

ATTACHMENT 13 – ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE

**San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers Watershed  
IRWM Implementation Grant, Step 1**

The implementation proposal for the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers Watershed Region will comply with all applicable environmental review requirements. This includes CEQA, or, if applicable, NEPA obligations. As shown in Attachment 8 – Schedule, each of the proposal components will have their own individual environmental review process. The project proponent within the Regional Water Management Group will serve as the lead applicant for their respective projects. Issues such as whether one project would cause an impact to another, or, in conjunction, may potentially cause a cumulative impact on the environment, will be addressed in the respective environmental documents. Table 13-1 below lists each of the proposal components and their respective environmental documentation status and completion dates.

**Table 13-1. Environmental Documentation Status and Schedule**

PROJECT NAME	STATUS	COMPLETION DATE
El Dorado Park Lakes Water Usage and Wetlands Restoration	Not yet initiated	May 31, 2007
Full Capture Trash Removal Devices	Not yet initiated	November 30, 2006
Invasive Weed Control in Riparian Habitat	Completed	2002
Large Landscape Conservation / Runoff Reduction Management and Educational Program	Not applicable	Not applicable
Montebello Forebay Attenuation and Dilution Studies	Not applicable	Not applicable
Morris Dam Water Supply Enhancement	Not yet initiated	February 28, 2007
Peck Water Conservation Park	Ongoing	September 30, 2006
Southeast Water Reliability Project, Phase 1 Water Recycling	Completed	April 30, 2005
Whittier Narrows Conservation Pool	Not yet initiated	October 20, 2006
Whittier Narrows Water Reclamation Plant UV Disinfection Facilities Project	Not yet initiated	October 31, 2005

A brief description of each project’s environmental compliance process is identified below:

**1. El Dorado Park Lakes Water Usage and Wetlands Restoration**

Upon receiving grant funding, preliminary design will commence. Once the design has advanced to approximately 30 percent of complete construction plans, environmental review will be required. An Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is anticipated due to the scale of the 445-acre project and the high public interest in any changes in El Dorado Regional Park and the Nature Center. The City of Long Beach Planning Commission is the lead agency for all City environmental reviews. An application will be filed by the City Planning and Building Department, which is the staff to the Planning Commission. Upon action by the Planning Commission, the EIR will be presented to the Long Beach City Council for final certification. Open public meetings will be held for project scoping and for review of the EIR before the Parks and Recreation Commission. Additional neighborhood or interest group meetings will also be held upon request.

Because the project will benefit environmental resources such as water conservation and habitat restoration, negative environmental impacts are anticipated to be minimal. One possible impact that

will be discussed is the loss of parkland to the nano-filtration equipment and to the trash removal equipment on the storm drain. Since City policy is to mitigate such losses with a two to one replacement, this will be mitigated by the addition of the 22 acres of Southern California Edison land to the park.

A second mitigation may result from the loss of fishing opportunities in the park lakes through naturalizing the shoreline. Small fishing piers into the lake will be proposed in the design to help mitigate this loss. In addition, the shoreline will be carefully designed so that adequate shore-based fishing or wading opportunities exist.

The soil in the retention basin has not been tested. It is possible such soils may contain contaminants. Any such contaminants that may exist would be disposed of in a properly approved manner. Construction activities would be limited by the appropriate seasonal restrictions, such as an approaching nesting season and other life-cycle concerns. Construction impacts to noise and air quality would also occur. These would be mitigated by the use of lower polluting equipment and by controlling the hours for construction.

## **2. Full Capture Trash Removal Devices**

Before the specific trash removal devices are constructed, an Initial Study will be performed to determine potential negative impacts of the project. A Notice of Exemption or Notice of Determination will be filed and a Categorical Exemption or Negative Declaration will be prepared as required by CEQA. The full capture trash removal devices will be placed immediately adjacent to existing storm drains. These devices are located underground and within existing street right of way. After construction, the only visible evidence of the devices would be the access manhole lid.

Potential impacts from installation of full capture trash removal devices would be limited to temporary impacts during construction of the projects and might include air quality impacts from additional truck trips and dust from the excavation of the project site, noise impacts from the construction activities and truck trips; and traffic resulting from the partial road closures. These impacts will be mitigated through the use of the required construction best management practices (BMPs). These BMPs could include the following: watering of the project site, traffic detour plans, and limiting project construction hours. As a result of implementing the construction BMPs, it is anticipated that the project impacts will be mitigated to less than significant.

## **3. Invasive Weed Control in Riparian Habitat**

CEQA/NEPA documentation is complete for this project. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Operations Branch issued a Categorical Exclusion in February 2002. Also, a Streambed Alteration Agreement was issued by the California Department of Fish and Game in August 2000 and October 2002 (permit amendment will be needed for upper the upper Walnut Creek location).

## **4. Large Landscape Conservation/Runoff Reduction Management and Educational Program**

Environmental documentation will not be required for this project. This project includes installation of landscape irrigation controllers and development of an education program.

## **5. Montebello Forebay Attenuation and Dilution Studies**

Environmental documentation will not be required for this project. This purpose of this project is to construct a model to conduct hydrogeologic studies of wastewater effluent and monitor attenuation and dilution rates for various constituents.

## **6. Morris Dam Water Supply Enhancement Project**

The project consists of modifications to Morris Dam to allow greater flexibility in dam releases and enable greater amounts of local runoff from the San Gabriel River watershed to be conserved. These proposed modifications are of a scale that they are not exempt from CEQA. As a result, an environmental document (Mitigated Negative Declaration) will be prepared to comply with CEQA. If the project is funded, the required environmental documentation will be completed by March 2007.

The project includes activities that, as defined in Section 1602 of the State's Fish and Game Code, potentially modify a lake and streambed. Activities include lowering the reservoir to the elevation of the intakes to the dam's outlet works, which are being modified to allow greater flexibility in dam releases, and moving away any sediment that has accumulated up against the outlet works and their intakes. The State's Department of Fish and Game oversees compliance with the Fish and Game Code. A Streambed/Lake Alteration Agreement (SAA) from the State's Department of Fish and Game will be obtained.

The above activities are also regulated by Section 404 of the Federal Clean Water Act. Compliance with that Act is overseen by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; therefore, a permit from the Corps is required and will be obtained. Issuance of Federal permits requires compliance with NEPA. The project's activities are within the scope of the Corps' Nationwide Permit No. 31 (Maintenance of an Existing Flood Control Facilities) or Nationwide Permit No. 33 (Temporary Construction, Access or Dewatering). The Corps has already completed the necessary NEPA documents and Decision Notices for its Nationwide Permits. As a result, with the Corps' issuance of a Nationwide Permit for the project, the project will comply with NEPA. Before the Corps can issue its Section 404 permits, Section 401 of the Federal Clean Water Act requires a water quality certification (401 WQC) from the State for the project. The State Water Resources Control Board, oversees the issuance of 401 WQCs. A 401 WQC will be obtained for the proposed project via the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board.

The impacts of the project will be of a temporary nature and will be fully mitigated. Best Management Practices (BMPs) will be employed for water quality impacts. When the reservoir is lowered for outlet modification work, fish in the reservoir (most of which are non-native) will be removed and relocated to recreational areas approved by the Department of Fish and Game. As is the current practice for releases from Morris Dam, the water released from the reservoir during its lowering will be directed to Public Works' numerous groundwater recharge facilities downstream, thus avoiding any waste of the water to the ocean.

The mitigation measures noted above will reduce the project's impacts to levels of non-significance. As a result, a Mitigated Negative Declaration will be the project's CEQA document. The Mitigated Negative Declaration will document the environmental impacts and the environmental benefits resulting from the project, and will discuss how the project's benefits from greater amounts conserved of local runoff equal, if not exceed, any temporary negative impacts of the project.

## **7. Peck Water Conservation Park**

Peck Road Water Conservation Park will require a Negative Declaration. In terms of CEQA, the project will not have any significant negative effect on the environment and does not require the preparation of an environmental impact report. The project will create, restore, and enhance wildlife habitat at Peck Road Water Conservation Park.

Trail and parking lot construction will take place in non-habitat areas, thus preserving and enhancing habitats of endangered species currently in the park. The project will restore wildlife habitat for the area's rich variety of bird species and the lake will be further protected and enhanced by filtering runoff and restoring the native flora. The human habitat will be enhanced with green spaces and

recreational areas. This project will have a lasting and positive impact on human health in an area plagued by obesity, diabetes, and childhood and adult asthma. This project has no detrimental biological impact.

#### **8. Southeast Water Reliability Project, Phase I Water Recycling**

A Negative Declaration was adopted on January 8, 1998 by Central Basin. It is an addendum to the Negative Declaration prepared for the Century Reclamation Program and Rio Hondo Water Reclamation Program within the Central Basin, which is collectively known as the Central Basin Recycled Water System. An updated Initial Study and Negative Declaration for Phase I of the Southeast Water Reliability Project were completed in April 2005.

#### **9. Whittier Narrows Conservation Pool**

This project will comply with all applicable environmental reviews, including CEQA and NEPA, through a formalized process. The Water Replenishment District of Southern California will serve as lead agency on this project and its Board of Directors will implement an update of the EIS/EIR that was developed in 1998.

The environmental impacts identified in the EIS/EIR would be addressed as follows:

- a. Land Use and Recreation Impacts of this project are minor; however, WRD will work closely with the County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation to ensure costs for additional maintenance of affected recreational facilities are met. In addition, this project calls for the increase in elevation of roads that would be inundated as part of this project. Any impacts to infrastructure will be mitigated.
- b. Impacts on Biological Resources as a result of this project are relatively minor. Specific mitigation measures for various biological resources, if they are determined to be necessary, are included in the draft EIS/EIR.
- c. Air Quality Impacts would occur during a period of approximately six months while short segments of roads are elevated. Average daily emissions are not expected to exceed threshold levels for any pollutant.

Other environmental impacts are included in the draft EIR/EIS. None of these impacts are considered major.

#### **10. Whittier Narrows Water Reclamation Plant UV Disinfection Facilities Project**

The Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County's (LACSD) Planning Section will ensure that all applicable environmental reviews will be conducted. Currently, LACSD expects that the project will be eligible for a categorical exemption from CEQA (Class 1 -15301b and Class 2-15302c of CEQA Guidelines) due to the fact that it is a modification of existing disinfection facilities having essentially the same purpose and capacity as the previous facilities, and are to be constructed within the same footprint. LACSD believes that the project is eligible for a categorical exclusion from NEPA since it is an action causing no significant environmental impact. The project may also be eligible for a statutory exclusion due to the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. 1371(c)(1)). If this is not the case, LACSD will complete and file the appropriate reviews (e.g. - Negative Declaration, EA, FONSI, EIR/EIS).