

Land Use

4.1 Introduction

This chapter evaluates the conformity of the Chiquita Canyon Landfill (CCL) Master Plan Revision (Proposed Project) with applicable land use plans and policies, provides an inventory of existing and designated land uses at CCL, and evaluates potential environmental impacts related to land use. The assessment of land use impacts is based primarily on General Plans supplemented by zoning maps and other planning documents from the County of Los Angeles.

4.2 Methodology

The study area for this chapter was the property boundary of the Master Plan Revision and land surrounding CCL. The County of Los Angeles' land use and zoning designations, as provided in its General Plan, were reviewed, and the data were overlain with the landfill's property boundary to determine potential impacts of project construction and operation on land use. Additionally, the Regional Comprehensive Plan and Guide (RCPG) of the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), the Disposal Facility Siting Element of the Los Angeles County Integrated Waste Management Plan (CIWMP), the Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan, and the Castaic Area Community Standards District (CACSD) were considered as part of the analysis. The significance of the potential impacts was assessed in accordance with criteria presented in Appendix G of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines.

4.3 Regulatory Setting

Provided below is a discussion of CCL's relationship to applicable regional, county, and local plans pertaining directly or indirectly to land use and/or growth and development. These plans include the RCPG of SCAG, Los Angeles County General Plan, Disposal Facility Siting Element of the Los Angeles CIWMP, Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan, and the CACSD.

Section 65302 of the *California Government Code* requires all cities and counties to adopt General Plans containing seven mandatory elements: Land Use, Circulation, Housing, Conservation, Open Space, Noise, and Safety. The General Plan is the basic planning document that provides a blueprint for growth and development. Additionally, zoning ordinances developed by a county or city must be consistent with the General Plan.

CCL is located in Los Angeles County, within the planning area of the City of Santa Clarita, but outside its city limits and sphere of influence. The landfill site is also located within the Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan of the Los Angeles County General Plan and in the CACSD.

4.3.1 Regional and Local Regulations and Standards

4.3.1.1 Southern California Association of Governments Plans

SCAG serves as an areawide clearinghouse for regionally significant projects and reviews the consistency of local plans, projects, and programs with regional plans. The RCPG, approved by SCAG in 1996, was designed to provide regional planning guidance with respect to population, housing, and employment for the SCAG region. In addition to growth management, the RCPG contains other elements related to transportation, air quality, water quality, and hazardous waste management. According to a letter from SCAG to the County of Los Angeles dated August 29, 2005, the Proposed Project is not regionally significant per SCAG Intergovernmental Review Criteria and CEQA Guidelines Section 15206 (SCAG, 2005). See Appendix A to review this letter. For this reason, no further discussion of RCPG policies in relationship to the Proposed Project is provided herein.

4.3.1.2 County of Los Angeles General Plan

The County of Los Angeles General Plan was adopted in November of 1980, with subsequent adoption dates. The General Plan consists of the following elements: General Goals and Policies, Conservation and Open Space, Land Use, Housing, Transportation, Plan of Bikeways, Water and Waste Management Element, Economic Development, Safety, Noise, Scenic Highway, and Regional Recreation Plan Area. Los Angeles County is currently preparing a comprehensive General Plan update with adoption anticipated in 2013. The General Plan provides that areas covered by local, community, and specific plans be developed in accordance with the General Plan's applicable guidelines.

The General Plan Land Use Policy map designates the entire CCL property as Non-Urban (R). Additionally, the General Plan Special Management Areas map designates CCL as Hillside Management (HM), and the General Plan Solid Waste Management Plan map identifies CCL as an existing landfill. Existing zoning for the landfill is A-2-2 (Heavy Agriculture, with a 2-acre minimum lot size), A-2-5 (Heavy Agriculture, with a 5-acre minimum lot size), and M-1 ½-DP (Restricted Heavy Manufacturing, Development Program).

The Land Use Element and Water and Waste Management Element of the County of Los Angeles General Plan are relevant to this evaluation of potential land use impacts, and their applicable goals and policies are provided below.

Land Use Element

The land use element sets forth countywide policy for the general location and intensity of land use. The land use element also reinforces the General Plan's policies of conserving natural resources and protecting population from natural hazards by careful management of development in sensitive areas. Objectives and policies relevant to the Proposed Project are as follows:

- Provide for land use arrangements that take full advantage of existing public service and facility capacities.
- Protect major landfill and solid waste disposal sites from encroachment of incompatible uses.
- Provide a land use decision-making process supported by adequate information and ongoing citizen participation.
- Encourage more efficient use of land, compatible with, and sensitive to natural ecological, scenic, cultural, and open space resources.

Water and Waste Management Element

The water and waste management element contains objectives and policies for water supply and distribution, flood control and aquifer replenishment, sewer and water reclamation systems, and industrial and solid waste disposal. Objectives and policies relevant to the Proposed Project are as follows:

- Mitigate hazards and avoid adverse impacts in providing water and waste services and to protect the health and safety of all residents.
- Develop improved systems of resource use, recovery, and reuse.
- Provide efficient water and waste management services.
- Encourage private firms and public agencies providing water and waste management services to cooperate with all levels of government in establishing, enacting, and enforcing consistent standards and criteria.
- Cooperate with federal, state, regional, and local agencies to develop and implement new technologies in water and waste management while continuing existing methods until new alternatives are economically feasible.
- Use technology for the conversion of waste to energy.

4.3.1.3 Los Angeles Countywide Siting Element

The Los Angeles Countywide Siting Element (CSE) was prepared by the Los Angeles County Department of Public Works (LACDPW), Environmental Programs Division, and adopted by the County Board of Supervisors in January 1997. The CSE meets the requirements of Title 14 *California Code of Regulations* (CCR) Section 18775, which requires that these elements demonstrate that counties have a minimum of 15 years of combined permitted disposal capacity. The purpose of the CSE is to provide a planning mechanism to address the solid waste disposal capacity needed in Los Angeles County for each year of the 15-year planning period, through a combination of existing facilities, expansion of existing facilities, planned facilities, and other strategies. The CSE recognizes the need for the expansion of CCL to meet Los Angeles County's future disposal needs, and identifies the landfill as a potential landfill expansion site.

4.3.1.4 Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan

The majority of CCL is designated as HM in the Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan Land Use Map. In addition to HM, the southeastern part of the landfill is designated as Industry (M) in the Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan. Specifically, Industry use must be clean, nonpolluting, with no offensive odors, and visually attractive. Lastly, part of CCL is designated as Public Service Facilities (P).

In 1976, the County of Los Angeles, through the General Plan, established Significant Ecological Areas (SEAs) that were intended to represent the wide variety of biological communities within Los Angeles County. The SEAs are intended to be preserved in an ecologically viable condition for the purpose of public education, research, and other non-disruptive outdoor uses but do not preclude limited compatible development. The Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan includes guidelines to protect identified resources in SEAs. The nearest SEA to CCL is SEA #23, Santa Clara River, located south of CCL. Specifically, the Proposed Project would be entirely outside of this SEA. For this reason, no further discussion of SEAs and their policies in relationship to the Proposed Project is provided herein.

4.3.1.5 Castaic Area Community Standards District

The CACSD was established to protect the rural character, unique appearance, and natural resources of the Castaic Area; provide a means of implementing special development standards, which will ensure that new development is carried out in a manner compatible with and complimentary to the existing neighborhoods and the goals of the Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan; support trucking-related business activities within the areas they currently operate, without interfering with the community's safe circulation and traffic patterns; strengthen existing oak tree protection regulations where appropriate; and preserve significant ridgelines. The CACSD includes the existing communities of Castaic, Castaic Junction, Val Verde, Hasley Canyon, Hillcrest, and Paradise Ranch; the canyons of Charlie, Tapia, Romero, Sloan, and Violin; it also includes the Valencia Commerce Center, the Peter Pitchness Detention Center, the Northlake development and part of Newhall Ranch (CACSD, 2004).

4.4 Regional Setting

CCL is located in the northwestern portion of unincorporated Los Angeles County and is approximately 3 miles west of the Interstate 5 (I-5) and State Route 126 (SR-126) junction. CCL is also located approximately 7 miles northwest of the City of Santa Clarita, 33 miles northwest of Downtown Los Angeles, and 18 miles east of the City of Fillmore.

CCL is located along the northwestern edge of the Santa Clarita Valley, in the San Gabriel Mountains of the Transverse Mountain Ranges. Topographically, the project area has steep-sided canyons with slopes that approach 1:1 (horizontal:vertical), one canyon oriented generally northeast-southwest, and one oriented northwest-southeast. In the natural areas onsite, the ridgelines rise from 300 to 600 feet above the canyon floors. In some areas, previous land filling has reduced the length of some slopes and has resulted in a more gentle terrain.

4.5 Local Setting

4.5.1 Existing Land Uses

CCL includes several buildings used to support landfill operations and include an administrative office, a scale house at the front gate, and a maintenance building used for vehicle maintenance and storage. The buildings are generally located in the southern portion of the site near the entrance to the landfill. Other site improvements include a landfill gas collection system on both closed and active landfill areas, a landfill gas-to-energy facility, a flare station, and water storage tanks.

The existing permitted waste footprint is approximately 257 acres of the total 639-acre site, but not all of the 257 acres have been developed. The currently permitted landfill consists of three fill areas: Primary Canyon, Canyon "B," and the Main Canyon.

The Primary Canyon and Canyon "B" stopped receiving waste in 1988 and 1989, respectively. The Main Canyon, as it is now called, includes Canyons A, C, and D and Modules 1 to 13 referenced in the previous landfill expansion project in 1997. The Main Canyon will be closed in phases as significant portions of the landfill reach final grade.

4.5.2 Surrounding Land Uses

Much of the area surrounding CCL consists of undeveloped open space as a result of steep topography. Surrounding land uses include mostly open space lands to the north; rural residential development is located to the west and northwest along Chiquito Canyon Road and in the Val Verde area, respectively. Relatively new suburban residential areas are located to the northeast. The closest of these residential dwellings is located approximately 500 feet from the northwest site boundary corner and 1,200 feet from the landfill footprint, and intervening topography prevents residential views of the operating landfill from these locations. Industrial/commercial uses are located to the northeast, east, and southeast. The United States Postal Service has a General Mail Facility adjacent to the eastern edge of the landfill property boundary. The property immediately west, south, southeast, and east of the landfill is owned by the Newhall Land and Farming Company (NLF) and is currently either vacant or is used for agricultural activities. Oil extraction fields and associated storage areas are located less than 1 mile from the landfill to the west and south. Valencia Travel Village, a short- and long-term campground, is located approximately 1 mile east of the landfill on the south side of SR-126.

4.5.3 Planned Surrounding Land Uses

The property immediately west and south of the landfill is owned by NLF and is currently either vacant or used for agricultural activities. There are four new residential and commercial developments planned for the land adjacent (south and west of the landfill) to SR-126: Landmark Village, Mission Village, Homestead Village, and Potrero Village. The villages will provide numerous dwelling units and thousands of square feet of commercial space. Construction and occupancy of all four developments will occur roughly between 2014 and 2030. The first planned development located immediately south of the landfill will be Landmark Village. This will be the first development to begin with occupancy starting in 2016. This development has access off SR-126 at Wolcott Way and Long Canyon/Chiquito Canyon Road. Improvements to these two intersections will be required immediately to accommodate additional traffic volumes and turning movements generated by the anticipated new housing units and commercial space (NLF, email comm., 2013).

4.6 Potential Impacts

This land use analysis evaluates the consistency of Proposed Project implementation with the type and intensities of land uses existing and proposed on and near the site, current zoning and general plan designations for the site, and for consistency with applicable plans and policies.

4.6.1 Standards of Significance

Proposed Project activities are generally considered to result in a significant impact when they are not compatible with nearby land uses or if they are inconsistent with current city or county plans, ordinances, programs, and policies. Specific thresholds of significance are provided below.

4.6.2 Thresholds of Significance

Land use impacts would be considered significant if the Proposed Project would result in the following:

- Conflict with existing land uses at the project site
- Disrupt or divide the physical arrangement of an existing community
- Conflict with applicable land use plans including the Los Angeles County General Plan
- Conflict with adopted environmental goals or policies contained in other applicable plans

4.6.3 Proposed Project

Proposed Project implementation would extend the waste footprint at CCL by approximately 143 acres within the existing landfill area.

Expansion activities would include liner, drainage, and landfill gas control system installation and would occur periodically over the life of the landfill. These activities, in addition to routine waste disposal activities, would involve the use of heavy equipment and trucks. Such activities are consistent with the existing land uses (i.e., waste disposal activities) that have occurred at CCL since its inception. Likewise, waste disposal activities would continue to occur within the existing site boundary, and would not disrupt or divide the physical arrangement of an existing community. Additionally, the Proposed Project is consistent with or would not conflict with any applicable local plan or policy including general plans, specific plans, CIWMP and zoning ordinances, and habitat conservation plans. The potential impacts resulting from the Proposed Project specific to resources such as aesthetics, noise, and air quality are discussed in detail in their respective chapters. Therefore, because the Proposed Project would maintain the intended land uses of the site, and would not conflict with applicable land use plans or adopted policies, no impacts related to land use are anticipated.

CCL has also included within the Project Description a composting operation, household hazardous waste facility (HHWF), and set-aside of a portion of the site within the existing CCL property boundary that could be used for a potential future conversion facility. The Proposed Project does not include construction or operation of a conversion technology facility. The composting facility, HHWF, and future conversion facility would all be co-located with the landfill, and therefore, future activities associated with the facilities would be consistent with the existing land use designations for the Project site (i.e., waste disposal activities) that have occurred and will continue to occur at CCL. The proposed facilities would maintain the intended land uses of the site, and would not conflict with applicable land use plans or adopted policies, and no impacts related to land use are anticipated from these facilities.

4.7 Mitigation Measures

No significant adverse impacts to land use resulting from the Proposed Project are anticipated; therefore, no mitigation measures are required.

4.8 Significance After Mitigation

The Proposed Project would not result in significant impacts to land use.

4.9 Cumulative Impacts

The cumulative projects discussed in Chapter 3.0, General Setting and Resource Area Analysis, would likely result in significant changes to land uses in the vicinity of CCL. A combination of residential, commercial, open space, public, and industrial uses are planned within the vicinity of the Proposed Project. However, the Proposed Project would maintain the intended land use of CCL, would not conflict with applicable land use plans or adopted policies, and would not result in impacts related to land use. Therefore, the Proposed Project, when combined with reasonably foreseeable projects in the project vicinity, would not incrementally contribute to cumulative changes to land use, and no cumulative impacts would result.

No cumulative impacts would result from the implementation of the Proposed Project; therefore, no mitigation measures are required.