

## **SECTION 1.0 – INTRODUCTION**

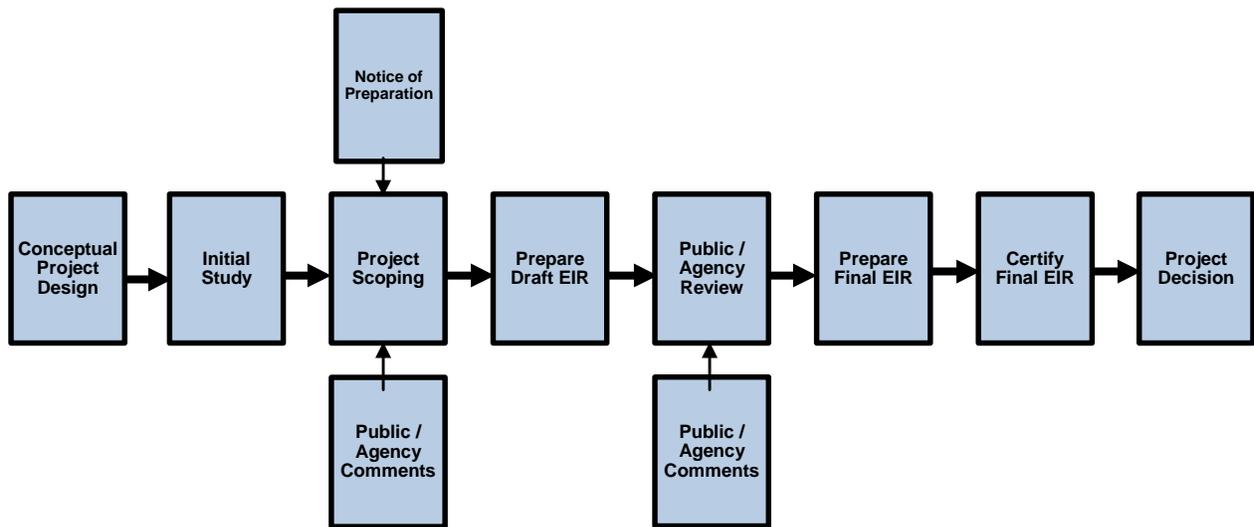
### **1.1 PURPOSE OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT**

All “projects” within the State of California are required to undergo environmental review to determine the environmental impacts associated with implementation of the project in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

CEQA was enacted in 1970 by the California Legislature to disclose to decision makers and to the public the significant environmental effects of a proposed project and identify possible ways to avoid or minimize significant environmental effects of a project by requiring implementation of mitigation measures or recommending feasible alternatives. CEQA applies to all California governmental agencies at all levels, including local, regional, and state, as well as boards, commissions, and special districts. As such, the Los Angeles County Flood Control District (LACFCD) is required to conduct an environmental review to analyze the potential environmental effects associated with the Proposed Project. The LACFCD is the lead agency for the preparation of this Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR) in accordance with CEQA.

This Draft EIR is circulated to the public and affected agencies for review and comment. One of the primary objectives of CEQA is to enhance public participation in the planning process; public involvement is an essential feature of CEQA. Community members are encouraged to participate in the environmental review process, request to be notified, monitor newspapers for formal announcements, and submit substantive comments at every possible opportunity afforded by the agency. The environmental review process provides ample opportunity for the public to participate through scoping, public notice, and public review of CEQA documents. A diagram illustrating the CEQA process is shown in Figure 1.1-1 below. Additionally, lead agencies are required to consider comments from the scoping process in the preparation of the Draft EIR and respond to public comments on the Draft EIR in the Final EIR.

Figure 1.1-1: The Environmental Review Process



## 1.2 SCOPE OF THE EIR

This section provides a summary of the issues addressed in the EIR. This Draft EIR was prepared following input from the public, responsible agencies, and affected agencies through the EIR scoping process, which included the following:

- In accordance with the State CEQA Guidelines, a Notice of Preparation (NOP) and Initial Study (IS) were prepared and distributed to responsible agencies, affected agencies, and other interested parties.
- The NOP was posted on September 28, 2011, in the County Clerk's office for 45 days. The NOP was submitted to the State Clearinghouse to officially solicit participation in determining the scope of the EIR.
- Scoping meetings were conducted on Wednesday, October 5, 2011, at 6:30 p.m. at the Rose Bowl Locker Room, 1001 Rose Bowl Drive, Pasadena, 91103 and Saturday, October 15, 2011, at 9:00 a.m. at the La Cañada High School cafeteria, 4463 Oak Grove Drive, La Cañada Flintridge, 91011.
- Requests for additional information and input provided from public comments during the 45-day scoping public review period and the scoping meetings regarding the contents of the NOP/IS and the scope of the EIR were incorporated in this Draft EIR.

The content of the Draft EIR was established based on the findings of the IS and public and agency input. Under the CEQA Guidelines, the analysis in the Draft EIR is focused on issues determined in the IS to be potentially significant, whereas issues found in the IS to have less than significant impacts or no impact, do not require further evaluation. Therefore, based on the analysis contained in the IS, the following issue areas were determined to have less than significant impacts or no impacts with respect to implementation of the Proposed Project and will not require further evaluation in the Draft EIR:

- Agriculture and Forest Resources
- Population and Housing
- Public Services (fire protection, police protection, schools, and other public facilities)

This Draft EIR analyzes the following environmental issues:

- Aesthetics
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Geology/Soils
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use and Planning
- Mineral Resources
- Noise/Vibration
- Public Services (included under Recreation)
- Recreation
- Transportation and Traffic
- Utilities and Service Systems

Mitigation measures to reduce impacts to a less-than-significant level were proposed where feasible. In addition to the environmental issues identified above, this Draft EIR also includes all of the sections required by the CEQA Guidelines.

### **1.3 FINAL EIR ORGANIZATION**

The Final EIR is organized into the following chapters so the reader can easily obtain information about the Proposed Project and related environmental issues:

- Executive Summary – Presents a summary of the Proposed Project and alternatives, areas of controversy and issues to be resolved, potential impacts and mitigation measures, and impact conclusions regarding growth inducement and cumulative impacts.
- Chapter 1: Introduction – Describes the purpose and use of the Draft EIR, provides a scope of the Draft EIR, and outlines the organization of the Draft EIR.
- Chapter 2: Project Description– Describes the project location, project details, and the LACFCD's overall objectives for the Proposed Project.
- Chapter 3: Environmental Analysis – Describes the existing conditions, or setting, before project implementation; methods and assumptions used in impact analysis; thresholds of significance; impacts, including cumulative, that would result from the Proposed Project; and applicable mitigation measures that would eliminate or reduce significant impacts identified for each environmental issue. This assessment of impacts considers the regulatory framework, environmental baseline conditions, thresholds for significance recommended by CEQA and other relevant statutes and regulations, and the potential to reduce or avoid significant impacts.

The environmental baseline condition for the sediment removal phase is considered at the time of publication of the NOP; however, due to the extremely dynamic drainage and vegetation conditions on the Proposed Project site; aesthetic and biological resources conditions change on a regular basis due to seasonal conditions, water flow/views, water storage, and sediment conditions. In 2011, these resources were severely impacted by sediment deposition. Under these resource issues, 2013 conditions were also taken into account. The environmental baseline condition for reservoir management will be conditions after sediment removal, approximately in the year 2020.

- Chapter 4: Alternatives Analysis – Evaluates the environmental effects of project alternatives, including the No Project Alternative, and provides an Environmentally Superior Project Alternative.
- Chapter 5: Other Mandatory CEQA Considerations – Includes a discussion of issues required by CEQA that are not covered in other chapters. This includes unavoidable adverse impacts, impacts found not to be significant, irreversible environmental changes, and growth inducing impacts.
- Chapter 6: References – Identifies the documents and individuals consulted in preparing the Draft EIR.
- Chapter 7: Report Preparation – Lists the individuals involved in preparing the Draft EIR.
- Chapter 8: Clarifications and Modifications – Identifies clarifications and revisions intended to update the Draft EIR in response to the comments received during the public review period.
- Chapter 9: Response to Comments – Provides the comments received during the public review period and the responses to those comments.
- Chapter 10: Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program
- Appendices – Present data supporting the analysis or contents of this Draft EIR. The Appendices include the following:
  - APPENDIX A Notice of Preparation and Initial Study, and Scoping Comments
  - APPENDIX B Air Quality Report
  - APPENDIX C Health Risk Assessment
  - APPENDIX D Biological Resources Reports
  - APPENDIX E Cultural Resources Report
  - APPENDIX F Geochemical and Geotechnical Exploration Report
  - APPENDIX G Greenhouse Gas Report
  - APPENDIX H EDR Hazardous Database Search

- APPENDIX I Noise Impact Analysis
- APPENDIX J Traffic Report
- APPENDIX K Sediment Transport Capacity Analysis

#### **1.4 AREAS OF CONTROVERSY/ISSUES TO BE RESOLVED**

Section 15123 (b)(2) of the *CEQA Guidelines* requires that an EIR Executive Summary identify areas of controversy known to the lead agency, including issues raised by other agencies and the public.

A Notice of Preparation (NOP) and Initial Study (IS) was released on September 28, 2011 (Appendix A) and two Public Scoping meetings were held on October 5 and October 15, 2011. Comments received during a 45-day comment period were considered and incorporated into this document. The scoping meeting introduced the Proposed Project, outlined the environmental review process for the EIR, and invited public comment on the scope and content of the EIR. Approximately 50 members of the public attended each meeting. Through this process, several key issues and areas of controversy were identified, including:

- What will be the potential of disruption to neighbors?
- Will there be potential destruction of biodiversity and habitat?
- Is there a possibility of water conservation or water replenishment?
- Is there a possibility of allowing natural processes within the reservoir?
- Could the Proposed Project include a landscaped seasonal water feature?
- Will the Proposed Project be compatible with the Hahamongna Watershed Park Master Plan elements?
- Will the spreading grounds be used for soccer fields?
- The Proposed Project should minimize traffic impacts on Windsor, include traffic control on Berkshire, and improve surface road conditions after sediment removal.
- Will the Proposed Project create a permanent access road to Oak Grove Drive?
- How will the Proposed Project provide conditions for sustainable regular removal of sediment instead of large-scale removals?
- Consider removing sediment through sluicing; allow the stream to move sediment naturally.
- The Proposed Project should consider a larger scope and long-term sustainability.
- Ensure sensitivity to La Cañada High School especially regarding hours of construction; maximize sediment removal when school is not in session.

- Communicate and coordinate with adjacent land uses (La Cañada United Methodist and Children's School, Child Education Center, Flintridge Riding Club, JPL).
- Coordinate with the following agencies: California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), U.S. Forest Service (USFS), City of Pasadena, City of Pasadena Public Works, and the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans).
- Coordinate with Audubon Society and other experts.
- Will there be potential job opportunities for local residents?

LACFCD refined the Proposed Project and developed project alternatives based on the public comments and concerns.

Another issue to be resolved involves the availability of dump trucks that meet EPA's emission standards for Model Year 2007 and later and the availability of off-road equipment that meets EPA's emission standards for Tier 3 equipment. This equipment would be required to conform to the mitigation measures proposed in Section 3.5 Air Quality; however, the availability of this equipment is unknown at this time.

## **1.5 AVAILABILITY OF THE DRAFT EIR**

The Draft EIR for the Devil's Gate Reservoir Sediment Removal and Management Project was distributed directly to responsible and reviewing agencies and a Notice of Availability (NOA) was distributed to organizations and interested groups and persons informing them of where the document can be viewed and how to comment. The Draft EIR was also available for review at the following locations:

- Linda Vista Library, 1281 Bryant Street, Pasadena
- San Rafael Branch Library, 1240 Nithsdale Road, Pasadena
- Pasadena Central Library, 285 East Walnut Street, Pasadena
- Altadena Library District, 600 East Mariposa Street, Altadena
- Bob Lucas Memorial Library, 2659 Lincoln Avenue, Altadena
- La Cañada Flintridge Library, 4545 North Oakwood Avenue, La Cañada Flintridge
- Irwindale Public Library, 5050 Irwindale Avenue, Irwindale
- County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works, 900 South Fremont Avenue, Alhambra, available at the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor public counter
- Sun Valley Library, 7935 Vineland Avenue, Sun Valley

In addition, the Draft EIR is also available online at the following website:

<http://www.LASedimentManagement.com/DevilsGate>.