

Section 3

Setting, Impacts, and Mitigation

3.1 Introduction

This section presents the environmental setting, impacts, and mitigation, where applicable, for the proposed Alternatives evaluated in this Draft EIR. As noted in Section 2, the improvements to the existing wastewater treatment system, new wastewater conveyance facilities, and major categories of recycled water distribution and runoff management facilities for the City of Los Angeles are described in detail in the IRP Facilities Plan (City of Los Angeles, 2004). Various components from this overall program description have been combined to create the four distinct Alternatives evaluated in this Draft EIR.

This section is organized by resource area, which includes the environmental setting for impacts and the direct, secondary (indirect), and cumulative impacts of the Project Alternatives (see Sections 2.2 and 2.3 for a detailed description of the IRP Facilities Plan components and Alternatives). The following resource areas are included in this section, each of which includes a description of setting, impacts, and mitigations.

- Section 3.2 Aesthetics
- Section 3.3 Agricultural Resources
- Section 3.4 Air Quality
- Section 3.5 Biological Resources
- Section 3.6 Coastal Resources
- Section 3.7 Cultural Resources
- Section 3.8 Environmental Justice
- Section 3.9 Geology and Soils
- Section 3.10 Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Section 3.11 Hydrology and Water Quality
- Section 3.12 Land Use
- Section 3.13 Noise
- Section 3.14 Population and Housing
- Section 3.15 Public Services
- Section 3.16 Recreation
- Section 3.17 Transportation
- Section 3.18 Utilities



3.1.1 Approach to Environmental Setting and Impact Analysis

Within each of the sections listed above, this Draft EIR presents the environmental setting and evaluates the impacts of the Alternatives relative to the subject resource area. In addition, the evaluation of impacts is conducted separately for the direct impacts of the individual components (to provide an understanding of the general impacts of the components) and for the Alternatives. The established date for the baseline environmental setting for all resource areas evaluated in this Draft EIR is July 2004, which is the date that the Notice of Preparation (NOP) was issued. The physical scope of the environmental setting and the analysis in this EIR is the HSA, as discussed in Sections 1 and 2. The HSA is the geographic area for assessing impacts of the Project Alternatives, because wastewater generated in this service area would be managed via the components comprising the Project Alternatives and because potential impacts of implementing the Proposed Alternatives would be focused in this area.

Because the impacts of the overall components are relevant only in consideration of how they are combined and implemented in the Project Alternatives, this Draft EIR presents the overall impacts of the components and analyzes in greater detail the direct, indirect, and cumulative analyses for each of the Alternatives. The Alternatives evaluated in this Draft EIR are evaluated at an equal level for direct and secondary (indirect) impacts using significance criteria developed for each resource area. The analysis in this Draft EIR assumes that, unless otherwise stated, the project will be designed, constructed, and operated following all applicable laws, regulations, ordinances, and formally adopted City standards (for example, *Los Angeles Municipal Code* and *Bureau of Engineering Standard Plans*). Also, this analysis assumes that construction will follow the uniform practices established by the Southern California Chapter of the American Public Works Association (for example, *Standard Specifications for Public Works Construction* and the *Work Area Traffic Control Handbook*) as specifically adapted by the City of Los Angeles (for example, *City of Los Angeles Department of Public Works Additions and Amendments to the Standard Specifications for Public Works Construction* [a/k/a “The Brown Book,” formerly Standard Plan S-610]).

As a covered entity under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, the City of Los Angeles does not discriminate on the basis of disability and, upon request, will provide reasonable accommodation to ensure equal access to its programs, services, and activities.

3.1.2 Project Level and Program-Level Analysis

As discussed in Sections 1 and 2, the IRP Facilities Plan components are evaluated at two levels of detail in this Draft EIR, project level and program level. The components assessed at a project level have specific locations. The components assessed at a program level generally are projects that would be implemented as part of the IRP, but these projects do not have specific locations or design details identified. The program-level components will be subject to additional future environmental review.

- The IRP Facilities Plan components described in Section 2.2.1 are assessed at a project level, and the components described in Section 2.2.2 are assessed at a

program level. The environmental analysis conducted in this Draft EIR will be used for the Los Angeles City Council to select an Alternative for implementation. These two sections provide detailed descriptions of the IRP Facilities Plan components and the level at which they are assessed in Section 3 of the Draft EIR.

3.1.3 Approach to Cumulative Impacts

Cumulative impacts of the IRP are evaluated as part of the Alternatives within the context of each resource area (Sections 4.2 through 4.18). This section presents the approach to the cumulative evaluation in this Draft EIR.

The CEQA Guidelines (Section 15130) require a reasonable analysis of the significant cumulative impacts of a proposed Alternative. Cumulative impact refers to “two or more individual effects which, when considered together, are considerable or which compound or increase other environmental impacts.” The cumulative impact that results from several closely related projects is:

...the change in the environment which results from the incremental impact of the project when added to other closely related past, present, and reasonably foreseeable probable future projects. Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor but collectively significant projects taking place over a period of time (State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15355[b]).

According to CEQA (Section 15130[b]), cumulative effects may be discussed in the form of:

- A list of past, present, or reasonably foreseeable probable future projects producing related cumulative effects
- A summary of projections contained in an adopted general plan or related planning document, or in a previously adopted or certified environmental document, which described or evaluated regional or areawide conditions contributing to the cumulative impact

The cumulative impact evaluation used in this Draft EIR is based on a “projections-plus” approach that primarily uses the projections approach, but also considers the contributions of several individually planned or foreseeable projects that are related to the IRP. These projects are related because they are of similar character, could affect similar environmental resources, or are located near the components.

The impact study area used for the cumulative impact evaluations is the HSA because the Project Alternatives would manage wastewater generated in this service area, and impacts would be anticipated to be within the HSA (based on other related projects). In some cases, the cumulative impact evaluations consider a smaller geographic area as influenced by the affected resource area. For example, cumulative noise impacts could occur only in the immediate vicinity of a component (rather than throughout the HSA as a whole). In other cases, the geographic area for cumulative impacts evaluation could extend beyond the HSA. As an example, other related projects outside the HSA could reduce the flow of water in a watercourse that, when

considered with the Project Alternatives, could result in a cumulatively considerable reduction in flow in that watercourse.

3.1.3.1 Assumptions

The assumptions below are used in the analysis of cumulative effects.

- Cumulatively considerable effects could occur only if the proposed Alternatives would contribute to the total effect. A cumulatively considerable effect is more likely to occur if either the contribution of the Alternative is substantial or if adverse conditions exist and are substantial.
- An incremental contribution of a project to a cumulative impact is not cumulatively considerable if the project would comply with the requirements of a previously approved plan or mitigation program that provides specific requirements that would substantially lessen the cumulative problem, or if the project would contribute its fair share of a mitigation measure or measures designed to alleviate the cumulative impact, pursuant to Sections 15064 and 15130 of the CEQA Guidelines.
- All direct or secondary effects of the proposed Project Alternatives have the potential to contribute to cumulatively considerable effects, even if they are individually less than significant.
- The geographic region for this Draft EIR, in general, is the HSA. The potential for cumulative effects and the applicable area will, however, vary by the resource area being evaluated.
- Past projects are included in the cumulative impact evaluations in the description of the environmental settings for each resource area.

3.1.3.2 Related Plans

In consideration of actions to include in the cumulative impacts assessment in this Draft EIR, past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions that have the potential to combine with incremental effects of the Project Alternatives to result in cumulative impacts are those that are of a similar character as the IRP or are otherwise related, could affect similar environmental resources, or are located near the HSA. On the basis of this criterion, the following plans or programs will be considered in the cumulative impact evaluations:

- *City of Los Angeles General Plan.* The General Plan of the City has been identified as having similar geographic coverage as the Project Alternatives for the IRP (approximately 90 percent of the HSA is part of the City of Los Angeles) and is related to the IRP in that future wastewater flows generated at residential, commercial, and industrial development governed by the General Plan would be managed by facilities proposed under the Project Alternatives for the IRP.
- *City of Los Angeles Wastewater Capital Improvements Program.* The City of Los Angeles implements wastewater collection and treatment system improvements through the Wastewater Capital Improvement Program (CIP). This program lists the individual wastewater projects, their design and construction

schedules, and programs funds for their completion. Projects such as new sewers, sewer repairs and rehabilitations, treatment plant modifications, new and replacement plant equipment, and other facility improvements are included in the Wastewater CIP.

- *Sun Valley Watershed Management Plan.* The Sun Valley Watershed Management Plan is a long-range plan of the County of LA that provides an alternative blueprint for flood control in the Sun Valley area different than traditional flood control methods (quick conveyance of storm flows via storm drains). The plan emphasizes reuse and retention. Its elements include stormwater retention and infiltration facilities (gravel pits and schools), stormwater conveyance facilities, Tujunga Wash diversion and infiltration at Hansen Spreading Grounds, stormwater reuse distribution systems, and onsite best management practices (BMPs).
- *Los Angeles River Revitalization Master Plan.* The City of Los Angeles is preparing the Los Angeles River Revitalization Master Plan, which will be a 20-year blueprint for the development and management of the Los Angeles River along the 32 miles of the Los Angeles River corridor within the City of Los Angeles. The Revitalization Master Plan will address a river zone of approximately 250 feet in width on either side of the river channel or wider, if needed, to address targeted areas of development. Goals for the Revitalization Master Plan include:
 - Developing environmentally sensitive guidelines for urban design and land use
 - Improving the water environment and ecological functioning of the river
 - Providing public access to the river
 - Providing recreation space and open space, and natural habitats to support wildlife
 - Preserving and enhancing the flood control features of the river
 - Fostering growth in community awareness and pride of the Los Angeles River

3.1.3.3 Related Projects

Using the same criterion for identifying related plans, the related projects listed below were identified for purposes of cumulative impact evaluations.

Terminal Island Renewable Energy Project

The Terminal Island Renewable Energy Project is a demonstration project that would test the concept of convertibility of biosolids into clean and renewable energy. This project would use biosolids produced from the Terminal Island Treatment Plant and Hyperion for deep well injection, its subsequent biodegradation, followed by the extraction of the resultant biological gases and conversion to energy. This project is currently in the preliminary planning phase.

River Supply Conduit Project

The River Supply Conduit is a new water supply line proposed by LADWP to replace the upper and lower reaches of the existing supply line, which is over 50 years old. The new pipeline would be approximately 13 miles long, constructed of welded steel



pipe and ranging in diameter from 48 to 96 inches. This pipeline would be installed using open-trench and microtunneling/jacking methods.

The upper reach of the new River Supply Conduit would extend from the vicinity of Vanowen Street and Morella Street in North Hollywood to the west end of the Headworks Spreading Grounds along Forest Lawn Drive (west of Zoo Drive). The alignment of the upper reach would include Forest Lawn Drive. The lower reach of the new River Supply Conduit would extend from the Headworks Spreading Grounds east then south to the Ivanhoe and Silver Lake Reservoirs. The alignment of the lower reach would include Forest Lawn Drive, Zoo Drive, Crystal Springs Drive, and Riverside Drive.

The proposed NEIS II Alignment west of the Los Angeles River and the GBIS Alignment south of the Los Angeles River closely follow the alignments for the upper and lower reaches of the new River Supply Conduit, but at a greater depth. Construction of this project would occur from late 2005 to mid-2010.

Hansen Area Water Recycling Project

The Hansen Area Water Recycling Project is a reclaimed/recycled water pipeline in Sun Valley, Pacoima, and Lakeview Terrace proposed by LADWP. The recycled water pipeline would provide water for irrigation of the Angeles National Golf Course and the Hansen Dam Recreation area.

Sepulveda Basin Water Recycling Project

The Sepulveda Basin Water Recycling Project is a 2.5-mile recycled water pipeline in the Sepulveda Flood Control Basin proposed by LADWP. The new pipeline would supply recycled water produced at Tillman to existing users that currently use potable water for irrigation, thereby improving the reliability of the drinking water supply. The proposed recycled water pipeline would be constructed in Woodley Avenue and Burbank Boulevard (to be constructed in 2007) in the basin.

Rio de Los Angeles State Park Final EIR, SCH 2004091126

The Rio de Los Angeles State Park is proposed for the Taylor Yard complex west of San Fernando Road between I-5 and SR 2. The State Park could have traditional passive park uses such as restored habitat areas, multipurpose trails, special event areas, nature center, gardens, picnic areas, and other compatible uses. Interpretive and educational programs could be developed on both parcels focusing on the natural history of the site and on the nearby Los Angeles River.

Los Angeles State Historic Park Draft EIR, SCH 2003031096

The proposed Los Angeles State Historic Park is proposed for the Cornfield project site, which is a 32-acre parcel situated between North Broadway and North Spring Street north of Chinatown at the foot of the North Broadway Bridge near the Los Angeles River. The proposed park could include administrative offices, maintenance shop; storage for vehicles, equipment, and materials; visitors center; facilities for interpretive program support, artifact conservation, visitor services, and volunteer support; indoor and outdoor gathering and educational spaces that may include plazas and interpretive exhibits; possible concessions; multiple-use trails;

limited parking; information signage; and recreational and open-space elements such as outdoor lighting, picnic tables, shade structures, gardens, and natural habitat areas.

Other Water Recycling Projects

The LADWP is involved continuously in planning and implementing recycled water projects to distribute recycled water to industrial and irrigation users for nonpotable use. These recycled water projects are located throughout the City but are concentrated in and around existing water reclamation plants. Other projects include:

- South Valley Water Reclamation Project
- East San Fernando Valley Water Reclamation Project
- Harbor Water Recycling Project
- Central City - Elysian Park Water Reclamation Project