

# Introduction

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## 1.1 Project Background

The Chiquita Canyon Landfill (CCL) is an existing Class III (municipal solid waste) facility located in northwestern Los Angeles County near the City of Santa Clarita, just west of the Interstate 5 (I-5) and State Route 126 (SR-126) junction (Figure 1-1). The site is a total of 639 acres, with an existing permitted waste footprint of approximately 257 acres, although not all of the 257 acres has been developed.

CCL was previously owned by the Newhall Land and Farming Company (NLF) and, prior to 1999, was operated by Laidlaw Waste Systems, Inc. under a lease agreement with NLF. CCL came under management of Republic Services, Inc. in 1999 and was subsequently purchased by Republic Services, Inc. in 2001. In 2009, CCL was purchased by Waste Connections, Inc. (Waste Connections); Waste Connections currently owns and operates the landfill.

Landfill operations at CCL were first permitted by the County of Los Angeles under Conditional Use Permit (CUP) No. 1809-5, issued on November 24, 1982, which expired in November 1997. The current CUP No. 89-051(5), which was approved in 1997, is for the permitted landfill area of 257 acres and a maximum daily permitted disposal of 6,000 tons per day. The current CUP closure date is 2019, but based on the current CUP tonnage limits, the projected closure date is between 2015 and 2019. The amount of waste delivered to CCL has generally been near the maximum allowed under the current permit, although there has been a decrease in recent years due to the sluggish economy. The currently permitted landfill consists of three fill areas: Primary Canyon, Canyon B, and Main Canyon. Primary Canyon and Canyon B stopped receiving waste in 1988 and 1989, respectively. Main Canyon, which includes Canyons A, C, and D and Modules 1 through 13, will be closed in phases as significant portions of the landfill reach final grade. The existing permitted fill areas are shown in Figure 1-2.

Waste Connections has applied for a new CUP to implement the CCL Master Plan Revision (Proposed Project). The Proposed Project will:

- Extend the waste footprint at CCL by approximately 143 acres within the existing site boundary
- Develop a new site entrance and support facilities
- Raise the maximum elevation
- Increase the disposal rate and volume
- Better utilize the landfill's remaining and potential disposal capacity
- Allow for the disposal of all nonhazardous wastes acceptable at a Class III solid waste disposal landfill
- Allow for a mixed organics composting operation
- Develop a Household Hazardous Waste Facility (HHWF)
- Create a land set-aside for a future potential conversion technology facility

Landfill operations would also include the continued diversion of such materials as green waste, asphalt, concrete, and metal.

### 1.1.1 Historical Waste Quantities

CCL receives waste from the Santa Clarita Valley, including Val Verde, Castaic, Santa Clarita, and the surrounding unincorporated county; the northern San Fernando Valley; the greater Los Angeles Basin via various transfer stations; and a limited area of Ventura County. In general, there are no geographic constraints on the sources of waste.

The amount of waste delivered to CCL has generally been near the maximum allowed under the current permit (1.56 million tons per year); although there has been a decrease in recent years due to the sluggish economy. The historical disposal tonnage is presented in Table 1-1.

TABLE 1-1  
Historical Disposal Tonnage

Year	Disposal Tons
1998	1,134,618
1999	1,294,917
2000	1,374,579
2001	1,412,339
2002	1,490,961
2003	1,541,282
2004	1,558,355
2005	1,549,088
2006	1,538,969
2007	1,543,138
2008	1,504,592
2009	687,714
2010	1,089,797
2011	1,330,312
2012	926,866
2013	1,029,326

In 2013, 66 percent, by weight, of the solid waste disposed at CCL originated from transfer stations. The remaining 34 percent of solid waste disposed was delivered to CCL by commercial direct-haul trash collection trucks and the general public. The 2013 CCL disposal tonnage is shown in Table 1-2.

TABLE 1-2  
Summary of 2013 Incoming Waste Tonnage

Month	Disposal			Diverted for Beneficial Use (tons)	Total Received (tons)
	Transfer Stations (tons)	Direct Haul (tons)	Total (tons)		
January	50,775	34,145	84,920	58,499	143,419
February	43,375	27,936	71,311	61,522	132,833
March	47,764	27,360	75,124	68,320	143,444
April	51,154	28,494	79,648	58,183	137,831
May	55,651	36,102	91,753	45,496	137,249
June	49,461	28,777	78,238	46,020	124,258
July	57,242	32,170	89,412	48,256	137,668
August	55,903	29,432	85,335	76,057	161,392
September	52,009	26,546	78,555	50,718	129,273
October	60,393	30,043	90,436	48,644	139,080
November	79,412	26,289	105,701	47,187	152,888
December	72,374	26,519	98,893	43,670	142,563
<b>Total</b>	<b>675,513</b>	<b>353,813</b>	<b>1,029,326</b>	<b>652,572</b>	<b>1,681,898</b>
Percentage of Waste Disposed	66%	34%	100%		
Percentage of Total Incoming Waste			61%	39%	100%

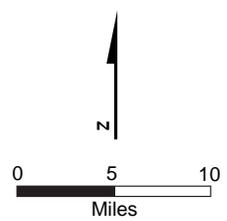


FIGURE 1-1  
Regional Location Map  
Chiquita Canyon Landfill  
Master Plan Revision

Source: Thomas Guide, California Road Atlas, 22nd Edition, 2004.  
ES092311093436SCO417064.11.05 CCL\_reg\_location.ai 11/11



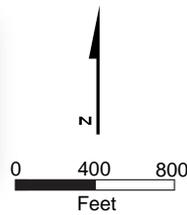
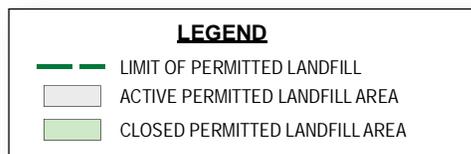
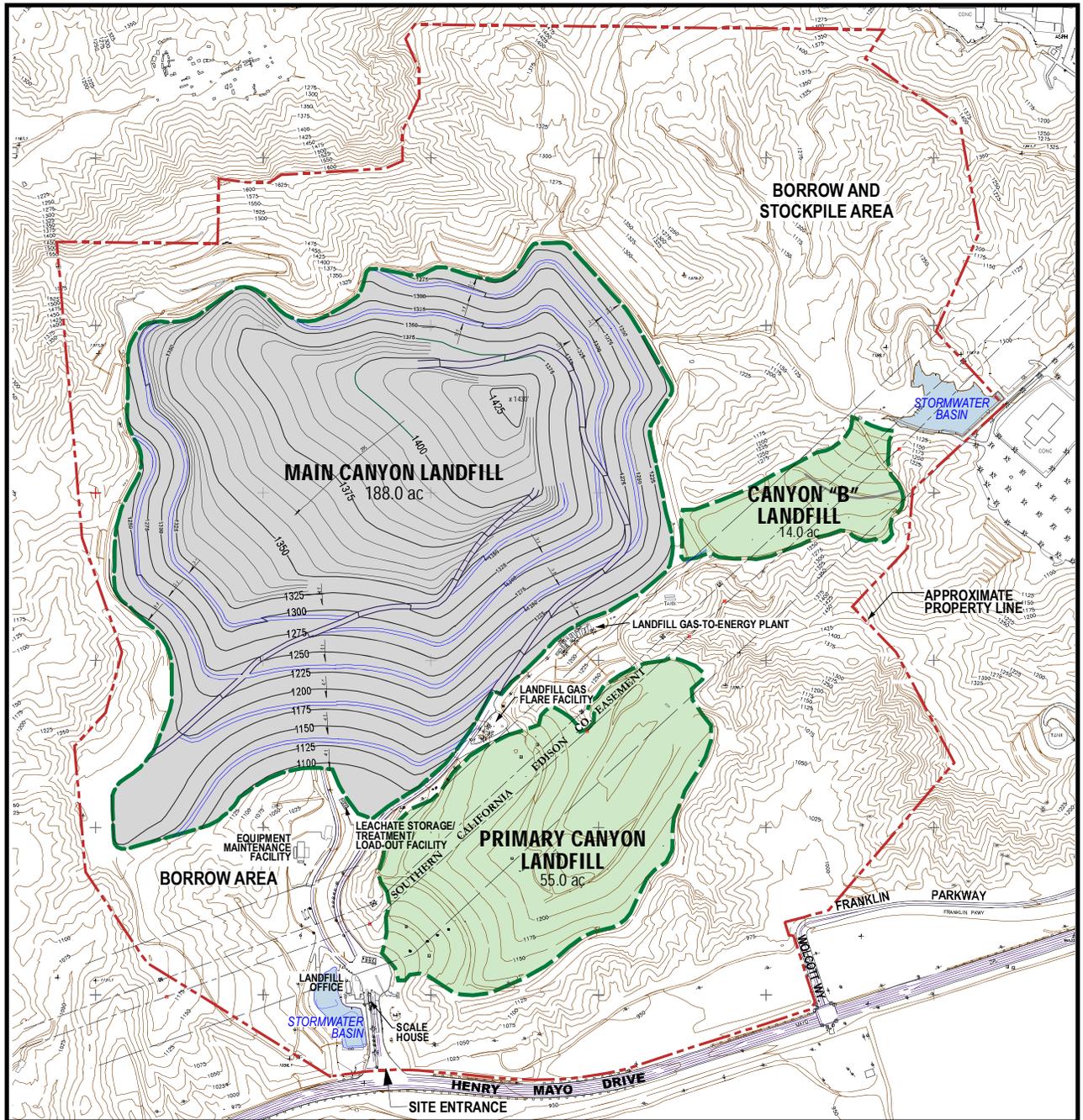


FIGURE 1-2  
Permitted Landfill  
Chiquita Canyon Landfill  
Master Plan Revision

Base compiled by photogrammetric methods by  
Don Read Corporation, Brea, CA  
Date of photography: April 6, 2010

Source: Golder Associates, 2013

ES050411114300SCO432307.11.01 CCL\_permitted\_landfill\_v6.2013.ai 4/13



Because management of solid waste in Los Angeles County is characterized by several disposal facilities serving a large metropolitan area, as opposed to one major facility serving a specific city or county area, there can be major variances in the source of wastes and the tonnage received at CCL. Contributing factors include closures at other landfills, changes in disposal fees, or other circumstances not controlled by CCL. Thus, market factors (i.e., supply and demand; disposal pricing) largely dictate where the waste disposed at CCL originates.

As shown in Tables 1-1 and 1-2, during 2013, 1,029,326 tons of waste were disposed at CCL. In addition to the waste disposed, CCL diverts additional waste material received at the landfill from disposal and utilizes it for beneficial uses, including but not limited to alternative daily cover, road construction, dust control, and erosion control. During 2013, 652,572 tons were diverted from disposal, which represents approximately 39 percent of the total incoming waste.

### 1.1.2 Existing Conditional Use Permit

The current CUP contains three separate and distinct conditions that control disposal capacity of the landfill:

- The final grading plan (maximum elevation of 1,430 feet) as shown on Exhibit A of the CUP (CUP Conditions 5 and 9b)
- 23-million-ton disposal limit (CUP Condition 46)
- Closure date of November 24, 2019 (CUP Conditions 5 and 46)

Based on the CUP disposal tonnage limit, the remaining permitted disposal tonnage is approximately 4.9 million tons, as of January 2012. The CUP disposal tonnage limit will be reached before the final grades shown on Exhibit A are reached, resulting in approximately 16.7 million tons of unused disposal capacity.

The CUP limits the landfill disposal rate to a maximum of 30,000 tons per week (CUP Condition 9d) and 6,000 tons per day (CUP Condition 9e). The waste tonnage disposed has varied from the maximum permitted weekly tonnage to much less depending on various factors, including the economy. Depending on the waste quantity received, the landfill is expected to close between 2015 and 2019. The CUP allows the landfill to operate 24 hours per day, 6 days per week (CUP Condition 9h).

The previous landfill expansion, originally proposed in 1989 included developing an East Canyon area previously referred to as Fill Modules 8 and 9. As a result of the disposal tonnage limit included in the CUP, Fill Modules 8 and 9 were deleted from the proposed grading plan. Additionally, the landfill footprint was pulled back north of the entrance area. The approved final grading plan, included with the CUP as Exhibit A, does not include the originally proposed Fill Modules 8 and 9, but does include language noting that nothing prohibits proposing a future landfill expansion (CUP Condition 9c). Therefore, the Proposed Project is consistent with the anticipated expansion identified in the CUP, and the Proposed Project is necessary to maximize the amount of waste that can be placed within the landfill.

## 1.2 Project Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of the Proposed Project is to provide additional disposal capacity through continued operation of CCL to help meet the critical solid waste management needs of Los Angeles County. Development of additional economically viable disposal capacity in a reasonable timeframe is of vital importance to meet the current and anticipated needs for the Santa Clarita Valley and the greater Los Angeles area, as existing landfills reach capacity and close. The Proposed Project will capitalize on the unique opportunity to utilize the existing CCL facility to achieve the development of additional disposal capacity.

The primary objectives of the Proposed Project are:

- To help meet the interim disposal needs of the Santa Clarita Valley and greater Los Angeles area, and to postpone or prevent a shortage of cost-effective local disposal capacity projected to occur in the future (e.g., Los Angeles County Department of Public Works [LACDPW], 2013)

- To provide environmentally sound, safe, and cost-effective disposal capacity through continued operation and development of the existing CCL facility; prevent premature closure of the landfill with underutilized remaining permitted airspace capacity; and avoid potential rail transportation impacts
- To continue to provide landfill waste diversion programs that are relied upon by many local cities and communities in achieving state-mandated goals

## 1.3 Project Need

The LACDPW estimated the solid waste disposal quantity for Los Angeles County was 8,612,083 tons in 2012. Of this amount 6,239,143 tons was disposed at Class III landfills in the County and 528,725 tons was disposed at transformation facilities in the County. Countywide, the diversion rate for this quantity of solid waste was estimated at 60 percent. The estimated waste exported to out-of-county landfills was 1,844,175 tons. At the end of 2012, the total remaining permitted Class III landfill capacity in the County was estimated at 129.2 million tons. By the end of the year 2026, the Class III landfill capacity is estimated at 134 million tons, resulting in a potential deficiency of approximately 5 million tons (LACDPW, 2013).

In addition to the proposed extension of CCL, other potential extensions in Los Angeles County include the Whittier (Savage Canyon) Landfill Expansion and the Scholl Canyon Landfill Expansion. In 2013, LACDPW conducted an analysis evaluating nine potential scenarios to help the County determine how to maintain adequate solid waste disposal capacity from 2013 to 2026. The analysis included the following scenarios: (1) status quo scenario; (2) increase in diversion rate; (3) utilization of alternative technology capacity; (4) in-County Class III landfill expansions with out-of-County disposal capacity; (5) increase in available out-of-County disposal capacity; (6) maximizing diversion rate; (7) increase in alternative technology capacity; (8) full utilization of out-of-County disposal capacity; and (9) full utilization of our-of-County disposal capacity. Out of the nine scenarios conducted, the first three (1-3) resulted in a disposal capacity shortfall during the planning period. The remaining six scenarios (4-9) were determined to avert a disposal capacity shortfall during the planning period. Scenarios 4 through 9 all include expanding existing landfill in the County. LACDPW concluded that “without expanding existing landfills in the County, available disposal capacity would be inadequate to meet the Daily Disposal Demand of all 88 cities and the unincorporated County areas” and would result in a disposal capacity shortfall before the end of the 15-year study period (LACDPW, 2013).

## 1.4 Environmental Review Process

### 1.4.1 Intended Uses of the DEIR

The *California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines* require that state and local government agencies, as well as special districts, consider the environmental consequences of projects over which they have discretionary authority before taking action on them. For proposed projects that may have potential significant adverse environmental effects, an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) must be prepared. This Draft EIR (DEIR) has been prepared in accordance with the *CEQA Guidelines* for the implementation of CEQA published by the Resources Agency of the State of California (*California Code of Regulations*, Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3, Sections 15000-15387 and Appendices A-K).

The DEIR will be used by various local and state agencies in their consideration of actions required to: (1) approve; (2) approve with conditions or modifications; or (3) deny the Proposed Project. This DEIR is intended to provide the public, agencies, and decision makers with a comprehensive analysis of the following:

- Potential environmental consequences of the Proposed Project
- Potential mitigation measures to avoid or significantly lessen environmental impacts that would otherwise be significant
- A reasonable range of alternatives to the Proposed Project

The level of technical detail, evaluation, and analysis provided in this DEIR is consistent with *the CEQA Guidelines* described above and is sufficient to provide an understanding of potential impacts.

## 1.4.2 Public Scoping Process

The first step of the DEIR preparation was the distribution of the Notice of Preparation (NOP) for the Proposed Project to facilitate scoping. The NOP was sent to responsible public agencies and interested parties. The NOP, released on November 21, 2011, included a summary of the Proposed Project and an invitation to submit comments on the content of the DEIR. A number of responses were received from various agencies. In addition, comment letters were received from members of the Union de Residentes Para La Proteccion Ambiental de Val Verde and Val Verde Civic Association. The NOP and associated response letters are found in Appendix A. The following agencies/parties responded to the NOP:

- California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW)
- California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle)
- County of Los Angeles, Department of Public Works
- County of Los Angeles, Fire Department
- County of Los Angeles, Metropolitan Transportation Authority
- County of Ventura, Air Pollution Control District
- County of Ventura, Public Works Agency, Transportation Department
- County of Ventura, Watershed Protection District
- Native American Heritage Commission
- Santa Clarita Organization for Planning and the Environment (SCOPE)
- Stuart Abramson (resident of Val Verde)
- Nancy Carder (community member)
- Thomas Leeb (resident of Val Verde)
- Raul Lejano (member of Union de Residentes Para La Proteccion Ambiental de Val Verde)
- Marc Salzarulo (resident of Val Verde)
- Scott Wardle (former President of the Castaic Town Council)

## 1.4.3 Agencies and Interested Parties Consulted

The following agencies/parties were consulted as part of the scoping process:

### Federal Agencies

- National Park Service, Santa Monica Mountains National Recreational Area
- Angeles National Forest
- United States Postal Service
- United States Army Corps of Engineers

### State Agencies

- California Department of Conservation, Division of Oil, Gas, and Geothermal Resources
- CDFW
- State Lands Commission
- California Department of Parks and Recreation
- California Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), Los Angeles Region
- Caltrans District 7, Intergovernmental Review/CEQA Coordinator
- California Department of Public Health
- South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD)
- California Department of Food and Agriculture
- CalRecycle

- Integrated Waste Management, Permitting, and Enforcement Division
- California Department of Water Resources (DWR)

#### Regional, County, City

- Los Angeles County Clerk
- County of Los Angeles, Environmental Health, Environmental Hygiene Program
- County of Los Angeles, Environmental Health, Solid Waste Management Program
- County of Los Angeles Fire Department, Forestry Division, Prevention Bureau
- County of Los Angeles, Department of Public Works, Land Development Division
- County of Los Angeles, Department of Parks and Recreation, Planning Division
- County of Los Angeles Sanitation Districts
- County of Kern, Planning and Community Development
- Ventura County, Planning Division
- City of Los Angeles, Planning Department
- City of Santa Clarita, Planning Commission
- Southern California Association of Governments
- Metropolitan Transit Authority, County Wide Planning

#### Interested Parties

- Rosemary Woodlock, Save Open Space
- Santa Clarita Civic Association
- SCOPE
- Santa Clarita Oak Conservancy
- Sierra Club
- United Water Conservation District
- California Native Plant Society
- Castaic Area Town Council
- Castaic Lake Water Agency
- Valencia Water Company
- Castaic Chamber of Commerce
- Friends of the Santa Clara River
- Val Verde Community Benefits Funding Committee
- Communities for a Better Environment
- Union de Residentes Para La Proteccion Ambiental de Val Verde
- Val Verde Civic Association
- Val Verde Community Advisory Committee
- Santa Clarita Civic Association

### **1.4.4 Circulation of the DEIR**

Upon completion, this DEIR was submitted to the State Clearinghouse for distribution to interested state agencies and circulated for public review and comment. Written comments will be accepted and verbal comments will be received at public hearings held by the Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning (LADRP). Per the requirements of CEQA, responses will be prepared for all comments received on the DEIR. A Final EIR will be prepared, which will include responses to comments received on the DEIR as well as any changes to the DEIR necessitated by the comments themselves. The Final EIR will be considered for certification by LADRP. Thereafter, the certified Final EIR will be used by agencies in permitting the Proposed Project.

## 1.5 Project Approvals

### 1.5.1 Regulatory Compliance – Framework for Class III Landfills

Class III landfills in California are regulated on multiple jurisdictional levels by local, state, and federal agencies. Compliance with the regulations of each of these agencies is necessary for the approval of the proposed landfill extension and/or monitoring the operation and closure of the facility. Local regulatory enforcement is performed by the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, also known as the local enforcement agency (LEA); RWQCB, Los Angeles Region; the Los Angeles County Solid Waste Management Committee/Integrated Waste Management District; and the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD). Each of these local agencies is involved in issuing permits that condition the operation and/or closure of the landfill.

The California Integrated Waste Management Act (IWMA) of 1989 (Assembly Bill [AB] 939) requires counties to prepare a Countywide Integrated Waste Management Plan (CIWMP) and mandates a minimum 50 percent volume reduction in solid waste being landfilled by 2000. Compliance with the IWMA is the responsibility of local jurisdictions. Later legislation mandates the 50 percent diversion requirement be achieved every year (CalRecycle, 2012).

Even with achievement of a 50 percent reduction in landfilled waste, the California legislature recognized that additional landfill capacity is required. Thus, the IWMA also requires counties to secure long-term (15 years) disposal capacity for waste that cannot be diverted. To conserve critical landfill space, it is CalRecycle policy to maximize the use of existing landfills, where feasible and environmentally acceptable.

The IWMA also requires development of countywide siting elements and solid waste facility components as part of the CIWMP to assure that locations exist for environmentally safe transformation and disposal facilities for waste that cannot feasibly be reduced, recycled, or composted. Availability of waste disposal capacity, however, does not relieve local jurisdictions from their responsibility for source reduction required by the IWMA.

Solid waste management in Los Angeles County is regional in nature and is guided by local policy carried out in accordance with federal, state, and local statutory and regulatory requirements.

### 1.5.2 Federal, State, and Local Approvals

Table 1-3 identifies permits and approvals that may be applicable to the Proposed Project. Many of these permits apply to the existing CCL and may need to be amended for implementation of the Proposed Project. Although a number of agencies are identified, discussions with those agencies will be required to determine the specific nature of any future permits or approvals that may be required from those agencies. Their inclusion in this document is intended to acknowledge the possible role of those agencies and ensure their notification. In addition, reference to these agencies is intended to provide them and the public with an environmental basis under *CEQA Guidelines* to facilitate the dissemination of information deemed necessary to the discretionary approvals process and the approval or conditional approval of any aspect of the Proposed Project within their jurisdiction.

TABLE 1-3

**Project Permits and Approvals**

Agency	Permit or Approval
<b>Federal</b>	
United States Department of Commerce	National Type Evaluation Program Certificate of Conformance
<b>State</b>	
State of California Department of Food and Agriculture	Certificate of Approval for Weighing Devices
State of California Industrial Relations	Air Pressure Tank Permit
State Water Resources Control Board	Stormwater Discharge Permit
CDFW	Agreement Regarding Proposed Lake or Streambed Alteration
RWQCB	Waste Discharge Requirements
California Department of Food and Agriculture	Weighmaster License
CalRecycle	Solid Waste Facilities Permit
<b>Local</b>	
RWQCB, Los Angeles Region	Conditional Certification – Sedimentation Basin #1
SCAQMD	Permit to Construct/Operate a Landfill Condensate and Leachate Collection incorporated in Title V
	Permit to Construct/Operate a Landfill Gas Collection System incorporated in Title V
	Permit to Construct/Operate a Landfill Gas Flare incorporated in Title V
	Title V Permit (incorporates all previous SCAQMD permits)
	Rule 431.1 Alternative Monitoring Plan for CCL

### 1.5.3 County of Los Angeles Approvals

The following County of Los Angeles permits and approvals may be applicable to the Proposed Project.

#### County of Los Angeles

- Above and/or Below Ground Tank Permits
- Waste Disposal Facility Business License Tax Registration Certificate
- Weights and Measures Registration Permit
- CUP
- Waste Plan Conformance
- Solid Waste Facilities Permit

#### Los Angeles County Department of Public Works

- Industrial Waste Disposal Permit – Leachate and Condensate
- Industrial Waste Disposal Permit – Wash Pad Water

#### Los Angeles County Fire Department

- Los Angeles County Certified Unified Program Agency
- Consolidated Unified Program Los Angeles County Fire Department

## 1.6 DEIR Content and Organization

The DEIR is organized into the following chapters:

- **Executive Summary.** The Executive Summary provides a brief summary of the Proposed Project purpose, description, major findings, and conclusions; it also includes a summary of Proposed Project impacts and mitigation.
- **Chapter 1.0, Introduction.** This chapter provides an overview of the Project background, purpose, objectives, and need; intended uses of the DEIR; the public scoping process and circulation of the DEIR; project approvals; and presents the general content and organization of the DEIR.
- **Chapter 2.0, Project Description.** This chapter describes the Proposed Project location and existing surrounding land uses and provides a detailed description of the Proposed Project, including the proposed facilities, lateral extension, increased elevation and disposal limits, wastes to be received, operation, design features, environmental monitoring, and ancillary uses. This chapter also addresses landfill closure and post-closure plans.
- **Chapter 3.0, General Setting and Resource Area Analysis.** This chapter discusses the general setting; the existing and approved CCL facilities; the organization and general content of the resource area chapters; and a discussion of reasonably foreseeable projects in the vicinity for which cumulative impacts were evaluated.
- **Chapter 4.0 through 16.0, Resource Area Analysis.** Chapters 4.0 through 16.0 discuss the following resource areas of concern. Each chapter above includes an introduction; description of the methodology; description of the setting (regulatory and regional); analysis of potential impacts; listing and description of relevant mitigation measures; determination of significance of potential impacts after mitigation; and discussion of potential cumulative impacts.
  - Chapter 4.0, Land Use
  - Chapter 5.0, Geology and Hydrogeology
  - Chapter 6.0, Surface Water Drainage
  - Chapter 7.0, Water Quality
  - Chapter 8.0, Biological Resources
  - Chapter 9.0, Cultural and Paleontological Resources
  - Chapter 10.0, Traffic and Transportation
  - Chapter 11.0, Air Quality
  - Chapter 12.0, Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Climate Change
  - Chapter 13.0, Noise
  - Chapter 14.0, Public Services and Utilities
  - Chapter 15.0, Visual Resources
  - Chapter 16.0, Environmental Justice and Socioeconomics
- **Chapter 17.0, Other CEQA-Required Sections.** This chapter includes a discussion of:
  - Unavoidable impacts of the Proposed Project
  - Significant irreversible environmental changes
  - Growth-inducing impacts of the Proposed Project
  - Effects found not to be significant
- **Chapter 18.0, Project Alternatives.** This chapter contains a reasonable range of alternatives to the Proposed Project, including the No Project Alternative. Each alternative is analyzed for feasibility, its ability to achieve the Proposed Project objectives, and its ability to potentially avoid or substantially lessen significant environmental impacts associated with the Proposed Project.

- **Chapter 19.0, Organizations and Persons Consulted.** This chapter lists all organizations and individuals consulted for their expertise during the preparation of this DEIR.
- **Chapter 20.0, DEIR Preparers and Contributors.** This chapter lists the primary authors and technical specialist for each resource area who contributed to preparation of the DEIR.
- **Chapter 21.0, References and Bibliography.** This chapter lists references and resources used in preparation of the various chapters of the DEIR.
- **Appendixes.** The following appendixes to the DEIR are included:
  - Appendix A: NOP/Initial Study
  - Appendix B: Mitigation Monitoring Plan from the Statewide Anaerobic Digester Facilities for the Treatment of Municipal Organic Solid Waste Program EIR
  - Appendix C: Hydrogeologic Report
  - Appendix D: Geotechnical Investigation
  - Appendix E: Biota and Oak Tree Reports
  - Appendix F: Cultural Resources
  - Appendix G: Traffic Analysis
  - Appendix H: Air Quality
  - Appendix I: Noise
  - Appendix G: Water Supply Assessment
  - Appendix K: LACDPW 2011 Annual Report