



Notice of Preparation of an Environmental Impact Report



Date: May 13, 2016

To: California Office of Planning and Research, Responsible and Trustee Agencies and Interested Parties

Subject: Notice of Preparation of an Environmental Impact Report

Project: United Rock Quarry No. 3 Project

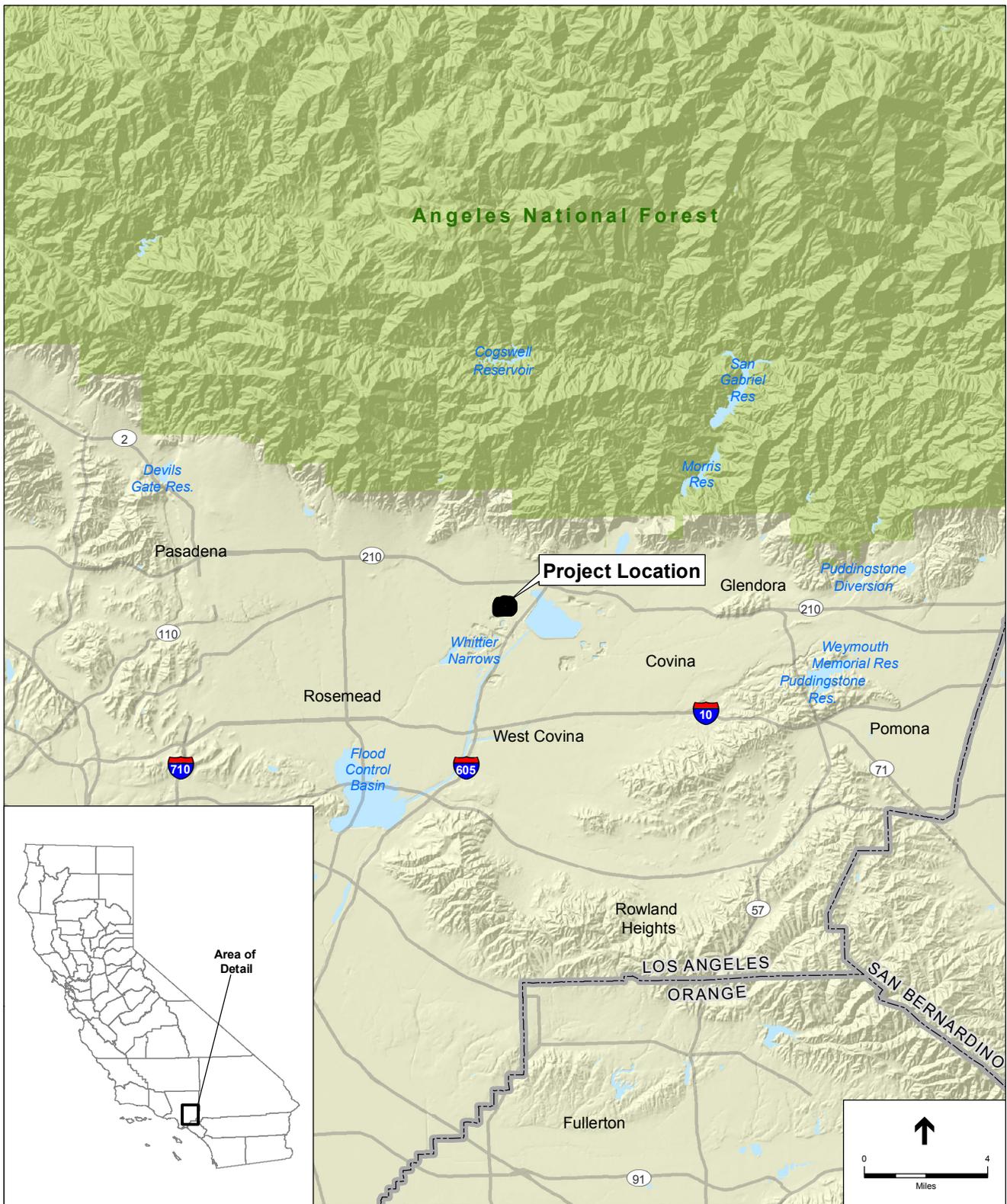
Lead Agency: Los Angeles County Flood Control District

Review Period: May 13, 2016 through June 13, 2016

This Notice of Preparation (NOP) has been prepared to notify agencies and interested parties that the Los Angeles County Flood Control District (LACFCD) is preparing an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for its proposed United Rock Quarry No. 3 Project (proposed project). The proposed project includes the acquisition of United Rock Product's (United Rock) Quarry No. 3 for the establishment of a new sediment placement site (SPS) and spreading grounds (SG) in the City of Irwindale, California (Figure 1). United Rock Quarry No. 3 is currently an open-pit mine that has been actively mined for decades by United Rock. The current mining activities are anticipated to be complete in the next five years or less.

Introduction

LACFCD manages a flood control system of dams, reservoirs, and debris basins that are designed to collect sediment from the hillsides and prevent it from damaging property downstream. Erosion, made up of sediment and debris, is conveyed through downstream confluences into the flood control facilities where the sediment is captured and stored. As a result, the removal of the accumulated sediment and debris buildup over time in these facilities is essential to ensuring proper operation and to protect downstream properties. Cleanouts of reservoirs are typically completed during the dry season, April through October, while debris basins are cleaned out year round. An average of approximately 300,000 cubic yards (CY) of sediment has been generated each year through these sediment removal cleanouts. This sediment is disposed of and hauled to the nearest SPS and/or landfill facility.



SOURCE: Los Angeles County

United Rock Quarry No. 3 EIR . 120810.42

Figure 1
Regional Location

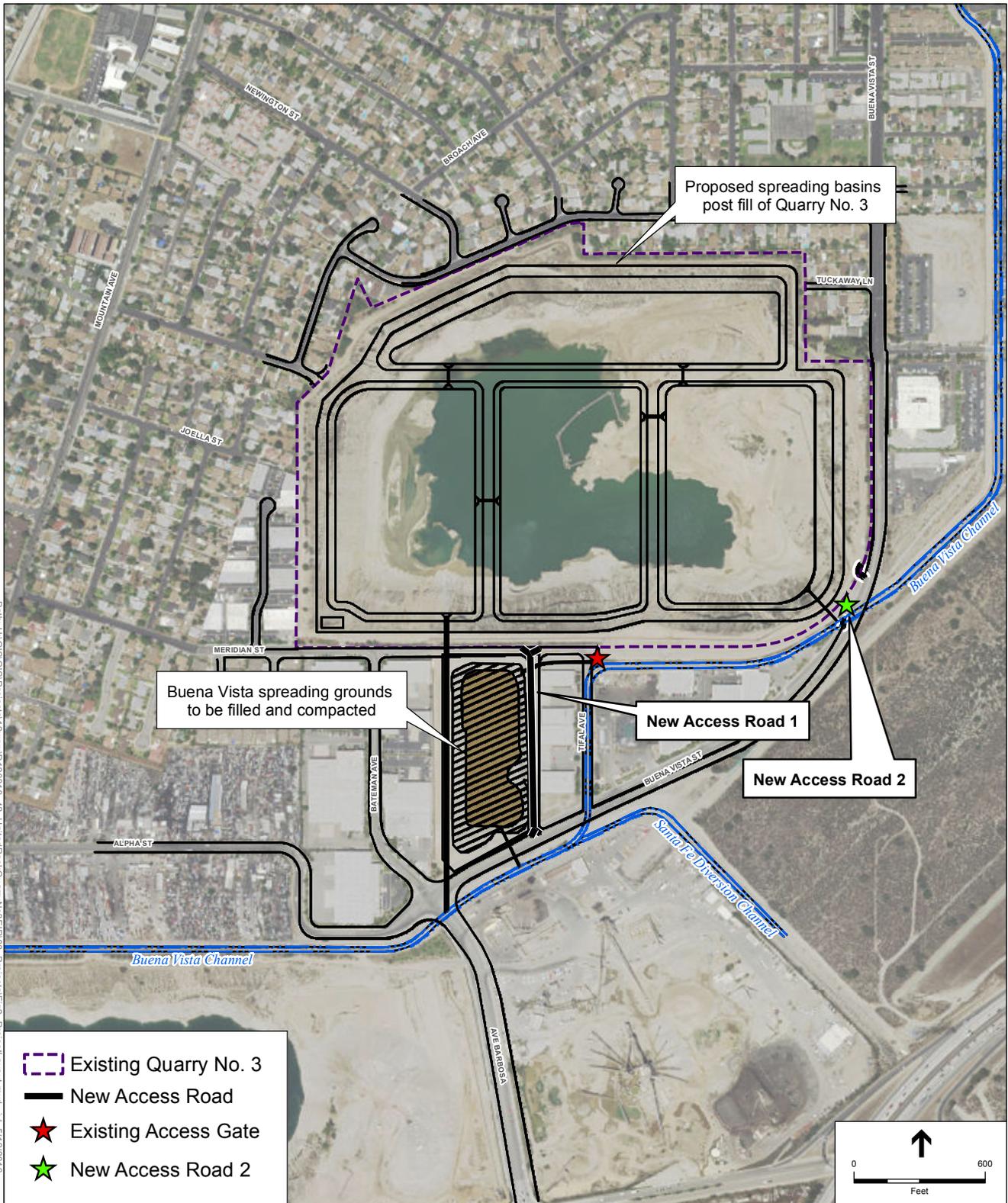
Background

As a result of several record setting fires that have occurred since 2009, the active SPSs in the region are quickly filling up with sediment cleared from impacted flood control facilities. The County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works (Public Works) prepared a Sediment Management Strategic Plan (Strategic Plan) that established sediment management strategies for a period from 2012-2032 (Strategic Plan, 2012). The Strategic Plan predicted that 58 million cubic yards (MCY) of sediment would need to be removed from the LACFCD's existing flood control facilities over the next 20 years, which would exceed the current capacity of the active SPSs. As a result, LACFCD needs to identify new SPS locations to accommodate the volume of sediment projected to be removed from existing operating facilities.

Project Description

The proposed project proposes to acquire and use United Rock Quarry No. 3 as a new SPS/SG, which would allow the LACFCD to prolong its sediment management capabilities into the future and to conserve additional stormwater. Currently, the United Rock Quarry No. 3 site has a storage capacity of approximately 25.3 MCY per City of Irwindale survey of 2014, with an area of approximately 91 acres and a depth of approximately 340 feet below the adjacent ground surface to its deepest location. Once Quarry No. 3 has been completely reclaimed and filled to street level, the LACFCD would have the option to convert the property into a spreading grounds facility, which would allow water to percolate into the ground and recharge groundwater supplies, or facilitate other local uses such as recreational open space.

The proposed project would require access improvements, including improvements to the existing access road along the south side of the site. These improvements would include construction of an access road across the Buena Vista spreading basin from Buena Vista Street to Meridian Street and construction of a second access point on Buena Vista Street (Figure 2). In addition, the proposed project would also include general site improvements consisting of site drainage improvements, enhanced lighting, a new entrance gate, a small operation building, and measurement scales for truckloads. Due to the significant need for placement of this material, the LACFCD would begin reclamation activities in 2020. Reclamation of the Quarry No. 3 would last 50 years with an anticipated end date in the year 2070. Sediment collected and transported from the impacted debris basin and reservoir cleanouts would occur in conjunction with flood control facility cleanouts on a year-round basis. The normal cleanout hours of operation would occur Monday through Friday between 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., while emergency cleanouts could occur for up to 24 hours a day for two week intervals or until the emergency regresses. Normal cleanouts would typically occur during the dry season from April to October, while emergency cleanouts typically occur during storm season from October through April.



SOURCE: ESRI

United Rock Quarry. 120810.42
Figure 2
 United Rock Quarry No.3

On average, current reservoir cleanouts within the LACFCD typically generate approximately 890 truck trips per day or approximately 8,000 CY per day of excavated material, while emergency reservoir cleanouts typically generate up to 1,250 truck trips per day or approximately 11,250 CY per day of excavated material. On average, current debris basin cleanouts typically generate approximately 550 truck trips per day or approximately 5,000 CY per day of excavated material while emergency debris basin cleanouts generate up to 1,500 truck trips per day or approximately 13,500 CY of excavated material per day. While these are the average truck trips for all SPS and basin combined, the proposed project's actual amount of sediment material transported to Quarry No. 3 would vary depending on the frequency and severity of annual storm events and the current capacity of the other active SPS. The proposed project would not generate any new additional truck trips beyond current LACFCD cleanout operations but rather proposes to reroute LACFCD hauling trucks to Quarry No.3 SPS from existing SPSs that are close to reaching their maximum capacity.

Areas of Probable Impact: The LACFCD, as Lead Agency, will prepare an EIR to evaluate the potential environmental impacts associated with the proposed project. An Initial Study for the proposed project has been drafted in compliance with the CEQA Guidelines for the proposed project. The draft Initial Study has thus far determined that the proposed project would result in a less-than-significant impact to aesthetics, agricultural and forestry resources, biological resources, cultural resources, hazards and hazardous material, land use and planning, population and housing, public services, recreation, and utilities and service systems. As a result, these environmental issue areas will not be carried into the EIR for further evaluation. The remaining environmental issues areas (listed below) will be evaluated within the EIR. The final Initial Study will be appended to the Draft EIR and can be reviewed when the Draft EIR is released for public review.

Air Quality/ Greenhouse Gas Emissions

The conversion of the Quarry No. 3 into a SPS would generate emissions from construction equipment exhaust, grading, construction workers' commute, and material hauling that could adversely affect regional air quality. Trucking of the sediment during the operational phase would generate emissions from truck exhaust. The EIR will assess the potential impacts of the proposed project on air quality and greenhouse gas emissions and, for potentially significant impacts, identify feasible mitigation measures to reduce the environmental impacts.

Geology, Soils and Mineral Resources

The EIR includes the filling of an active quarry with sediment. The EIR will evaluate the potential geologic hazards associated with the project and the elimination of a mineral extraction operation, and for potentially significant impacts, will identify feasible mitigation measures to reduce the environmental impacts.

Hydrology and Water Quality

The project includes site improvements consisting of site drainage improvements. The EIR will assess the potential impacts of the proposed project on the local drainages and overall water quality of the site, and for potentially significant impacts, identify feasible mitigation measures to reduce the environmental impacts.

Noise and Vibration

Construction activities would generate short-term noise and vibration that could affect nearby sensitive receptors. Operation of the project would generate noise that would impact nearby sensitive land uses. The EIR will identify sensitive receptors and land uses near the proposed facilities and evaluate noise impacts associated with the project, and for potentially significant impacts, will identify feasible mitigation measures to reduce the environmental impacts.

Transportation/Traffic

Construction of the proposed project would require short-term truck trips for construction materials and construction workers. During the operational phase, there would be truck trips delivering sediment to the new SPS on a daily basis. The EIR will assess the potential impacts of the proposed project on the local intersection and traffic patterns and, for potentially significant impacts, identify feasible mitigation measures to reduce the environmental impacts.

Public Comments: The LACFCD is soliciting the views of interested persons and agencies as to the scope and content of the environmental information to be evaluated in the EIR. In accordance with CEQA, agencies are requested to review the project description provided in this NOP and provide comments on environmental issues related to the statutory responsibilities of the agency. The EIR will be used by the LACFCD when considering approval of the proposed project.

We request that comments be received no later than June 13, 2016, or 30 days after receipt of this notice. Please send your comments to the address shown below. Please include a return address or email address and contact name with your comments.

John Bodenchak
Los Angeles County Flood Control District
Water Resources Division
900 South Fremont Avenue, 2nd Floor
Alhambra, California 91802-1460
spreadinggrounds@dpw.lacounty.gov