are going to seed, then they need to be weeded to prevent spreading.

Ms. Landis stated that she does not understand why the landfill operators do not use more straw waddles since they are great for stopping erosion down the slopes and hold seeds well. She also informed that she has low opinion of hydroseeding as it uses a fixative to hold the seeds in the soil, and that the fixative prevents seeds from germinating, like covering the seeds with glue. Ms. Landis recommended not using any fixative and instead use straw waddles across the slope to prevent erosion.

IV. WOOLSEY AND HILL CANYONS FIRE EMERGENCY WAIVER – CALABASAS, CHICQUITA CANYON AND SUNSHINE CANYON LANDFILLS

Ms. Robinson gave a summary of the Woolsey and Hill Canyons Fire Emergency Waiver for Calabasas (CL), Chiquita Canyon (CCL) and Sunshine Canyon (SCL) Landfills.

On November 8, 2018, the Woolsey fire broke out in Los Angeles and Ventura Counties. The following day on November 9, 2018, the Governor declared a state of emergency in Los Angeles and Ventura Counties and subsequently, on

November 12, 2018, the President approved the Governor's request for a major disaster declaration in the State of California due to the Woolsey Fire. The Governor's Executive Order suspends State statutes, rules, regulations and requirements related to the removal and disposal of hazardous and non-hazardous debris resulting from the wildfire, while at the same time protecting public health and the environment.

To provide some more background, nearly 97,000 acres, including over 1,700 properties, were burned in the Woolsey Fire. This resulted in an estimated 700,000 to 1 million tons of debris, which poses a potential threat to public health, and safety, and the environment, and needs to be removed as soon as possible to allow the communities to continue the recovery process.

The County requested State and federal assistance to expedite recovery activities and ensure the safe removal of the hazardous waste and fire debris from structures and properties damaged by the wildfire. There are two phases to this State program:

Phase I - included hazardous material inspection and removal, which was performed on a majority of the parcels, and was completed in January 2019.

Phase II - is a government-sponsored consolidated debris removal program, which includes non-hazardous fire debris removal by State contractors, which property owners can opt-in to receive at no direct cost to them. Debris removal for this phase began in early February 2019 and is still in process.

To date, CalRecycle has 25 teams cleaning up the debris, but has the capacity to deploy up to 50 teams. Each team can send upward of 10 truckloads of debris to the landfill per day. There are four major landfills that are relatively close to the fire burn area: Simi Valley Landfill (SVL), Calabasas Landfill (CL), Sunshine Canyon Landfill (SCL), and Chiquita Canyon Landfill (CCL). Currently, a majority of the material is being taken to SVL, in Ventura County. CalRecycle is currently negotiating to begin utilizing CL, which is the State's preference due to its proximity to the burn area. So far, CL has been receiving up to 1,000 tons per day (tpd) of fire mudflow debris from the Flood Control District.

Current State regulations give the LEA the authority to waive daily tonnage limits and hours of operation in response to a declaration of emergency. At the State's request, the various invested agencies which included CalOES, CalRecycle, Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (DPH), Los Angeles County Public Works, Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts, Waste Management, Republic Services and Waste Connections all convened, and recommended waivers be issued for the four aforementioned landfills. Additional action was

taken by the Board of Supervisors at the recommendation of the DPH, acting as the LEA, and Public Works, to grant a temporary waiver for waste shed restrictions and an increase in the short-term disposal tonnage limits, without disruption of regular solid waste collection and disposal operations at CL, CCL, and SCL.

On January 29, 2019, the Board of Supervisors approved a motion to:

- Authorize the CL to temporarily accept material from outside of the wasteshed to accommodate the emergency disposal of fire and mudflow debris generated from the Woolsey Fire burn area.
- Authorize SCL and CCL to temporarily increase their tonnage limits as follows:
 - CCL would increase its monthly tonnage limit, authorized under its CUP, by 20 percent; from 233,333 tons to 280,000 tons.
 - SCL would increase its daily tonnage limit under its CUP by 2,900 tons; from 12,100 tons to 15,000 tons.

Provided the excess tonnage amounts consist solely of disaster debris.

In addition, the LEA subsequently approved a tonnage increase from 3,500 tpd to 5,000 tpd at CL. As previously stated, the State's preference and intention is to utilize CL and SVL to dispose of the debris due to their proximity to the burn areas, convenience, fewer transportation impacts and cost efficiency. In light of the Woolsey Fire emergency recovery and rebuild efforts, this waiver is necessary to ensure that the County is able to appropriately manage its overall waste stream and protect public health and safety, as well as the environment.

Ms. Landis asked if this debris was non-toxic. Ms. Robinson responded that hazardous waste is sent to La Paz Landfill located in Arizona. Ms. Landis asked if any of the landfills were damaged by the fires. Ms. Robinson responded that CL was affected. Mr. Shammass stated there were several structures burned at CL and the fire went over the entire landfill, but everyone got out safely.

Ms. Landis mentioned having to comment on the Cal Fire Forestry Treatment Plan Program that they never finished but keep sending back for more comments. She stated their main way of getting rid of understory weeds is to prescribe burns. When looking at Cal Fire's latest maps, they are including all the fire areas for more prescribed burns.

Mr. Mohajer noted that he heard that the Woolsey Fire burned over 280,000 trees.

Mr. Hunter asked that the presentation be made available since it was hard to hear.

He also asked why the percentage was only shown for CCL on their tonnage increase and not shown for SCL. Mr. Ruiz responded it was the way their permits were structured. Mr. Hunter stated that he knows SCL's daily permitted tonnage is 11,000 per day, which is 6,000 County and 5,000 City; he continued to explain that an additional 10 percent is allowed for inert or recyclables, which bumps the daily permitted tonnage up to 12,100. Now the County has bumped the daily tonnage limit up to 15,000 tpd. Mr. Hunter asked if the 15,000 tpd is all inert material, because it is supposed to be.

Mr. Hunter continued to state that he is sickened by what the County has once again done to SCL; running an abatement for the odors. The LEA went in and increased the hours of operation. He stated he does not feel the job was done properly. He went on and asked about the purpose of 25 teams and maybe up to 50 teams that State is using and the 10 trucks per day. Mr. Ruiz stated this was for the clearing of properties that are participating in the consolidated program. Mr. Hunter also asked what control the County has over all of the other operations where they are cleaning streets and doing landslides. He continued asking who collects the material. Mr. Ruiz responded that cleaning streets within the unincorporated areas is Public Works and Road Maintenance Division. He added that for flood control facilities and mudslide debris, it is the Flood Control District. Mr. Ruiz continued that for private properties that are not participating in a consolidated program, the owners will have their own contractors that must meet County requirements.

Mr. Hunter further stated that he is concerned about what is being taken to SCL and the increase of tonnage when there are other landfills available. Mr. Ruiz stated the material coming down from the hills is going into flood control facilities. Public Works, in anticipation of the storms, has moved in to clear the materials and those materials are being taken to Calabasas Landfill. Calabasas Landfill had been damaged by the fire, and therefore, did not have the capability to handle all the fire debris material. Mr. Ruiz added that the State is requesting bringing from 5,000 tons to 7,000 tons to the Calabasas Landfill and the Sanitation District must get ready to accommodate the material. Currently, a lot of material is going to the Simi Valley Landfill.

Mr. Ruiz stated there were two major fires; Woolsey and the other in northern California that is even more significant in terms of area and devastation. He continued that the State wants to move as much of the material as soon as possible, starting with hazardous material and then with non-hazardous material for communities to start rebuilding. Mr. Ruiz stated that he understands that Simi Valley Landfill has received up to 18,000 tons of material per day. Ms. Landis summarized the issue with everyone working together in an emergency situation and learning about it, stating they are having even more trouble up north.

V. LAWSUIT STATUS – CHIQUITA CANYON LANDFILL AND LOS ANGELES COUNTY

Mr. Shirzadegan gave an update on the lawsuits.

CUP Lawsuits

On December 11, 2017, the DRP issued a NOV indicating that certain CUP conditions are not being met. On January 12, 2018, DRP received an appeal to the NOV from the Landfill operator. The NOV appeal was heard by the DRP Hearing Officer on March 6, 2018, and the Hearing Officer upheld the NOV. Since then, the Landfill operator filed a lawsuit seeking to overturn the NOV. The trial in that case is set for June 19, 2019.

The Landfill operator also filed a lawsuit challenging thirteen operating Conditions in the CUP. In July 2018, the court struck CCL's legal challenge. Since then, the Landfill operator appealed the case and it was heard on January 9, 2019. The Court of Appeal now has 30-to-60 days to render its decision. If the Court of Appeal rules in the operator's favor, the entire challenge to the CUP (fees and operating conditions) will proceed to trial.

CEQA Lawsuits

Since the effective date of the CUP, the County has been challenged with a lawsuit by environmental and community groups. The lawsuit alleges that the prepared EIR is inadequate and did not comply with the California Environmental Quality Act. The case has been briefed and was originally set for hearing on February 8, 2019. However, the case has been reassigned to a new court and judge and, to date, no specific date has been set. Staff will monitor this process and will provide any relevant updates when they become available.

VI. DISCUSSION OF FOC REPORTS

Due to time constraints, the FOC Reports will be discussed at the next subcommittee meeting.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Hunter read a statement that he presented to the Board of Supervisors and concluded that although Woolsey Fire was a disaster, it should not be in exchange to create another disaster by disposing of potentially contaminated and toxic

materials to other landfills, and thus creating a disaster for those communities. He believed the Board should deny the motion [for the emergency waiver] as written.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 12:42 p.m. The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for Thursday, March 21, 2019, at 11:00 a.m., in TMC Conference Room, at the Annex Building, First Floor.

CSO