



CHAPTER 8

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CHAPTER 8 INTRODUCTION

In accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act, Section 15120(b), an EIR may be integrated into a project report (i.e. not a separate document) as long as it is clearly distinguishable and provides analysis of all the topics required in an EIR. Part II of this document (Chapters 8-24) constitutes the *2015 Santa Clarita Valley Joint Sewerage System Facilities Plan Environmental Impact Report*.

BACKGROUND

The 2015 Plan addresses the need to expand and upgrade the SCVJSS in order to accommodate wastewater flow associated with the projected population and industrial growth in the planning area. In addition, the 2015 Plan discusses biosolids disposal and wastewater conveyance needs, and water reuse opportunities (the objective of the 2015 Plan is introduced in Chapter 1). Alternatives to satisfy the objective were identified and screened to determine the recommended project based on good engineering practices, environmental impacts, and cost-effectiveness. The recommended project consists of expansion of the VWRP in two stages: Stage V and Stage VI (9 mgd and 6 mgd, respectively), and upgrade of both the SWRP and VWRP to incorporate nitrification-denitrification. The environmental impacts of the recommended project are analyzed and addressed in the associated 2015 Plan EIR and appropriate mitigation measures are recommended to reduce or avoid adverse impacts. Part I of this document (Chapters 1-7) is the 2015 Plan.

PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

Purpose

The basic purposes of CEQA (State CEQA Guidelines Section 15002[a]) are as follows:

- Inform government decision-makers and the public of any adverse impacts resulting from the project.
- Identify measures to reduce or avoid impacts.
- Prevent significant impacts where feasible, by the use of different alternatives or mitigation measures.
- Disclose to the public reasons why a project was approved if significant impacts are involved.

Based on Section 15126 of the State CEQA Guidelines, the objective of the 2015 Plan EIR is to identify and describe:

- Alternatives to the recommended project of the 2015 Plan.
- Significant environmental effects associated with the 2015 Plan.
- Significant environmental effects which cannot be avoided.
- Significant cumulative impacts of all past, present, and reasonably anticipated future projects.
- Growth-inducing impacts.
- Feasible mitigation measures necessary to minimize significant impacts.
- Significant irreversible environmental impacts.

Scope and Organization of the EIR

The scope, organization, and content of the 2015 Plan EIR are designed to meet the requirements of Article 9 of the State CEQA Guidelines. The following resources and topics are analyzed in the 2015 Plan EIR for construction, operations and biosolids disposal and reuse impacts as applicable:

- Land Use
- Geologic Hazards and Soils
- Energy and Chemicals
- Transportation
- Air Quality
- Noise
- Aesthetics
- Hydrology
- Water Quality
- Biological Resources
- Public Health
- Public Services and Facilities
- Cultural Resources
- Population, Employment, and Housing
- Cumulative, Growth-Inducing, and Growth-Related Impacts
- Draft Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program

As described in Chapter 7, construction of the proposed upgrades will involve minor modifications to the existing piping/structures and installation of ancillary equipment, which may include a chemical storage tank at both the SWRP and VWRP. In addition, Chapter 7 also discusses changes in the operational mode as a result of the proposed upgrades. The environmental impacts associated with the construction and operation of the proposed upgrades, as discussed in this EIR, are considered to be less than significant. Since the potential adverse impacts associated with the proposed upgrades are minimal, discussion of the existing conditions of the SWRP is generally not included in this EIR.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROGRAM

The Public Participation Program (detailed in Part III of this document) is designed to ensure that the 2015 Plan and EIR are as informative as possible to the public, those potentially affected by the proposed action, as well as the governmental decision-makers. It is also designed to address comments received on the draft and final documents.

Several key periods have been identified in the preparation of the 2015 Plan and EIR during which the agencies and public will have the opportunity to comment on the facilities planning and participate in the environmental review process. These key periods include comment periods on scoping, the Draft and Final 2015 Plan EIR.

A fact sheet describing the 2015 Plan and EIR were prepared and distributed to several libraries, Santa Clarita City Hall, and the County Supervisor's Field Office in Santa Clarita. In addition, the fact sheet was mailed to a comprehensive list of individuals and organizations in the SCVJSS planning area.

Scoping Comment Period

A Notice of Preparation for the 2015 Plan EIR was distributed on April 24, 1996. The comment period ended May 27, 1996 and 10 comments were received and acknowledged. Two presentations on facilities planning have been made to the City of Santa Clarita, a staff presentation on October 16, 1996, and a City Council presentation on February 25, 1997.

An agency scoping meeting and a public workshop were held on April 29, 1997 and May 15, 1997, respectively. The purpose of these meetings was to solicit comments from the public and agencies in order to identify any issues of concern regarding the 2015 Plan and EIR. Comments and questions

received during the scoping period were addressed in the Draft 2015 Plan and EIR.

Draft EIR Comment Period

Following the distribution of the Draft 2015 Plan and EIR, a 45-day public review period was provided and a public hearing was conducted. The purpose of the public hearing was to provide agencies and the public with an opportunity to comment on the Draft 2015 Plan and EIR. Comments are addressed in Chapter 26 of the Final 2015 Plan and EIR.

Final EIR Comment Period

A public hearing will be held prior to the Districts Nos. 26 and 32 Board of Directors approving the Final 2015 Plan and certifying the Final EIR, at which time agencies and the public can provide additional comments.

TERMINOLOGY

Impacts

The 2015 Plan EIR defines the different kinds of impacts as follows:

- *Less than Significant Impact:* A less than significant impact is considered to cause no substantial adverse change in the environment and requires no mitigation measures.
- *Significant Avoidable Impact:* A significant avoidable impact is considered to cause a substantial adverse effect on the environment, but can be reduced to a less than significant level by implementing feasible mitigation measures.
- *Significant Unavoidable Impact:* A significant unavoidable impact is considered to cause a substantial adverse effect on the environment for which insufficient feasible mitigation measures are

available to reduce the impact to a less than significant level.

- *Beneficial Impact:* A beneficial impact is considered to cause a positive change in the environment.

Mitigation

The State CEQA Guidelines (Section 15370) define the following as mitigation:

- Avoiding the impact altogether by not taking a certain action or part of an action.
- Minimizing the impact by limiting the degree or magnitude of the action and its implementation.
- Rectifying the impact by repairing, rehabilitating, or restoring the affected environment.
- Reducing or eliminating the impact over time by preservation and maintenance operations during the life of the action.
- Compensating for the impact by replacing or providing substitute resources or improvements to the environment.