

PUBLIC NOTICE OF PROPOSED ACTIVITY

This public notice is issued by the Chief, Asset Management Division, to inform the general public that the Los Angeles District of the United States Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) is proposing to transfer lands presently under license to the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) to the State of California, Department of Toxic Substances and Control (DTSC). The lands in question are improved by a water treatment facility, conveyance system and groundwater monitoring system referred to collectively as the Whittier Narrows Operable Unit (WNOU). The WNOU was constructed by USEPA as a remedy under CERCLA to address chemical contamination of groundwater originating from industrial activities in the San Gabriel Basin.

Currently, contaminated groundwater is contained in intermediate zone and shallow zone extraction wells near San Gabriel Boulevard, Rosemead Boulevard and Siphon Road. Extracted groundwater is piped through a conveyance system comprised of pipelines and booster pumps that transport contaminated groundwater from the wells to the treatment plant. Treated water is then conveyed to end-use water purveyors, or for recharge of the aquifer. Historically, some of the treated shallow zone water has been discharged into Legg Lakes. A groundwater monitoring system was also installed by USEPA to measure the WNOU system's performance.

As contained in its agreement with DTSC, EPA agreed to operate the WNOU for a period of 10 years after which, DTSC would assume control, operations and maintenance of the WNOU. Until recently, the City of Whittier has acted as an operator of the WNOU and beneficially reused the treated water. The City of Whittier indicates that they have an alternate source of water available and are no longer willing to operate the WNOU.

EPA, together with DTSC, held multiple meetings with other water purveyors to identify interested parties that would be willing to operate the WNOU upon transfer of the lands and WNOU facilities to DTSC. The San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water Company (SGVMWC) was identified by USEPA and DTSC as the preferred operator of the WNOU facilities largely in part because of SGVMWC's existing, large diameter water supply pipeline running along Durfee Avenue in front of the groundwater treatment plant. Selection of a water purveyor/operator for the WNOU would provide for continued beneficial reuse of the treated water.

For SGVMWC to operate the WNOU and reuse the water, EPA would be required to construct a new storage tank, a booster pump station, and modify discharge piping, in order for the water to be available for the SGVMWC's potable water distribution system. The new construction is required by DTSC to store the treated water for the required contact time before it can be pumped into the SGVMWC pipeline.

The Corps has received a request from the USEPA with the support of DTSC to transfer the land to DTSC with SGVMWC as the WNOU operator and water purveyor. As part of this request, the Corps must evaluate alternatives to reuse or dispose of the treated water in order to maintain compatibility with the flood risk management project (i.e. the treated water cannot remain onsite).

The Corps will evaluate the USEPA request, along with reasonable alternatives and modifications, under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) through an Environmental Assessment (EA). The Corps has made a preliminary determination that an Environmental Impact Statement is not required. The Corps

will consider compliance with other laws, including the Endangered Species Act and Migratory Bird Treaty Act, in conjunction with this analysis.

Public Notice and Comment Period

April 29, 2013- May 15, 2013

Proposed Implementation Date

May 17, 2013

Proponents

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency with the support of the State of California, Department of Toxic Substances Control.

Location

The subject area is north of the Whittier Narrows Dam within the Whittier Narrows Basin. The existing USEPA groundwater treatment facility is located at 331 Durfee Avenue, South El Monte, California 91733. The WNOU in its entirety, including the conveyance system, treatment and monitoring wells are within the boundaries of the Whittier Narrows Flood Control Basin, Los Angeles County, California. Whittier Narrows Basin is in a densely populated suburban area of Los Angeles County within and near the communities of South El Monte, Rosemead, Industry, Pico Rivera, and Montebello. The Whittier Narrows Basin is located on the San Gabriel River approximately 15 miles east of downtown Los Angeles and 10 miles southeast of Pasadena. The San Gabriel River and Rio Hondo flow into the Whittier Narrows Basin, but do not convene. State Route 60 (Pomona Freeway) and the Interstate 605 intersect at the northeast corner of the Whittier Narrows Basin and State Route 19 (Rosemead Boulevard) runs north-south through the middle of the Whittier Narrows Basin.

The Whittier Narrows Basin is owned in fee by the Federal Government and operated and maintained by the Corps. The subject area is outside the lands leased by the County of Los Angeles, Department of Parks and Recreation for public recreation purposes.

Proposed Federal Action (Proposal description)

The proposed action is to terminate the existing license to USEPA and to grant a license or lease to DTSC, an entity of the State of California, for the purpose of operating and maintaining a groundwater treatment facility, conveyance system, treatment and monitoring wells, referred to collectively as the "WNOU", together with the right to cross federal lands as may be necessary for the operation of the WNOU. The proposed action also includes the beneficial reuse of the water treated by the WNOU by San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water Company (SGVMWC), who would also operate the WNOU for DTSC.

As part of the transfer to DTSC with SGVMWC as operator, the proposed action would provide a new Combined Chlorine Contact (CCT), treated water storage tank, and booster pump station at EPA's WNOU treatment plant to treat pumped groundwater and supply disinfected, treated water to the SGVMWC's potable water distribution system. The SGVMWC has a 30-inch-diameter distribution pipeline running down Durfee Avenue directly in front of the EPA treatment plant. That pipeline currently serves

nearby customers, including Los Angeles County Parks facilities, the Corps' Maintenance Yard, and the Logistics Terminals, Inc., trucking yard next door. The new tank is required to store the water for the required contact time before it can be pumped into the SGVMWC pipeline.

The Proposed Action incorporates the following primary components for construction:

- Storage tank
- Booster pump station
- Discharge piping modifications, including a new pipeline connection
- Removal of LGAC vessels

Details, plans and specifications describing the construction components may be requested from the Corps by contacting Ms. Deborah Lamb, contact information provided below.

Alternatives to the Proposed Project

Alternatives and modifications considered may include, but not be limited to, disposing of all treated water into the San Gabriel River (no beneficial reuse). The No Action Alternative must also be assessed, consistent with NEPA requirements. In this case, the No Action Alternative would be the continued operation of the existing WNOU as currently operated without modification or construction.

Map

See figure attached.

Public Involvement

The Corps invites the general public to submit comments on potential environmental impacts that could result from implementation of the proposals and alternatives. The public comment period on preparation of an EA for the proposal described above will extend from April 29, 2013 through May 15, 2013. All comments must be received by 5 p.m. on May 15, 2013. Please direct your comments to Debbie Lamb, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, at deborah.l.lamb@usace.army.mil or by mail at 915 Wilshire Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90017, Attn: Asset Management Division. If you have questions or would like additional information, please contact Ms. Debbie Lamb at (213) 452-3798. The Corps will actively consider any comments timely received regarding the proposed action and alternatives. The results of this consideration will be reflected in a section of the EA articulating responses to the comments, in addition to any changes to the EA made to incorporate the comments and suggestions. Once the EA is complete, and if a FONSI is determined to be appropriate based upon the analysis contained in the EA, pursuant to 33 C.F.R. 230.11, a notification will be sent to concerned agencies, organizations and the interested public stating that the FONSI is available for review. If you would like to receive notification, please provide an email address with your comment letter. The FONSI will also be posted on the Corps' website. If significant effects on the quality of the human environment are identified and cannot be mitigated to a level below significance, the Corps will initiate preparation of an EIS and afford the public opportunities to participate in the environmental review process.