

Los Angeles County Flood Control District

Enhanced Watershed Management Program PEIR



Introduction

The Los Angeles County Flood Control District is preparing a Program Environmental Impact Report covering the proposed Enhanced Watershed Management Programs that are being developed to improve storm water quality in Los Angeles County. This Fact Sheet provides some background information to assist in understanding the process.

What is a Program EIR?

A Program EIR is a type of Environmental Impact Report (EIR) allowed under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) that is used to evaluate a plan or program that has multiple components or actions that are related either geographically, through application of rules or regulations, or as logical parts of a long-term plan.



Bioswales help remove pollutants from stormwater.

What Does this Program EIR Accomplish?

This Program EIR assesses environmental effects of implementing Enhanced Watershed Management Programs (EWMPs) throughout the County to achieve compliance with the MS4 Permit.

- It is a disclosure process that identifies potential impacts to the environment
- It informs the public and decision makers about the potential impacts
- It identifies ways to avoid or reduce potential impacts

What is CEQA?

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) is a California law enacted in 1969 that requires public agencies in the state to evaluate environmental impacts of proposed projects. The act includes a public review period allowing the public and interested agencies time to comment on the project and potential impacts.

What are EWMPs?

The Flood Control District is one of 85 Permittees covered in the recently issued MS4 storm water discharge permit. The other 84 Permittees are municipalities within Los Angeles County. The MS4 permit allows for Permittees to prepare EWMPs to achieve compliance with storm water quality objectives. The EWMP is an option in the MS4 Permit that investigates the possibility of projects that benefit water quality, water supply, and/or flood control.

Many Permittees have joined forces to comply with this option of the MS4 Permit, forming 12 distinct EWMP groups. Each EWMP group is developing a series of projects to achieve the water quality objectives required in the permit for their individual watersheds.

The Flood Control District is not leading any of the EWMP groups, but is a partner in all 12. As a result, the Flood Control District has chosen to prepare a Program EIR to evaluate the effects of using the EWMP process to achieve MS4 permit compliance. As individual projects are fully developed, each Permittee will be responsible for evaluating the need for subsequent project approvals and CEQA compliance for each project.

What is an MS4 Permit?

A Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) is the network of storm water drainages throughout our cities that conveys storm water to the larger flood control channels and rivers and ultimately to the ocean. The federal Clean Water Act requires that MS4s be covered under a discharge permit that ensures the region will achieve regional water quality objectives. The Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board issued a new MS4 discharge permit to the 85 Permittees within Los Angeles County in December 2012.

Are there Specific Projects Being Approved with this Program EIR?

No. This Program EIR covering preparation of EWMPs does not approve any individual projects. Each Permittee is responsible for ensuring CEQA compliance for each of the subsequent, related projects that will arise from this planning effort.



Parks can be engineered to clean urban runoff before entering rivers and streams.