



PUBLIC NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE OF PROPOSED ACTIVITY **Notice of Intent for Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI)**

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
LOS ANGELES DISTRICT

BUILDING STRONG®

Comment Period: May 23 to May 27, 2016

Direct comments to:

Department of the Army
Los Angeles District
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
915 Wilshire Boulevard, Room 1430 (CESPL-PD-RL)
Attn: Mr. Kirk C. Brus, Environmental Coordinator
Los Angeles, California 90017-3401

or by email at
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Proposed Federal Action

This public notice is issued by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) to inform the general public that the Los Angeles District of the Corps is preparing a Finding of No Significant Impact on a Final Environmental Assessment (FEA) for the proposed Missions Springs Water District (MSWD), Assessment District (AD) 12 Sewer Improvement Project (proposed action), located in the City of Desert Hot Springs and unincorporated area of Riverside County, California.

Over the past several years, the MSWD has been actively involved in the improvement of sanitary sewer infrastructure and systems in the City of Desert Hot Springs and portions of the unincorporated areas of Riverside County. The MSWD AD 12 Sewer Improvement Project, part of the MSWD Groundwater Quality Protection Program, is proposed for design and construction under Section 219(c) of the Water Resources Development Act of 1992 as amended by the Consolidated Appropriations Act, Fiscal Year 2001, Public Law 106-554 (21 December 2000).

The proposed action involves construction of approximately fifty seven (57) miles of wastewater (sewer) pipelines that would facilitate the removal of approximately 4,000 individual septic tanks to protect and preserve the quality of groundwater. The removal of the septic tanks and the connection from the proposed city sewer to the house would be accomplished separately by the landowner on improved private land and would not impact undisturbed land. The sewer construction proposed as the current action would be within the public right of way (ROW) and would end at the private property line. Construction of the proposed action would occur in AD 12 Service Areas (SA) L, M, F, D, J, A, H, I, K and G, and would be phased and prioritized by the AD 12 SA vulnerability to groundwater. Some of the MSWD SA sanitary sewer improvements already have been constructed. However, they are included in the proposed action as these completed SA areas need to be connected to the remaining SA areas to be functional.

The proposed action consists of design and construction of underground (u/g) 8-inch, 10-inch, and 12-inch diameter Vitrified Clay Pipe (VCP) sewer mains including manholes, cleanouts, appurtenances and appurtenant infrastructure, and u/g 4-inch and 6-inch VCP sewer lateral pipelines. The proposed installation and construction of sewer mains and sewer laterals installation would use typical standard, bench and/or open trench activities within existing, paved ROW/Property Line (PL) roadways with a construction zone approximately 23 to 55 feet wide and an average street width of approximately 40 feet. Trench width would be between 3 to 15 feet, and depth for the sewer mains would be approximately between 8 to 12 feet with a maximum depth of 17 feet. Excavation, pipe installation, and backfilling are expected to occur along a range of approximately 300 to 500 foot segment each day. The proposed action period for construction completion is approximately 4.5 years. The proposed construction could tentatively commence in Fall 2016 and could be completed sometime in Spring 2021, but would be dependent upon availability of funding and weather related issues.

All environmental resources have been analyzed in the environmental assessment (EA). Biological, cultural, and environmental resources surveys were conducted for the proposed action. The area of the proposed action has been previously disturbed by existing underground (u/g) utilities for the entire route of the pipe. The proposed action would not have significant impacts to the following resources addressed in the EA: physical environment; biology; cultural; water; air; noise; land use; hazardous and toxic waste; transportation and circulation; socioeconomic; recreation, aesthetics; environmental justice; sustainability; climate change/global warming/greenhouse gases. The proposed action would not affect federally or state listed threatened or endangered species, proposed threatened or endangered species, sensitive species, or designated critical habitat. Cultural resources coordination has occurred with the California's State Historic Preservation Office and State Native American Heritage Commission, and no known historic properties would be impacted. The EA has also been coordinated with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Colorado River Basin Regional Water Quality Control Board, State Water Resources Control Board, State Department of Health Services, other resource agencies, and non-governmental organizations.

The proposed action would not result in discharge of dredged or fill material into waters of the U.S. The proposed action is in compliance with all applicable laws pursuant to the Clean Water Act. An air quality calculation analysis was completed for the proposed action.

Potential air quality impacts from the proposed action were determined to be minimal and below the de minimis threshold for each air pollutant for the Federal air quality yearly standards, for the state air quality standards under the California's Air Resources Board's Salton Sea Air Basin, and for the regional/local South Coast Air Quality Management District. The proposed action is in compliance with the Clean Air Act.

Potential short term erosion impacts would be reduced during construction and post construction using Best Management Practices to ensure compliance with California's water quality codes, including the California Code of Regulations Title 22 (Health and Safety Codes), and requirements. Potential short term increase in noise levels is anticipated during construction but the potential impact would be less than significant. The proposed action would be in compliance with the City of Desert Hot Springs and County of Riverside noise ordinance for construction work. Potential temporary impacts to vehicular traffic by the proposed action would be reduced through implementation of a Traffic Management Plan. In addition, environmental commitments incorporated in the EA would be implemented prior to and during construction to avoid and minimize potential impacts to all resources.

Previous Public Involvement

The Corps circulated the Draft Environmental Assessment (DEA) for a 30 day period from September 15, 2010 through October 15, 2010, on the Proposed Activity described above. Comments on the DEA were received, and the Corps addressed review comments and provided responses on the DEA. The Corps completed follow-up coordination with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on the proposed action in the Fall 2015 to address all previous review comments.

Sewer improvements that have been completed by other entities since the publication of the DEA in some of the Service Areas (SAs) are as follows: SA L was divided into SA L-1 and L-2 and were completed in August 2008; SA M was divided into SA M-1 and M-2, M-1 was completed in October 2013; SA F was divided into SA F and F-1, SA F was completed in October 2013 and SA F-1 was completed in August 2012; SA D was divided into SA D-1 and SA D-2, SA D-1 was completed in March 2014.

Public Involvement

The Corps invites the general public to provide comments on the Corps preparation of a Finding of No Significant Impact for the proposed action. The review period to provide comments is from May 23, 2016 through May 27, 2016. If you have questions or would like additional information, please contact Kirk C. Brus at phone number (213) 452-3876.