



PUBLIC NOTICE

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
LOS ANGELES DISTRICT

BUILDING STRONG®

APPLICATION FOR PERMIT Big Tujunga Reservoir Sediment Removal Project

Public Notice/Application No.: SPL-2012-00057-BLR

Project: Big Tujunga Reservoir Sediment Removal Project

Comment Period: December 05, 2012 through January 04, 2013

Project Manager: Bonnie Rogers; 213-452-3372; Bonnie.L.Rogers@usace.army.mil

Applicant

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Contact

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Los Angeles County Dep. of Public Works
900 S. Fremont Ave.
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Location

The project is located in the San Gabriel Mountains within the Angeles National Forest, California (Big Tujunga Reservoir: 34.29236°N, -118.18819°W and Maple Canyon Sediment Placement Site 34.28491°N, -118.18573°W). The nearest communities are Sunland and Tujunga which are located about 9 miles south of Tujunga Dam near Big Tujunga Road and the 210 Freeway.

Activity

The County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works proposes to conduct the Big Tujunga Reservoir Sediment Removal Project to excavate accumulated sediment and debris within the Big Tujunga Reservoir (BTR) upstream of Big Tujunga Dam, and transport this sediment to an existing deposition site, the Maple Canyon Sediment Placement Site (Maple SPS), which is located 1.8 miles away in Big Tujunga Canyon, Angeles National Forest. Impacts to non-wetland waters of the U.S. include temporary impacts on to 46.4 acres (9,500 linear feet) in Big Tujunga Reservoir and permanent impacts on to 0.7 acres (3,800 linear feet) within Maple Canyon SPS. The project consists of various activities as described below (see attached documents).

Interested parties are hereby notified that an application has been received for a Department of the Army permit for the activity described herein and shown on the attached drawing(s). We invite you to review today's public notice and provide views on the proposed work. By providing substantive, site-specific comments to the Corps Regulatory Division, you provide information that supports the Corps' decision-making process. All comments received during the comment period become part of the record and will be considered in the decision. This permit will be issued with special conditions, or denied.

Comments may be mailed to:

BONNIE ROGERS
LOS ANGELES DISTRICT CORPS OF ENGINEERS
REGULATORY DIVISION
PO BOX 532711
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90053-2325

Alternatively, comments may be sent electronically to: Bonnie.L.Rogers@usace.army.mil

The mission of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Regulatory Program is to protect the Nation's aquatic resources, while allowing reasonable development through fair, flexible and balanced permit decisions. The Corps evaluates permit applications for essentially all construction activities that occur in the Nation's waters, including wetlands. The Regulatory Program in the Los Angeles District is executed to protect aquatic resources by developing and implementing short- and long-term initiatives to improve regulatory products, processes, program transparency, and customer feedback considering current staffing levels and historical funding trends.

Corps permits are necessary for any work, including construction and dredging, in the Nation's navigable water and their tributary waters. The Corps balances the reasonably foreseeable benefits and detriments of proposed projects, and makes permit decisions that recognize the essential values of the Nation's aquatic ecosystems to the general public, as well as the property rights of private citizens who want to use their land. The Corps strives to make its permit decisions in a timely manner that minimizes impacts to the regulated public.

During the permit process, the Corps considers the views of other Federal, state and local agencies, interest groups, and the general public. The results of this careful public interest review are fair and equitable decisions that allow reasonable use of private property, infrastructure development, and growth of the economy, while offsetting the authorized impacts to the waters of the United States. The permit review process serves to first avoid and then minimize adverse effects of projects on aquatic resources to the maximum practicable extent. Any remaining unavoidable adverse impacts to the aquatic environment are offset by compensatory mitigation requirements, which may include restoration, enhancement, establishment, and/or preservation of aquatic ecosystem system functions and services.

Evaluation Factors

The decision whether to issue a permit will be based on an evaluation of the probable impact including cumulative impacts of the proposed activity on the public interest. That decision will reflect the national concern for both protection and utilization of important resources. The benefit, which reasonably may be expected to accrue from the proposal must be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments. All factors which may be relevant to the proposal will be considered including the cumulative effects thereof. Factors that will be considered include conservation, economics, aesthetics, general environmental concerns, wetlands, cultural values, fish and wildlife values, flood hazards, flood plain values, land use, navigation, shoreline erosion and accretion, recreation, water supply and conservation, water quality, energy needs, safety, food production and, in general, the needs and welfare of the people. In addition, if the proposal would discharge dredged or fill material, the evaluation of the activity will include application of the EPA Guidelines (40 CFR Part 230) as required by Section 404 (b)(1) of the Clean Water Act.

The Corps of Engineers is soliciting comments from the public; Federal, state, and local agencies and officials; Indian tribes; and other interested parties in order to consider and evaluate the impacts of this proposed activity. Any comments received will be considered by the Corps of Engineers to determine whether to issue, modify, condition or deny a permit for this proposal. To make this decision, comments are used to assess impacts on endangered species, historic properties, water quality, general environmental effects, and the other public interest factors listed above. Comments are used in the preparation of an Environmental Assessment and/or an Environmental Impact Statement pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act. Comments are also used to determine the need for a public hearing and to determine the overall public interest of the proposed activity.

Preliminary Review of Selected Factors

EIS Determination- A preliminary determination has been made that an environmental impact statement is not required for the proposed work.

Water Quality- The applicant is required to obtain water quality certification, under Section 401 of the Clean Water Act, from the California Regional Water Quality Control Board. Section 401 requires that any applicant for an individual Section 404 permit provide proof of water quality certification to the Corps of Engineers prior to permit issuance. For any proposed activity on Tribal land that is subject to Section 404 jurisdiction, the applicant will be required to obtain water quality certification from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. A 401 Water Quality Certification application was submitted to the Regional Water Quality Control Board in June 2012.

Coastal Zone Management- This project is located outside the coastal zone and preliminary review indicates that it would not affect coastal zone resources. After a review of the comments received on this public notice and in consultation with the California Coastal Commission, the Corps will make a final determination of whether this project affects coastal zone resources.

Essential Fish Habitat- Preliminary determinations indicate the proposed activity would not adversely affect essential fish habitat. Therefore, formal consultation under Section 305(b)(2) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA) is not required at this time.

Cultural Resources- The latest version of the National Register of Historic Places has been consulted and this site is not listed. A Native American consultation was initiated on September 26, 2011, with a letter to the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC). Letters were sent to Native American tribes on September 27, 2011. A cultural resources survey of the property was conducted on October 13, 2011. The U.S. Forest Service (USFS) is the designated lead federal agency on consultation with SHPO, cultural resources, and NEPA.

Endangered Species- Preliminary determinations indicate the proposed activity would affect federally-listed endangered or threatened species, but not their critical habitat. Based on surveys, the federally-listed aquatic species Santa Ana sucker (*Catostomous santaanae*) is present downstream of Big Tujunga Dam, and the federally-listed species Arroyo toad (*Anaxyrus californicus*) is present upstream of Big Tujunga Dam. Therefore, formal consultation under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act may be required. The U.S. Forest Service is the designated lead federal agency on NEPA and will determine if any ESA species or critical habitat would be affected and if ESA consultation is required.

Public Hearing- Any person may request, in writing, within the comment period specified in this notice, that a public hearing be held to consider this application. Requests for public hearing shall state with particularity the reasons for holding a public hearing.

Proposed Activity for Which a Permit is Required

Basic Project Purpose- The basic project purpose comprises the fundamental, essential, or irreducible purpose of the proposed project, and is used by the Corps to determine whether the applicant's project is water dependent (i.e., requires access or work within the aquatic site to fulfill its basic purpose). The basic project purpose for the proposed project is flood control maintenance. The project is a water dependent activity.

Overall Project Purpose- The overall project purpose serves as the basis for the Corps' 404(b)(1) alternatives analysis and is determined by further defining the basic project purpose in a manner that more specifically describes the applicant's goals for the project, and which allows a reasonable range of alternatives to be analyzed. The overall project purpose for the proposed project is to restore the holding capacity of Big Tujunga Reservoir by removing accumulated sediment (approximately 4.4 million cubic yards over 5 years).

Additional Project Information

Baseline information- Due in part to a fire in the Angeles National Forest in 2009 that burned 160,000 acres, Big Tujunga Reservoir has approximately 1.96 million cubic yards (mcy) of sediment and debris occupying a portion of its total capacity. The reservoir is located directly upstream of Big Tujunga Dam and currently has a reduced water holding capacity due to sediment accumulation behind the dam. An additional 2.4 mcy of sediment is anticipated to flow into Big Tujunga Reservoir over the next 3 to 5 years, totaling an estimated 4.4 mcy of sediment. Similar sediment removal at this location has taken place since the 1970's, depositing excavated material at a nearby site approved in 1981, the Maple Canyon Sediment Placement Site (SPS). Maple Canyon SPS is currently filled with 3 mcy of sediment and can hold an additional approximately 4.4 mcy. There are existing drainage features (ie. pipes and culverts) at the upper portion of Maple Canyon SPS designed to control the flow of water through Maple Canyon. Vegetative types in Maple Canyon SPS include mixed chaparral, chamise chapparal, scrub oak chapparal, and California annual grassland. Because the SPS has been used for previous reservoir cleanouts, access roads for trucks are currently available for transporting sediment from the reservoir to the deposition site. Access roads would need to be graded and maintained before and during project construction. No conveyor-belt system for transporting sediment currently exists on site, but this is an alternative option that would route a conveyor belt approximately 1,000 ft within waters of the United States in the reservoir, and continue thereafter along the existing truck route road. Biological surveys in the review area indicated presence of federally-listed species including Santa Ana sucker (*Catostomous santaanae*) downstream of Big Tujunga Dam and arroyo toad (*Anaxyrus californicus*) upstream of Big Tujunga Dam.

Project description- The proposed project would remove 4.4 mcy of sediment and debris from Big Tujunga Reservoir and transport it offsite to a nearby deposition site, Maple Canyon SPS. To dewater the reservoir, water diversion structures would divert water but allow natural flows to bypass Big Tujunga Reservoir into Big Tujunga Creek below the dam. Best management practices (BMPs) for construction would also be employed to prevent sediment from entering Big Tujunga Creek downstream of the dam. Work would take place during the dry season each year for up to 4 years, or about 1,030 working days. Heavy equipment such as excavators and bulldozers would work entirely below the reservoir high water line. During the storm season, equipment would be removed and water paths would be restored to previous project conditions. An addition of 4.4 mcy of sediment to Maple

Canyon SPS, from this project, would deposit sediment within the existing footprint on both disturbed/previously-filled (approximately 9.4 acres) and non-disturbed/not-previously-filled (approximately 19.7 acres) areas within the boundaries of the Maple Canyon SPS. Impacts to non-wetland waters of the U.S. include temporary impacts on to 46.4 acres (9,500 linear feet) in Big Tujunga Reservoir and permanent impacts on to 0.7 acres (3,800 linear feet) within Maple Canyon SPS (see attached figure).

The proposed project consists of the following activities:

- Completely dewater Big Tujunga Reservoir during the dry season (April 15 – October 15) using a cofferdam, desilting basins, and a surface diversion pipe.
- Divert upstream water flow past Big Tujunga Reservoir and through Big Tujunga Dam.
- Let out water from the dam into the plunge pool directly downstream, and equip the pool with sandbags to reduce the turbidity of water flowing into Big Tujunga Creek.
- Operate heavy equipment in Big Tujunga Reservoir to excavate 4.4 mcy (68 acres) of sediment, resulting in temporary impacts to approximately 46.4 acres (9,500 linear ft.) of waters of the United States (see attached figure).
- Stockpile a portion of excavated sediment next to Big Tujunga Dam and transport this sediment to an offsite facility.
- Transport a portion of the excavated sediment 1.8 miles to Maple Canyon SPS along existing access roads by either truck or conveyor-belt (see attached figure).
- Grade existing access roads throughout the project to allow trucks to transport sediment, or construct a conveyor-belt system along the access roads spanning approximately 11,800 feet.
- Operate bulldozers and other heavy equipment continuously at Maple Canyon SPS to spread and compact the sediment, resulting in permanent impacts to approximately 0.7 acres (3,800 linear feet) in ephemeral waters of the United States (see attached figures).
- Relocate and/or extend existing drainage facilities at Maple Canyon SPS, including underground pipes, gutters, inlets, and surface drains to the top portion of Maple Canyon SPS within streambed to accommodate drainage following the proposed deposition of sediment.

Proposed Mitigation– The proposed mitigation may change as a result of comments received in response to this public notice, the applicant's response to those comments, and/or the need for the project to comply with the 404(b)(1) Guidelines. In consideration of the above, the proposed mitigation sequence (avoidance/minimization/compensation), as applied to the proposed project is summarized below:

Avoidance: The applicant will use a surface diversion system to maintain natural flow rates for the downstream creek by diverting all upstream water flow around the construction area.

Minimization: The applicant has proposed a number of general and specific construction-related BMPs, as follows:

General BMPs:

- All construction activities would occur within the designated project footprint.
- To control erosion from exposed topsoil slopes and channels, frequent water checks will be placed on dirt roads, and runoff from steep erodible surfaces will be diverted into stable areas with less erosion potential.

Water quality BMPs:

- A cofferdam would be used to contain sediment and debris during the dewatering process to minimize suspension of sediment in the water column and floating debris from dispersing downstream.
- During construction, the contractor would implement the water quality monitoring program required by the RWQCB and comply with the permit conditions imposed by the Corps of Engineers and RWQCB.
- A surface water diversion plan would be submitted prior to construction activities and surface water inflow would be redirected away from construction areas whenever possible.
- Sandbags and other safeguards would be employed at the plunge pool's outlet to ensure acceptable turbidity levels downstream.

Air quality BMPs:

- Sediment stockpiled at the dam entrance would be transported by truck off-site during times after construction activities occur in order to reduce any air quality impacts, within the threshold of air quality standards.

Endangered Species Act and Critical Habitat BMPs:

- To avoid impacts to Santa Ana sucker present in the downstream plunge pool, fish will be relocated prior to construction and at the beginning of each construction season.
- Each spring following the storm season, water in the downstream plunge pool would be released at an acceptable rate to minimize any effects downstream.
- The worksite would be clearly flagged or staked to avoid potential impacts to adjacent natural habitats or sensitive areas.
- A qualified biologist would conduct field surveys prior to construction to locate present species and habitats and employ onsite avoidance measures recommended by biologists.
- Any non-native fish will be removed.
- Special status plants will be avoided.

Compensation: The project proposes to employ a number of Best Management Practices (BMPs) to reduce water turbidity, negative impacts to aquatic resources from dewatering, and erosion within the Big Tujunga Reservoir work area. BMPs include flagging the area, surveying the area for biological species prior to construction, surface water diversion methods, desilting basins, and avoidance of equipment and diverted water on surfaces susceptible to erosion. The applicant has not proposed any compensatory mitigation for the activities with Big Tujunga Reservoir nor those within Maple Canyon SPS.

Proposed Special Conditions

The following list is comprised of proposed Permit Special Conditions, which are required of similar types of projects: None at this time

For additional information please contact Bonnie Rogers at 213-452-3372 or via e-mail at Bonnie.L.Rogers@usace.army.mil. This public notice is issued by the Chief, Los Angeles and San Bernardino Section, Regulatory Division.



Regulatory Program Goals:

- To provide strong protection of the nation's aquatic environment, including wetlands.
- To ensure the Corps provides the regulated public with fair and reasonable decisions.
- To enhance the efficiency of the Corps' administration of its regulatory program.

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS – LOS ANGELES DISTRICT

PO BOX 532711

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90053-2325

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BIG TUJUNGA DAM

MAPLE CANYON SEDIMENT PLACEMENT SITE

**BIG TUJUNGA RESERVOIR CLEANOUT
IMPACT AREAS**

LOS ANGELES COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

-  Temporary Impacts
-  Permanent Impacts



SCALE
AS SHOWN

DATE
09/10/12

PREPARED BY
T.BUDINGER



Big Tujunga Reservoir

Big Tujunga Canyon Rd

Big Tujunga Dam & Reservoir

© 2012 Google

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Imagery Date: 7/15/2011 1994

lat 34.296872° lon -118.181911° elev 2372 ft

Eye alt 8874 ft



Big Tujunga Reservoir

Big Tujunga Dam

Plunge Pool

BIG TUJUNGA CANYON RD

AGAZLES FOREST HWY

Maple Canyon SPS

LOS ANGELES COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

**BIG TUJUNGA RESERVOIR CLEANOUT
WORK PLAN MAP**

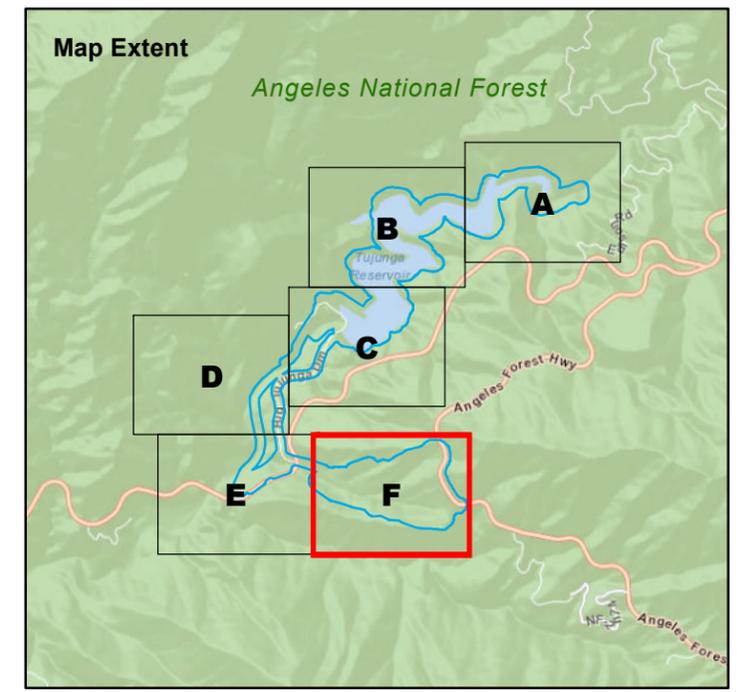
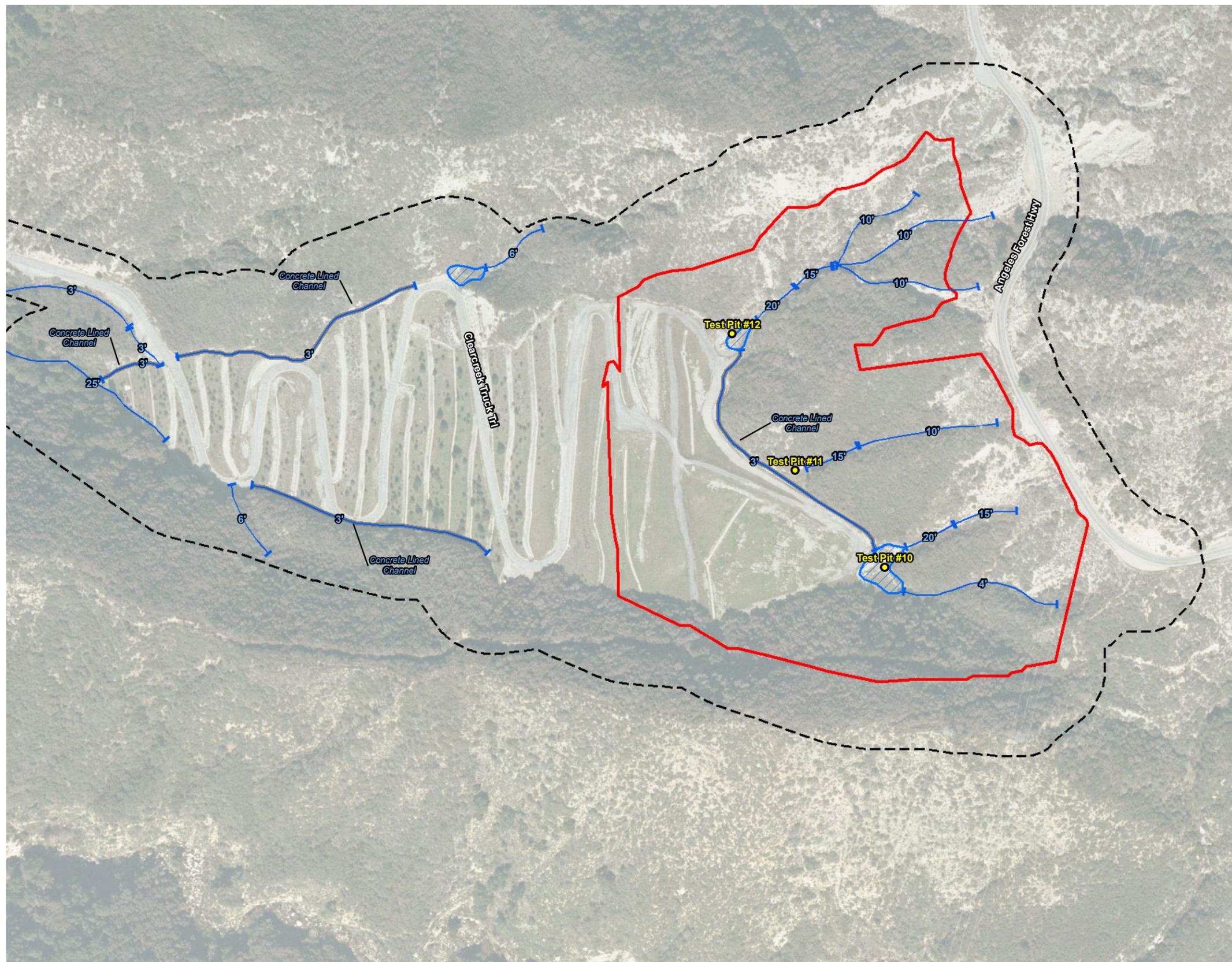
- Legend**
-  Potential Conveyor Belt Route
 -  Potential Haul Routes
 -  Approximate Limit of Work
 -  Potential Staging Area
 -  Approximate Limit of Excavation
 -  Approximate SPS Limit of Work
 -  Approximate SPS Boundary



SCALE
1"=1000'

DATE
4/7/2011

PREPARED BY
J.BODENCHAK



- Survey Area
- Test Pit Location
- Proposed Limits of Sediment Removal
- Proposed Limits of Sediment Deposition
- Open Water*
- USACE Jurisdiction**
- "Waters of the U.S." (width in feet)
- "Waters of the U.S." (concrete channel)
- "Waters of the U.S."

*Open water boundaries observed on October 27, 2011, though variable throughout year.
Aerial Source: Aerials Express, 2009

USACE Jurisdictional Resources

Big Tujunga Reservoir Sediment Removal Project

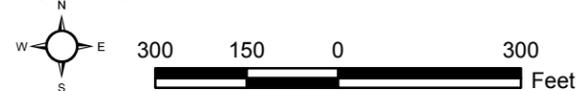


Exhibit 5F





Maple Canyon SPS drainage feature #3

2012/10/9 11:16

SSW mag
W: 113° 11' 00.84"
N: 034° 17' 02.55"