CHAPTER 27

PUBLIC HEARING COMMENTS AND RESPONSES

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INTRODUCTION

A public hearing to solicit comments was held on June 2, 2005, at the Larry Chimbole Cultural Center, 38350 Sierra Highway, Palmdale, California, 93550. District No. 20's staff gave a brief presentation describing the project before the meeting was opened to hear public testimony. District No. 20 received comments from 21 speakers representing federal, state, and local agencies and concerned citizens. Those who provided comments are listed in Table 27-1. The official record of the proceedings and responses to comments received during the hearing immediately follow the table.

Table 27-1
June 2, 2005 Draft PWRP 2025 Plan and EIR
Public Hearing Speakers

SPEAKER NO.	NAME	AFFILIATION
A	Harmon, Don	Self
B	Jacobsen, Jorgen	Self
C	McKean, Kathy	Self
D	Simon, Donald	Self
E	Walker, Roberta	Self
F	Hendricks, Marcia	Self
G	Webb, Dean	Sierra Club, Antelope Valley Section
H	Walker, Marcia	Self
I	Nebeker, Gene	Self
J	Dunn, Ed	Self
K	Plaziak, Mike	Regional Water Quality Control Board, Lahontan Region
L	Good, Joan	Self
M	Dodson, Jim	Antelope Valley Resource Conservation District
N	Kyle, Julie	Self
O	Trout, Lewis	Los Angeles World Airports
P	Huang, Andrew	Los Angeles World Airports
Q	McEnaney, Christina	Desert Aire Golf Course
R	Ortiz, Lt. Col. Ron	United States Air Force Plant No. 42
S	Kalajian, Steve	Self
T	Slezak, John	Attorney Representing Los Angeles World Airports
U	Baldus, Joe	Self

27.2 PUBLIC HEARING

COUNTY SANITATION DISTRICT NO. 20 OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY
PALMDALE WATER RECLAMATION PLANT 2025 FACILITIES PLAN
AND EIR AGENCY PUBLIC HEARING
--oOo--

THURSDAY, JUNE 2, 2005
PALMDALE, CALIFORNIA
7:00 P.M.

Reported by: Timothy Scott, CSR No. 8517

Public Hearing held at the Larry Chimbole Cultural Center, 38350 Sierra Highway, Palmdale, California, on Thursday, June 2, 2005, at 7:00 P.M., before Timothy Scott, a Certified Shorthand Reporter for the State of California, holding Certificate No. 8517.

PANEL MEMBERS:

MR. CHUCK BOEHMKE, Section Head
MR. STEVE HIGHTER, Supervising Engineer
MR. SEAN CHRISTIAN, Project Manager
MR. DON AVILA, Public Information Officer

PALMDALE, CALIFORNIA

THURSDAY, JUNE 2, 2005

7:00 P.M.

MR. AVILA: Ladies and gentlemen, if you could all be seated. I would like to welcome you this evening to the public hearing on the draft Palmdale Water Reclamation Plant, 2025 Facilities Plan and Environmental Impact Report.

My name is Don Avila. I'm the assistant information officer for the sanitation district, and I will be your hearing officer this evening. It's my responsibility to make sure that your public input is not only received by us, but that we incorporate it into our final plan and final Environmental Impact Report.

Before we get started, if anybody wishes to use either the restroom or you want the drinking fountain, it's directly outside that door. The restrooms will be to your right, the drinking fountain will be to the left.

The format for tonight will begin with a 20-minute presentation by staff, and they will give you background on the project. I will then open up input on the draft documents. If there's time at the very end, we will reopen the information booths in the back. And

if not, we'll close the public hearing at that point.

I would first like to introduce a couple people that are up here with me. Chuck Boehmke and Steve Highter are both with our planning group. They are here for matters of clarification. If there's something during testimony that needs to be clarified, they may be able to clarify it for you.

With that, I would like to introduce my two presenters tonight. The first is Brian Dietrich, who is with our planning group; and then Sean Christian, who will follow. And we will start with Brian giving his presentation. And with that, if I could have the lights.

Give these to the ladies back there.

He's probably downstairs. There we go.

MR. DIETRICH: Okay. Thank you, Don, and thank you, ladies and gentlemen, for your time and attention this evening.

We are pleased to present to you tonight our plan for bringing full tertiary treatment and recycled water reuse to the Palmdale area.

Before we get into the details, I would like to give a brief overview of tonight's presentation. First, I'll give a little -- a little bit of background on District Number 20 and on the sanitation district in

general. Then we'll talk a little bit about the needs and objectives of the project.

After that, a little bit about the method we use to analyze alternative solutions, and then site selection, environmental quality issues, and finally the cost estimate and scheduling.

The Sanitation District of L.A. County serves the wastewater treatment and disposal needs of over 5.1 million people in L.A. County. The service area includes the L.A. basin, here on the bottom of the screen, where our headquarters is located in Whittier, right next to the San Jose Creek Plant. This also includes the Santa Clarita Valley and the Antelope Valley to the north. Each of these areas has its own unique circumstances and challenges for wastewater disposal.

And tonight we're here to focus on the special situation in the Antelope Valley. So please zoom in to the Antelope Valley. You can see that the most outstanding feature is the fact that the region is a closed basin, which means there is no natural outlet to the ocean. The Tehachapi mountains lie here to the north, San Gabriel mountains to the south, and here on the east side there are a series of elevated hills and buttes. All Of these cause surface water to drain to

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the center of the basin, where you see Rosamond Dry Lake and Rogers Dry Lake.

Because of this, the only disposal options are reuse, evaporation, or percolation to the groundwater aquifer.

So now, zooming in a little further, this is the Palmdale area. This slide shows the relationship between the city of Palmdale and District Number 20. The District's 20 service area is designated by the blue cross-hatch area, whereas the city boundary area is designated by the green shaded area. The blue border, the solid blue border, designates the projected service area for District 20.

U.S. Air Force Plant 42 lies to the north, as well as lands belonging to Los Angeles World Airport. The Palmdale Water Reclamation Plant is made up of two separate facilities located here and here. These two pieces of land are owned by District Number 20 and lie inside the larger area owned by Los Angeles World Airport.

District Number 20 is governed by a board of directors which consists of the Mayor of Palmdale, the Mayor Pro Tem, and the Chair of the L.A. County Board of Supervisors. In some cases there can be an alternate to the board. This is the group that will receive the 2025

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Plan and Environmental Impact Report for certification in September of this year.

This slide shows an aerial photo of the existing treatment facility in Palmdale. One site is located here outlined in yellow, and the other site is back here, also outlined in yellow.

It was originally built in 1953, and there have been five upgrades and expansions since that time. The operation and maintenance buildings are located down here along 30th Street East. Primary treatment is located here, and primary treatment consists of settling tanks with the settled solids collecting at the bottom of the tank. And the settled solids are then pumped to these round tanks here, called digesters, for further treatment.

After primary treatment, the wastewater goes to secondary treatment. Secondary treatment is a biological process that uses microorganisms to break down and digest organic material in the wastewater. Secondary treatment at this plan consists of large oxidation ponds located here and here. And the oxidation ponds provide air so that the microorganisms can survive. So even though these large bodies of water may look like storage ponds, they are actually treatment ponds.

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And finally, in the back corner here, we have a chlorination facility for disinfection. After disinfection, the treated wastewater goes to our effluent management site located in the background and outlined in this green border.

The full -- the full capacity of the plant is 15 million gallons a day, and the average flows right now are around 9.5 million gallons day. So we have about five to six million gallons a day of capacity remaining.

Now we see a bird's eye view of the effluent management site. To the left of this yellow border is property owned by U.S. Air Force Plant 42, and to the right of that border is all land owned by Los Angeles World Airport, except the two treatment plant locations located here and here. These are the only parcels of land owned by District 20. So as you can see, they lie inside the larger area owned by the airport.

The entire effluent management site, which you see here outlined in red, is on land that is leased by District 20. So recycled water coming from the treatment plant is used on this land to irrigate pistachio orchards, an ornamental tree farm, and fodder crops using center-fitted technology.

The vast majority of recycled water goes to

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these fodder crops, and that consists mostly of alfalfa, Sadam grass, wheat, and barley. So that pretty much sums up the existing treatment and effluent management facilities at the site.

The question we have now is to ask, why does District 20 need this upgrade and expansion. Well, there are three reasons. First, we have population growth happening in Palmdale; second, we have more stringent regulatory requirements; and third, we have increasing demand for high-quality recycled water in the Antelope Valley.

So first let's take a look at population.

Being a public wastewater treatment agency, it is our obligation to provide facilities to accommodate growth forecasted in improved regional plans. This graph shows the expected wastewater flows for the planning horizon. This axis shows the flow rates in million gallons per day, and this axis shows the year from 2000 until 2025.

The current flow rate is shown here, 9.4 million gallons a day. Based on population projections provided by the Southern California Association of Governments, the number of people in Palmdale is expected to double to over 225,000 people by the year 2025. This amounts to a wastewater flow of

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22.4 million gallons of water a day, indicated here on the end of the graph. So the plant capacity of 15 million gallons, as shown here by the gray shaded area, you can see that the plant capacity will be reached around the year 2013. So any expansions to the plant have to be completed and ready to operate by that time.

The second need for the project involves increasing regulatory requirements. As part of the permitting process, District 20 has always been required to monitor the groundwater surrounding the site. So we have maintained monitoring wells, shown here as the blue triangles. Right now we have 27 of them. In the late 1990s, some wells exceeded the drinking water limit of 10 milligrams per liter per nitrate, and these are shown in purple.

The Regional Water Quality Control Board responded to this by issuing orders to reduce the nitrogen content of water reaching the groundwater aquifer. They also issued a series of subsequent orders with deadlines for constructing actual facilities to reduce nitrogen. And on top of these measures, the Regional Board required a thorough investigation of the extent of the nitrate contamination. District 20 acted aggressively at that time to address these concerns.

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The groundwater contamination was analyzed immediately, and it was determined to be a localized problem, miles from any drinking water source.

District 20 also immediately began expanding the agricultural reuse at the site, the plan being to grow crops that would take up nitrogen from the recycled water before it reached the aquifer. In 2002, the only agriculture on site was the tree farm and the pistachio orchard located here. Less than 3 percent of the total recycled water was actually used for irrigation, and the rest of the water was used to apply to this area here on bare soil.

In 2003, these areas were added and were developed as agricultural areas. Then in 2004, these areas were developed. And also in 2004, one of the monitoring wells went back down below the 10-milligram-per-liter limit for nitrate.

By the end of this year, the entire site will be developed. All of the land application areas will be converted to agriculture, and nearly 60 percent of the recycled water will be managed for agricultural reuse. We will not be able to manage 100 percent of the water with agricultural reuse because the crop demand for water is much lower in the winter than in the summer. The land area that we lease is only large enough for

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summer -- for summer months. So during the winter months, overwatering of the crops will be necessary. To manage 100 percent of the current flow with agricultural reuse, storage facilities will be required.

The last need for the project comes from increased demand for recycled water. With the growing population and dry desert conditions, the water supply for the Antelope Valley is under constant strain. The groundwater aquifer, which is the largest water supply, has been overdrafted from years of overpumping. This overdraft depresses the groundwater table and causes reduced storage capacity in the aquifer. In some cases it also causes the land to subside.

Recycled water, on the other hand, has been identified as a water resource that is underutilized in the area. If we can provide high-quality recycled water to supplement potable water for things like recreational use, landscape irrigation, groundwater recharge, and golf course irrigation, then groundwater supplies can be preserved.

So with these needs in mind, we can identify what the plan objectives will be.

First, we need to expand the facilities to meet the future needs of District 20 through the planning horizon of 2025. By facilities, we mean both the

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wastewater treatment and the effluent management site.

Second, we need to meet the water quality requirements set forth by regulatory agencies, and this is primarily concerned with the nitrate contamination.

And third, we must accommodate emerging recycled water reuse opportunities.

The first step in implementing these objectives was to form a public outreach program. In October and November of last year, three scoping meetings were held and a series of community workshops were given to engage the public. These are some of the groups that we contacted and met with personally. Feedback from these events was used to formulate project alternatives for the 2025 plant. For example, the overwhelming support we received for tertiary treatment and recycled water reuse led to these options playing a prominent role in the recommended projects.

After the public input phase, the feedback was used to come up with conceptual wastewater retreatment alternatives, as well as conceptual effluent management alternatives.

As you can see, we looked at all levels of treatment and a wide variety of options of what to actually do with the treated wastewater. Once we had these, we applied a first-level screening process that

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eliminated some of the alternatives based on whether or not they met the project alternatives. After this step, we applied a second level of screening that ranked the alternatives based on these criterion: Environmental impacts, cost effectiveness, effluent quality, and operational considerations. The highest-ranged alternatives from this process was chosen as the recommended projects.

So these are the components of the recommended projects: A wastewater reclamation plant with 22.4 million gallons of water per day capacity, full tertiary treatment and nitrogen removal.

Second, municipal and agricultural reuse for effluent management.

And third, storage reservoirs to accommodate seasonal fluctuations in crop water demands.

And another component of the project is that it will have phased implementation to accommodate any emerging reuse opportunities that are not available during the planning phase.

And with that, I'll turn it over to Mr. Sean Christian.

MR. CHRISTIAN: Thanks, Brian.

Well, now that Brian has described the project, the recommended project, I'm going to be discussing the

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isometric process, findings of the EIR, the project's financing or funding, as well as the project scheduling.

First, let's talk about the site selection process. As Brian mentioned, the recommended project includes upgrading this Palmdale Water Reclamation Plant to full tertiary treatment, which can be accommodated entirely on this project site right here. The recommended project also includes agricultural reuse, municipal reuse, as well as storage reservoirs, which requires additional land.

Now, Brian also mentioned that the Palmdale W.R.P. is completely surrounded or landlocked by land that is owned by Los Angeles World Airports. So this meant that we had to look off this site for solutions to this problem. We came up with a 15-mile radius search area that stretched from the mountains to the south to the Kern County line to the north. Then we started to remove areas that logically wouldn't serve our agricultural reuse or storage reservoir needs from this search area.

The first area we removed was this area right here to avoid existing and proposed uses from Air Force Plant 42 and Los Angeles World Airports.

The next area we removed was these areas to the south because of topography, as well as the amount of

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urbanization located there.

We also removed this area to further avoid urbanized areas from the city of Lancaster. This area here was removed to avoid any conflict with Edwards Air Force Base, and this area was removed in order to avoid effluent management facilities that District 14 is currently developing.

That left this site here, which was then subdivided into six areas of approximate equal size. Each area in and of itself would be enough for agricultural reuse and storage operations.

So we examined these six sites in further detail, comparing them against each other with screening criteria, such as the soil suitability in these areas; we looked at the potential for impact to the environment, operational considerations, project cost, as well as impact to the public.

And that's what this picture shows here. We have a number of homes that are mapped out within the entire region, and as you can see, some of the study areas have more homes than others.

So the study -- conclusion of the study was identifying a portion of Study Area 6 that is all within Los Angeles World Airports' property as a recommended project. This study area would be able to contain the

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agricultural reuse operations as well as storage reservoirs that are needed up through the year 2025. This solution also avoids proposed uses of Los Angeles World Airport, which are currently to the west of the wash, and minimizes impacts to property owners and homeowners that surround this area.

So in summary, the Palmdale Water Reclamation Plant 2025 Facilities Plan and EIR is recommending the following project: First, the Palmdale Water Reclamation Plant will be upgraded to full tertiary treatment via activated sludge with nitrogen removal and filtration and disinfection.

Second, a recycled water transmission line will be constructed along 40th Street East and Avenue N to convey water out to the 700-acre storage reservoir site located at this location right here. An irrigation line, which is a main irrigation line, will also be constructed in order to deliver water to up to 5,000 acres of agricultural reuse, which will be cited in these areas here.

Now, keep in mind that this is a phased implementation; So if better reuse such as ground water recharge, becomes a reality, then the development of this area can be scaled back.

Now, I would like to touch upon the EIR

process. Sanitation District Number 20 hired Environmental Science Associates to conduct an EIR for the facilities plan in accordance with California Environmental Quality -- the California Environmental Quality Act, or CEQA.

Now, CEQA has three objectives. The first objective is to disclose to decision makers and the public the environmental effects of the proposed project.

CEQA also looks to identify ways to avoid and reduce impacts to the environment.

And the third objective of CEQA is to provide a forum to enhance public participation in the planning process.

This is a schedule showing the path that the EIR consultant has taken, including the finishing of this plan. That started out with a scoping period, began with the Notice of Preparation that was mailed out in September of 2005. After that an agency scoping meeting was held in October of 2004 -- I'm sorry. That Notice of Preparation was September of 2004, not 2005. My mistake.

This essentially ended the scoping period and led us right into the preparation of the draft EIR, which ended in April of 2005.

Now, at that point the draft EIR and the facilities plan were mailed out, which began the 45-day review period that ends June 17th.

The public hearing tonight is also a part of that 45-day review period, which is another opportunity for the public to comment on the EIR and the facilities plan. After this is over, we go into a process of responding to the comments that we get here tonight, as well as comments that are received in a written form, and we prepare a final EIR and facilities plan.

And then in September of 2005, we approach our board for certification of our final EIR and approval of our facilities plan, which meets a deadline that has been imposed on District Number 20 by the Regional Water Quality Control Board.

These are the areas that the EIR investigated. Some of these areas had significant impacts but were mitigated to less than significant levels by implementing mitigation measures. However, these areas were found to have impacts that were both significant and unavoidable. They include temporary impact to air quality from construction emissions during the construction phase of the project. There is also a cumulative impact to regional air quality and biological resources. And thirdly, an impact due to the secondary

effects of growth.

Now I would like to touch on project funding. The total cost for this project is estimated to be $197 million. 103 million is necessary for plant upgrades to the treatment plant, and that cost will be borne by existing users of the system.

$94 million is needed to pay for expansion of the treatment plant and the effluent management site, and this is a cost that's going to be borne by new users to the system. So to give you an example, the current service charge rate for a single-family home is $101 per year. Now, this service charge rate is expected to increase by $30 a year over a six-year period to approximately $281, and this is necessary in order to pay for the plant upgrades.

Connection fees, which are fees that are paid by new users to this system, is also projected to increase from $2,250 to $5,100 for a single-family home, and again, this is necessary to pay for treatment plant expansions and upward management expansions.

But keep in mind that the district board has to approve any rate increases before they come into effect. So to put this into perspective, this shows the current rate -- service charge rate that homeowners pay in comparison to similar communities. And as you can see,

District Number 20 and District Number 14 are among the lowest.

These numbers right here in yellow are rate increases that have already been approved by the district board, and anything in orange are projected increases and have yet to be approved.

Now, with an increase of $30 a year over six years to arrive at $281 a year, that puts the service charge rate still well within similar communities. And keep in mind that these numbers are going to increase over time, too.

Finally, I would like to talk -- talk about the final project schedule.

Now, like I've mentioned, we've been in the planning period so far, and this period will end in September of 2005. After this point, we go into a two-year process of design, land acquisition, and permitting. After that two-year process, we then go into a construction phase with the construction of storage reservoirs that will be completed by October of 2008, which meets a deadline imposed on District Number 20 by the Regional Water Quality Control Board.

Construction of a tertiary treatment plant, which will provide municipal and agricultural reuse will also be completed in October of 2009, which, again,

meets the Regional Board deadline.

That completes our presentation. And I would like to thank you for your attention.

MR. AVILA: If I may please have the lights back on.

Ladies and gentlemen, we will now start the input phase of this public hearing. I will be calling the presenters in the order of which you signed up, and presenters will be given a total of four minutes. If you'll notice the little box in front of you, it will not only count down the time, but the green light will initially come on. When there's 30 seconds left, the yellow light will come on. And when the time is up, the red light will come on and start blinking, and then I'll notify you that your time is up.

If anybody wishes to speak that hasn't already signed up, there is a sign-up table in the back, and please do so.

Yes, sir.

MR. BOEHMKE: Mr. Avila, could you move the lectern over to this mic for the people who have notebooks?

MR. AVILA: Yes, I think we can go ahead and do that.

If time permits when we're done, we will reopen

the tables for information in the back, but it is totally dependent on how long public input takes.

Thank you very much, Chuck.

And with that, I would like to call our first speaker, Don Harmon.

And when you come up, if you could please give me your name and address, and if you represent an affiliation or group, please give me that as well.

MR. HARMON: My name is Don Harmon.

I live in the area that everybody is concerned about. My biggest concern is that the -- go ahead and make the decisions and get the thing done instead of dragging it out over a long period of time. That's my -- what I'm really concerned about. **A-1**

Thank you.

MR. AVILA: Thank you very much, Don.

The next person who was signed up is Jorgen Jakobsen, I believe it is.

MR. JAKOBSEN: I'm Jorgen Jakobsen. I live on 41630 106th Street East.

MR. AVILA: Jorgen, could you move that mic a little close to you, please.

MR. JAKOBSEN: I'm a little curious. This public outreach overview seems to have been going on for about a year. It never reached us until about a month **B-1**

ago. And we're affected, unlike the people that it seemed to reach. So was it them that helped you make up your mind instead of us? **B-1 (cont.)**

And I was also wondering the significance after mitigation. I'm a little unclear as to what exactly mitigation is or what you plan to use for mitigation. **B-2**

But it is more than significant for us, obviously.

And which phase is going to go first? You have the phases of building. Are you going to put the wastewater out there before you upgrade the plant or are you going to do it afterwards? **B-3**

And like Mr. Harmon, I'm of the same opinion that if you're going to do it, do it. Don't drag it out. **B-4**

Thanks.

MR. AVILA: Thank you very much.

The next person who is signed up is Kathy McKean.

MS. McKEAN: Thank you for your presentation. My name is Kathy McKean. I live at 46521 100th Street East.

And Mr. Avila, as the assistant information manager, I think you kind of missed the mark with your notifications. Those of us who live in Study Area 5, of the 11 homeowners that are in there, three got notices. **C-1**

The rest were notified by me. So I think I did a better job than you. C-1 (cont.)

That being the case, the decision was boggled. When that's made, will we be notified in a timely manner of that decision? Because when that decision -- if it's a negative decision, we're going to be moving. You guys are going to be buying us out. And we've been there for many, many years. It's our world. We've got lots of livestock, things of that nature; it's not going to be easy. We need as much notification as possible. Will we be given that consideration? C-2

MR. BOEHMKE: The final plan and EIR will be going to the directors in September; so we are hoping that we can work through the discussions with LAWA by that time and that's when we would be able to notify those in the alternative study area and everybody else, if we were to have to recommend something other than the recommended site.

MS. McKEAN: Okay. Thank you.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Mr. Avila, your timer is not working.

MR. AVILA: You're right. And that is because I didn't start it. Thank you very much.

It really helps if we push the little button. You've got to love the little electronic devices.

The next person is Donald Simon.

MR. SIMON: Hello. My name is Donald Simon. I live at 41617 100th Street East.

And as many of the people out here have enjoyed the separation from the city and relative lack of interference, one of the things I'm concerned about is the fact that just at the end of the planning phase, we've been notified to -- as to this project. I think that we should have had some input earlier on in this -- in this planning process, because after all, this is a D-1

closed reservoir, as they pointed out, and the water quality considerations should be really far more scrutinized because of this being a closed basin, and there isn't any -- any outlet to the ocean; that the impact of -- to the aquifer is certainly something that needs to be given the highest priority because we don't want to contaminate our groundwater. And a lot of us have no knowledge of what the tertiary treatment plant actually does. D-2

I spoke to the gentleman back there that says the nitrogen is not part of the -- the effluent or the water that's discharged, but I think that many of us have concerns as to drinking or -- you know, concerns because we have wells out there, and we're very concerned about what - what's going to happen to the

groundwater because of its agricultural reuse plans. And I think there needs to be some more input and information given to people that are concerned with this.

I actually like living where I'm at and enjoy drinking the well water that -- that we get; so that's -- basically, those are my concerns. I think that the public needs to know a little bit more about what tertiary treatment really involves. That's my --

D-3

MR. AVILA: Thank you very much.

Our next presenter would be Roberta Walker.

MS. WALKER: Thank you.

My name is Roberta Walker, and I live at 41711 106th Street East.

Now, I don't have a lot of property, but I do have an acre and a quarter, which I purchased back in the early '70s with the idea of having that as my retirement area. And I have retired and moved out there. I find out just last Sunday that my property could be acquired for this project, which I was in total shock. I mean, here I have owned this property all this time. I didn't get a letter about it. I'm really in a state of shock.

E-1

I just think I should have had some input also from the beginning of the project rather than the end of

the project because now I don't know if I'm going to have my area, my small area to live in, or if I'm going to have to find someplace else to move to. And at my age, it really makes it a little difficult.

E-1 (cont.)

Thank you very much.

MR. AVILA: Thank you, Roberta.

Our next presenter is Marcia Hendricks.

MS. HENDRICKS: Hi. My name is Marcia Hendricks, and I live at 41717 97th Street.

It would have been nice if we had known about this sooner. Maybe we would have been able to help with the planning because I -- I see other alternatives. I mean, just looking at it tonight, I see an alternative. We have an aqueduct that comes all the way from the north.

F-1

And I don't know if you've noticed or not, but this valley has a -- let's see -- a trough. You could actually build something that would run into the ocean eventually. I mean, you do have the rivers and you do have the aqueduct; that this water does flow south. Because the hyperian by the sea in El Segundo, they do put their water into the ocean, and if it's the quality you say it's going to be, it shouldn't be a problem.

F-2

I -- I work at Plant 42, and we haven't been able to drink that water over there safely for probably

ten years. I've been there over 25 years. And it's -- it's amazing that the plants -- at Plant 42 I'm not allowed to put any water on the ground. It's against the E.P.A. They have to -- if they want to wash a car, they have to -- they had to build holding areas where they pull the vehicle in, and then the water is put into a holding like septic tank or whatever, and they probably pump that water out and do whatever they have do with it.

But the point is how come this company that you're representing can take this water and dump it into the aquifer, which to me is precious water that we need for good health. And I haven't drank chlorine in as long as I have lived up here, which is over 25 years. I just wonder why the plants can't put water on the ground, but you can take all this water and dump it on the ground. That's basically what my question is.

F-3

Thank you.

MR. AVILA: Thank you.

Our next presenter is Bruce -- I believe it's Purdue.

MR. PURDUE: No comment at this time.

MR. AVILA: Okay. Bruce, thank you.

Dean Webb.

MR. WEBB: My name is Dean Webb, and I live at

1000 East Capterton in Lancaster.

And I'm here representing the Antelope Valley Group of the Sierra Club. And we would like to see the land that's being looked at now as a possible agricultural site. We would like to see that left as a preserve, like it was set up to be over 30 years ago with the L.A. World Airports, as it was set up then as.

G-1

There is a large field of Joshua trees, which are really nice. We hate to see them destroyed. There

G-2

are all types of burrowing owls and other types of birds out there. So we would like to see the water used in

G-3

what we think is a better way, like, you know, full tertiary treatment, and then maybe after it's been checked and everything, go to percolation, back into the aquifer, if it's deemed that the water is good. So that's our basic position.

G-4

Thank you very much.

MR. AVILA: Thank you.

Marcia Walker.

MS. WALKER: I live at 41711 106th Street.

I'm a little nervous, and I'm definitely not prepared.

My concern is that off of my property we have views, and my understanding is that is a natural -- reservoir or not, a natural environment, and then we

H-1

have the Indian museum on the other side.

So If your plan is going to be doing what you say you're going to do, are you going to be, like, blowing the views up and disrupting that? Because, again, then we have got the little foxes and we've got all kinds of little coyotes out there, and we've got a lot of natural habitat out there.

Another thing that I'm concerned with is when you did this, I saw Apollo Park out there. So you're using the water in Apollo Park up there --

MR. AVILA: Yes, that is correct.

MS. WALKER: -- for -- for fishing and stuff like that?

If this does come about, I have driven down our 40th and P place down there, and it looks like a little concentration camp. If we can't fight this, and you guys -- and it happens that you get this, I would like to see more things like golf courses and stuff that would be attractive. Mountain biking -- I mean, we're talking 7,120 acres.

I mean, let's put something in for the kids, the teenagers, skate parks. Get them out of the city. Get them off drugs. I mean, do something that will be helpful.

I'm sure I have a lot more questions written

H-1 (cont.)

H-2

down here.

Again, property value. Is there going to be a smell? There's just so many things. And I hope we have -- oh, I know another one. If you're leasing the property that you have right now, the LAWA, is that going to be a lease or is that going to be an ownership? Because if you're leasing property, leases run out. So if you're leasing this property and the lease runs out, if you lease LAWA and they're not giving it to you, you're not purchasing it outright, when that runs out, where are you going to go?

So give me a little time and I'll have a lot more questions.

Thank you.

MR. AVILA: Thank you very much.

Our next presenter will be Gene Nebeker.

MR. NEBEKER: Good evening, Mr. Avila and staff.

I feel very strongly that the proposed plan will be and is very damaging to the city of Palmdale, LAWA, Air Force Plant 42, and the entire community of Antelope Valley.

On May 21st I was quoted in the Daily News as saying that "If this plan is allowed to proceed, we'll be very stupid and foolhardy."

H-3

H-4

I-1

I would really like to retract that statement publicly after further reflection and talking to the agencies that are most effected. I now feel that it is the most foolhardy and stupid plan I've ever seen in my whole life. The valley -- and I want to give you a few examples to support this position.

The valley is currently undergoing an adjudication of the groundwater. It is to the benefit of the district and the entire community to get through this process quickly. Hopefully we can establish a market of value for the district's reclaimed water.

But look at what the districts are doing and what they are proposing. There is ample evidence to indicate that the current groundwater pumping in the valley exceeds the recharge. In other words, the districts are proposing a gigantic, massive, new consumptive use of water in an overdrafted basin. **I-2**

There are massive degraded and contaminated plumes under the LAWA property due to this treated sewage water they are moving off the LAWA property. The extent of these plumes now is approximately ten square miles, and it has adversely affected approximately 290,000 acre-feet of water. **I-3**

The Regional Board estimates the amount of nitrogen in the ground in these plumes is approximately

1,200 tons; and yet, over the next four years, the district is proposing and the region for it is allowing them to put in another 50 percent or another 600 tons. This seems to -- this makes you wonder if the districts are trying to not think the existing plumes are big enough and are trying to set a world record.

In other words, the districts have participated in degrading groundwater, contaminating groundwater, damaging underground groundwater storage, and adversely affecting the best natural and imported water recharge area in the valley, namely Little Rock Creek, and also increasing a massive new consumptive use in an overdrafted basin. **I-3 (cont.)**

I'm afraid the districts are acting against their own self interest in this regard.

There is a solution to this, and I have suggested it before. And the district is employing the solution already in Valencia and knows quite a bit about it. Many other treatment plants are doing it in the Mojave watershed. Many additional treatment plants are doing this in the Santa Ana River watershed, and many treatment agencies are doing it all over Southern California. The districts need to treat the wastewater to the level they were proposing, namely, tertiary, removing most of the nitrogen, and disinfecting it and

putting it into Little Rock Creek.

The regulatory community considers this incidental recharge. I have recently met with the staffs of the Regional Board, Department of Health Services, together and separately, and we have even discussed how to word the permit until the district builds a new plant they can lease or purchase package treatment plans.

I-3 (cont.)

Based on the available facts, what the districts are telling the community about ground water recharge is just simply not true. The districts need to be directed to go back to the drawing board and propose some plan like I have suggested which will not be so damaging to the community; in fact, it will be a positive benefit to the community.

Thank you very much.

MR. AVILA: Thank you, Dr. Webb.

Our next presenter will be Ed Dunn.

MR. DUNN: I have had an ongoing interest in recycled water back to the days they used to call it reclaimed water, which was probably seven years or more. I was on committees in Sacramento. It's a very, very valuable resource, and really needs to be harnessed, and it needs to be put to valuable use.

I sometimes think when we look at the potential

J-1

of the growth rate in the Antelope Valley, valuable use would not include ponds, lakes, and golf courses. The public will need it for public use. And right now I believe you have a surplus of your effluent, and since you have a route to the river -- or to the ocean, rather, that's part of the problem. But I think that alternatives of plants should be looked at.

And we're hearing different inputs tonight, and possibly haven't all been approached.

J-1 (cont.)

And then on the financial side of it, I was wondering -- and I realize what it costs to go from secondary treatment on the tertiary. It's expensive to the plants; so it has to be bonds that will be placed on the people's houses.

Well, after that is paid off over a period of years, it might be a bond for 20 years or 30 years, instead of continuing to increase the taxation to the dwelling units, I would feel it would drop back to the operation of the tertiary plants. I don't know if that's been considered.

J-2

In addition to that, when they calculated the number of dwelling units and applied the factor of what it's going to cost with each dwelling unit, have they considered as time goes on all dwelling units will eventually have low-flow toilets, low-flow showerheads,

J-3

et cetera, and the consumption would be reduced by all-growing new units. All new ones, new units are being required to have that. Old units are being converted. Eventually it will be mandatory. I believe in San Diego County when they change the title of a house and sell from one owner to another, you have to change out the toilets, you have to put in the low flow, et cetera.

These things need to be looked at, the costs, and maybe the costs won't be so brutal. I think the one thing that's sure of all of us, none of us want to give up where recycled water comes from. Do we want to give up toilets and showers? I don't think so.

MR. AVILA: Thank you very much.

Mike Plaziak, I believe it is.

MR. PLAZIAK: Good evening. Thanks for the opportunity to comment. I'm Mike Plaziak, Senior Geologist with the Water Quality Board in Victorville.

Our comments on the EIR will be forthcoming. I'm not going to talk specifically to those comments, but some things brought up during discussion today.

One is during Brian's discussion on the project description, I noticed that he had made the comment that the Regional Board gave the district a deadline to construct the facilities.

J-3 (cont.)

K-1

37

I want to clarify something here; that the Regional Board, because of the California Water Quality Control Act, cannot mandate or specify the manner or method of compliance. So it's a nuance, but I want to make it clear that we did not specify that the district construct facilities; we specified that the district reduce the nitrogen discharge by certain dates. And I want to make that fact clear.

Also, there was another point that Brian had made about one of the marks that you had mentioned during the discussion had 10 milligrams per liter of nitrogen had come down. I think that is somewhat misleading, and I think that just the audience needs to know you need to look at the plume in general. The comment that it's reduced its concentrations down to 10 milligrams per liter leaves the impression that something the district has done has actually improved the groundwater there. And I would say that unless you can actually relate the cause for that concentration to go down, I wouldn't make that comment. Because if you look -- if you step back and look at the plume as a whole, you still have a groundwater pollution in that you have concentrations that exceed 10 milligrams per liter, and recent data are above 14 milligrams per liter.

K-1 (cont.)

K-2

38

Just a last comment here on one of the things that Dr. Nebeker had mentioned. And I think his points are right on the spot. But to declare -- back to the issue about the Regional Board specifying the manner and method of compliance that the proposals that the district has given the Regional Board to date are the best proposals they have given us to date with respect to allowance of 600 tons of nitrogen to go in the groundwater over the next four years.

I will tell you from the Regional Board, that is not necessarily taken lightly by the Regional Board. In fact, we have sent a letter to the district to ask them to look at this again, give us a feasibility of cleaning up the groundwater and reducing -- actually, not cleaning up the groundwater but reducing the amount of nitrogen that goes in the groundwater over the next few years and looking at the feasibility of reducing that time frame. And we are currently evaluating their response.

So to put on the record, are we happy with 600 tons going in over the next few years? I would say probably not. But we are asking the district to again take another look at closing that time frame up. That is -- that is 600 tons that is going into groundwater is the best plan that the district has provided to date,

K-3

based on the technical and economic feasibility range of options that they have evaluated.

K-3 (cont.)

And that's my final comment. If anybody else has any other questions of the Regional Board, I will be here after the presentation.

MR. AVILA: Thank you very much.

Our next presenter is Joan Good.

MS. GOOD: I'm not used to speaking so well.

MR. AVILA: That's quite all right, Joan. Just take your time.

MS. GOOD: All right. My name is Joan Good. I live at 1023 Calle Contento in Thousand Oaks, California.

Is that all you need?

MR. AVILA: Yes.

MS. GOOD: I come from a different perspective a little bit. I -- the land that we own, we purchased or actually acquired in 1959. My husband was a veteran, and we went and homesteaded five acres, and you had to put on a 20-by-20 building. We had very little time to do this; so -- by the way we acquired it; so we had it done by a contractor.

Around 1960, our plans for that was to be using it on the weekends and future to maybe build on it in retirement.

In 1960, someone went through all the homestead homes and bulldozed them down and then told us that if we couldn't have the rubble out in a week, that they were going to take it out, and the city went and billed us for it. That was a big dream blown up as it is.

But then we felt, okay. The airport is going to go in and that will help our retirement, et cetera. Since that time, the zoning has been changed. We couldn't build on it. And finally, from what I understand right now, the county has it as agriculture and the city of Palmdale, which takes precedence, I understand, has it as manufacturing 4.

Over the -- over the 40-some years we have had that property, we have paid for the taxes, paid for the administration building, the library, the schools, you name it, and the taxes I'm paying on that property is 400-and-some dollars a year. And on a $600,000 home in Thousand Oaks you pay $800, and that just doesn't make sense to me at all. But I was willing to do it because this was an investment for myself, my children, and my grandchildren.

Under the grant that we were given this property by the United States of America, and it was under the land management at that time, it says that "The United States of America has given and granted to

L-1

the claimant and his heirs the track above described to have and to hold the same together with all the rights and privileges," and it goes on and on about all the rights and privileges. And then it ends with, "Thereunto belonging to the said claimant and to the heirs and assigns of the claimant forever."

Now, I know there are some stipulations probably in there about water rights and different things like that, but this is something that we thought was ours to have and to hold, and no one could take away from us. And now, after someone bulldozing down our place, charging us for that, paying taxes for 40-some years on it, someone is going to come in there now and just tell me that they can take over my property and put these -- this reclamation thing on it. It just doesn't make sense to me.

L-1 (cont.)

And the other thing that didn't make sense to me is that if you look at the development summary that was put out by the city in 2005, January, it states under there that this thing that you're proposing has already been approved. This is approved changes with no construction started. And this whole page goes into how -- what's been given to the reclamation plant.

I'm not very knowledgeable on that, but it looks like it was already a prerequisite that you were

L-2

given the right and the okay to go ahead with it. I know there's a lot of other agencies you have to go through. It just doesn't make sense to me.

I want to also reiterate that over this 40-some years, when the airport was going in and all these other different things, when the aerospace came in, we were offered a lot of money for the property. But we felt that we would need the money more upon retirement and also for our children and our grandchildren and their education, and we didn't sell.

And I -- I really take offense to someone coming in at this time when now they have put off the airport and now the aerospace business is quite down. The property isn't of value as it was then. When we let that go, even though we needed the money, and now I might be forced to sell it when it's at a lower value than it was at another time.

Thank you very much.

MR. AVILA: Thank you very much, Joan.

Our next speaker will be Jim Dodson.

MR. DODSON: I'm Jim Dodson.

I am the president of the Antelope Valley Resource Conservation District, another special district like the sanitation district. Our headquarters are in Lancaster, 44811 Date, Suite G in downtown. I am a

L-2 (cont.)

L-3

resident also of Lancaster.

We were not one of your interested parties earlier. I just today was finally able to obtain a copy of the draft report, although we are an agency that is responsible for the conservation of natural and -- natural resources here in the valley. And we have some very deep concerns about the proposed solutions that are being put forward to an obvious problem.

Something that's known both I'm sure to sanitation districts and certainly to planners is garbage in, garbage out. Wastewater is essentially the result of the consumption of fresh water. You cannot address problems of overdemand for wastewater disposal without addressing the overall problems of water conservation and -- and more effective use of water in our community. There needs to be an integrated approach that will address both the city's planning efforts in terms of requirements for landscaping, for water use in new homes, et cetera. The counties -- and to try and do a better job of reducing the demand for sanitation district services by reducing the volume of the flow.

We believe that the tertiary treatment with nitrogen removal is -- is obviously the way to go. The -- District 14 is going to do that also, we understand. I have a lot of experience out at the

M-1

M-2

M-3

Edwards Air Force Base where they went to full tertiary treatment and reuse a decade ago and have done so very safely and effectively.

M-3 (cont.)

What I have a problem with is your idea of tearing up a lot of good Joshua trees and Creosol bushes to just let the stuff grow more alfalfa rather than putting it back into the water table through a recharge process of some sort.

M-4

I'm interested -- very much interested in Mr. Nebeker's suggestions about incidental recharge into Little Rock wash. It's a very deep recharge point. I know, having studied flood patterns here in the valley for 30 years, a lot of water can get into the ground very quickly out of Little Rock wash. So I don't doubt its capacity to absorb your output. And I think that's a whole technological solution that you have not adequately addressed in the plan as presented to us.

M-5

As I say, I got it today. I'm going to go back and read it with some care over the next few days and reserve the privilege, as this thing goes, to revise and extend my remarks in written form before the end of the comment period.

But we are -- we are an interested party, and we think you are only solving a part of the problem and that it's a bad solution.

So thank you very much.

MR. AVILA: Thank you.

Steve Kalajian.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: He stepped out for a minute.

MR. AVILA: Okay. I'll set Steve at the end and call him when I'm done with these others.

Julie Kyle.

MS. KYLE: Good evening. My name is Julie Kyle, and my husband farms at 50th Street East and Avenue M.

And our concern is the contamination that has already occurred at Palmdale in the growing plume. There is no cleanup effort in effect. Some monitoring wells have been put in, really, just to see how far the contamination has traveled, but nothing has been done to do any clean-up.

N-1

In regards to the Regional Board's information about the estimated 1200 tons of nitrogen that has already been placed into our underground, to think about adding another 600 tons is just ridiculous.

We are a closed basin, no chance of getting rid of it any other way than to get it out of the ground and clean it up. To put more in should be criminal.

Our property is threatened by this. When your first speaker said, you know, that there's no chance of

N-2

any drinking wells being affected, I -- I beg to differ. We are just a very few short miles. We use that water for drinking, not just for irrigating, and that is a problem; that is going to be a problem. N-2 (cont.)

I do believe that the tertiary treatment is the way to go. I don't believe that it's probably the best use to put it on fodder crops. I mean, we're farmers, and I -- we want to continue to farm here, but to put it on fodder crops, I don't think is the best use of that water. Municipal use or recharge is the way to go. N-3

Thank you.

MR. AVILA. Thank you.

Sue Reichart.

MS. REICHART: No.

MR. AVILA: Thank you, Sue.

Lewis Trout.

MR. TROUT: Good evening, there, Mr. Chairman. My Name is Lewis Trout. I live at 930 Crescent Drive in the city of Barstow. I work here in the Antelope Valley.

I would like to focus on Chapter 11 of your EIR -- or draft EIR this evening, but I would like to give a little bit of background about myself first.

I studied archeology at U.S.C. under Drs. Gerald Larue and Jack Bennett. They escavated the Lewis

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B. Leakey zone, North American site, under project director Ruth D. Simpson. But prior to her death approximately three years ago, was associated with the San Bernardino County and Southwest Museums.

In Looking at Chapter 11, the Cultural Resources chapter, it appears that there are several omissions and erroneous and misleading statements that result from a failure to have done a proper analysis per your contract. I would like to suggest that appropriate due diligence be applied to correct the omissions, and apparently a number of other omissions cited by people speaking tonight, when you do a supplemental draft EIR and release it for public comment, and then have a second hearing on it.

Specifically, on Page 11-4 of your document, the statement is made, "No cultural resources have been found and identified on LAWA property west of Little Rock wash." O-1

The same erroneous statement appears on Page 11-6. It appears that your consultants, in doing their literature search -- literature search, failed to review the 1978 Final Environmental Impact Statement that was issued by Los Angeles World Airports and its contractor, the Arthur Little Company. Had they done that, they would have discovered that finds of individual artifacts

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were made in several locations on LAWA property consisting of matades, manjoes, obsidian points, and obsidians cores and flakes.

Because they didn't do the -- the kind of due diligence that they should have, they conclude on Page 11-4 that a record search resulted that they did, in finding that the entire LAWA site, all 17,000 acres, including the existing Palmdale Reclamation Plant area and proposed effluent management site, were fully surveyed.

Again, had they checked the 1978 LAWA document, they would have found that only 18 percent of the property was surveyed; that 82 percent was not. What's the consequence of that omission? Well, the most significant survey that's been done in recent years of 1,000 acres on Air Force Plant 42 was done by Earthtech in 1996. Their survey of 1,000 acres of undeveloped land on Air Force Plant 42, in accordance with Federal Cultural Resource Compliance Regulations, found 47 historic resources, four lithic prehistoric sites, and four lithic prehistoric isolated fields.

If we apply that 1,000-acre component to your 6,000-acre acquisition project, it suggests that there may be as many as 2- to 300 historic sites, 20 to 30 prehistoric lithic sites, and 20 to 30 prehistoric

O-1

isolated finds.

The significance of the omissions of that 82 percent was something that was commented on at the LAWA public hearing in December of 1972. As a result, LAWA staff and the Arthur Little Company made the following recommendations: Features consisting of roughly circular accumulations of broken rock and river-worn pebbles needed to be surveyed in the vicinity of Little Rock wash.

Additionally, they recommended that the entire area between 75th and 105th Streets north of Avenue P be fully surveyed because of the identified proximity of numerous sites in the Little Rock -- the Big Rock wash drainage.

O-1 (cont.)

The conclusion, Mr. Chairman, is clear: Your client -- or your contractor needs to conduct field surveys. They need to go into a supplemental document, the results of what you present to us, and we need a chance to review them, along with the other things, to comment on them for the public and the decision makers.

O-2

Thank you.

MR. AVILA: Thank you very much for the input.

Our next speaker will be Andrew Huang. And excuse me if I mispronounced that.

MR. HUANG: That's very -- very good. Thank

you.

My name is Andrew Huang. I'm with LAWA Environmental Management.

I had an opportunity to review this 2025 plan and EIR, and I will be providing written comments later. However, tonight I want to just highlight I think a major problem I see in this document, and it has to deal with the selection of the alternatives.

I think the selection process was flawed and that the microfiltration followed with reverse osmosis was not adequately addressed. Based on the screening criteria -- criteria of environmental impacts, cost effectiveness, effluent quality, and operational considerations, I believe that reverse osmosis should have been selected. And the advantage of this is, again, you don't need to go to the east side with 106,000 acres. And not having to develop these additional acreage, you would avoid the cultural, biological, the public health related issues.

In my own analysis, I went through your -- your financial analysis, and I believe it is cost effective. It is -- it is right there. It may even be beneficial as the valley goes into adjudication.

Some additional comments in regards to -- to the reverse osmosis. It produces higher quality water.

P-1

It will remove approximately 17,700 tons of dissolved salts from effluent every year that otherwise would be spread on the ground. This technology is off -- off the shelf, and so I believe it should be the preferred -- preferred alternative.

P-1 (cont.)

Thank you.

MR. AVILA: Thank you very much.

Christina McEnaney.

MS. McENANEY: Good evening. Thank you. My name a Chris McEnaney. I'm the operator of Desert Golf Course in Palmdale at 3620 East Avenue B, which happens to be right next door to the sanitation district plant, right next door to the reclamation plant.

Anyway, I would just like to reiterate that the golf course would be very happy to use that tertiary-treated water, whether it be within the next year or within the next five years. We could really use that water as soon as possible. And whether it be a large plant or just a small plant, a little million-gallon-a-day plant or module unit, that would do because we use about half that every night in the summer.

Q-1

Also, I would just like to say it is municipal use, and it means a lot more than just playing golf. What this golf course means to the community of Palmdale

is because we offer free juniors -- juniors can play free. Seniors play for very little, and it's just an affordable way for families to recreate.

Thank you for your time tonight.

MR. AVILA: Thank you for your input.

Lieutenant Colonel Ron Ortiz.

MR. ORTIZ: I'm Lieutenant Colonel Ron Ortiz, Commander of Air Force Plant 42.

As I have previously stated on several occasions, Air Force Plant 42 has always considered the community and its residents a key to our success in executing the responsibilities of developing, producing, testing, and upgrading systems used by the military services and other agencies.

We understand that as the community grows, the demand for resources and infrastructure to sustain that growth also increases. I believe a strong partnership exists between Air Force Plant 42 and the surrounding community that has enabled local area growth to occur without diminishing our ability to carry out our day-to-day mission.

We understand, based on our review of the draft documents, that a need has been demonstrated for the potential establishment of a new water reclamation plant east of Air Force Plant 42. We support the district's

R-1

objectives of building capacity to handle future growth through the year 2025 and to find ways that accommodate recycled water use opportunities through tertiary treatment if the community supports the establishment of that new plan.

R-1 (cont.)

In going through this process, we offer the following comments, which are being provided from an air operations perspective. Similar to the comments made by the Regional Water Board, I'm not here to specify method and manner for meeting your objectives, but providing input from an air operations perspective.

First and foremost, let me say that the safety of flight is of paramount importance in terms of the Air Force Plant 42 mission. By introducing the establishment of a new water treatment facility, the potential for bird air strikes increases. We recommend during your deliberate planning activities you consider locations for evaporation ponds and/or agricultural farming areas situated that are south of Runway 25 because that particular air corridor handles about 85 percent of all of the aircraft coming into Air Force Plant 42 air space.

In other words, we believe your range of alternatives should focus on solutions that locate these facilities south of Avenue N, and the subsequent

R-2

documents should be a bit more robust in addressing bird air strike hazards and how to mitigate those risks, not only for Air Force Plant 42, but for L.A. World Airports, as well as Edwards Air Force Base.

The document also discusses several, quote, "natural alternatives"; however, it tends to focus on the establishment of a chemically activated sludge treatment facility with the assumption that some 5100 acres of agriculatural land will be irrigated with reclaimed or recycled water.

To put this into perspective, we're talking about eight square miles of agricultural land, which is almost the size of Air Force Plant 42.

We recommend the district further examine how to potentially incorporate some form of recharged/discharged alternatives in combination with the treatment facility, evaporation ponds, and agricultural land use. By looking at recharged and discharged alternatives, you would help reduce the dependency on the amount of agricultural land that would be required, reduce the size of any evaporation ponds that would be used, and also, at the same time, reduce the potential for bird air strike hazards. In doing -- in doing so, you also must look, when you're examining recharged/discharged alternatives, that they should not

R-2 (cont.)

R-3

adversely effect downstream stakeholders.

We look forward to participating in this process as one of the community stakeholders.

Thanks for your time and attention.

MR. AVILA: Thank you, Lieutenant Colonel Ortiz.

Did Steve Kalajian come back in?

MR. KALAJIAN: Yes, I did.

Yes, Mr. Avila. Hi, everyone. I would like to --

MR. AVILA: Steve, could you move the microphone a little closer so we can have the court reporter -- we want to make sure we get everything down.

MR. KALAJIAN: Is that better right there?

MR. AVILA: Yes. Pull it up just a touch.

Perfect, thank you.

MR. KALAJIAN: Okay. Yes. My family -- my dad bought this property in Lancaster when I was about four years old in 1958 on M and 105. And, you know, I can remember going out there with my dad when he was alive in -- in a '58 Cadillac, you know. And it's really nice out there, open, and sometimes on Sundays we would go out there.

And I guess you know, we just had the property for so long. And what -- what I kind of thought about

R-3 (cont.)

S-1

someday was doing something with it, you know, what we wanted to do with it. And now, since we got this letter, it just doesn't seem like we'll ever be able to do that. And that's a shame.

You know -- and I hear people talking about, you know, that they are in the same situation, a few people, and those are kind of like my concerns. And then, like, my mom and my dad have been paying 4- and $500 a year on taxes, you know; that adds up in 50 years.

And we really, I think, hoped that someday we could either build a little house there and -- or maybe see something -- you know, growth in the community, maybe some shopping center. I don't know. You know, something besides a treatment plant, you know.

So anyhow, you know, I was really hoping that -- that we could have done something with it ourself instead of you guys getting the land, you know.

I guess that's all I have.

MR. AVILA: Thank you, Steve.

My last two that I have are both from the L.A. City Department of Airports. One is Karen Philbin and one is John Slezak. I will give one of you the four minutes and the other can have the extended, and I'll leave it up to you which one wants which.

S-1 (cont.)

S-2

MS. PHILBIN: I will Give my time to Mr. Slezak.

MR. AVILA: All righty. Then our final presenter will be John Slezak.

And as the final presenter, I told John he can have a little more time because he requested it for a presentation he had to make; so I hope you all bear with me on that.

And John, I won't start the timer because of that.

MR. SLEZAK: Okay. Thank you very much.

I'm John Slezak, and --

MR. AVILA: John, could you raise that just a little. I want to make sure the court reporter gets everything.

MR. SLEZAK: All right.

MR. AVILA: Thank you.

MR. SLEZAK: I'm John Slezak. My address is 624 South Brand, Los Angeles. I'm outside counsel for the City of Los Angeles Department of Airports.

The City will also be submitting written comments, and we're going to make preliminary or oral comments tonight.

LAWA supports the District's proposed upgrade and treatment to the plant and would even support more

T-1

aggressive treatment protocol, including reverse osmosis treatment. LAWA's principal concern with the district's EIR is that there be adequate assessment and remediation of the groundwater impacted by nitrate from the district's effluent discharge to the district's ponds and to LAWA's property, and as soon as possible that the district's effluent be treated adequately and managed safely so that the discharge of effluent and the continuing use of recycled water from the plant does not adversely impact the groundwater underlying LAWA's property.

T-1 (cont.)

T-2

LAWA's further concern is that its property not be used in a manner that interferes with the existing future aviation uses of the airport or disturbs existing conservation areas. LAWA is committed to a regional approach to meet air travel capacity needs, and an important part of that plan is the expansion of the Palmdale Regional Airport.

LAWA will not voluntarily allow its land to be used in a manner that creates any safety risks, inhibits its ability to make the Palmdale airport a major regional airport, and disturbs existing conservation needs.

T-3

We have the following comments regarding specific subjects in the EIR: With regard to the

proposed treatment of the effluent, LAWA believes that the upgraded treatment could be provided by the district tertiary treatment with nitrification and denitrification and disinfection of solids removal will substantially improve the quality of the effluent.

When implemented, the upgraded treatment will generate effluent, which should not cause contamination to the underlying groundwater that has occurred previously as a result of the district's inadequate treatment of the effluent.

The district's EIR states that this treatment will remove most of the nitrate from the effluent and will allow uses such as agricultural use, municipal reuse, and groundwater recharge via spreading.

T-4

The EIR states that advanced treatment in the form of reverse osmosis will not be adopted, even though it is the environmentally superior alternative, since it supposedly does not increase the types of uses of recycled water; however, we would note that utilizing advanced treatment and reverse osmosis would allow groundwater recharge by injection, as well as by spreading, such advanced treatment should be considered.

With regard to the proposed effluent management under the EIR, the EIR states that agricultural reuse with winter storage and municipal reuse as available is

T-5

the only effluent management option that provides an immediately effective effluent management program.

The EIR disregards municipal reuse, which is the use of recycled water instead of potable water to irrigate municipal lands, parks, schools, golf courses, and similar areas as requiring time to be implemented involving local water purveyors and construction of infrastructure. **T-5 (cont.)**

The EIR disregards groundwater recharges supposedly being an alternative. Feasible implementation is uncertain because of the needs for blending effluent with fresh water, installing infrastructure to deliver the water and in part from the water agencies.

In fact, groundwater recharge by spreading is feasible, even with a treatment proposed by the EIR, and it is acknowledged to be the environmentally superior alternative that would help restore the groundwater balance in the overdrafted Antelope Valley groundwater basin and would avoid land conversion. **T-6**

Municipal reuse is also a viable option which would use recycled water for municipal irrigation uses in lieu of pumping groundwater. Conversely, the district's proposal to increase agricultural use in the form of fodder crops would be unnecessarily consumptive **T-7**

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in this overdrafted basin.

The district's tertiary-treated recycled water should not be reused for at least for consumptive and artificially agricultural uses, but rather should be used for municipal reuse, groundwater recharge, and for existing agricultural crops which currently use groundwater. And that way tertiary-treated recycled water can be used in a manner that benefits rather than exacerbates the overdraft in the groundwater basin and would address the need to reduce the land for effluent management. **T-7 (cont.)**

With regard to the district's proposed acquisition of land to site agricultural reuse and storage reservoirs, we believe that that would conflict with existing and future aviation uses of the Palmdale Regional Airport and the conservation areas.

The district states that it will need 5,140 acres of land for agricultural reuse and storage reservoirs to manage effluent from the extended land and 700 acres for solids handling. **T-8**

The district states that Agricultural Study Area Number 6, which is on LAWA land bounded by Avenue M-8 on the north and Little Rock wash to the west; and Storage Area Number 1, which is on LAWA land bounded by 90th Street on the west, Avenue M-8 on the north, 105th

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on the east, and Avenue 12 on the south are the most suitable areas for agricultural reuse operations and storage reservoirs.

The district's intent to acquire and use this LAWA land for agricultural reuse and storage reservoirs is restricted by the existence of conservation areas, including our fear with existing and future flight patterns, both for LAWA and for Air Force Plant 42 across LAWA land. T-8 (cont.)

LAWA's 1978 EIR for the Palmdale Regional Airport designated two natural resource conservation areas for the airport, which were approved by the Federal Aviation Agency. The larger conservation area covers approximately 4,940 acres and is located east of 80th Street to 105th Street. And this area appears to encompass approximately 80 percent of the area which the district proposes to use for agricultural use and storage reservoirs. The conservation areas provide for uses consistent with the preservation of the natural undisturbed state of the land; so that conservation area may preclude use of that land for agricultural reuse, storage reservoirs, and solids handling. T-9

On the issue of aviation uses, Air Force Plant 42 has expressed its concerns about bird strikes that may approach the path to Air Force Plant 42's runways. T-10

That approach path is located north of Avenue M and south of Avenue M. The flight path is 2,000 feet wide and overlays approximately 719 acres, about 36 percent of the 1,973 acres of LAWA-owned land east of Little Rock wash and north of Avenue N.

The cultivation of hay would be encompassed in the district's proposed agricultural reuse of LAWA land, would attract rodents which, in turn, attract high-flying rafters and ravens because these birds rise up and circle the area in which they feed. Growing and baling hay under the approach path would pose significant increased threats of bird strikes to approaching aircraft. Strikes to aircraft engines and cockpits increase the risk of crashes and are opposed by both the Air Force and LAWA. T-10 (cont.)

For this reason, previous district requests to use land north of Avenue N for effluent dispersal and hay cultivation have been opposed by the Air Force and were disapproved by LAWA. The location of storage reservoirs under and immediately south of the main runway approach of Air Force Plant 42 as proposed by the district would pose another potential risk.

Migrating water fowl, ducks and geese are frequently attracted to such ponds. By siting large reservoirs under and immediately adjacent to the

approach path would create a potential attraction for ducks and gees and increase the risk of bird strikes to aircraft.

The LAWA strategic plan issued in February 2005 provides for runways and clear zones, which are located to the west of the Little Rock wash; however, the two LAWA strategic plan runway approach corridors, which are also 2,000 feet wide, would overlie approximately 1,480 acres or 37 percent of the approximately 4,000 acres that LAWA owns south of Avenue N and east of the Little Rock wash. These proposed LAWA runway corridors with Cross-sections 12 and 13 and Section 7, 8, 9, 16, 17, and 18, and the district's Agricultural Study Area Number 6 and Storage Area Number 1. **T-10 (cont.)**

These runway corridors correspond closely to the critical Air Force Plant 42 installation compatibility use zones and would be greatly threatened by increased bird attraction and cultivation activity on both sides of the corridors, as we have previously discussed. Creating situations that promote such risks would be unacceptable to LAWA and civil aviation authorities.

In conclusion, LAWA appreciates the district's proposed upgrade of the plant and its consideration of LAWA's comments. It is the position of LAWA that it **T-11**

remains committed to a regional approach to meet the aviation passenger capacity needs of southern California and an important part of that plant is the growth of passenger service and future expansion of the Palmdale airport; that LAWA will not allow its land to be used in a manner that creates safety risks to pilots and passengers using existing or future Palmdale airport facilities or that inhibits LAWA's ability to make Palmdale a major regional airport, including disturbing lands intended for on-site mitigation as resource conservation areas. **T-11 (cont.)**

Thank you very much.

MR. AVILA: Thank you very much.

That was the last of everyone that signed up to speak.

Would you like to speak, sir?

MR. BALDUS: Well, I signed up. Between the first session and the --

MR. AVILA: Well, why don't you come on up. I must have either missed your card or somehow it didn't make it to me, and I apologize for that.

If you could, when you come up not only give me your name, but spell it so that the court reporter has it, since I don't have a card on you.

MR. BALDUS: I'm Joe - Joe Baldus, B-a-l-d-u-s.

MR. AVILA: Thank you, Joe. If you could give me your address.

MR. BALDUS: 1249 H-1, Lancaster.

I just have two questions. Number 1: Is the L.A. airport willing to sell? It seems to me like leasing to really be a problem, and if they are not willing to sell, then we are wasting some time. It sounds like they have to put a lot of ands, ifs, and buts, even if they do. But I'm not -- I don't know. I guess you ought to be able to answer the question, are they willing to sell this property any more? **U-1**

The other question I have is how much money District 14 has in reserve? The reason I ask this question is six weeks ago, I went to a meeting in Lancaster about water, and they said District 14 had a hundred million in reserve. **U-2**

So that's my two questions.

MR. AVILA: Thank you very much, Joe.

Was there anybody else that wished to give input before I close the public hearing this evening? If not, there is still time to submit written comments.

The comment period will be open until June 17th, and we will take written comments up until that time. After that, all of the comments made this evening, written comments, et cetera, will be put into

and evaluated in the final facilities plan and the final environmental impact report and that will then go to our board for their final consideration of adoption, which will be sometime in September of this year.

The final documents we expect to be released back to you again for review sometime around summer.

So with that, what I would like to do is close the public hearing and reopen the booths because some of the questions you asked, our staff can answer for you in the back.

I thank you very much for coming this evening and giving us input, and please talk to our staff back in the booths.

(PROCEEDINGS CONCLUDED AT 8:37 P.M.)

CERTIFICATE

OF

CERTIFIED SHORTHAND REPORTER

I, TIMOTHY SCOTT, CSR NO. 5817, CERTIFIED SHORTHAND REPORTER, DO HEREBY CERTIFY:

THAT SAID PROCEEDINGS WERE TAKEN BEFORE ME AT THE TIME AND PLACE THEREIN SET FORTH AND WERE TAKEN DOWN BY ME IN SHORTHAND AND THEREAFTER TRANSCRIBED, SAID TRANSCRIPT BEING A TRUE COPY OF MY SHORTHAND NOTES THEREOF.

I FURTHER CERTIFY THAT I AM NEITHER COUNSEL FOR, NOR RELATED TO, ANY PARTY TO SAID PROCEEDINGS, NOR IN ANYWAY INTERESTED IN THE OUTCOME THEREOF.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I HAVE HEREUNTO SUBSCRIBED MY NAME THIS DATE: JUNE 10, 2005.

_____

CERTIFICATE NUMBER 8517

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RESPONSES TO COMMENTS

Comment No. A-1

The comment requests that the decision to approve the project be expedited and that the project be implemented soon. The comment is noted. Figures 7-8 and 7-9 of the PWRP 2025 Plan and EIR show the proposed project schedule.

Comment No. B-1

The comment states that Mr. Jacobsen was not given an opportunity to participate in the public outreach program at the beginning of the planning process, even though he is affected. The purpose of the public outreach program was to engage Palmdale residents early on in the planning process to help formulate project alternatives. Proposed and alternate project sites were not determined until much later in the process. Residents that were potentially affected by the project were then promptly notified through a Notice of Availability that coincided with the release of the Draft PWRP Plant 2025 Plan and EIR. Refer to Chapter 24: Public Outreach Overview for more information on public outreach and notification.

Comment No. B-2

The comment inquires as to what mitigation measures would be adopted and what would be the level of impact after mitigation is implemented. Table ES-8 of the PWRP 2025 Plan and EIR summarizes the impacts and mitigation measures in the impact analysis. District No. 20 is committed to implementing each of the mitigation measures identified in the table. As noted on page ES-21 and ES-22, the project would result in only three unavoidable significant impacts: construction air emissions, cumulative impacts to biological resources and air quality, and secondary effects of growth.

Comment No. B-3

The comment inquires what phase of the project would be implemented first and if effluent would be discharged prior to the proposed facilities upgrades. The PWRP will remain operational throughout the planning and construction of the proposed facilities. Effluent management will also continue throughout this time period. Expansion of the current EMS to its maximum capacity will be completed by 2006. Effluent will continue to be discharged at the EMS with all of the water beneficially reused during the summer months. Stage V of the proposed project, which includes upgrade and expansion of the treatment plant, construction of 500 acres of storage reservoirs, and development of 840 acres of agriculture, will be implemented first. It is anticipated that the storage reservoirs will be completed in October 2008, while treatment plant upgrades and agricultural reuse expansion will be completed in October 2009. Refer to Figures 7-8 and 7-9 of the PWRP 2025 Plan and EIR for further details regarding the project schedule.

Comment No. B-4

The comment requests that, if the project is going to be implemented, it be implemented quickly. The comment is noted. Figures 7-8 and 7-9 of the PWRP 2025 Plan and EIR show the proposed project schedule.

Comment No. C-1

The comment states that public notification associated with the release of the Draft 2025 PWRP Plan and EIR was insufficient. In accordance with CEQA, impacted property owners were promptly notified through an NOA that coincided with the release of the Draft PWRP 2025 Plan and EIR on April 29, 2005. Over 2,100 notices were mailed to property owners within 500 feet of Study Area No. 5 and Study Area No. 6. District No. 20 used the Los Angeles County Tax Assessor Role as its source for address information, which is the best source available to District No. 20. Approximately nine percent of the NOAs were returned from this mailing. All returned notices were researched using other sources. Approximately 10 percent of the returned NOAs were resent.

Additional efforts were taken to distribute NOAs to homeowners in the area of the proposed project. One returned NOA was identified as a resident. Additional research eventually yielded a different address and a new NOA was successfully mailed to this resident. In addition, a local resident volunteered to distribute additional NOAs to local residents to ensure that notifications reached all of the area residents. Refer to Chapter 24: Public Outreach Overview for more information on public outreach and notification.

Comment No. C-2

The comment states that public notification on the decision to change the site of the proposed project to Study Area No. 5 should occur in a timely manner. As required by CEQA, there will be a 10-day review period for the Final PWRP 2025 Plan and EIR before its approval and certification by District No. 20's Board of Directors in September 2005.

Comment No. D-1

The comment states that potentially affected residents were not notified until the end of the planning phase, which did not provide them an opportunity for input in the early stages of the planning process. The purpose of the public outreach program was to engage Palmdale residents early on in the planning process to help formulate project alternatives. A proposed project site was not determined until much later in the process, which was then disclosed with the release of the NOA for the Draft PWRP 2025 Plan and EIR. Refer to Chapter 24: Public Outreach Overview for additional information on public outreach efforts.

Comment No. D-2

The comment recommends closer scrutiny of water quality considerations, particularly nitrogen, because of the fact that the basin is closed and there are potable water wells in the study area. The Draft PWRP 2025 Plan and EIR describes the on-going remediation efforts on page 14-4 and evaluates the potential for impacting groundwater quality including nitrogen on page 14-7. Mitigation measures have been identified to reduce impacts to groundwater quality to less than significant levels. The proposed secondary treatment with nitrogen removal and tertiary treatment facilities will provide for a level of treatment that will remove nutrients, such as nitrogen, and most BOD and suspended solids. The PWRP 2025 Plan and EIR provides a description of wastewater treatment processes, including secondary with nitrogen removal and tertiary treatment, in Chapter 6.

Comment No. D-3

The comment recommends that District No. 20 educate the public about what tertiary treatment involves. District No. 20 implemented a year-long public outreach and education program to inform the public on the need for the project through the outreach efforts described in Chapter 24. As part of the public education process, wastewater treatment processes including tertiary treatment were explained. In addition, the PWRP 2025 Plan and EIR provides a description of wastewater treatment processes, including tertiary treatment, in Chapter 6 (see page 6-6).

Comment No. E-1

The comment states that public notification associated with the release of the Draft PWRP 2025 Plan and EIR was insufficient and potentially affected residents were not notified until the end of the planning phase, which did not provide them an opportunity for input in the early stages of the planning process. The purpose of the public outreach program was to engage Palmdale residents early on in the planning process to help formulate project alternatives. A proposed project site was not determined until much later in the process. Residents that were potentially affected by the proposed project were promptly notified through NOAs that coincided with the release of the Draft PWRP 2025 Plan and EIR. Refer to response to Comment No. C-1 and Chapter 24: Public Outreach Overview for additional information on public notification and outreach activities.

Comment No. F-1

The comment states that potentially affected residents were not notified until the end of the planning phase, which did not provide them an opportunity for input in the early stages of the planning process. District No. 20 implemented a public outreach and education program to include input from local residents early on in the facilities planning process, which helped formulate project alternatives. A proposed project site was not determined until much later in the process. Residents that were potentially affected by the proposed project were promptly notified through NOAs that coincided with the release of the Draft PWRP 2025 Plan and EIR. Refer to response to Comment No. C-1 and Chapter 24: Public Outreach Overview for additional information on public outreach activities.

Comment No. F-2

The comment proposes an alternative that would discharge recycled water into a water body, such as the aqueduct, or a structure that would eventually discharge into the ocean. District No. 20 evaluated alternatives that would have discharged water out of the Antelope Valley, including the use of the California Aqueduct, on page 6-22. The alternative was deemed infeasible due to anticipated opposition from the DWR and the DHS. Also, District No. 20 considers recycled effluent to be a valuable resource for the Antelope Valley that should not be exported, but rather put to beneficial uses for the local community.

Comment No. F-3

The comment asks why USAF Plant 42 is not allowed to put water onto the ground but District No. 20 would be allowed to do so if this project was implemented. The PCA requires that the SWQCB adopt water quality control plans and policies for the protection of water quality. In the Antelope Valley, the SWQCB has delegated authority for the day-to-day administration and enforcement of the PCA to the RWQCB-LR. The RWQCB-LR is authorized to regulate all discharges to water and/or land in order to protect water quality through the use of

WDRs. The WDRs specify water quality requirements for both the discharges and receiving waters. Any discharger, including USAF Plant 42, may apply for a WDR prior to discharging water. District No. 20 intends to operate the agricultural operations under the authority of a WDR issued by the RWQCB-LR.

Comment No. G-1

The comment states that Agricultural Area No. 6 is on land that should be retained as a preserve, since 30 years ago it was designated as a conservation area when the PIA was proposed in the 1970s by LAWA. Although LAWA identified this land in a 1978 EIS as a potential conservation area to mitigate impacts associated with the once-proposed PIA, the PIA was never constructed and those impacts did not occur. District No. 20 is not aware of any development restrictions or recorded conservation easements that have been identified for the property. Recent discussions with LAWA staff, as well as the January 2005 NOP of a Draft EA/EIR for future development recommended by the proposed Master Plan for PMD, indicate that the scale of the proposed airport development has been significantly reduced. The proposed Master Plan and EA/EIR concluded that the existing USAF Plant 42 airfield has adequate capacity to accommodate forecast aircraft operations and will continue to be utilized for all aircraft operations. There is no proposal to maintain the land east of Little Rock Wash for habitat conservation. Refer to General Response: Airport Compatibility for additional information.

Comment No. G-2

The comment states that Joshua trees are located in the area of the proposed agricultural fields. Figure 12-1 of the PWRP 2025 Plan and EIR identifies locations of Joshua tree woodlands within the proposed agricultural areas. Impacts to Joshua trees are discussed on pages 12-23 through 12-25. Mitigation Measure 12-16 requires District No. 20 to obtain a permit from the City of Palmdale for Joshua trees removed by the project within the City. Mitigation Measure 12-18 commits District No. 20 to purchasing compensation lands at a 1:1 ratio for the conservation of Joshua tree woodlands in perpetuity.

Comment No. G-3

The comment states that there are burrowing owls and other birds residing, foraging, nesting, etc., in the area of the proposed agricultural fields. The PWRP 2025 Plan and EIR provides a detailed description of the natural resources within the project impact area in Chapter 12. Also contained in Chapter 12 is Mitigation Measure 12-5, which sets forth requirements for preconstruction surveys for nesting birds and the creation of no-disturbance buffer zones around any active nests that are identified. Refer to response to Comment No. 6-11 in Chapter 26 for additional information.

Comment No. G-4

The comment states that the Antelope Valley Group of the Sierra Club would rather have District No. 20 percolate the tertiary-treated water back into the aquifer, provided that the proper agencies approve the water quality of the treated water. Groundwater recharge was considered by District No. 20 as an effluent management alternative. The alternative was rejected since it could not be implemented within the timeframe set forth by project objectives. However, District No. 20 remains supportive of groundwater recharge and is interested in working with regional partners to develop a groundwater recharge project. Refer to General Response: Alternative Analysis for additional information.

Comment No. H-1

The comment asks if the proposed project would adversely affect the scenic views and overall aesthetics of the natural environment in the area. The PWRP 2025 Plan and EIR discusses the project's potential impact to local aesthetic resources in Chapter 10. Although some development would alter the open space character of the area, the project is not seen as contributing to significant aesthetic impacts in the region.

Comment No. H-2

The comment states that if the project were to be implemented, Ms. Walker would like to see the development of more recreational uses in the area utilizing the recycled water. Municipal reuse of recycled water consists of utilizing recycled water in place of potable water for various purposes. One of the main municipal reuse applications is to irrigate large landscaped areas, such as golf courses, parks, etc. District No. 20 is interested in expanding recycled water use in the Antelope Valley and is supportive of municipal reuse projects. The PWRP 2025 Plan and EIR includes municipal reuse as a component of the proposed project.

Comment No. H-3

The comment states that Ms. Walker is concerned that the project will have a negative effect on her current property value. Water reuse through agricultural irrigation is currently practiced in many areas throughout the state of California with no known negative effect on the values of adjacent properties. Therefore, the proposed project is not anticipated to have any adverse impacts on property values. Refer to General Response: Property Value and Acquisition for more information.

Comment No. H-4

The comment asks whether the current LAWA property will be leased or bought if the project were to be implemented. District No. 20 is interested in securing long-term use of the property, preferably through ownership, but would also consider a long-term lease, if the appropriate terms were included.

Comment No. I-1

The comment states that the proposed project will be very damaging to the City of Palmdale, LAWA, USAF Plant 42, and the community in the Antelope Valley. The PWRP 2025 Plan and EIR identifies impacts associated with implementation of the project pursuant to the requirements of CEQA. Table ES-8 summarizes the impacts and mitigation measures developed to minimize potential impacts. The project needs and objectives are discussed on pages ES-2 through ES-4. The PWRP 2025 Plan and EIR proposes a long-term program to meet the immediate deadlines imposed by the RWQCB-LR while allowing for future reuse of the water produced by the upgraded treatment facilities. It also furnishes a master plan to provide wastewater management that is protective of public health and the environment. Refer to General Response: Alternative Analysis for additional information.

Comment No. I-2

The comment states that the proposed project represents a new consumptive use of water in an already overdrafted basin. The proposed agricultural operations are a component of the EMS that can be scaled back

when future reuse programs such as municipal reuse and indirect potable reuse alternatives are implemented. In addition, agricultural reuse offers current farmers an additional source of irrigation water, which would lessen current groundwater consumption. Since no additional groundwater will be extracted, the agricultural operations associated with the project do not constitute a new consumptive use in the Antelope Valley that would increase water demand from an already overdrafted basin. Refer to response to Comment No. 11-7 in Chapter 26 and General Response: Alternative Analysis for additional information.

Comment No. I-3

The comment states that the extent of the nitrogen plumes is approximately 10 square miles, that nitrogen has adversely affected approximately 290,000 acre-feet of water, and that nitrogen in the ground in these plumes is approximately 1,200 tons. The comment also questions the addition of another 600 tons of nitrogen to the ground from the proposed effluent stream when there is already a contaminated groundwater plume underneath the LAWA property.

It should be noted that the 10 square miles mentioned above is an estimate by the RQWCB-LR of groundwater with nitrate above 2 mg/L, not 10 mg/L. District No. 20 estimates the volume of groundwater within the estimated 2 mg/L nitrate iso-contour line to be approximately 190,000 acre-feet, the volume of groundwater containing greater than 10 mg/L of nitrate (over the drinking water standard) to be about 21,000 acre-feet, and that from 2004 through 2009 approximately 560 tons of nitrogen will be land applied at the Palmdale EMS and a portion will eventually become available to the groundwater[1].

District No. 20 is currently working in coordination with the RWQCB-LR on projects to remediate existing nitrogen levels in the groundwater below the current EMS. The PWRP 2025 Plan and EIR provides a long-term solution to prevent additional impacts to the groundwater. Groundwater sampling from three monitoring wells downgradient of the land application areas indicated that nitrate concentrations varied but periodically exceeded the drinking water standard of 10 mg/L as N. As a result, the RWQCB-LR adopted CAO No. R6V-2003-056 requiring District No. 20 and LAWA to delineate, contain, and remediate the impacted groundwater (see Appendix C).

A conceptual approach and design for containment and remediation of nitrate-affected groundwater was proposed in the Containment and Remediation Plan (CRP) dated September 15, 2004, and was further described in the February 28, 2005, supplement to the CRP. The proposed approach and design to contain nitrate-affected groundwater includes District No. 20's ongoing and planned abatement activities supplemented by construction and seasonal operation of new groundwater extraction wells in the area where nitrate concentrations exceed 10 mg/L.

One project objective of the PWRP 2025 Plan and EIR is to "provide a long-term solution for meeting water quality requirements set forth by regulatory agencies." District No. 20 is committed to complying with the CAO and future discharge permit requirements.

[1] Regional Water Quality Control Board-Lahontan Region: March 2005 Staff Report

The comment further states that the PWRP 2025 Plan and EIR will degrade groundwater in the Antelope Valley and recharge areas (Little Rock Wash) while increasing new consumptive use in an overdrafted basin. The comment suggests that the solution would be to treat the wastewater to a tertiary level after denitrification and disinfection, then discharge it into Little Rock Wash, where it would be considered "incidental recharge" by the regulatory community. The PWRP 2025 Plan and EIR evaluates the feasibility of discharging treated effluent to Little Rock Wash on page 6-21. The alternative was rejected since a planned discharge to Little Rock Wash would be considered a planned groundwater recharge project and therefore would not meet the schedule objectives of the project. Furthermore, agricultural reuse would not constitute a new consumptive use since no additional groundwater would be extracted and it could be scaled back if reuse options are developed. Refer to response to Comment No. I-2, response to Comment No. 14-4 in Chapter 26, and General Response: Alternative Analysis in Chapter 25 for additional information.

Comment J-1

The comment acknowledges that reclaimed water is a very valuable resource and should be utilized, but also states that this potential resource should be reserved for public use and not for the creation of lakes and ponds or the watering of golf courses. District No. 20 remains committed to the responsible use of water resources and recognizes that one of the highest and best uses for potable water is direct public consumption. One effective way to preserve valuable potable water supplies is to substitute recycled water for applications that do not involve direct public consumption. The Draft PWRP 2025 Plan and EIR includes a provision for the use of recycled water to irrigate parks, median strips, playgrounds, cemeteries, and golf courses that would otherwise consume potable water. If implemented, this measure would make more potable water available for public use. Refer to response to Comment No. N-3 for additional information.

Comment No. J-2

The comment notes that bonds could finance the proposed project and that rates should be reduced once the debt service is payed. The cost of the projects proposed in the PWRP 2025 Plan and EIR will generally be financed by a combination of State Revolving Fund (SRF) loans and bonds. The repayment periods for the anticipated loans and bonds are typically 20 and 30 years, respectively. Existing users will only pay the portion of the debt service payment related to upgrade of facilities from Service Charge revenue. New users would pay for the remainder of the debt service through Connection Fee revenue. However, it is too difficult to accurately predict what Service Charge and Connection Fee rates are needed in the future due to economic uncertainties and changes in regulatory requirements over this time period. Therefore, although it may be theoretically possible, no commitments can be made at this time regarding reduction of Service Charge or Connection Fee rates after the debt service is paid.

Comment No. J-3

The comment asks if the eventual conversion to low-flow toilets and showerheads was considered in the calculation of the proposed cost per dwelling unit to implement the proposed project. Water conservation measures, such as low-flow toilets and showerheads, were included in the flow projections for this project and were therefore indirectly included in the cost per dwelling estimates. They are discussed in Chapter 5 of the PWRP 2025 Plan and EIR where the methodology for all flow projections is outlined. Refer to response to Comment No. M-2 for additional information.

Comment No. K-1

The comment clarifies that the RWQCB-LR, whom Mr. Plaziak represents, did not mandate that District No. 20 construct facilities or specify the type of facilities to be built. This is because, under the PCA, RWQCBs cannot mandate or specify the manner or method of compliance. The comment is noted. The RWQCB-LR did instruct District No. 20 to reduce the nitrogen level in the PWRP effluent by certain dates. The PWRP 2025 Plan and EIR has been developed in response to RWQCB-LR's CAO to achieve the nitrogen reduction required.

Comment No. K-2

The comment states that it was "somewhat misleading" for District No. 20's staff to infer in the opening presentation at the June 2, 2005 public hearing that reduction in groundwater nitrate levels at the PWRP EMS was a result of District's actions. The District's presentation accurately stated that one of two monitoring wells that had been above the 10 mg/L MCL for nitrates recently dropped below 10 mg/L. This left only one of the 27 wells monitoring wells at the PWRP EMS above the MCL for nitrates. It is by no means misleading to point at out that a decrease in nitrate levels in a previously high monitoring well occurred after a significant increase in agricultural operations occurred at the EMS. Although the cause of this decline is difficult to verify in the short term, the fact remains that reducing land application and increasing agricultural reuse will improve groundwater quality over time. For this reason, District No. 20 proposed increasing agricultural reuse as an integral component of the Abatement Plan approved by the RWQCB-LR. The RWQCB-LR acknowledged the effectiveness of crops with respect to nitrogen consumption in the CDO issued to District No. 20. The CDO allows demonstration of compliance in reducing nitrogen discharges by expanding farming operation at the EMS.

Comment No. K-3

The comment states that recent proposals from District No. 20 to the RWQCB-LR proposed an allowance of adding 600 tons of nitrogen in the groundwater over the next four years. The RWQCB-LR has asked the District to reassess the feasibility of reducing this time frame. The PWRP 2025 Plan and EIR provides measures to prevent additional nitrogen from affecting groundwater quality in the future. The project schedule provided in Figure 7-8 reflects the best case scenario for implementing the project. District No. 20 is complying with RWQCB-LR's remediation requirements set forth in the CAO and CDO. Refer to responses to Comment No. I-3, previously discussed in this chapter, and 11-36 in Chapter 26 for additional information.

Comment No. L-1

The comment expresses concern that, after 40 years of owning the property within the proposed project site with the belief that the deed provided protection from any other entity acquiring the property in question. District No. 20 conducted an alternatives screening process to develop a proposed project to meet the project objectives. The highest ranked project would utilize LAWA property and avoid removing residential landowners to accommodate the project. However, attempts to negotiate with LAWA have been unsuccessful. Because the LAWA property is not available, the proposed project includes acquisition of properties in Agricultural Reuse Study Area No. 5. Refer to General Response: Property Value and Acquisition for further details on land acquisition procedures.

Comment No. L-2

The comment questions whether the City of Palmdale has already approved development of the proposed project on the site. The lead agency of a project must approve any CEQA documentation prepared for a project, such as an EIR, before that project is considered approved for development. District No. 20, not the City, is the lead agency for the project; therefore, District No. 20 will approve the project, not the City. The project has not been approved yet, but will be considered for approval by the Board of Directors of District No. 20 in September 2005.

Comment No. L-3

The comment states that the property owner will be forced to sell at a time when the market is historically lower in price. Displaced property owners will be compensated at fair market value and be given appropriate relocation costs, if applicable. Refer to General Response: Property Value and Acquisition for further information on land valuation.

Comment No. M-1

The comment states that the Antelope Valley Resource Conservation District (AVRCD), which Mr. Dodson represents, did not obtain a copy of the Draft PWRP 2025 Plan and EIR until the day of the public hearing even though this agency is responsible for the conservation of natural resources. District No. 20 agrees that the AVRCD, as an agency that assists in the management of the natural resources of the Antelope Valley (CEQA Guidelines Section 15086), should review and comment on the Draft PWRP 2025 Plan and EIR. The AVRCD was not included on the mailing list, which was an oversight. The AVRCD is now listed on the project mailing list and will receive all future correspondence regarding the project. Although the AVRCD does not have discretionary approval authority over implementation of the project and is therefore not a "Responsible Agency" for purposes of CEQA (CEQA Guidelines Section 15381), the agency's input is encouraged.

Comment No. M-2

The comment states that water conservation and more effective water use need to be addressed in an integrated manner. The PWRP 2025 Plan and EIR includes a municipal reuse component, which could replace potable water use in certain areas. As municipal reuse demand in the Palmdale area increases, this component can be adjusted accordingly.

Development and implementation of water conservation programs are the responsibility of the local water purveyors. The majority of the residents within the District No. 20 service area are serviced by PWD and Los Angeles County Waterworks District No. 40. These purveyors are subject to several water conservation regulations, including the Urban Water Management Planning Act, which requires medium to large suppliers to prepare and adopt urban water conservation measures; the Water Conservation in Landscaping Act, which requires cities and counties to adopt water-efficient landscaping ordinances; and the Agricultural Water Management Planning Act, which requires large suppliers for agriculture to submit water conservation reports to the DWR.

The planned facilities and timing of the Stage VI expansion will be reevaluated between 2009 and 2013 to respond to any changes in wastewater flow projections or other factors affecting the proposed project, such as

additional water reuse opportunities. If wastewater generation rates decrease due to water conservation measures, implementation of the proposed project components will be adjusted accordingly.

Comment No. M-3

The comment states that tertiary water treatment with nitrogen removal should be the preferred level of treatment for the wastewater effluent. The PWRP 2025 Plan and EIR proposed project includes this level of treatment. The comment is noted and no response is necessary.

Comment No. M-4

The statement expresses concern over the destruction of Joshua trees and creosote bushes as a result of the proposed project. Impacted Joshua tree woodlands, a sensitive community that could also support special-status species, would be mitigated per Mitigation Measures 12-16 and 12-18. Compensation lands would be required to mitigate impacts to Joshua tree woodlands. Creosote bush scrub habitat can be used by MGS, a special-status species, and mitigation for impacts to this habitat are shown in Mitigation Measure 12-7. Refer to responses to Comment Nos. 6-5, 6-13 in Chapter 26, and G-2 previously discussed in this chapter for additional information.

Comment No. M-5

The comment recommends discharging to Little Rock Wash rather than using the recycled water to irrigate agricultural fields. This alternative is evaluated on page 6-21 of the PWRP 2025 Plan and EIR. The alternative is deemed infeasible since it would not allow District No. 20 to meet the deadlines imposed on it by the RWQCB-LR. Refer to General Response: Alternative Analysis for additional information.

Comment No. N-1

The comment expresses concern that no efforts have been made to map the extent or clean up the contamination plume. A conceptual approach and design for containment and remediation of nitrate-affected groundwater was proposed in the CRP dated September 15, 2004, and was further described in the February 28, 2005, supplement to the CRP. The proposed approach and design to contain nitrate-affected groundwater includes District No. 20's ongoing and planned abatement activities supplemented by construction and seasonal operation of new groundwater extraction wells in the area where nitrate concentrations exceed 10 mg/l.

An objective of the PWRP 2025 Plan and EIR is to "provide a long-term solution for meeting water quality requirements set forth by regulatory agencies." District No. 20 is committed to complying with the CAO and future discharge permit requirements. Refer to response to Comment No. I-3 for additional information.

Comment No. N-2

The comment expresses concern about the additional 600 tons of nitrogen in the groundwater below their property and that nearby drinking wells will be adversely affected by the additional nitrogen. The PWRP 2025 Plan and EIR describes the on-going remediation efforts on page 14-4 and evaluates the potential for the proposed project to impact groundwater quality, including nitrogen levels, on page 14-7. District No. 20 is coordinating its efforts closely with the RWQCB-LR to remediate the elevated levels of nitrogen in the groundwater below the EMS. Refer to responses to Comment Nos. I-3 previously discussed in this chapter and 11-36 in Chapter 26 for additional information.

Comment No. N-3

This comment expresses concern that the use of the effluent to water fodder crops is not the best use of the water and that a better use would be municipal use or recharge. The proposed project of the PWRP 2025 Plan and EIR includes agricultural reuse while making recycled water available for municipal reuse projects. District No. 20 welcomes opportunities to increase municipal reuse of recycled water in the Antelope Valley. At this time, PWD, Los Angeles County Waterworks District No. 40, the Cities of Palmdale and Lancaster, and other members of the Antelope Valley Water Reuse Group have expressed interest in developing recycled water programs to reduce potable water demand. A 1997 Reclamation and Feasibility Study Draft Report from the City of Palmdale identified projects that could provide effluent management for up to 35 percent of the total flow rate by the year 2025.

In addition, groundwater recharge was considered by District No. 20 as an effluent management alternative. This alternative was rejected since it could not meet the project schedule. Nonetheless, District No. 20 remains interested in working with regional partners to develop a groundwater recharge project. Refer to General Response: Alternative Analysis for additional information.

Comment No. O-1

The comment states that the Cultural Resources section of the Draft PWRP 2025 Plan and EIR contains omissions and erroneous and misleading statements regarding the absence of cultural resources, whereas the Final EIS for the PIA discusses significant cultural resources in the area. The PWRP 2025 Plan and EIR provides an adequate description of existing information on the site based on available information from the South Central Coastal Information Center, including the results of the cited survey. A supplemental evaluation is not necessary. The PWRP 2025 Plan and EIR summarizes the results of the 1978 survey on page 11-4. The 1978 EIS referenced in the comment states the following on page III-160:

> "As indicated above, the archaeological and historical features discovered in the areas surveyed are not of major significance. Finds of individual artifacts were made at several locations consisting of two metates, three fragmentary manos, an obsidian point, and several obsidian cores and flakes. The manos and metates were found on the surface without associated artifacts or indications of habitation. The original areas from which each had been derived could not be determined.
>
> The obsidian flakes and point posed a different problem since obsidian is not native to the Valley and most of the artifacts were found in dumping areas containing refuse of recent age. Judging from the appearance of this obsidian it probably originated in the China Lake area near Inyo-Kern while the association with modern refuse and the absence of other aboriginal materials of any type demonstrated that the artifacts had been collected by a modern resident and later thrown out along with the other refuse. Three additional obsidian flakes were found on the surface of a recently deserted barnyard [*sic.*] near one of the metates, again without other associated aboriginal materials.
>
> Based on these findings, it is determined that construction of the runways and passenger terminals will not disturb any significant archaeological or historical features on the site."

The 1978 EIS goes on to recommend additional surveying in areas east of Little Rock Wash. The PWRP 2025 Plan and EIR commits District No. 20 to surveying areas not already surveyed for LAWA as summarized in the

1978 EIS (Mitigation Measure 11-1). The PWRP 2025 Plan and EIR concludes on page 11-5 that the entire Initial Study Area could be categorized an area of moderate sensitivity for cultural resources. Refer to response to Comment No. 15-2 in Chapter 26.

Comment No. O-2

The comment states that there is a need to perform additional cultural resource surveys and to prepare a supplemental document for public review. The PWRP 2025 Plan and EIR commits District No. 20 to surveying areas not already surveyed for the LAWA PIA project as summarized in the 1978 EIS and 1982 EIR (Mitigation Measure 11-1). The PWRP 2025 Plan and EIR concludes on page 11-5 that the entire Initial Study Area could be categorized as an area having moderate sensitivity for the presence of cultural resources. Based on this comment, there is no reason to recirculate a supplemental environmental analysis to satisfy the requirements of CEQA.

Comment No. P-1

The comment states that the PWRP 2025 Plan and EIR is flawed because an alternative to use MF/RO, which, among other things, would reduce the salt content of the effluent, was not adequately addressed. The PWRP 2025 Plan and EIR evaluates MF/RO as a treatment alternative in Chapter 6. The effluent management alternative of agricultural and municipal reuse was considered to be more cost-effective with tertiary treatment than MF/RO and attainable within the timeframe of the project objectives. The costs associated with blending water and its uncertain availability, management of the brine effluent from the MF/RO process, and the need for adjudication of water rights in the Antelope Valley were other factors that made MF/RO less desirable than the proposed project. When considering all the infrastructure and pumping stations required to operate an MF/RO facility, obtain and transfer blending water, and transfer the combined MF/RO effluent and blending water to the recharge site, the equivalent annual costs associated with fully implementing advanced treatment with groundwater recharge are twice the cost of tertiary treatment with agricultural and municipal reuse. As noted in the PWRP 2025 Plan and EIR, District No. 20 will remain actively involved with other stakeholders in the region interested in developing emerging effluent management alternatives. The PWRP 2025 Plan and EIR also concludes that the application of salts over time could be managed through implementation of an FMP that would flush salts periodically without significantly degrading groundwater. Refer to General Response: Alternative Analysis for additional information.

Comment No. Q-1

The comment states that the Desert Aire Golf Course at 3620 East Avenue P in Palmdale, whom Ms. McEnaney represents, would gladly use the proposed tertiary-treated water for irrigation purposes and could use the water as soon as possible. District No. 20 is committed to working with the Desert Aire Golf Course and the rest of the Palmdale community with respect to making recycled water available for municipal reuse.

Comment No. R-1

The comment states that the U.S. Air Force (USAF) understands that a need has been demonstrated for the potential establishment of a new water reclamation plant east of USAF Plant 42. Furthermore, the comment states that the USAF supports District No. 20's objectives of increasing wastewater treatment capacity to handle

future growth and finding ways that accommodate recycled water use opportunities through tertiary treatment, if the community supports this option. The comment is noted.

Comment No. R-2

The comment expresses concern that the establishment of the new water treatment facility near USAF Plant 42 could increase the potential for bird strikes by aircraft and asks that, during the design phase, locations for the evaporation ponds and/or agricultural fields be situated south of Runway 25 (south of Avenue N) because 85 percent of all air traffic to Plant 42 is handled by this runway. Not every existing or proposed land use practice, such as the PWRP treatment and effluent management facilities, on or near an airport that potentially attracts hazardous wildlife, actually does. The FAA's Advisory Circular (AC No. 150/5200-33A) provides guidance on land use practices that have potential to attract hazardous wildlife on or near airports and outlines procedures by which an actual hazard can be identified and mitigated. District No. 20 is not aware of any specific triggering events, as defined by Part 139 of 14 CFR, resulting from the operation of the existing treatment and effluent management facilities, or that a WHA has been prepared by USAF Plant 42 or PMD. Therefore, it can be concluded that no hazard from current PWRP operations exists. Nonetheless, the proposed project has been modified to site all effluent management facilities and agricultural operations outside the flight corridor between Avenues M and N, which has been identified by USAF Plant 42 as an area of concern. The proposed project recommends upgrade and expansion of the existing facilities in a manner that is consistent with AC No. 150/5200-33A. Therefore, the Final PWRP 2025 Plan and EIR concludes that the proposed project also has a less than significant impact on airfield operations at USAF Plant 42. Refer to General Response: Airport Compatibility for additional information.

Comment No. R-3

The comment asks that the groundwater recharge alternative be considered further. As discussed in Chapter 6 of the PWRP 2025 Plan and EIR, the groundwater recharge alternative was considered. The alternative was deemed infeasible due to its inability to meet the project objective of providing reliable effluent management within the timeframe needed to comply with the RWQCB-LR discharge permit. However, as noted in Chapter 7 of the PWRP 2025 Plan and EIR, District No. 20 will implement the proposed project in stages, so that any alternative effluent management options that may become available, such as recharge, may be integrated into the project. Refer to General Response: Alternative Analysis for additional information.

Comment No. S-1

The commenter expresses concern that he may never be able to utilize his property if the proposed project were implemented. District No. 20 will attempt to obtain properties from willing sellers. However, if not enough property is acquired from willing sellers, District No. 20 has the authority to use eminent domain to provide needed public services for the community as a whole. Refer to General Response: Property Value and Acquisition for additional information.

Comment No. S-2

The commenter expresses concern that his property will be used for a treatment plant rather than as part of a growing community. District No. 20 conducted an alternatives screening process to develop a proposed project to meet the project objectives. The highest ranked project would utilize LAWA property and avoid removing

residential landowners to accommodate the project. However, attempts to negotiate with LAWA have been unsuccessful. Because the LAWA property is not available, the proposed project includes acquisition of properties in Agricultural Reuse Study Area No. 5. Refer to General Response: Property Value and Acquisition for additional information.

Comment No. T-1

The comment states that LAWA, for whom Mr. Slezak is outside counsel, supports District No. 20's proposed project to upgrade treatment and would support an even more aggressive treatment protocol. The comment is noted. Chapter 6 discusses the treatment alternatives screening process.

Comment No. T-2

The comment requests that the PWRP 2025 Plan and EIR adequately assess and remediate adverse impacts to groundwater due to nitrogen in the discharge effluent within District No. 20's ponds and on LAWA property. District No. 20 is coordinating closely with the RWQCB-LR to delineate and remediate the elevated levels of nitrogen in the groundwater below the EMS. The Draft PWRP 2025 Plan and EIR describes the on-going remediation activities on page 14-4. Refer to response to Comment Nos. I-3 and N-1 for additional information.

Comment No. T-3

The comment states that LAWA's property should not be used in a manner that interferes with existing or future aviation uses or that would disturb existing conservation areas. The comment also states that LAWA will not voluntarily allow its property to be used in a manner that creates safety risks, inhibits its ability to make PIA a major regional airport, and disturbs existing conservation needs. District No. 20 agrees that the PWRP 2025 Facilities Plan and EIR must be compatible with existing and future neighboring land uses, and would not approve an effluent management system that created unsafe conditions for existing or future airport operations. Based on LAWA's January 2005 NOP of a Draft EA/EIR for future development recommended by the proposed Master Plan for PMD, the existing USAF Plant 42 airfield has adequate capacity to accommodate forecast aircraft operations and will continue to be utilized for all aircraft operations through 2030. Construction of new runways, as described in the 1978 and 1982 environmental documents for the originally proposed PIA, is not included as part of any of the proposed alternatives developed in the Master Plan for PMD.

Regarding the creation of safety risks, District No. 20 is not aware of any specific triggering events, as defined by Part 139, resulting from the operation of the existing treatment and effluent management facilities, or that a WHA has been prepared by USAF Plant 42 or PMD. Therefore, it can be concluded that no hazard from current PWRP operations exists. The proposed project proposes upgrades and expansion of the existing facilities in a manner that is consistent with AC No. 150/5200-33A. Therefore, it can be concluded that the proposed project will have less than significant impacts on existing and future aviation uses.

Finally, the proposed project does not disturb any existing conservation areas; no development restrictions, NRMP, or recorded conservation easements were identified for the property. Nevertheless, coordinating long-term planning efforts with LAWA is an essential part of the PWRP 2025 Plan and EIR. The Draft PWRP 2025 Plan and EIR notes in several places (e.g., page 9-7) that the use of LAWA property is contingent on LAWA's approval. Refer to General Response: Airport Compatibility for additional information.

Comment No. T-4

The comment states that although tertiary treatment is an improvement over secondary treatment, advanced treatment should be considered because it increases the types of uses for which recycled water can be utilized (specifically, it allows groundwater recharge via injection). Advanced treatment was evaluated as a wastewater treatment alternative in Chapter 6. It was determined that tertiary treatment was more cost-effective than advanced treatment with the selected effluent management alternative of agricultural and municipal reuse. Refer to response to Comment No. P-1. Also refer to General Response: Alternative Analysis for additional information.

Comment No. T-5

The comment states that the PWRP 2025 Plan and EIR disregards municipal reuse as an effluent management option. Municipal reuse is a component of the proposed project's effluent management alternative. Refer to General Response: Alternative Analysis for additional information.

Comment No. T-6

The comment states that the PWRP 2025 Plan and EIR disregards groundwater recharge as an alternative, although this option could be viable with the proposed tertiary treatment of effluent and would avoid land conversion. Groundwater recharge was considered by District No. 20 as an effluent management alternative. The alternative was rejected since it could not meet the schedule objectives of the project. Nonetheless, District No. 20 remains interested in working with regional partners to develop a groundwater recharge project. Refer to General Response: Alternative Analysis for additional information.

Comment No. T-7

The comment expresses concern that the proposed use of effluent to irrigate fodder crops would be unnecessarily consumptive and require excessive land conversion, especially in an overdrafted basin, and should instead be used for municipal reuse, groundwater recharge, and existing agricultural crops that currently use groundwater for irrigation. The proposed agricultural operations are a component of the proposed project for effluent management that can be scaled back when future reuse programs such as municipal reuse and indirect potable reuse alternatives become a reality. As such, the agricultural operations do not constitute a new consumptive use in the Antelope Valley that would increase water demand. Refer to response to Comment No. 11-7 in Chapter 26 for additional information.

In addition, groundwater recharge was considered by District No. 20 as an effluent management alternative. The alternative was rejected since it could not meet the schedule objectives of the project. Nonetheless, District No. 20 remains interested in working with regional partners to develop a groundwater recharge project. Refer to General Response: Alternative Analysis for additional information.

Comment No. T-8

The comment states that it is LAWA's position that the proposed acquisition and conversion of land into agricultural reuse and storage reservoirs would conflict with the existing and future aviation uses of the PMD site and the conservation areas. District No. 20 would not approve an effluent management system that created

unsafe conditions for existing or future airport operations. The FAA's Advisory Circular (AC) No. 150/5200-33A provides guidance on land use practices that have potential to attract hazardous wildlife on or near airports. The proposed project recommends upgrades and expansion of the existing facilities in a manner that is consistent with the AC. Therefore, it can be concluded that the proposed project will have less than significant impacts on the existing USAF Plant 42/PWD airfield.

Regarding future aviation uses, based on LAWA's January 2005 NOP of a Draft EA/EIR for future development recommended by the proposed Master Plan for PMD, the existing USAF Plant 42 airfield has adequate capacity to accommodate forecast aircraft operations and will continue to be utilized for all aircraft operations through 2030. Construction of new runways, as described in the 1978 and 1982 environmental documents for the originally proposed PIA, is not included as part of any of the proposed alternatives developed in the Master Plan for PMD. The proposed project has considered the FAA's recommendations as they relate to future airport development recommended by the proposed Master Plan for PMD. Therefore, it can be concluded that the proposed project will have less than significant impacts on future aviation uses.

Finally, the proposed project does not disturb any existing conservation areas; no development restrictions, NRMP, or recorded conservation easements were identified for the property. Nevertheless, coordinating long-term planning efforts with LAWA is an essential part of the PWRP 2025 Plan and EIR. LAWA would have to agree that the proposed effluent management facilities are compatible with existing and future uses of the PMD in order to utilize the land. Refer to General Response: Airport Compatibility for additional information.

Comment No. T-9

The comment states that the 1978 Final EIS for the PIA designated two conservation areas, of which 80 percent of the larger 4,940-acre area located east of 80th Street East to 105th Street East would be converted to agricultural use and storage reservoirs under the proposed project. The comment asserts that this is a potential conflict in land use and may preclude the use of the site for these components of the proposed project. District No. 20 is not aware of any development restrictions or recorded conservation easements that have been identified for the property. Recent discussions with LAWA staff, as well as the January 2005 NOP of a Draft EA/EIR for future development recommended by the proposed Master Plan for PMD, indicate that the scale of the proposed airport development has been significantly reduced. The proposed Master Plan and EA/EIR concluded that the existing USAF Plant 42 airfield has adequate capacity to accommodate forecast aircraft operations and will continue to be utilized for all aircraft operations. The Master Plan does not contain any proposal to maintain the land east of Little Rock Wash for habitat conservation. Refer to General Response: Airport Compatibility for additional information.

Comment No. T-10

The comment expresses concern about potential bird air strike hazards due to cultivation of fodder crops near existing and proposed runway areas that could attract rodents, which, in turn, attract high-flying raptors and ravens. The comment expresses concern that the proposed location of the storage reservoirs and agriculture would attract migrating waterfowl, ducks, and geese and would increase the potential for bird air strike hazards. The FAA's Advisory Circular (AC) No. 150/5200-33A provides guidance on land use practices that have potential to attract hazardous wildlife on or near airports. Not every existing land use practice that potentially attracts hazardous wildlife (such as the PWRP and current EMS) actually does. Because of this, the

FAA has outlined procedures by which an actual hazard can be identified. An investigation is first triggered by the occurrence of specific triggering events on or near an airport. If the triggering events meet the criteria as outlined in Part 139, a WHA is required. The FAA will then determine whether a formal WHMP is needed. If the FAA determines that a WHMP is needed, the airport operator must formulate and implement a WHMP, using the WHA as a basis for the plan.

District No. 20 is not aware of any specific triggering events, as defined by Part 139, resulting from the operation of the existing treatment and effluent management facilities, or that a WHA has been prepared by USAF Plant 42 or PMD. Therefore, it can be concluded that no hazard from current PWRP operations exists. The proposed project recommends upgrades and expansion of the existing facilities in a manner that is consistent with AC No. 150/5200-33A. Refer to General Response: Airport Compatibility for additional information.

Comment No. T-11

The comment states that LAWA is committed to the future expansion of the PMD and will not allow LAWA-owned property to be used in a manner that creates safety risks to pilots and passengers using existing or future PMD facilities, including disturbing lands intended as conservation areas. District No. 20, in turn, would not approve an effluent management system that created unsafe conditions for existing or future airport operations. Refer to the response to Comment Nos. T-3, T-8, T-9, T-10 and General Response: Airport Compatibility for additional information.

Comment No. U-1

The comment asks if LAWA is willing to sell or lease the property. Attempts to negotiate with LAWA to acquire land for this project have been unsuccessful. Because of this, Agricultural Study Area No. 5 and Storage Reservoir Study Area No. 3 are proposed for siting effluent management facilities and agricultural operations. These areas consist of privately-held land located north and northeast of LAWA property.

Comment No. U-2

The comment asks how much money District No. 14 has in reserve. This comment does not specifically address the adequacy of the PWRP 2025 Plan and EIR, which was prepared by District No. 20. Therefore, no response is necessary.