

**ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
for proposed activities on Corps-managed Federal land**

**Santa Fe Dam Recreation Area:
Renaissance Pleasure Faire Concession Agreement for a Nine-year term**

**Proposed Implementation Period:
April 1, 2016-April 30, 2025**

**Proponent:
County of Los Angeles,
Department of Parks and Recreation**

**Location:
Santa Fe Dam Recreation Area
Santa Fe Dam Flood Control Basin
Irwindale, California
Los Angeles County**

November, 2015

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ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
for proposed activities on Corps-managed Federal land

Proposal Name: Santa Fe Dam Recreation Area:
Renaissance Pleasure Faire concession agreement for ten-year term
starting in 2016

Proposed Implementation Period: April 1, 2016-April 30, 2025

Proponent: County of Los Angeles, Department of Parks and Recreation

Location: Santa Fe Dam Recreation Area, Irwindale, CA
Special Events Area

County: Los Angeles County, CA

I. PROJECT AUTHORITY, PURPOSE AND SCOPE

a. Authority

Santa Fe Dam Flood Control Dam (Project) was authorized pursuant to the Flood Control Act (FCA) of 1941 (Public Law (P.L.) 77-228). The project purpose is to provide flood risk management, initially referred to as flood control, to communities along the San Gabriel River downstream of the Basin; other activities that may occur within the Basin must not impede or compromise the primary project purpose of flood risk management.

The United States Army Corps of Engineers, pursuant to the specific authority granted by Congress in 16 USC 460d, is authorized to lease lands at water resources development projects to non-Federal entities for such periods, and upon such terms and for such purposes as are deemed reasonable in the public interest. The Corps has leased lands at Santa Fe Dam Basin, which refers to the lands acquired by the federal government to support the Project, to the County of Los Angeles for recreational and park purposes. Pursuant to the terms of the lease, the County is required to request written approval from the Corps for any concessionaire requests within the leased premises. The Corps is required to evaluate concessionaire requests in accordance with applicable federal laws, regulations and policies.

b. Purpose and Need

The current recreational lessee, Los Angeles County, has requested the Corps' approval of a concession agreement with Renaissance Entertainment Products, Inc. (concessionaire) pursuant to paragraph [xxx] of the County's lease. The Faire will operate on weekends (Saturday and Sunday) from the first weekend in April to the last weekend in May, prior to the Memorial Day weekend. The hours of operation will be from 10:00 am to 7:00 pm.

The USACE needs to ensure that any concession agreement granted by the lessee to a third party is consistent with the project operation, the terms of the lease, and the master plan. The purpose for the concessionaire agreement is to obtain a site for use on a recurring basis for a renaissance faire that can accommodate approximately 150,000 patrons annually. The purpose for the concession agreement would provide a living history environment for park visitors to experience some of the European Renaissance lifestyle on each weekend from April to May for nine (9) years. The County in requesting approval of the concession agreement seeks to obtain quality concession services that provide special events during the spring-time periods of low general use of park facilities (as the schools are still in session, rather than the more peak summertime levels), consistent with

its recreation goals for the leasehold. The need arises from the limited facilities available in the area to provide for events of this size and time period. The USACE needs to respond to the concession agreement request in accordance with the lease and the USACE's standard procedures.

c. Scope of Analysis

This draft EA analyzes potential effects of approving the proposed concessionaire agreement, by comparing a No-Action Alternative against a reasonable range of alternatives. The Scope for this EA is a 9 year period beginning in 2016.

This analysis is offered to the interested public to solicit input on the project and will be made available for review and public input for 30 days. Comments received from the public in the thirty (30) days following the Notice of Preparation will be addressed prior to determining whether an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will be required and if a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) can be issued.

II. ALTERNATIVES

A. No Action –If the Corps were to deny the request, the land would likely be used for a host of different activities, including long periods of time with no scheduled activities at the site during the same 9-year period, as well as no extension of the proposed, additional 4 acres as a permanent condition in the agreement.

If the request were to be denied, the current general uses of the Basin would be expected to continue. These activities include picnicking, walking, swimming, fishing, and occasional model-rocket club use. The time period under consideration is generally a low-use period for the park. The lessee might also be expected to seek a concession agreement with another entity to provide other special events of similar scope and magnitude to the proposal; however, any such agreement would require additional approval and review by the USACE. The lessee is not anticipated to host special events of similar scope and magnitude on its own. Because the conditions of the no-action alternative are commensurate with the baseline conditions analyzed in this document, the “affected environment” description for each area of concern will also serve as the no-action alternative consideration.

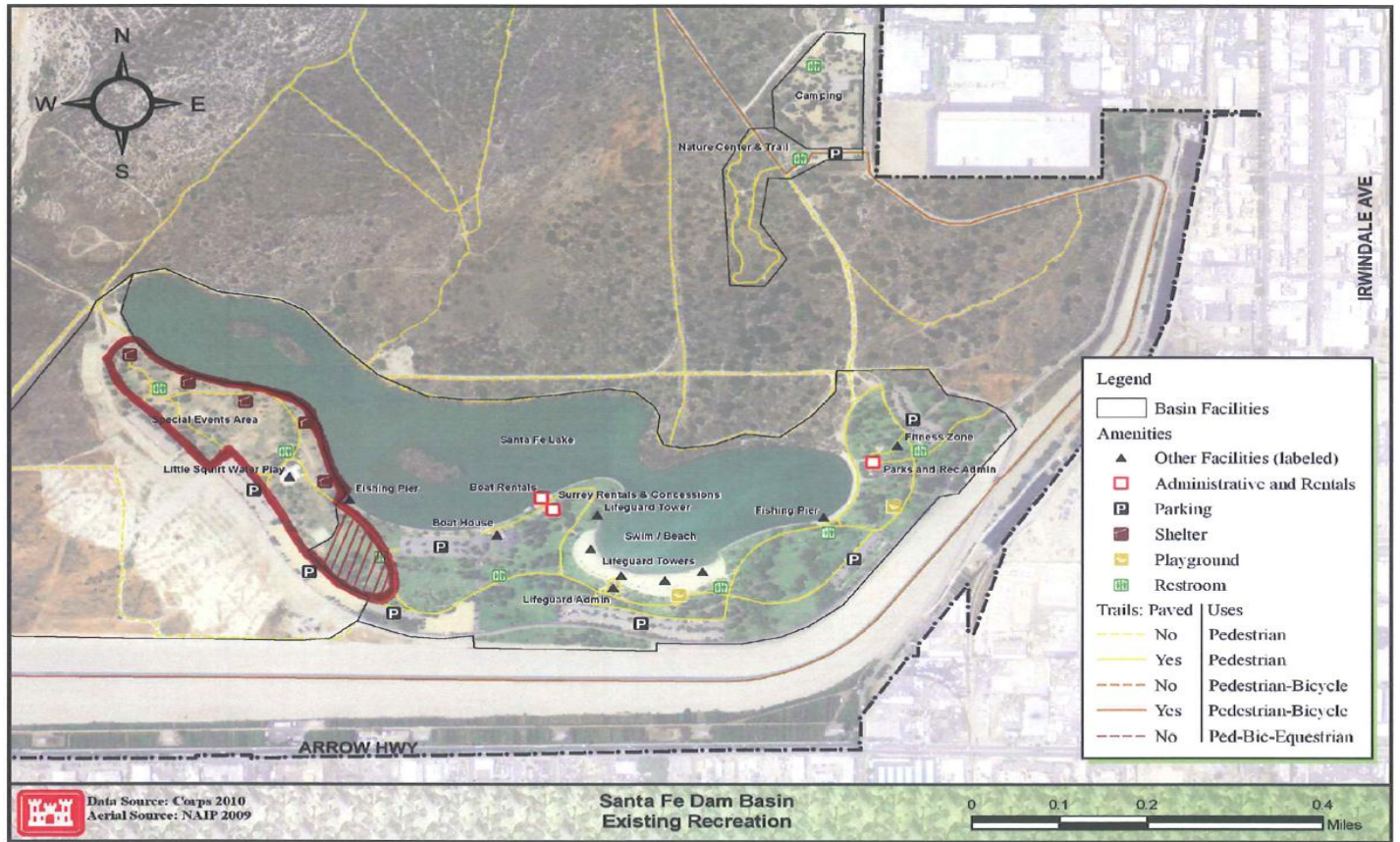
B. Onsite Alternative 1: Renaissance Pleasure Faire at Santa Fe Dam Recreation Area with Additional Four Acres (Proponent's Preferred Alternative)

Approval would allow the County permittee to conduct concession services for Renaissance Pleasure Faire (Faire) for a period of a nine-(9-)year term, to include the total period from 2016-2025. In addition, the proposed site for the Renaissance Pleasure Faire is normally used for other special events as well and for picnics, family gatherings, sports activities, and for general recreational activities that have occurred at the Basin as programmed by County Park managers. In the Santa Fe Dam Recreation Master Plan (2011), the subject land is classified as Low Intensity Recreation within the Santa Fe Recreation Area.

The Faire Operation is proposed to be sited on and around turfed areas, used for large special events, at the southwest portion of the County's recreation lake. Parking has been designated at southwest basin areas, located between the lake and the Dam's inner toe. While the event has grown slightly in attendance, the Faire continues to add improved guest services, additional entertainment, and increased living history experiences. Additional acreage is needed to accommodate these additions. An additional 4 acres located just southeast of the existing Renaissance Faire footprint from past years is proposed to be included in the fenced event compound. This additional acreage is continuous with previously-approved acreage. It will complete the Loop Project, providing ADA compliant sidewalks throughout 99.5% of the Faire. The additional acreage also incorporates the majority of shade available within the Faire footprint. It provides access to necessary and additional park services such as electricity, water, and restroom and wash station facilities, which provides better services and experience for the Faire patrons. Previously, the Faire had become too crowded on very busy days, and tight on average days. With the additional 4 acres, optimal flow of the patrons throughout the grounds and greater ease for emergency services

rescue can be provided. Because this additional 4 acres has already been used in recent years on a year-to-year basis, with no known problems, this alternative seeks to formalize that footprint.

The Faire is the re-creation of a lively 16th Century Market Village in the English countryside. Brightly costumed performers dance, parade, sing, and present colorful pageants. Artisans participate to display high-quality, hand-made wares and to educate the guests with craft demonstrations representing skills taught hundreds of years ago. Food and drink are offered for sale.



Map 10 Santa Fe Park

The days of operation for the Faire would be weekends only (Saturday and Sunday) beginning the first weekend in April and continuing through the last weekend in May prior to the Memorial Day weekend. The maximum hours on the days the Faire would operate are from 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Non-withstanding the above, the concessionaire proposed to host an “Educational Day” at the Faire for local school districts to attend, on one weekday during the period of operation.

The concession agreement would allow the concessionaire to conduct the following activities: conduct renaissance -themed faire concession services; construct an Elizabethan-era village and marketplace; provide merchandise and services consistent with the Faire’s historic theme; conduct activities including but not limited to: blacksmithing, leatherworking, weaving, pottery, glass blowing, printing, painting, drawing, coin striking, wood carving, forging, and candle making; selling foods; and selling alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages. A combination of 188 structures are built to create the Faire environment. The structures pass all building and safety codes, are fire retardant, and pass all health department codes and regulations. These structures are a combination of living history buildings (heavily used in the school program), food and beverage, merchant shops, and rides and games for children. There are also 12 office trailers rented for operations. The concessionaire shall have the exclusive use of the concession premises, subject to the rights of the lessee.

The proposed Faire would have three phases: pre-faire construction of the village and its infrastructure; operational period, where the event is open to the public; post-faire removal and clean-up of the village. Ahead of the public admission period, the Faire village construction and site set-up will take place during business hours (9 a.m. to 7 p.m.), for one month before the public event, seven days a week. On weekends from April to May, the Faire will be operational and open to the public, with maximum operational hours of 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Then, for approximately 30 days, the Faire will enter its demobilization phase, during normal business hours (9 a.m. to 7 p.m.), 7 days a week, removing the Faire and restoring the park to its pre-event state. Given the magnitude of the event, it requires one month prior to event opening to build the event, and one month to pack and remove the event. The event happens while school is still in session, concluding before Memorial Day, and the traditional “kickoff” for summer time fun. This time frame is early enough in the spring, when all requests for special events for the park can be accommodated. There are a minimum of 80 crewmembers working diligently to build and take the event down. The event is built and taken down in chronological stages to ensure the safety of the crew, and care of the structures. One cannot add additional people to speed up the process. The process is considered as refined and efficient as possible from the past years. If, at any time, the construction was to experience any substantial amount of rain, the event would not reach its completion date of opening. After the Faire event, the park ground would be restored in better shape than prior to pre-faire construction, with new sprinkler heads, grass seed and upgraded or repaired electrical,

It has been estimated that 150,000 patrons will attend for the run of the event. The average number of patrons per weekend day is approximately 7,800 patrons, including the need of parking for 3,500 vehicles. Currently, admission is \$28 for Adults, \$15 for children (ages 5-12), and the County will collect a \$10 vehicle entry fee.

C. Onsite Alternative 2: Renaissance Pleasure Faire at Santa Fe Dam Recreation Area without the Additional Four Acres

Without the additional four acres, the Faire would not be able to add improved patron services, additional entertainment, and increased living history experiences to the existing footprint. The Loop Project would not be completed without the additional acreage to provide ADA compliant sidewalk. Access to necessary and additional park services such as electricity, water, and restroom and wash station facilities, would not be provided. The optimal flow of the patrons throughout the grounds and greater ease for emergency services rescue would not be accommodated with the Faire’s growing attendance.

D. Alternatives Considered and Dropped from Further Consideration

While the proposed 10-year Agreement alternative may seem an arbitrarily limiting or limited term and other terms of duration for the agreement, such as a new 5-year term-alternative could also be considered as alternatives, this Proponent is only requesting a 10-year agreement, for business purposes. Thus, no other varying termed alternatives are further analyzed. Additionally, no other significant scoping variables are being considered by the proponent for alternate scenarios. No other alternatives for this proposal are being considered.

III. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

1. GEOLOGY AND SOIL QUALITY, STABILITY AND MOISTURE

The Santa Fe Dam Basin is located on a large alluvial fan system formed by the erosion of the southern flank of the San Gabriel Mountains. Bedrock in the mountains upstream of the Basin is a complex mix of igneous and metamorphic rock, which are highly fractured, faulted, and tectonically active, resulting in extremely high erosion potential. The Basin is situated on a large deposit of poorly-sorted alluvium consisting of sand, gravel, cobbles, and boulders. Overbank areas tend to consist of the same material with somewhat larger amounts of silt and clay in the matrix.

The proposed site, located within County-leased areas of the Santa Fe Dam Recreation Area, has relatively flat topography with a slight southwestward slope, and is composed of alluvium or turfed fill within this dynamic basin and floodplain. Hence, erosion and deposition may occur during high-water events. The high-water season is generally expected to be from October through March. Regular recreation activities result in no significant erosion or sedimentation.

NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE: The No-Action alternative consists of no new concession agreement to operate the Renaissance Pleasure Faire event. It is anticipated that the site would likely be used for other special events of a shorter duration with a less significant set up or break down. Additional anticipated activities would include routine operations and maintenance, such as vegetation clearance, repair of fencing, roads, erosion control, etc. Thus, it would be unlikely that there would be any temporary or permanent construction that could affect the site's geological or soil conditions.

PROPOSED ACTION (ALTERNATIVE 1): The proposed Renaissance Pleasure Faire event with the additional four acres would take place during Saturdays and Sundays in April and May and one weekday during the period of operation together with thirty days beforehand and thirty days after the event, annually for nine consecutive years, at Santa Fe Dam Recreation Area on dirt and turfed areas of the Special Event Area which has no special geologic features. The additional acreage is continuous with previously-approved acreage. A special event, such as this, that does not impact any subsurface areas would not result in any usual impacts to soils or geologic features, nor would it result in liquefaction or any other impacts.

ALTERNATIVE 2: The proposed Renaissance Pleasure Faire event with no additional acreage would take place in the same period of time as the Alternative 1, at Santa Fe Dam Recreation Area on dirt and turfed areas of the Special Event Area which has no special geologic features. Alternative 2 does not impact any subsurface areas which would not result in any usual impacts to soils or geologic features, nor would it result in liquefaction or any other impacts.

2. WATER RESOURCES

The San Gabriel River and some tributary channels and swales receive seasonal rain and runoff from upper surrounding elevations. Nearly all precipitation occurs during the months of December to March. Santa Fe Lake is a 70-acre man-made lake north of the proposed Operation, which is the focal point of recreation in the southern portion of the Basin. The lake has an average depth of 6 to 8 feet and water is supplied to the lake by pumped groundwater. The southeastern shore of the lake is protected from erosion by grouted riprap.

NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE: No more than rare or incidental minor and insignificant impacts to water resources are anticipated from the general, continuing park activities such as picnicking, gatherings and sports at the site for the proposed Operation.

PROPOSED ACTION (ALTERNATIVE 1): The proposed Faire event with additional four acres is planned for relatively high, dry ground. The additional acreage is continuous with previously-approved acreage in the Basin's higher floodplain. No significant adverse effects to water quality or conservation activities are expected to occur from the Alternative 1. Alternative 1 will otherwise protect surface/subsurface water quality parameters

by adhering to County practice and regulations at the site regarding trash management and the management of large groups of people and their autos. Possible pollution from trash or other waste will be avoided through trash management by the concessionaire, provision of adequate restroom facilities, and other large-scale event management practices, as have been practiced at this and former Faire locations, to keep wastes from water sources. All Faire activities are regulated with respect to proper machinery management and necessary containment of potential contaminants.

ALTERNATIVE 2: The proposed Faire event without the additional acreage is planned at the same location as the Alternative 1, but with smaller footprint. No significant adverse effects to water quality or conservation activities are expected to occur from the Alternative 2. Alternative 2 will also protect surface/subsurface water quality parameters by adhering to County practice and regulations at the site regarding trash management and the management of large groups of people and their autos.

3. AIR QUALITY

The Basin is surrounded by several high-capacity arterials and freeways, including Duarte Road and Interstate 210 to the north, Irwindale Avenue to the east, Live Oak Avenue to the south, Arrow Highway to the southwest, and Buena Vista Street and Interstate 605 to the west. The air quality in the vicinity is determined primarily by the vehicles traveling along the Freeway. Other sources include industrial amenities and construction zones that allow for fugitive dust.

The Santa Fe Dam Basin lies within the boundaries of the South Coast Air Basin (SCAB), which is managed by the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD). The SCAB, which covers an area of approximately 6,745 square miles, is bounded by the Pacific Ocean to the west and the San Gabriel, San Bernardino, and San Jacinto Mountains to the north and east, and encompasses all of Orange County, Riverside County, Los Angeles County except for Antelope Valley, and the non-desert portion of San Bernardino County. The SCAB is primarily a coastal plain with interconnected valleys and low hills progressing into high mountain ranges on the perimeter. The region is located within a semi-permanent high-pressure system that lies off the coast. As a result, the weather is mild, tempered by a daytime sea breeze and a nighttime land breeze. This mild climate is infrequently interrupted by periods of extremely hot weather, winter storms, and Santa Ana winds. Rainfall in the SCAB mainly occurs from November through April, with rainfall totals usually within a range of 15 to 18 inches. The SCAB has a low average wind speed of 4 miles per hour, and as a result, air contaminants in this area do not readily disperse.

Air Quality Standards

Regulation of air pollution is achieved through both national and state ambient air quality standards and emission limits for individual sources of air pollutants. As required by the Federal Clean Air Act, the EPA has identified criteria pollutants and has established national ambient air quality standards (NAAQS) to protect public health and welfare. The NAAQS are defined as the maximum acceptable concentration that may be reached, but not exceeded more than once per year. The EPA has established the NAAQS for ozone (O₃), carbon monoxide (CO), nitrogen dioxide (NO₂), sulfur dioxide (SO₂), particulate matter (PM₁₀, PM_{2.5}), and lead. These pollutants are called “criteria” pollutants because standards have been established for each of them to meet specific public health and welfare criteria.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Greenhouse gases are compounds in the atmosphere that absorb infrared radiation and re-radiate a portion of that back toward the earth’s surface, thus trapping heat and warming the earth’s atmosphere. The most important naturally occurring greenhouse gas (GHG) compounds are carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄), nitrous oxide (N₂O), ozone (O₃), and water vapor. CO₂, CH₄, and N₂O are produced naturally by respiration and other physiological processes of plants, animals, and microorganisms; by decomposition of organic matter; by volcanic

and geothermal activity; by naturally occurring wildfires; and by natural chemical reactions in soil and water. Ozone is not released directly by natural sources, but forms during complex chemical reactions in the atmosphere among organic compounds and nitrogen oxides in the presence of ultraviolet radiation. While water vapor is a strong greenhouse gas, its concentration in the atmosphere is primarily a result of changes in surface and lower atmospheric temperature conditions.

Atmospheric concentrations of CO₂ have risen from a pre-industrial background of 280 ppm by volume (ppm) to 396 ppm in 2013.

Atmospheric concentrations of CH₄ have risen from a pre-industrial background of about 0.70 ppm to 1.800 ppm in 2013.

Atmospheric concentrations of N₂O have risen from a pre-industrial background of 0.270 ppm to 0.326 ppm in 2013.

The International Panel on Climate Change has concluded that these changes in atmospheric composition are almost entirely the result of human activity and not the result of changes in natural processes that produce or remove these gases.

Climate Change

Climate change (CC) is a shift in the average weather patterns observed on earth, which can be measured by such variables as temperature, wind patterns, storms, and precipitation. Scientific research to date indicates that observed climate change is most likely a result of increased emission of GHGs associated with human activity. In California, the transportation sector is the largest emitter of GHGs (accounting for 28% of the total GHG emissions in the state in 2012), followed by electricity generation. Climate change is expected to exacerbate air quality and other environmental problems and to adversely affect human health, in ways too numerous to mention here but including rising temperatures, increases in storm events, prolonged droughts, and sea level rise, which will likely change the makeup of entire ecosystems; and secondary effects related to climate change, increased input of pollutants and sediments through storm runoff, may produce impacts as well.

In many cases, the severely degraded riparian habitat currently present in southern California has already led to some riparian bird populations to be depressed or even threatened, making them increasingly susceptible to future environmental changes brought upon by climate change.

CC, at a regional level, could contribute to more frequent and intense El Niño events, triggering a number of large-scale environmental changes. The frequency of extreme weather events such as the 1997-98 and 2009-2010 El Niño events would be expected to increase and which in inland areas included the increased frequency and intensity of droughts and wildfires, which substantially altered upland vegetation. Subsequent heavy rains triggered extensive erosion in the burned areas, which removed topsoil from the upper reaches of local watersheds. Powerful storm runoff events moved high sediment loads downstream where they scoured and buried riparian vegetation and physically altered floodplains, fundamentally impacting local ecosystems. The heavily altered natural environment of the Santa Fe Dam Basin locale, within an arid, water-stressed biome, make it susceptible to future impacts from climate change. These impacts could stress local wildlife populations, and in particular, further impact sensitive species already susceptible to environmental shifts.

NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE: Conditions would be similar to baseline air quality conditions which are macro phenomena and unrelated to typical recreation activities at the Basin. It is anticipated that there would be ongoing traffic into and out of the Whittier Narrows recreation basin as would be consistent with normal combination active and passive recreational use. Less frequent special events may be held from time to time temporarily increasing impacts for a few hours or days at a time at which time traffic levels would return to normal recreation type impacts, which would not result in a significant impact to air quality.

PROPOSED ACTION (ALTERNATIVE 1): The Operation with the additional four acres at this location would take place during Saturdays and Sundays in April and May and one weekday during the period of operation, annually for nine (9) consecutive years. Alternative 1 will generate additional vehicle trips over that level during a non-event weekend in the Santa Fe Dam basin. However, air quality impacts would be within minimal levels and as below regional significance as at a typical large recreation event such as the annual Santa Fe Dam New Year's Day Classic Car Show, also an annual, approved event.

ALTERNATIVE 2: The Operation without the additional acreage would generate fewer vehicle trips over that level during a non-event weekend in the Santa Fe Dam basin in comparison to the Alternative 1. Air quality impacts would be within minimal levels and as below regional significance as at a typical large recreation event such as the annual Santa Fe Dam New Year's Day Classic Car Show.

Although air quality impacts would not be significant, event parking and traffic management is designed to avoid vehicle backup, traffic jams, and to reducing vehicle idling. In addition, event organizers encourage ridesharing among friends and family.

IMPACTS ON THE BIOLOGICAL ENVIRONMENT

4. VEGETATION COVER, QUANTITY AND QUALITY

The Special Event Area is primarily covered with turf, dirt, ruderal non-native grasses and weed species. It is regularly mowed by the County to maintain a recreationally usable space. The Santa Fe Flood Control Basin results from a constructed dam with basin delineated at the south by the Santa Fe Dam gates which receive several feeder channels, including the main San Gabriel River which is also the primary channel which leaves the basin. Depending upon topography, elevation, management, and groundwater availability, several distinct habitat types are found within 1/4-1/2 mile of the proposed Operation. The proposed Faire site itself is located southwest of the lake's west end and entirely upon land designated and developed for Recreation, and managed by Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation. To the north of the Park's recreation lake and surrounding the Basin's central willow forest, this drier vegetation is characterized as Coastal Sage Scrub (CSS) with cacti, sagebrush (*Artemisia* sp.) and yucca (*Yucca* sp.). (CSS provides habitat for the Federally-listed California gnatcatcher which has not, however, been observed in or near the project area). Finally, a significant, well-developed willow-woodland exists as near as approximately 1,000 feet west of the existing Faire location; this habitat type provides known territory for the least Bell's vireo, another Federally-listed species. These ecological settings have been described in several Corps documents, including Santa Fe Dam Recreation Master Plan, which is incorporated here by reference, and in past (1990's) Corps of Engineers water conservation studies.

NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE: There would be no anticipated impacts to vegetation cover given that the site would continue to be used for passive and some active recreation activities with some occasional special events. County would continue to be required to operate and maintain the area. No vegetation may be cut or removed during the migratory bird breeding season (March 15-September 15). Continued use for recreation and maintenance would not have significant impact on vegetation.

PROPOSED ACTION (ALTERNATIVE 1): The proposed Operation would take place in the far western portion of the developed parkland, with the additional four acres joining the previously-approved acreage to the east, on dirt and turfed, special event parking areas and dirt overflow parking, for seven consecutive weekends, and one weekday during the period of operation, from April to mid-May for a nine-year term. The County is clear with event operators that no wildlife habitat, or any other, non-special event areas within the Basin, is authorized for use for this event. There are no vegetated areas within the footprint of this alternative, but if growth does occur due to a heavy rain event prior to mobilization, vegetation may only be removed prior to the migratory

bird season (March 15 - September 15). Approval of the agreement for Alternative 1 would not result in significant impacts to vegetation.

ALTERNATIVE 2: The proposed Operation, without the additional four acres, would take place in the same period of time and in the same area as the Alternative 1, on dirt and turfed, special event parking areas and dirt overflow parking. No wildlife habitat, or any other, non-special event areas within the Basin, is authorized for use for Alternative 2. There are no vegetated areas within the footprint of the Alternative 2, but if growth does occur due to a heavy rain event prior to mobilization, vegetation may only be removed prior to the migratory bird season (March 15- September 15). Approval of the agreement for Alternative 2 would not result in significant impacts to vegetation.

5. WILDLIFE

The Special Event Area is adjacent to the western edge of the lake. During non-recreation hours, turfed areas of the Special Event Area is occasionally used by wildlife, including birds common to and adapted to urban areas.

Wildlife habitat at the Santa Fe Dam Basin is comprised of a variety of habitat types, including the types above described as native communities, disturbed vegetation communities, constructed open water, disturbed wetlands, and developed parks or urbanized areas. Species common to many Basin areas include native and non-native fishes, amphibians, reptiles, mammals, and birds. Over 100 bird species use the Basin for breeding, wintering, and/or are residents. Open water areas found in the Basin attracts waterfowl and shorebirds. Upland habitats host a diversity of passerine species. Bat species are also present and use Basin areas for roosting, breeding, or are year-round residents. Only two amphibians are likely to be seen and include the California toad and Pacific tree frog. Dry upland areas host some upland lizard and snake species. Non-native species such as feral cats and dogs may be found in the Basin. The altered seasonal flows and existing barriers to fish passage severely limit fish presence in Basin waters. Native freshwater fishes historically found in waters of the Basin include arroyo chub, Santa Ana speckled dace, Santa Ana sucker, three-spine stickleback, and rainbow trout. Common non-native species of unknown origin that may occur in the Basin's Recreation Lake include largemouth bass, bluegill, western mosquito fish, channel catfish, fathead minnow, common carp, and goldfish.

NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE: There would be no anticipated impacts given that the Faire site would continue to be managed and used under the approved existing circumstances. County staff would continue to manage existing areas through weed control and disc-ing. Occasional, non-native species removal would also be undertaken. General park use would not change.

PROPOSED ACTION (ALTERNATIVE 1): The proposed Operation with the additional four acres will take place in the Special Event Area only, on dirt and turfed special event areas for ten consecutive years. As a condition of Corps' approval, the Corps would state that wildlife habitat areas within the Santa Fe Dam basin are not authorized for use. The potential use of the site by wildlife or birds would be very similar to both the Alternative 2 and the No Action Alternative: currently existing recreational uses would limit the desirability of these large, open, flat recreation areas for use by wildlife and birds. Implementation of either alternative would be substantially the same. There would be no anticipated adverse impacts to wildlife.

ALTERNATIVE 2: The proposed Operation without the additional four acres will take place in the same period of time and in the same area as the Alternative 1, but with smaller footprint. There would be no anticipated adverse impacts to wildlife.

6. SENSITIVE SPECIES AND HABITATS

Special status species do not occur in the Special Event Area and the Area is not suitable for use by these species, due to the current, approved recreational uses, per the 2011 Master Plan. The Special Event Area is currently maintained with mowers or disc'd to control weeds and provide a mostly flat surface for picnicking, family gatherings, small-scale sports activities, special events, and general recreational activities. When water is flowing, the San Gabriel River flows west of the Special Event Area; the sensitive San Gabriel River habitat is generally unaffected by the dry-land recreation through the year.

The Special Event Area is located within the County's leased, Santa Fe Recreation Area, at an area designated for special events. The river channel itself enters the Basin as a soft-bottomed channel as it passes southward toward the dam, eventually flowing through the Dam gates and downstream toward the Whittier Narrows Flood Control Basin. The San Gabriel River is separated from the proposed Faire Operations area over a distance of approximately 1,300 feet. There is no riparian habitat within the Special Event area, although potential habitat exists west of here at the banks of the San Gabriel River which approaches the toe of the dam and its outlet works.

Research of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's, California Natural Diversity Database found two occurrences of federal threatened, endangered or candidate species within the Basin as listed in Table 1 below. The California Gnatcatcher (*Polioptila californica californica*) may utilize the Coastal Sage Scrub habitat to the west, while the least Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*) occupies the willow-woodland to the south, within 1/2 mile of the proposed Operation. The proposed Faire site is in a bare, ruderal, or turfed areas which do not support endangered plant or wildlife species.

Table 1: Potentially Occurring Special Status Species

Table 1 Potentially Occurring Special Status Species

| Common Name Scientific Name | Federal Status | Critical Habitat ¹ | CNDDDB ² | Federal Register | Year Listed |
|---|-------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|----------------|
| Coastal California gnatcatcher <i>Polioptila californica californica</i> | T | 2007 | 2008 | 58:16757 | 30-Mar-93 |
| Least Bell's vireo <i>Vireo bellii pusillus</i> | E | 1994 | 2003 | 51:16482 | 2-May-86 |

¹Year designated, Source: USFWS 2010, CDFG 2010b.

NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE: No endangered species or related habitat would be impacted by the continued use of the Special Event Area under existing circumstances.

PROPOSED ACTION (ALTERNATIVE 1): The proposed Operation with the additional acreage, without protection measures, could have indirect and/or cumulative effects to the least Bell's vireo. The Corps believes that the presence of large livestock (horses) for a number of weeks, just east of the willow-woodland, may result in additional presence of the vireo's brood parasite, the brown-headed cowbird which frequents livestock areas and then affects the ecology of the adjacent, vireo-quality habitat. However, the County permittee has agreed to continue providing a cowbird management in in area located between the occupied willow woodland and the Faire, during each year in which the proposed Faire would be held at Santa Fe Basin. The additional four acres is on the east side of the existing footprint, which is far from willow woodland. With these protections in place, the proposed Alternative 1 will have no effect on listed species.

ALTERNATIVE 2: The proposed Operation without the additional acreage, will take place in the area as the Alternative 1, but with smaller footprint. With the implementation of the cowbird management in the area located between the occupied willow woodland and the Alternative 2 site, Alternative 2 will have no effect on listed species.

7. WETLANDS

Riparian and wetland resources occur largely outside of the proposed event area. Santa Fe Lake, a 70-acre man-made lake, is the focal point of recreation in the southern portion of the Basin. Impacts to the lake from regular park use, including such special events as that proposed here, are limited. Impacts of recreation to the lake were assessed in the EA for the basin master plan.

NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE: The Special Event Area is in bare, ruderal, or turfed areas which do not allow special event activities in the Basin's wetland areas. There would be no anticipated impacts to wetlands as the project site would continue to be used under existing circumstances.

PROPOSED ACTION (ALTERNATIVE 1): Other than the adjacent Lake (which is off-limits for direct contact during the Renaissance Faire), the Basin's remaining riparian and wetland resources are located 0.3 miles distant from the proposed Alternative 1. The proposed Operation with the additional four acres is expected to have no involvement with these areas. Patrons from the proposed event are not permitted to visit the entire Basin since the Alternative 1 is ringed with security fencing. Alternative 1 would not directly or indirectly affect such areas. No significant impacts are anticipated.

ALTERNATIVE 2: The Basin's remaining riparian and wetland resources are also located 0.3 miles distant from the Alternative 2. The proposed operation of Alternative 2 is expected to have no involvement with these areas. Patrons from the event are not permitted to visit the entire Basin since Alternative 2 is ringed with security fencing. The Alternative 2 would not directly or indirectly affect such areas. No significant impacts are anticipated.

IMPACTS ON THE HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

Cultural resources are locations of human activity, occupation, or use, and include expressions of human culture and history in the physical environment such as archaeological sites, historic buildings and structures, or other culturally significant places. Cultural resources can also be natural features, plants, and animals or places that are considered to be important or sacred to a culture, subculture, or community. Cultural resources that may be present include three general categories: archaeological resources, historic buildings and structures, and traditional cultural properties. Historic buildings and structures are architecturally, historically, or artistically important individual and groups of residential, commercial, industrial, transportation or water control properties. Resources may be important individually or as part of a grouping of complementary resources, such as an historic neighborhood.

A literature search, record search, and pedestrian survey of the Santa Fe Dam Basin and vicinity were conducted by the Corps in 1975 and 1985. No prehistoric archaeological sites were found, but three isolated artifacts were noted in the 1985 survey (Corps 1985). Historic resources including two railroad bridges and a large quantity of historic debris dating as far back as 1880 were noted. These survey reports have not been obtained and the results and methods employed are unknown. The Basin is also the site of a small research station where Dr. A.A. Michelson, America's first Nobel Prize winner, conducted numerous experiments between 1922 and 1926 to determine the speed of light. The facility itself had been located approximately a mile east of the Renn Faire location, but is now gone and the NRHP status of this location is unknown. The Dam itself is of historic age, but the status of the structure regarding its historic significance is unknown. No information was available in the previous Master Plans regarding SHPO concurrence with Corps findings or Native American consultation (Corps 1995).

Although no known First Nation cultural sites are known from the Santa Fe Recreation Area, which includes the proposed Faire location, the Santa Fe Basin is located in an important area for the Tongva. The nearby city of Azusa is named for the Tongva village of Ashuukshanga. Information from native inhabitants documented by early Spanish explorers, early settlers and 20th century ethnographers indicate several named locations associated

with Tongva history and traditional practices. The mouth of San Gabriel River canyon was the terminus of an important trade route leading from the San Gabriel Valley to the Mojave Desert. Pictographs on rock walls and boulders are found nearby which may be related to spiritual practices or mark trails or territorial boundaries. The Basin is near a reliable water source and would have provided plants and animal life that would have been utilized by native inhabitants.

NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE: There would be no anticipated impacts to cultural resources given that the Special Event sites would continue to be used under existing, approved circumstances.

PROPOSED ACTION (ALTERNATIVE 1): The proposed operations with the additional four acres would take place at dirt and turfed Special Event Area only and for ten consecutive years, with a potential 5-year extension. The Alternative 1 is not expected to result in activities in Basin areas which would affect sensitive cultural resources, because all proposed activities are planned to occur on existing recreation areas. The ground surface is already disturbed and with no known cultural resources at this location. The Alternative 1 activities that would be undertaken do not include ground disturbing activities. Consequently, there is no potential to affect to cultural resources.

ALTERNATIVE 2: The proposed operation without the additional acreage would take place in the same area and in the same period of time as the Alternative 1. Alternative 2 is not expected to result in activities in Basin areas which would affect sensitive cultural resources, because all proposed activities are planned to occur on existing recreation areas. The ground surface is already disturbed and with no known cultural resources at this location. The Alternative 2 activities that would be undertaken do not include ground disturbing activities. Consequently, there is no potential to affect to cultural resources

9. AESTHETICS

The Basin is a quiet and pastoral open space but can accommodate large, temporary crowds within developed recreation and parking areas. The turfed areas are designed for passive recreation activities. The compacted area often used for large event parking has no substantial aesthetic value impacted by parking use.

The visual resources within and around the Basin vary between natural habitat to recreation amenities to urbanized areas. The dominant features of Santa Fe Dam Basin include the vegetation of the San Gabriel River and adjacent upland habitats, lawn and ornamental trees, Santa Fe Lake, and the Dam itself. The overall visual quality is of open and expansive surroundings that provide a peaceful respite from the urbanized surroundings. Within the recreation area, picnic areas consist of maintained lawns and ornamental trees. The lake has a gently undulating shoreline and a large sand beach has been installed on the south side of the lake for swimming access. From the crest of the Dam, urban and residential development may be seen in nearly all directions. State Route 210 is visible from the entire Basin, except when obscured by vegetation. The Dam itself is a long, solid gray feature along the entire south and southwest portion of the Basin. It is visible throughout the majority of the Basin and limits the view to the south from within the Basin.

NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE: No impacts are anticipated given that the Faire site would continue to be used under existing, approved circumstances, which include regular use as well as routine year-long maintenance.

PROPOSED ACTION (ALTERNATIVE 1): During seven springtime weekends and one weekday during the period of operation, and to a lesser extent, during the month-long mobilization and demobilization phases, the proposed Alternative 1 would, temporarily, greatly expand the public presence at Santa Fe Basin, with temporary structures, and other temporary installation such as fencing, flags, and signs, primarily in a well-restricted area and leaving most of the Basin unaffected. Because Alternative 1 is a pre-arranged, modular footprint which is first set up and then dismantled at event close, there are no permanent or unforeseen effects anticipated.

ALTERNATIVE 2: Alternative 2 will take place in the same period of time and in the same area as Alternative 1, but with smaller footprint. Alternative 2 will also require month-long mobilization and demobilization phases. Alternative would also, temporarily, greatly expand the public presence at Santa Fe Basin, with temporary structures, and other temporary installation such as fencing, flags, and signs, primarily in a well-restricted area and leaving most of the Basin unaffected. There are no permanent or unforeseen effects anticipated for aesthetics impacts.

10. DEMANDS ON ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES OF LAND, WATER, AIR OR ENERGY

The proposed Operation would be contained within Santa Fe Dam Recreation Area, Special Event Area, which is designed to be used by large numbers of park attendees. The Area continues to be managed and used throughout the year per individual event reviews as needed.

NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE: Other noteworthy demands on environmental resources were not identified at this site which is identified as a recreational area. There would be no anticipated impacts given that the project site would continue being used under existing due diligence and review procedures per the County's recreation outgrant.

PROPOSED ACTION (ALTERNATIVE 1): This part of the park has been designed for the purpose of people being allowed to congregate, socialize and celebrate together. This area is designated as a Special Events Area for the Santa Fe Dam Recreation Area. Other nearby recreation and wildlife areas will remain open and accessible to the public. No additional mitigation to impacts is required.

ALTERNATIVE 2: Alternative 2 will take place in the same area as the Alternative 1, in the designated area for the special events. Other nearby recreation and wildlife areas will remain open and accessible to the public. No additional mitigation to impacts is required.

11. WATERS/NAVIGABLE WATERS OF THE UNITED STATES

There are no waters of the US or navigable waters of the US present on the project site and no structures are proposed.

NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE: There would be no anticipated impacts to waters of the U.S. given that the project site would continue to be used under the existing circumstances. Implementation of any of the alternatives considered in this EA would not impact resources of this type.

PROPOSED ACTION (ALTERNATIVE 1): The proposed operation with the additional four acres will take place at dirt and turfed Special Event Area, for up to ten consecutive years. The County will make clear to the permit applicant that any nearby or adjacent areas with connections to waters of the U.S. within Santa Fe Dam basin are not authorized for use. No additional mitigation is required.

ALTERNATIVE 2: The proposed operation without the additional acreage will take place in the same area as Alternative 1, but with smaller footprint. The County will make clear to the permit applicant that any nearby or adjacent areas with connections to waters of the U.S. within Santa Fe Dam basin are not authorized for use. No additional mitigation is required.

12. NOISE

The predominant noise sources within the County of Los Angeles are transportation-related, including railroad, airport, and motor vehicle sources. Traffic volume, average speed, vehicular fleet mix (i.e. combination of automobiles, motorcycles, buses, and trucks), roadway steepness, distance, and characteristics of the pathway between generator and receptor, and weather all influence the level of noise near roadways. For example, as

traffic volume, vehicle speed, number of trucks, and roadway grade increase, so does traffic noise levels. However, as vehicles traffic volumes increase, so does congestion, often causing reduced speeds, which may to some extent offset the noise levels.

Ambient noise levels within the Santa Fe Dam Basin are generally low. Major off-site noise sources in the area include traffic on the Interstate 210 (Foothill Freeway), Arrow Highway, and Live Oak Avenue. Onsite noise is generated from recreation activities, events, and maintenance within the Basin. Approximately 1,200 acres (86%) of the area within the Basin has been set aside for recreation purposes (WCA 2010). Recreation activities are generally comprised of low noise level uses, such as picnicking, camping, hiking, bird watching, exploring the nature center, and using the equestrian staging area. Some areas may generate a greater level of noise, such as the group picnic rental areas or the swim beach. Large events, such as the Renaissance Faire, may also generate high noise levels.

Development surrounding the Basin area includes a mixture of commercial and industrial to the east and south, and predominantly residential to the west. In addition, sensitive uses located within one mile from the Basin include schools, places of worship, the City of Hope Hospital, hotels, libraries, and community parks. The Dam embankment attenuates noise from south of the Basin to a considerable degree, and buffers the residential areas to the south and southwest from noise generated on the site (Corps 1995).

Federal

Under the authority of the Noise Control Act of 1972, the EPA established noise emission criteria and testing methods that apply to interstate rail carriers and some construction and transportation equipment such as portable air compressors and medium- and heavy-duty trucks 40 CFR Part 204. The EPA has also issued guidance levels for the protection of public health and welfare in residential land use areas.

Under the Occupational Safety and Health (OHSA) Act of 1970 (29 USC §1919 et seq.), regulations have been adopted which are designed to protect workers against the effects of occupational noise exposure. The Noise Control Act of 1972 was amended by the Quiet Communities Act of 1978, which provides guidance for the development of noise control programs through the Quiet Communities Program.

State

The state of California does not promulgate statewide standards for noise but requires each county to include a noise element in its general plan (California Government Code Section 65302(f)). These guidelines are used by cities within California to help determine the appropriate land uses that could be located within an existing or anticipated ambient noise level. Occupational noise exposure is regulated by the state OSHA office, which has promulgated Occupational Noise Exposure Regulations (California Code of Regulations., title 8, §§ 5095-5099). These regulations set employee noise exposure limits based on Federal OSHA guidelines. The California Noise Act of 1973 sets forth a resource network to assist local agencies with legal and technical expertise regarding noise issues. The objective of the act is to encourage the establishment and enforcement of local noise ordinances.

Local

The Noise Element of the Los Angeles County Code provides a broad perspective of the noise issues throughout the County and identifies goals, policies, and implementation measures to guide future actions by the County. The Noise Element identifies NEPA and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) as the primary regulations that guide environmental assessments in the County. Chapter 12.08 of the Los Angeles County Code (Part 4) places limits on noise that affect adjacent properties (with residential zones with the most critical limit) to unhealthy or excessive noise levels. Several activities are identified as being exempt from the noise ordinance (subsection B1 of Section 12.08.440). These include noise associated with construction, repair, remodeling, or grading of any real property provided that the activities do not exceed: 70 dBA during the hours of 8PM and 7AM

on weekdays or Saturday, or at any time on Sundays or a Federal holiday; 85dBA during the hours of 7AM and 8PM on weekdays or Saturday, or at any time on Sundays or a Federal holiday

NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE: The proposed Faire site is removed from an intrusively noisy environment since it is at a centrally-placed location within the flood control basin. The site is up to a mile from any freeway and nearly as far from city streets or industry. Regular use of the area for recreation produces no significant noise impacts.

PROPOSED ACTION (ALTERNATIVE 1): Aside from the patrons' car parking activities, plenty of revelry during work hours and possibly some at the camping area at night, there will be no significant increase in noise. The proposed Faire level of recreation activity simply contributes its own sounds, noises, and other effects, all of which are non-amplified. Examples of Faire noise sources include acoustically-performed Renaissance music, galloping horses, and the clashing of metal swords, as well as stage actors, engaged in staged dramas, speaking to audiences at some distance. While microphone is used at a few of the performances, there is no heavy amplified music. The hours of operation are 10 A.M. through 7 P.M., which do not disturb the neighbors. Most of the performances are live and unamplified. The Faire does not hire nor promote heavy, loud music, nor does it attract a loud and boisterous crowd. All of these temporary noises are intermittent and within normal comfort levels.

ALTERNATIVE 2: The proposed Alternative 2 will have the same recreation activities, noise sources and hours of operation as Alternative 1. There is no amplified sound and music. All of the temporary noises are intermittent and within normal comfort levels.

The voice level at various distances

Talking with a normal voice approximate to a sound pressure level of 70 dB, a raised voice to 76 dB, a very loud voice to 82 dB and a shouting voice to 88 dB (1 ft distance).

For every doubling of the distance from the noise source the sound pressure levels will be reduced by 6 decibels. This may be expressed as:

| Distance | | Voice Level (dB) | | | |
|----------|-----|------------------|--------|-----------|----------|
| (feet) | (m) | Normal | Raised | Very Loud | Shouting |
| 1 | 0.3 | 70 | 76 | 82 | 88 |
| 3 | 0.9 | 60 | 66 | 72 | 78 |
| 6 | 1.8 | 54 | 60 | 66 | 72 |
| 12 | 3.7 | 48 | 54 | 60 | 66 |
| 24 | 7.3 | 42 | 48 | 54 | 60 |

In social situations people often talk with normal voice levels at distances of 1 to 4 meters. In such cases the noise level should not exceed 55 to 60 dB(A). In outdoor play and recreational areas, people often communicate with a raised or very loud voice at distances of 5 to 10 meters.

The County is required to comply with applicable Federal and State laws and regulations. In addition, compliance with standards established in the County’s general plan and noise ordinance would also be required. County Park staff will enforce the County Noise Ordinance during the Proposed Operation. No additional mitigation is required.

13. TRAFFIC

Baseline: Travel to the Basin occurs through a multi-modal transportation network in and around Los Angeles County that accommodates vehicular, bicycle, train, equestrian and pedestrian traffic. The Basin is located in the southeast quadrant of the intersection of Interstates 210 and 605. Access into the Basin is from the south via the gated entrance off Arrow Highway at Azusa Canyon Road, or from east of Irwindale Avenue through East 1st Street to South Peckham Road, which eventually connects to the main Azusa Canyon Road entrance (Graham 2010). Access to the San Gabriel River wash in the northern portion of the Basin is from Ranch Road or Crystal Canyon Road to San Gabriel Canyon Road at the far northern extent, or from West Foothill Boulevard just north of Interstate 210. Bicycle and pedestrian access to the Basin are available from various points around the perimeter, or by crossing the Dam wall (Graham 2010). The Basin is surrounded by several high-capacity arterials and freeways, including Duarte Road and Interstate 210 to the north, Irwindale Avenue to the east, Live Oak Avenue to the south, Arrow Highway to the southwest, and Buena Vista Street and Interstate 605 to the west. Irwindale Avenue is a north-south arterial, whereas Arrow Highway is an east-west arterial that connects the communities of Irwindale and San Dimas, a distance of approximately 10 miles. There are no direct access points to the Basin from Interstates 210 and 605, so a linkage via local roadways is required. Traffic volumes for the nearby roads in the vicinity of the Basin are shown in the Table 2, below.

Table 2. Average Traffic Volumes on Nearby Roadways

| Roadway Name | Average Daily Two-way Traffic (thousands of cars) | Roadway Designation | Number of Lanes |
|------------------|---|---------------------|-----------------|
| Interstate 210 | 242,000 | Freeway | 12 |
| Interstate 605 | 185,000 | Freeway | 10 |
| Arrow Highway | 25,000 | Arterial | 4 |
| Irwindale Avenue | 21,000 | Arterial | 4 |

Source: Los Angeles County 2009, Caltrans 2009.

Visitors traveling to the Basin by bicycle can make use of a network of designated bikeways and trails. Los Angeles County has developed a bicycle master plan and maintains a bikeways map online, which differentiates between the following three types of bike paths:

- Class I – Separate off-road paved bike path.
- Class II – On-road bikeway with lane striping.
- Class III – On-road bikeway with signage only.

The Basin is accessible by the San Gabriel River Bike Trail, a 38-mile Class I bike path that runs from Seal Beach to the San Gabriel Mountains and along the river (Graham 2010, Metro 2010b). For visitors who prefer to walk to the Basin, there are continuous sidewalks on most connecting streets. Pedestrians and equestrians can connect to a network of trails in the foothills of the San Gabriel Mountains from the upper northeast extent of the Basin or from the San Gabriel River Bike Trail as well as from the 22 mile long LARio Trail.

Approximately 3 miles of roadways and several parking lots throughout the Basin provide access to recreation amenities. Approximately 5 miles of equestrian trails, and several miles of unpaved looping pedestrian trails are available throughout the Basin. Cyclists and pedestrians also have the option of riding or walking across the Santa Fe Dam to join with the San Gabriel River Trail. In-Basin trails are maintained by the County (Graham 2010).

Emergency vehicles can access the Basin through the main entrances on Arrow Highway or from East First Street and South Peckham Road. The northern portion of the Basin can be accessed from San Gabriel Canyon Road or from West Foothill Drive. No additional non-public access points are available for emergency vehicles. Two emergency vehicle access points are available for the main portion of the Basin, and two emergency vehicle access points are available for the northern portion of the Basin.

NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE: The No-Action alternative would not affect traffic in the Basin because local traffic would not be appreciably changed, absent this proposal, and would remain essentially as that at present.

PROPOSED ACTION (ALTERNATIVE 1): It has been estimated that 150,000 patrons will attend for the run of the event (seven 2-day weekends and one weekday during the period of operation). The average number of patrons per weekend day is approximately 7,800, including the need of parking for approximately 3,500 vehicles. The Faire has not reached capacity for the event, which is 10,000 patrons per weekend day. It is a manageable number for the size of the site, the services offered and parking available.

ALTERNATIVE 2: The estimated number of patrons for the run of the Alternative 2 event and the average number of patrons per day would be approximately the same as Alternative 1. The traffic impact would be similar to Alternative 1.

County recreation staff have long experience with events of this size, including with the Faire itself for approximately ten years, and the Faire staff itself specializes in crowd/traffic management and control. Both alternatives are required to submit a parking/traffic management plan for review. Traffic would increase on weekends outside of rush hour periods. 3,500 cars into the Basin/out of the Basin over several hours would not result in a significant adverse impact.

No significant adverse effects to local traffic are expected.

14. IMPACTS TO EXISTING FEDERAL FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT PROJECT

The site was acquired pursuant to congressional authority to construct the Santa Fe Dam Basin, a federal flood risk management facility. The Dam operates to provide flood risk management to the communities adjacent and downstream of the Basin. Routine operational activities are conducted in areas designated for operations only.

Lands outgranted under the Lease have been determined to be compatible with recreation which use remains subject to flood risk management operations, including inundation. As delineated in the Corps Master Plan (2011), while the parking area lies partially within the 10-year return flood event, the Faire event area lies within the 10-50-year return flood event area (between 460.3 and 475 feet elevation, respectively).

NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE: There would be no anticipated impacts given that the proposed Faire site would continue to be used under existing, known and approved recreational land uses which have been deemed to be compatible with existing flood risk operations. Continued use for recreation purposes would not result in significant adverse impacts to flood risk management operations undertaken by the Corps.

PROPOSED ACTION (ALTERNATIVE 1): There will be no effect from the Alternative 1 on flood control or hydrology. The proposed Alternative 1 operation will be held at upper margins of the flood basin and its public schedule will be outside the typical Flood Season (October-March). The proposed operation proponents are aware that Corps flood control requirements take precedence over recreation events. The proposed operation is required to develop an evacuation plan subject to approval by the Corps. The operation site would continue to be used

under existing due diligence and review procedures per the County's recreation outgrant. During the annual flood season, of November 15-April 15, any potentially floatable debris must be secured and, in addition, the Corps does not recommend on-site storage of any CERCLA-regulated substances.

ALTERNATIVE 2: Alternative 2 will also be held at upper margins of the flood basin and its public schedule will be outside the typical Flood Season (October-March). The proposed Alternative 2 operation is required to develop an evacuation plan subject to approval by the Corps. The operation site would continue to be used under existing due diligence and review procedures per the County's recreation outgrant. During the annual flood season, of November 15-April 15, any potentially floatable debris must be secured and, in addition, the Corps does not recommend on-site storage of any CERCLA-regulated substances.

IMPACTS ON THE HUMAN POPULATION

15. HUMAN HEALTH AND SAFETY

Santa Fe Dam is a major recreation area with health and safety considerations normally associated with a park. Because the County manages this land under the Corps outgrant, County safety standards are applied to management of the Special Event Area. Existing Corps protocols (Corps' *Orange Book - Instructions for Emergency Operations Center Personnel, 2012*) for the closure of the Santa Fe Dam Basin to traffic prior to and during flood events, are designed to protect health and safety from extreme weather (rain) conditions at Corps basins. Presently, the Special Event Area is used for picnics, family gatherings, sports activities and special events.

Public health and safety focuses on potential risks to the public and County staff from hazards that may occur within the Basin itself, or which may impact public services adjacent to the Basin. Health and safety hazards to the public can arise from recreation uses, plants and wildlife, flooding, hazardous materials, and criminal activity. Nearby public services, such as law enforcement, fire protection, hospitals and schools, may be designated as respondents to health and safety issues within the Basin. Public health and safety measures are intended to protect the public, to maintain public services, to ensure compliance with applicable Federal and state laws, to prevent waste contamination, and to minimize hazards resulting from actions on Corps-managed lands and amenities.

During storm and flood events inflow to the Basin can create hazardous conditions related to flowing water, erosion of soil from stream-banks, and inundation of Basin lands. During non-flood periods, the risk of flooding or inundation is relatively minimal allowing for public utilization of Basin lands; the potential rate of rise of flood waters would be slow enough that anyone could readily walk to safety by moving to higher ground. Furthermore, the County would ensure that public use of the Basin during a potential flood condition would be curtailed through erecting roadway barriers and signage, and by having authorities in place to redirect traffic. The County maintains close coordination with law enforcement and the Corps as well as fire, medical, and emergency response agencies in the area.

The County determines the response to hazards which occur within the boundaries of the Basin. However, the Reservoir Regulation Section of the Corps has a comprehensive notification protocol that is followed during storm and flood periods, to notify entities that may be affected both within the Basin and downstream of the Dam. The Emergency Action and Notification Subplan for Santa Fe Dam Basin (Corps 2008) provides information needed.

The Santa Fe Dam Basin includes both natural and largely undeveloped areas and formal recreation amenities. Public health and safety issues within the Basin can arise from recreation uses, plants and wildlife, flooding, hazardous materials, criminal activity, vehicle accidents, use conflicts, intoxication, and a variety of sports and activity-related accidents and injuries.

A number of public service agencies provide security or emergency response to the Basin. Onsite law enforcement at the recreation amenities is currently provided by the Parks Bureau of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department. A substation is located at the nature center at Whittier Narrows approximately 3 miles south. The City of Irwindale provides police response in the surrounding community. Criminal activity has included trespass, fighting, vandalism, unauthorized dumping, and firearm use. Vehicle entry is controlled and the park closes in the early evening. When large gatherings are held in the Santa Fe Dam Recreation Area, the City of Irwindale Police Department typically assists in traffic control (City of Irwindale 2008).

NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE: Infrastructure to provide Health and Safety services are in place at the County-leased Basin areas. No residual adverse effects to health and safety would result from ongoing recreational activities or the occasional special event.

PROPOSED ACTION (ALTERNATIVE 1): The proposed operation with additional four acres would take place only in the Special Event Area and would not add additional health or safety risks outside the Special Event Area. Existing safety standards and protocols would not change under the proposed Operation. First Aid would be available, safety precautions would be enforced, and traffic and other crowd control measures would be maintained by the Concessionaire, as required by the Fire Department and local law enforcement.

ALTERNATIVE 2: The proposed operation with no additional acreage would take place in the same area as Alternative 1, but with smaller footprint. Alternative 2 would not add additional health or safety risks outside the Special Event Area. Alternative 2 will comply with existing safety standards and protocols. First Aid would be available, safety precautions would be enforced, and traffic and other crowd control measures would be maintained by the Concessionaire, as required by the Fire Department and local law enforcement.

The Concessionaire would be responsible for all trash collection, including providing and emptying trash cans and dumpsters under Alternatives 1 and 2. Cleanup shall occur throughout the duration of the event. The Concessionaire would also be responsible for cleanup and damage in the area used by the event. The proposed operations will enter its demobilization phase, during normal business hours (9 a.m. to 7 p.m.), 7 days a week, for 30 day, removing the proposed operations and restoring the park to its pre-event state. The County requires a maintenance deposit from any Concessionaire and requires the Concessionaire to obtain insurance for liability and property damage and to indemnify the County and the Corps. Portable restrooms are provided as well as a first-aid station on site for these special events.

16. ACCESS TO AND QUALITY OF RECREATIONAL AND WILDERNESS ACTIVITIES

A variety of recreation amenities and opportunities are available at the Basin. The primary recreation features within the Basin are the extensive picnic and park grounds located generally south of the swimming and fishing lake. All recreation is concentrated in the southeast portion of the Basin, except for the model airplane area located in the spillway on the northwest side of the Basin, and the future recreation amenities to be developed by the Kare Youth League between the Dam and Interstate 605. Other recreation opportunities include hiking the extensive system of trails, camping, and the Nature Center. There are no formal sports fields, although there are several tot lots throughout the park. The only consumptive use approved within the Basin is fishing, which requires a license.

No wilderness tracts exist at Santa Fe Dam Basin. Although areas of proposed Environmentally Sensitive land are on the east side of the Basin, human use in the areas is limited, which means less inhibition of species movement.

NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE: There would be no anticipated impacts, given that the proposed Faire site would continue to be used under the existing circumstances.

PROPOSED ACTION (ALTERNATIVE 1): The Alternative 1 site itself is used throughout the year for a variety of low- and higher-density events, per the County’s Recreation Lease with the Corps of Engineers. Nearby areas used for recreation and wildlife viewing include the playing/recreation fields, and wildlife areas. The playing/ recreation fields are adjacent to the additional four acres adjoining the previously-approved acreage.

Parking for other Recreation Area events will not be impacted because Faire parking and general parking are located in different areas with Faire parking disallowed in general parking areas. Besides the western turfed areas specified for Renn Faire and the additional four acres of turfed areas, all other Park areas are available for general park users.

ALTERNATIVE 2: The proposed operations without the additional acreage would be far from the playing /recreation fields and wildlife viewing areas. Parking for other recreation area events will not be impacted because Alternative 2 will use a different parking area and parking for Alternative 2 is not allowed in general parking areas. Besides the western turfed areas specified for Renn Faire, all other Park areas are still available for general park users.

There is some potential that a Corps sediment processing and removal operation, on the western Basin, will be initiated and could still be running during the next Renaissance Faire (May, 2016). The processing operation itself would not involve recreation areas, but some materials hauling is proposed to take place and one alternate route has included a dirt roadway at the inner toe of the Santa Fe Dam. During Faire operations, however, this road would not be used and, instead, an alternate road is proposed for use at that time which would reduce any Corps project impacts during Faire time.

17. DENSITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION AND HOUSING

The Basin is located in a highly urbanized area although there is no housing in the Basin itself. Because the Basin operates as a flood risk management facility, residential use is prohibited. The nearby area is urbanized and contains a mix of commercial and residential uses.

NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE: Residential use in the Basin would continue to be prohibited, whereas areas near the Basin would continue to be utilized as usual.

PROPOSED ACTION (ALTERNATIVE 1): The proposed Faire with the additional four acres would provide entertainment and recreation opportunities to the local and existing populations. Approval of the proposed Alternative 1 would not add to the population nor require additional housing.

ALTERNATIVE 2: The proposed Faire with no additional acreage would provide entertainment and recreation opportunities to the local and existing populations. Approval of the proposed Alternative 2 would not add to the population nor require additional housing.

18. OTHER APPROPRIATE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES:

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE AND LOCAL ECONOMY

Federal agencies are required, by Executive Order 12898, Environmental Justice, 1994, to “make achieving environmental justice part of its mission by identifying and addressing, as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of its programs, policies, and activities on minority populations and low income populations.” Ensuring environmental justice means protecting existing local and market area minority and low-income populations from adverse human health or environmental effects of any management strategy undertaken or authorized in this or other proposals on Federal land.

The Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ), identifies minority groups as Asian, American Indian or Alaskan Native, Pacific Islander, Black not of Hispanic origin, and Latino. It defines a “minority population” as any group of minorities that exceed 50% of the existing population within the market area or where a minority group comprises a meaningfully greater percentage of the local population than in the general population. Additionally, the CEQ identifies “low-income,” using Census data for “individuals living below the poverty level.” For the purposes of this assessment, a low-income population is defined similarly as a local or market area population with more than 50% of people living below the poverty level (Corps, 2011).

American Community Survey (2009-2013) data was obtained from the US Census Bureau relative to total population, race/ethnicity, age distribution, and average sizes of families within the Census Tract No. 4046, in which the Special Event Area is located. The census tract had a total population of 1,497 persons and the median household income of the population within this census tract was \$ 63,250.

The adjacent communities of the Santa Fe Dam area are primarily white, but also have sizeable Latino populations. The larger market areas of Los Angeles and San Bernardino Counties do not have a significant minority population. However, when the local communities’ ethnicities are averaged, including the neighboring cities, the Latino population is found to exceed 50% of the overall population. The number of individuals living below the poverty level is less than 20% for the larger market area, and none of the local communities exceed a total of 26.1% of the total population. The market area does not have a significant low income population.

NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE:

There would be no anticipated impacts, given that the proposed Faire site would continue to be used under the existing circumstances.

PROPOSED ACTION (ALTERNATIVE 1):

Park use in most Park areas is generally available at no-cost on a daily basis, seven days per week. The general vehicle entry fee for Park users is \$10 daily, year-round. For the Alternative 1 under consideration, the event economics are not anticipated to result in disproportionate adverse effects to low-income families or to general Park users because it is a public event which interested people may attend if they choose. The event admission ranges from no cost to as much as \$28/person which is not considered an adverse impact to local recreation user populations in the San Gabriel Valley. In addition, most (2/3) of the Park’s turfed areas, east of the Faire, are still available to the general public during Faire.

County Parks and Recreation staffers are not hired specifically for events, but increased hours may be made available for part-time staff to cover the event. The Concessionaire would hire security and event staff from local companies and would hire some local residents for event staff positions which, thus, reflects some limited and seasonal local hiring. County Park staff estimated that, perhaps, up to 150 people in San Gabriel Valley work during the year for Faire event promoters and subcontractors.

No significant adverse effects reflect upon local socioeconomic, including environmental justice issues. No additional mitigation is required.

ALTERNATIVE 2: The ranges of event admission for Alternative 2 would exactly the same as the Alternative 1, which will not have adverse impact to local recreation user populations in the San Gabriel Valley. About two-thirds of the Park’s turfed areas are still available to the general public during the event. Temporary employment opportunities will be available during the event. No significant adverse effects reflect upon local socioeconomic, including environmental justice issues. No additional mitigation is required.

V. ALTERNATIVE IMPACTS SUMMARY, INCLUDING PROPOSED MEASURES TO REDUCE IMPACTS AND CUMULATIVE IMPACTS FROM THE PROPOSAL

A. The proposed Operation includes the following land management practices to avoid and minimize impacts.

General:

- County Parks and Recreation staff conducts planning meetings with County agencies and departments to provide safety, crowd and traffic control.
- No growing vegetation may be cut during Concessionaire's activities.

Recreation:

- Use of any non-event areas is not authorized and that access by the general public to these areas may not be impeded in conjunction with said events.

Air Quality/Traffic/Parking:

- Event parking and traffic management will be designed to avoid vehicle backup onto adjacent roadways, reducing idling and congestive traffic.
- A parking plan must be implemented to minimize impacts to traffic.
- Appropriately-sized disabled parking areas will be provided adjacent to the proposed Faire area.

Noise:

- County noise ordinance in keeping with Renaissance-era noise levels shall be enforced during Concessionaire's activities.

Health/Safety:

- Areas will be kept in good condition. County will ensure the permit holder is responsible for trash collection, including providing and emptying trash cans and dumpsters.
- The County will ensure the permit holder is responsible for cleanup and damage in the area used by the event. Cleanup shall occur throughout the duration of the event and the permit holder shall ensure all cleanup and equipment removal is completed in thirty (30) days following the close of each celebration. The County will require a maintenance deposit from the permit holder.
- The County will require the permit holder to obtain insurance for liability and property damage and to indemnify the County and the Corps.
- Two Parks restrooms, 155 deluxe portable restrooms, 18 ADA wheelchair accessible restrooms, 5 ADA hand wash stations, 4 baby care units, 4 men's urinal houses, and 18 standard hand wash stations will be provided and a first-aid station will be on site.

CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

A cumulative impact is an "impact on the environment which results from the incremental impact of the action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions" (40 CFR § 1508.7). Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor, but collectively significant, actions taking place over time (40 CFR § 1508.7). CEQA's guidance for considering cumulative effects states that NEPA documents "should compare the cumulative effects of multiple actions with appropriate national, regional, state, or community goals to determine whether the total effect is significant" (CEQA 1997).

Cumulative impacts of development within and around the Basin have adversely affected water quality and quantity, air quality, and noise levels. Dense urbanization has adversely affected the presence of culturally

valuable resources, as well as the native fish, wildlife and vegetative habitats that were historically present in the Basin. Development both within and around the Basin has increased the possibility for introduction of pollutants, toxic materials, wastes, and non-native plant and animal species to the Basin. The overall quality of the natural environment at the Basin has diminished significantly since industrialization and urbanization of Los Angeles County and the areas immediately adjacent to the Santa Fe Dam and Basin.

Past Actions

The construction of Santa Fe Dam, which was completed in 1948, necessitated clearing the land that is now the Dam embankment and spillway. In contrast to the land surrounding the Basin which has undergone an intense urbanization process in the areas of Duarte, Azusa, and Irwindale and associated freeways during the same time, the native plant communities and wildlife habitats have re-established and the Basin is now an increasingly rare piece of naturalized open space within a highly urbanized region. In comparison with the surrounding area, sources of noise and air pollution within the Basin have remained fewer and of lower intensity, natural habitats have matured since construction of the Dam and, within the Basin, traffic is much less than the surrounding area. The Basin's esthetic value is higher due its natural character and environmental quality that has evolved over time while urbanization outside the Basin has destroyed much of the natural environment. The Basin offers a retreat from densely urbanized surroundings and provides the community a place to enjoy nature and recreate safely.

Present Conditions

Several ongoing construction projects have been formulated and/or initiated in recent years and include construction of a Metropolitan Transit Authority (/MTA) Gold Line extension (Duarte and Irwindale), Corps of Engineers sediment management activities (western Santa Fe Basin), additional Corps fire and debris management activities upstream of the Basin, and development of a sports complex which is outgranted to an educational organization, located south and outside of the Basin. Although each of these examples impose additional activity in the general area within or adjacent to the Basin, none of these activities are significantly impacted by or directly impact these proposed changes to the existing and long-running Renaissance Faire at this location.

By tailoring management of Santa Fe Basin activities to guidance provided in the 2011 Master Plan, some effects of local urbanization may be tempered to a small degree. The land use classification plan set forth in the 2011 Master Plan includes an increase in Low density recreation areas (MRM - Recreation - Low Density) acreage as in the case of the Renaissance Faire. This event would not result in changes to land management or to its effects. Land within Santa Fe Dam Basin classified as Environmentally Sensitive has increased and Faire activities do not directly affect those areas. Environmentally Sensitive land has the greatest use restrictions and therefore the greatest natural protections. However, the Faire is not expected to contribute to cumulative adverse impacts to the region's biological resources.

Future Actions

In the future, there are only a few projects, mostly minor in scope, which are known at this time as likely or imminent to potentially affect the Basin or its surroundings. Because some utility lines within the Basin sometimes need maintenance, or minor relocation, these activities are expected to continue as needed by terms of their respective real estate outgrants; similarly, County Recreation will need to perform maintenance in the future at Santa Fe Recreation Area as needed. In addition, as the Corps maintains a Flood Risk Maintenance (/FRM) responsibility, additional sediment, debris, and wildfire fuel management activities will continue. Each Corps project is subject to environmental review to account for no significant impact to existing resources or approved activities. It is also possible that any future catastrophic rain event could affect normal operations, including recreation activities, at Santa Fe Basin, on a case-by-case basis.

Because the 2011 Master Plan does not contain recommendations for specific projects to be constructed or implemented, there are no specific future impacts to assess in combination with impacts of other ongoing or future projects in the nearby vicinity. Aside from the primary use of the Basin for flood risk management, the only other authorization for development within a Federal water resources development project is for recreation amenities. Maintaining the area as a naturalized open space area and recreation oasis would continue to mitigate the impacts of increasing traffic, noise, air and light pollution, loss of natural habitats and open space, and population growth within the surrounding communities that result from crowding associated with greater infill of surrounding urban areas over time.

VIII. COORDINATION

County of Los Angeles, Tribes, and other Interested Parties

IX. RESPONSE TO COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATION

Comments when received will be addressed.

X. ENVIRONMENTAL LAWS AND COMPLIANCE

The EA fulfills the requirements of NEPA and of other pertinent laws and regulations discussed below.

6.1 National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (42 USC 4321 et seq.)

NEPA is the nation's primary charter for protection of the environment. It establishes national environmental policy which provides a framework for Federal agencies to minimize environmental damage and requires Federal agencies to evaluate the potential environmental impacts of their proposed actions. Under NEPA, a Federal agency prepares an Environmental Assessment (EA) describing the environmental effects of any proposed action and alternatives to that action to determine if there are significant impacts requiring development of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) or if a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) is appropriate. The EA must identify measures necessary to avoid or minimize adverse impacts, and all impacts must be reduced to a level below significance in order to rely upon a FONSI.

As presented in this Environmental Assessment, the Faire changes as proposed must comply with the Act during the planning and implementation process.

6.2 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (16 USC 661)

This Act requires Federal agencies consult with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the fish and wildlife agencies of States where the "waters of any stream or other body of water are proposed or authorized, permitted or licensed to be impounded, diverted . . . or otherwise controlled or modified" by any agency under a Federal permit or license. Consultation is to be undertaken for the purpose of "preventing loss of and damage to wildlife resources." The intent is to give fish and wildlife conservation equal consideration with other purposes of water resources development projects.

As the proposed Faire does not involve impoundment, diversion, or other modification to bodies of water within the Basin with the proposed reclassification of land use, no Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act Report is required.

6.3 Endangered Species Act (ESA), as amended 16 USC 1531 et seq.)

The ESA protects threatened and endangered species, and their designated critical habitat, from unauthorized take. Section 9 of the Act prohibits such take, and defines take as to harm, harass, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect or to attempt to engage in any such conduct. Section 7 of the ESA requires Federal agencies to insure that any action authorized, funded or carried out by them is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of listed species or modify their critical habitat. Consultation with the USFWS or National

Marine Fisheries Service is required if the Federal action may affect a Federally-listed species or designated critical habitat.

This Environmental Assessment provides current information on Special Status Taxa Occurrences within the Property vicinity. No listed species are known to utilize the Special Event Area and any suitable habitat lies outside these areas. There would be no anticipated effects to listed species as a result of this action.

6.4 Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) (16 USC 715- 715s)

The MBTA prohibits the taking or harming of any migratory bird, its eggs, nests, or young without an appropriate Federal permit. Almost all native birds are covered by this Act and any bird listed in wildlife treaties between the United States and several countries, including Great Britain, Mexican States, Japan, and countries once part of the former Soviet Socialist Republics. A “migratory bird” includes the living bird, any parts of the bird, its nest, or eggs. The take of all migratory birds is governed by the MBTA’s regulation of taking migratory birds for educational, scientific, and recreation purposes and requiring harvest to be limited to levels that prevent over-utilization. Section 704 of the MBTA states that the Secretary of the Interior is authorized and directed to determine if, and by what means, the take of migratory birds should be allowed and to adopt suitable regulations permitting and governing take. Disturbance of the nest of a migratory bird requires a permit issued by the USFWS pursuant to Title 50 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR).

The proposed Operation is in compliance with the MBTA as no such wildlife is known to use the site. Any recreation and/or restoration projects that may be proposed in the future for development would need to comply with the Act during the planning and implementation process.

6.5 Clean Water Act (CWA) (33 USC 1251 et seq.)

Section 401 of the CWA requires every applicant for a Federal license or permit for any activity that may result in a discharge into navigable waters to obtain a State Water Quality Certification (Certification) or waiver that the proposed activity will comply with state water quality standards (i.e., beneficial uses, water quality objectives, and anti-degradation policy). The Los Angeles RWQCB issues section 401 Water Quality Certifications for activities within Los Angeles County. The proposed Operation is in compliance with the Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (CWA). The Special Event Area is not located within a wetland and will not affect wetlands or navigable waters. The project is in compliance with Section 401, no involvement with Clean Water Act parameters is envisioned.

Section 402 prohibits the discharge of pollutants to "waters of the United States" from any point source unless the discharge is in compliance with a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit. Section 402 requires a NPDES Permit for the discharge of stormwater from municipal separate storm sewer systems (MS4) serving urban areas with a population greater than 100,000; construction sites that disturb one acre or more; and industrial amenities. The RWQCB administers these permits with oversight provided by the SWRCB and EPA Region IX.

The proposed Faire changes do not involve discharge of pollutants into waters of the US; therefore a Section 402 permit is not required. Any recreation and/or restoration projects that may be proposed in the future for development would need to comply with the Act during the planning and implementation process and may require a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) under the NPDES under Section 402 of the Act.

Section 404 authorizes the Secretary of the Army acting through the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to issue permits for the discharge of dredged or fill materials into the waters of the United States, including wetlands, at

specified disposal sites. The selection and use of disposal sites must be in accordance with guidelines developed by the Administrator of EPA in conjunction with the Secretary of the Army and published in 40 CFR Part 230 (known as the 404(b)(1) guidelines). Under the Section 404(b)(1) guidelines, the Corps shall examine practicable alternatives to the proposed discharge and permit only the Least Environmentally Damaging Practicable Alternative (LEDPA).

Since the proposed project is limited to review the Renaissance Faire Event, which would not involve discharge of dredged or fill material in waters of the United States, a 404(b)(1) analysis is not required.

6.6 Clean Air Act of 1970 (42 USC 7401 et seq.)

Section 118 of the Act states that any Federal action that may result in discharge of air pollutants must comply with Federal, State, interstate and local requirements respecting control and abatement of air pollution. Section 176(c) of the Act requires that Federal actions conform to an implementation plan after it has been approved or promulgated under Section 110 of the Act.

Section 176(C) of the Clean Air Act (CAA) General Conformity Rule Review. A conformity determination for a specific pollutant is not required because for each criteria pollutant or precursor the total of direct and indirect emissions of the criteria pollutant or precursor in the nonattainment area caused by the Federal action would not equal or exceed any of the rates in 40 CFR 93.153(b)(1) or (2). As a result, approval of the proposed Faire would conform to the CAA.

Potential air quality impacts of the proposed Faire have been examined and compared to the significant levels identified by the Southern California Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD), which is the agency with jurisdiction to enforce the Clean Air Act regulations and other relevant local air quality regulations. The SCAQMD sets the threshold limits which, if exceeded, trigger New Source Review Rules, as defined in the Act.

6.7 Noise Control Act of 1972, as amended (42 USC 4901 et seq.)

Noise generated by any activity, which may affect human health or welfare on Federal, state, county, local, or private lands, must comply with noise limits specified in the Noise Control Act.

Since the proposed Operation is limited to a special event with known noise standards and effective County controls per the Corps outgrant, the proposed project will not have any direct impacts to noise levels in the area. Noise will continue to be regulated with Federal, state, and local laws and ordinances.

6.8 National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) (16 USC 460b, 4701-470n)

Section 106 of the NHPA requires any Federal agency to take responsibility for the impact of the decisions on historic resources. Under Section 106, Federal agencies are prohibited from approving any Federal “undertaking” (including the issuance of any license, permit, or approval), without 1) taking into account the effects of the undertaking on the historic properties, and 2) affording the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) a reasonable opportunity to comment on the undertaking. The NHPA forces an agency to stop and consider the consequences of its undertakings on any historic property, and assures that the agency does so by requiring it to receive comment from the ACHP, or agencies acting in its stead, and from the public before proceeding with any such undertaking. In order to comply with the NHPA, a Federal agency considering an undertaking must go through the process outlined in the ACHP’s regulations at 36 C.F.R. Part 800.

The proposed Operation will be in the designated Special Event Area and is not likely to have a potential effect on historic properties. As such, the proposed Operation is in compliance with Section 106 of the Act and its implementing regulations (36 CFR part 800). If any cultural resources are discovered in the future during study

of proposed additional recreation amenities, they will need to be evaluated for their eligibility for inclusion in the NRHP pursuant to 36 CFR 800.13(b).

A literature search, record search and pedestrian survey of the Santa Fe Dam Basin and vicinity were conducted in 1975 and 1985. No prehistoric archaeological sites were found, but three isolated artifacts were noted in the 1985 survey (Corps 1995). Historic resources including two railroad bridges and a large quantity of historic debris dating as far back as 1880 were noted. These survey reports have not been obtained and the results and methods employed are unknown. The Basin is also the site of a research station where Dr. A.A. Michelson, America's first Nobel Prize winner, conducted numerous experiments between 1922 and 1926 to determine the speed of light. The facility itself is gone, and the NRHP status of this location is unknown. The Dam itself is of historic age, but the status of the structure regarding its historic significance is unknown. No information was available in the previous Master Plans regarding SHPO concurrence with Corps findings or Native American consultation (Corps 1995). The proposed Operation is in compliance the NHPA as no cultural resources will be affected.

6.10 Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA) (42 USC 9601 et seq.)

CERCLA regulates the release or substantial threat of release into the environment of any pollutant or contaminant which may present an imminent and substantial danger to the public health or welfare.

The proposed Operation is limited in the designated Special Event Area, the proposed Operation will not store or handle CERCLA regulated materials onsite for this event. It is not anticipated that approval of the Faire would contribute contaminants to the Basin. If during the planning process of future proposed recreation development in the Basin such sites were discovered, compliance with the Act would be required.

6.11 Executive Order (EO) 11514, Protection and Enhancement of Environmental Quality, amended by Executive Order 11991, Relating to Protection and Enhancement of Environmental Quality

This EO mandates that the Federal government provide leadership in protecting and enhancing the quality of the nation's environment to sustain and enrich human life. Federal agencies must initiate measures needed to direct their policies, plans and programs so as to meet national environmental goals. These regulations include procedures for early EIS preparation and require impact statements to be concise, clear, and supported by evidence that agencies have made the necessary analyses.

Any recreation and/or restoration projects that may be proposed in the future for development would need to comply with the EO during the planning and implementation process. An Environmental Assessment has been prepared as part of this Master Plan. Therefore, the proposed Operation is in compliance with the mandates of this EO.

6.12 Executive Order 11988, Floodplain Management

In accordance with this EO, the Corps shall take action to "...avoid to the extent possible the long and short term adverse impacts associated with the occupancy and modification of floodplains and to avoid direct or indirect support of floodplain development wherever there is a practicable alternative."

This EO requires that Federal Agencies take action to manage the risk and/or impacts of floods on human safety, health, and welfare; and restore and preserve natural and beneficial values served by the floodplains. Each agency also has the responsibility to evaluate potential effects of Federal actions that may be made within floodplains.

Compliance with this EO requires proper implementation of engineering regulations (ER) 1165-2-26, which states that the policy of the Corps with respect to floodplain management is to formulate projects which, to the extent possible, avoid or minimize adverse impacts associated with use of the base (100-year) floodplain and avoid inducing development in the base floodplain unless there is no practicable alternative.

Since the proposed Operation is limited in the designated Special Event Area, the proposed Operation will not result in further inducing development in the base floodplain.

There is no practicable alternative to undertaking the proposed Action Alternative within the floodplain, as the project area is already established within the floodplain. The Action Alternative recommends a land use classification plan for the Basin only, and does not include provisions for any physical development, alteration, or modification of the existing conditions. Therefore, the Action Alternative must occur within land that is already within the floodplain, and there are no practicable alternatives. The proposed project is in compliance with the ER 1165-2-26 for implementing EO 11988.

If actions are proposed in the future that would result in changes to the Basin, a separate review for compliance with this EO would be undertaken.

6.13 Executive Order 11990, Protection of Wetlands

Federal agencies shall take action to minimize the destruction, loss, or degradation of wetlands, and to preserve and enhance the natural and beneficial values of wetlands in carrying out the agencies responsibilities. Each agency, to the extent permitted by law, shall avoid undertaking or providing assistance for new construction located in wetlands unless the head of the agency finds (1) that there is no practicable alternative to such construction and (2) that the proposed action includes all practicable measures to minimize harm to wetlands which may result from such use. In making this finding, the head of the agency may take into account economic, environmental, and other pertinent factors. Each agency shall also provide opportunity for early public review of any plans or proposals for new construction in wetlands.

The proposed Operation will be in the designated Special Event Area, and will not impact any wetlands within the Basin. The proposed project is in compliance with this EO.

Any recreation and/or restoration projects that may be proposed in the future for development would need to comply with the EO during the planning and implementation process if the proposal would impact existing wetlands.

6.14 Executive Order 12088, Federal Compliance with Pollution Control Standards

Federal Agencies are responsible for ensuring that all necessary actions are taken for the prevention, control, and abatement of environmental pollution with respect to Federal amenities and activities under control of the agency.

The proposed Operation will be in the designated Special Event Area and is in compliance with the Master Plan, the proposed project is in compliance with the EO.

Any recreation and/or restoration projects that may be proposed in the future for development would need to comply with the EO during the planning and implementation process.

6.15 Executive Order 12898, Environmental Justice Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations

EO 12898 is intended to direct each Federal agency “to make achieving environmental justice part of its mission by identifying and addressing... disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of its programs, policies, and activities on minority populations and low income populations in the [U.S.]...”

No minority or low income communities would be disproportionately affected by implementation of the proposed Operation. The proposed Operation is in compliance with the EO.

Any recreation and/or restoration projects that may be proposed in the future for development would need to comply with the EO during the planning and implementation process.

6.16 Executive Order 13112, Invasive Species

Federal agencies are to expand and coordinate efforts to prevent the introduction and spread of invasive plant species and to minimize the economic, ecological, and human health impacts that invasive species may cause.

Invasive species management within the Basin is the responsibility of the local sponsor under the terms of the lease. Through recommended eradication and/or maintenance of invasive species, and the future replacement of non-native ornamental trees and other plant material, within the Master Plan and per additional Corps guidance, the intent of the EO is met.

Any recreation and/or restoration projects that may be proposed in the future for development would need to comply with the EO during the planning and implementation process.

6.17 Executive Order 13148, Greening the Government through Leadership in Environmental Management

Environmental management considerations must be a fundamental and integral component of Federal Government policies, operations, planning, and management. The primary goal of this EO in the natural resources arena is for each agency to strive to promote the sustainable management of Federal facility lands through the implementation of cost-effective, environmentally sound landscaping practices, and programs to reduce adverse impacts to the natural environment.

The Master Plan in Section 5, Resource Objectives, discusses ways to improve environmental stewardship and management of the Basin. The proposed Operation is in compliance with the EO.

Any recreation and/or restoration projects that may be proposed in the future for development would need to comply with the EO during the planning and implementation process.

6.18 Executive Order 13195, Trails for America in the 21st Century

This EO states that Federal agencies will, to the extent permitted by law and where practicable and in cooperation with Tribes, States, local governments, and interested citizen groups, protect, connect, promote, and assist trails of all types throughout the United States.

The 2011 Master Plan will not result in the development of trails or the reduction in quality or quantity of existing trails. An analysis of existing trails has been provided, which will serve to inform the promotion of trail building and connection in the future. This Master Plan and DEA is in compliance with this order.

6.19 Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA). This Act is not applicable. The Santa Fe Dam Basin is not in the Coastal Zone.

XI. REFERENCES

1. *Santa Fe Dam Master Plan and Environmental Assessment, US Army Corps of Engineers, 1996.*
2. *Santa Fe Dam Basin Master Plan/Final Environmental Assessment, US Army Corps of Engineers, 2011.*
3. *California Department of Fish and Wildlife's, California Natural Diversity Database* (accessed via internet on June 14, 2011)

4. *Los Angeles County Code*, (accessed via internet) June 14, 2011.

XI. RECOMMENDATION

Based upon the information provided here, an EIS will not be needed and the following Corps action is recommended:

EIS

FONSI

PREPARED BY: Jui Ing Chien, Park Planner
County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation

Reviewed By: Carvel Bass, Ecologist, Asset Management Division
US Army Corps of Engineers