

LOS ANGELES COUNTY DRAINAGE AREA (LACDA) DISPOSITION STUDY

Public Scoping Meeting
10 November 2021, 6:00 pm

Presented by: Los Angeles District
Chief, Planning Division Chief: Ed DeMesa
Lead Study Planner: Megan Whalen
Environmental Manager: Ken Wong



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US Army Corps
of Engineers.



Agenda

- ✓ Welcome and Introductions
- ✓ WebEx Tools & Meeting Rules
- ✓ Meeting Purpose
- ✓ Scoping Presentation
 - ✓ Study Background & Disposition Purpose
 - ✓ National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) Process
 - ✓ Disposition Next Steps
- ✓ Public Input & Comments
- ✓ Adjourn





Team Introductions



- **District Leadership:**

- Ed DeMesa – Chief, Planning Division
- Jerica Richardson – Chief, Plan Formulation Branch
- Darrell Buxton – Project Manager
- Megan Whalen – Lead Planner
- Ken Wong – Environmental Coordinator

- **Study Partner:**

- Carolina Hernandez – Los Angeles County Public Works (Assistant Deputy Director)

- **Facilitator & Co-Host:**

- Eileen Takata – Public Involvement Specialist, Facilitator and Co-Host

GET TO KNOW YOUR WEBEX SPACE



SLIDE ADVANCE

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AUDIO CONNECTION

Sharing Whiteboard ▾

DOC VIEWING NOW, OTHER AVAILABLE DOCS

Layout

LAYOUT OPTIONS

COPY MTG LINK/URL

LEAVE MEETING

Mute ▾

Start video ▾

Share



Participants

Chat



Type here to search



4:03 PM
10/18/2021



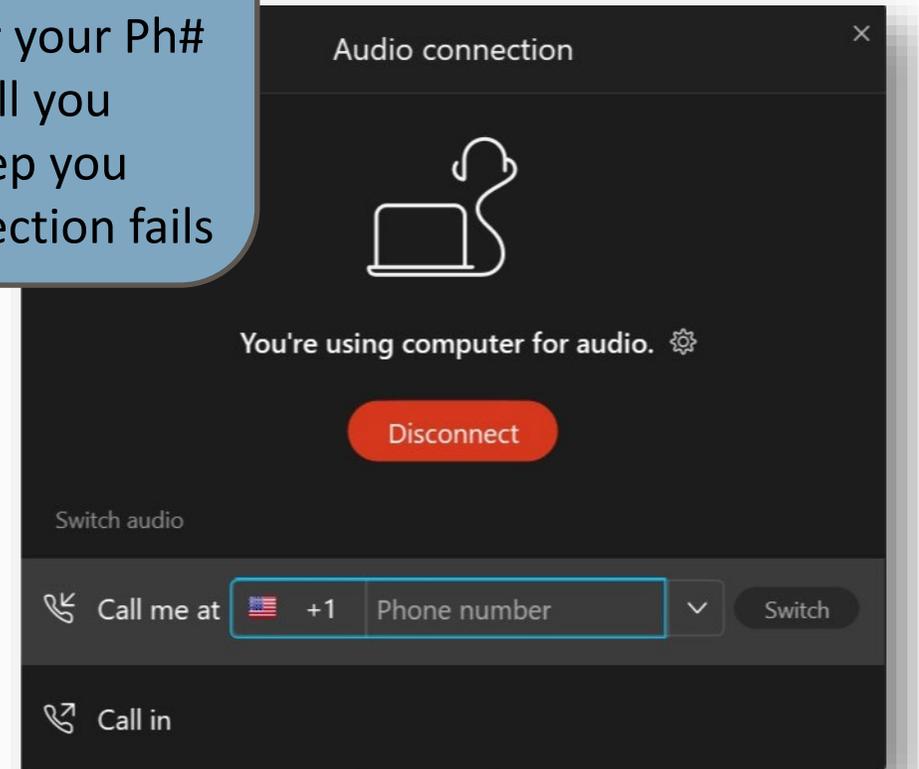
AUDIO CONNECTIONS

MUTE / UNMUTE

- Host will mute All Participants until the Public Comment Period
- If calling in with Phone, you may be double-muted – check Phone mute; or try #6 to unmute
- Space bar toggles mute/unmute

SWITCH AUDIO

- Can switch from Computer to/from Phone – Enter your Ph# and Webex will call you
- TIP: Phone will keep you connected if wifi connection fails



Mute ▾

Start video ▾

Share



Participants

Chat



Connected

Participants (4)

Search

N

Aaron

Joel Flannery

PARTICIPANTS

Connected

Chat

from Eileen Takata to everyone: 3:25 PM

Glad you could join us! Chat in your questions and we will try to answer them in CHAT.

To: Everyone

Enter chat message here

CHAT

Mute Start video Share

Participants Chat



Meeting Rules of Engagement



- All participants to be on “MUTE” until the public comment portion of this meeting.
- Public comments accepted **VERBALLY** following the presentation or in writing by **December 3, 2021**.
 - Instructions to enter verbal comment queue will follow the presentation.
 - Verbal comments are limited to 3 MINUTES.
 - Comments submitted through CHAT will not be included in the meeting transcript.
 - Questions will be answered as time permits.
 - Email and mailing address for written comments will be provided at the end and throughout CHAT.
- **NOTE:** This meeting is being recorded, transcribed and documented for the study record.



Scoping Meeting Objectives



- Inform and involve stakeholders in the process toward identifying reasonable Disposition Study outcomes that will inform our final recommendation.
- Understand what we should consider in our evaluation of potential outcomes

Involve

- Solicit Scoping Input

Inform

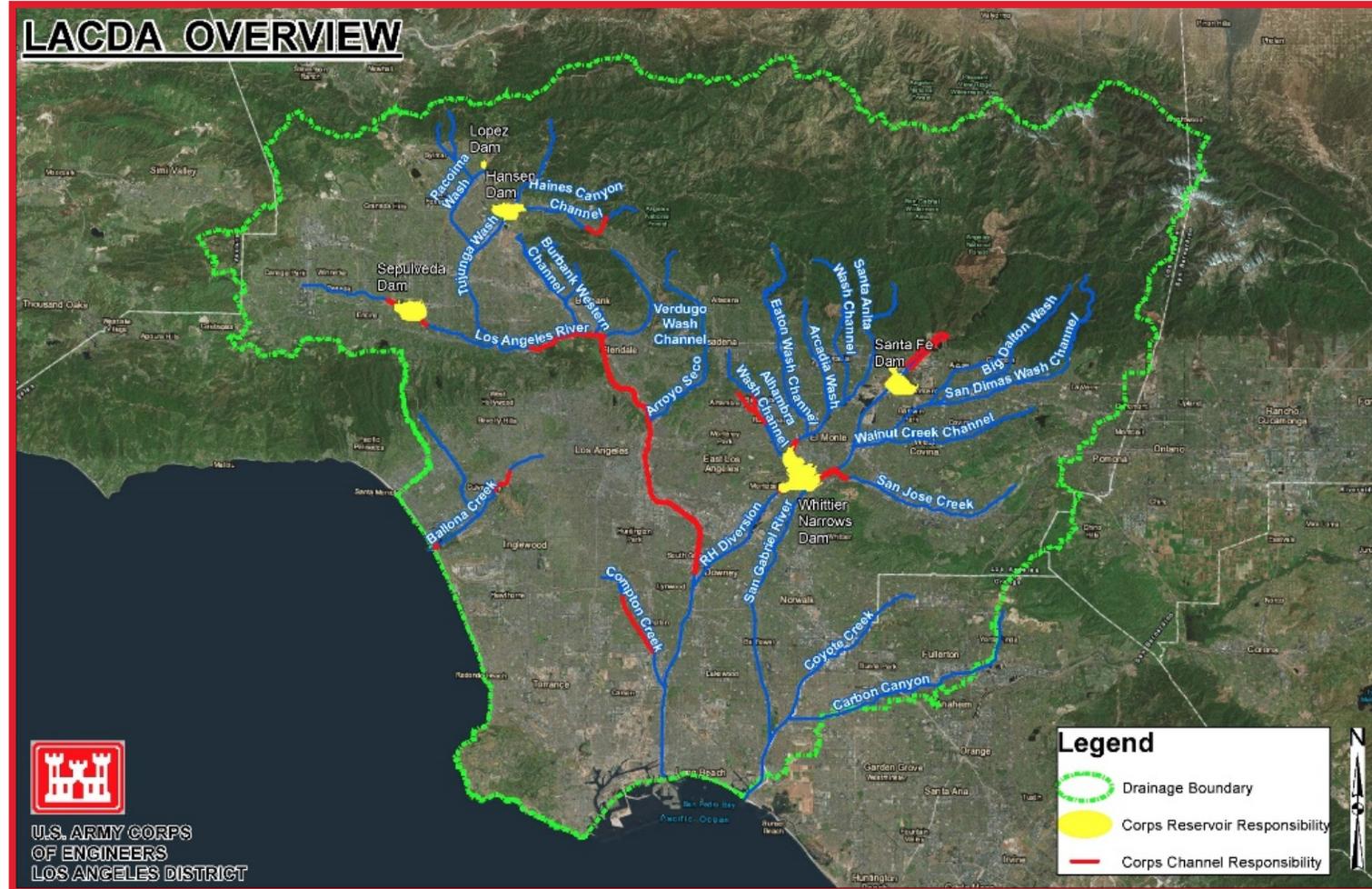
- Study Authority
- Disposition Study Purpose
- NEPA Process
- Outreach tools



LACDA Project Authority & Background



- **Study Authority:** Flood Control Act of 1941. To reduce flood and life/safety risk to stakeholders in the study area.
- **Land Ownership:** Los Angeles County and Private Landowners
- **Operation Managers:** Agreement between USACE and Los Angeles County
- **Area of Responsibility (USACE):** 45 miles of non-contiguous channels and levees, 5 dams (Whittier Narrows, Santa Fe, Hansen, Sepulveda, and Lopez), and 1 debris basin (Haines Canyon).
- **Area of Responsibility (LA County):** Permitting, operations and maintenance, and access

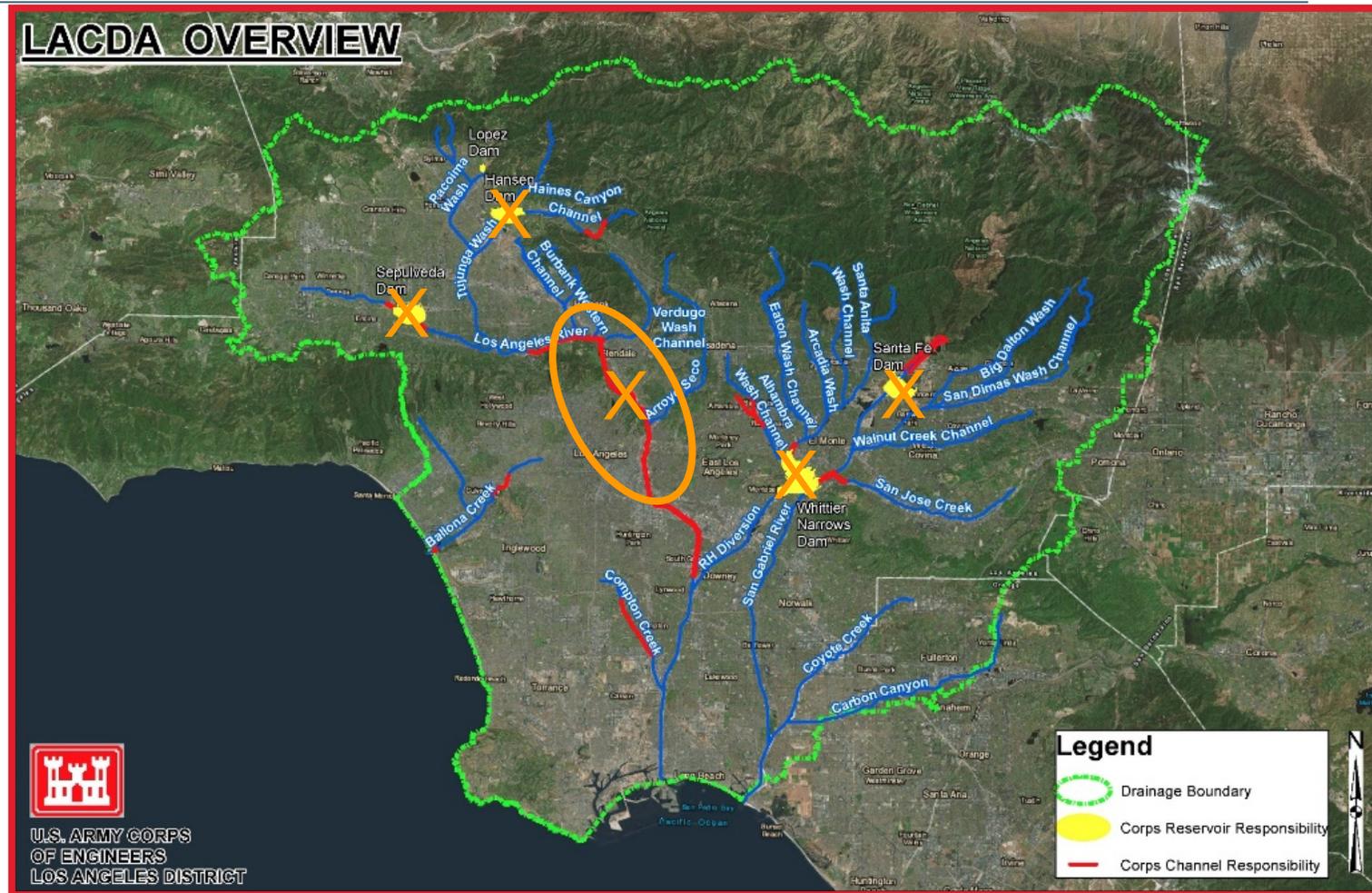




Disposition Study Authority & Background



- In 2020, the Corps funded this requested disposition study under Section 216, part of the Flood Control Act of 1970. The Study will determine what the federal interest is in retaining, divesting, deauthorizing, or re-programming portions of LACDA.
- In February 2021, the non-federal partner requested that the disposition study scope be expanded to evaluate deauthorization of all LACDA channels/levees (**except the authorized LA River Ecosystem Restoration Project**), Lopez Dam, and Haines debris basin, with particular interest in the elimination of federal permit requirements for the deauthorized features.





Disposition Study Purpose

What is a Disposition Study?

Determine whether a water resources development project and associated real property and Government-owned improvements owned by USACE should undergo **disposal and to identify the most **feasible** method of doing so.**

Why Conduct A Disposition Study?

Significant changes to **physical or economic conditions** in certain areas may warrant periodic review of the operation of projects originally constructed for navigation, flood control, water supply, and related uses. Study results in a report to Congress with recommendations on the **advisability of modifying** the structures, their **operation**, or for **improving the quality of the environment** in the overall **public interest**.

Who Pays For A Disposition Study?

100% Federally Funded. Study partners are vitally important in conducting Study and public input helps us **understand and document** the changes that have taken place in the study area.



Disposition Study: Integrated, Informed Processes



Identify Problem and Opportunities →

Develop Range of Possible Outcomes ←

Detailed Evaluation

Identify and Justify Recommendation in Integrated Report

Problem Statement

USACE has operated and maintained LACDA in accordance with federal standards. Now determining if **federal interest** in changing the responsibilities for ongoing operations, maintenance and permitting within LACDA.

Opportunities

- Address challenges to permitting process
- Maximize use of other study authorities
- Improve cross-coordination with partnering agencies and expand roles and responsibilities
- Forecast future uses within LACDA, especially along the LA River corridor.

Constraints

- Study authority allows only for disposal and re-operation as a recommendation, not design or construction
- **Excludes 11-mile LA River Ecosystem Restoration reach** from Burbank Blvd to 1st Street Bridge, and most major dams



Disposition Study: Integrated, Informed Processes



Current range of outcomes for detailed evaluation

- No Action (retain/maintain project as is)
- Alternatives to disposal (O&M, programmatic changes, transfer of responsibilities)
- Channel Disposal only
- Debris Basin Disposal only
- Channel and Debris Basin Disposal (all)
- Channel and Debris Basin Disposal (segments)



National Environmental Policy Act



Key Elements

- **Public Input**
- **Consideration & disclosure of environmental impacts**
 - **Natural**
 - **Human**
- **Informed decision-making process**



National Environmental Policy Act

Disposition Study-NEPA Integration

Public input

Identify problems and issues

Formulate and evaluate options

Evaluate environmental impacts (natural & human)

Identify recommendation



National Environmental Policy Act

Opportunities for Public Input

- **Public scoping**



- **Public review and comments of draft Integrated Study**



Disposition Study Schedule Highlights

| Activity | Dates |
|---|-----------------------|
| Initiate Study | March 2020 |
| Scoping Period | Nov - Dec 2021 |
| Plan Formulation/Planning Process | April 2022 |
| Tentatively Selected Plan Milestone | June 2022 |
| Release of Draft Report for public comment | Sep 2022 |
| Final Integrated Report Complete (NEPA + Report) | May 2023 |
| Chief of Planning Approval to Release Integrated Report | July 2023 |
| S&A Review | Aug – Sep 2023 |
| Chief's or Director's Report | Oct 2023 |



Scoping: An Opportunity For Input



National Environmental Policy Act

- **Evaluate Natural and Human Impacts of Range of Possible Outcomes**

What considerations are important to you as we evaluate the potential future ownership and uses of the Los Angeles County Drainage Area?

Examples of topics and interests helpful to our evaluation:

- Life safety
- Property protection
- Climate change
- Water supply
- Recreational uses
- Open space access
- Biological impacts
- Cultural impacts



Verbal Comment Instructions



- 3 MINUTE limit
- CHAT comments will not be included in the meeting transcript.
- **To enter verbal comment queue, type in CHAT**
 - E.g.: “I wish to speak” OR “Add me to the list.” OR “Name, Affiliation, I request to speak.”
 - Optional to include name and affiliation; this will help you track your comments in the transcript.
- **Host will announce each name in order received in CHAT..**
 - When your name is called, UNMUTE yourself, STATE YOUR NAME, then COMMENT
 - Host will state when you have 30 seconds remaining and mute your line after time has expired.
- **REMINDER:** This meeting is being recorded, transcribed and documented for the study record.



Submit Written Comments



- **Submit written comments by DECEMBER 18, 2021 (postmarked)**

Email: LACDADS@usace.army.mil

Postal Mail:

Mr. Kenneth Wong
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
915 Wilshire Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90017



LACDA Disposition Study Web Page:



www.spl.usace.army.mil/Missions/Civil-Works/Projects-Studies/Los-Angeles-County-Drainage-Area-Disposition-Study



Closing Remarks & Meeting Adjourn



Thank You For Your Participation!