



SANTA ANITA STORMWATER FLOOD MANAGEMENT AND SEISMIC STRENGTHENING PROJECT



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

FAQs

What is the Santa Anita Stormwater Flood Management and Seismic Strengthening Project?

The Project would modify three existing flood management and water conservation facilities along the Santa Anita Canyon Watershed, including the Santa Anita Dam (Dam), the Santa Anita Headworks (Headworks), and the Santa Anita Debris Dam (Debris Dam). The Project would also remove and replace the Culvert Crossing to the City of Arcadia's Wilderness Park to ensure that the roadway and crossing can withstand flows generated by a larger storm event. The Project would improve these facilities to better manage storm water runoff and to improve public safety by addressing seismic safety and other structural issues, as well as to prevent flood damage to downstream communities. The Project is located within the jurisdictions of the City of Arcadia, the City of Monrovia, and the United States Forest Service (USFS).

Why is the Project needed?

The Project is needed for three primary reasons: 1) to reduce flood risk to downstream communities by modifying the Dam spillway to safely pass the Probable Maximum Flood and by remediating seismic safety issues at the Debris Dam; 2) to enhance sustainability of local water supply and increase recharge to the groundwater basin by over 500 acre-feet per year by restoring storage capability at the Debris Dam, rehabilitating the Headworks for more reliable diversion of stormwater runoff to the spreading grounds, and modernizing facilities and implementing new monitoring and control systems; and 3) improve all-weather access to the Arcadia Wilderness Park by constructing a new culvert crossing.

What is the cost of this Project and who is funding it?

The Project is part of a larger suite of projects within the Santa Anita Canyon that is collectively estimated to cost approximately \$40 million. Approximately half of the Project is funded by a State Proposition 1E grant while the remaining share is funded by existing funds of the Los Angeles County Flood Control District and local partner agencies (City of Arcadia, City of Sierra Madre, and the Raymond Basin Management Board).

What is an Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND)?

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) mandates an environmental review for projects. Because all Project-related environmental impacts would be less than significant, an IS/MND has been prepared. The IS/MND provides the public, responsible agencies, and other local and state governmental agencies with an evaluation of the potential environmental impacts related to both short-term construction activities and long-term operational activities, as well as methods to reduce, avoid or mitigate impacts.

Why was an IS/MND prepared as opposed to an Environmental Impact Report (EIR)?

An EIR requires that all of a project's impacts are disclosed, but not necessarily mitigated to below significant thresholds (since it may not be possible). A MND requires that all of a project's impacts are below significant thresholds or mitigated to below significant thresholds. Because the Project successfully avoids, minimizes or mitigates any significant environmental impacts, the IS determined that an MND is the appropriate environmental document for the Project.

What are the key steps in preparing an Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration?

The IS/MND describes the Project site's current conditions, which provides the existing "baseline" for the environmental impact analysis. The Project Description includes details about the Project's construction activities (e.g. phases, equipment, schedule) and post-Project operational activities. The IS/MND includes an analysis of environmental impacts that may result from all Project phases, and determines if mitigation is required to reduce impacts to a level that is "less than significant." If mitigation is needed, it is described in detail and then put into a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program that must be followed and monitored during Project implementation.

FAQs

What environmental topics are considered in an IS/MND?

The IS/MND addresses the following topics: Aesthetics; Agricultural and Forestry Resources; Air Quality; Biological Resources; Cultural Resources; Geology and Soils; Greenhouse Gas Emissions; Hazards and Hazardous Materials; Hydrology and Water Quality; Land Use and Planning; Mineral Resources; Noise; Population and Housing; Public Services; Recreation; Transportation/Traffic; Utilities and Services Systems; and Mandatory Findings of Significance.

What impacts will this Project have on the environment?

All Project-related impacts for both short-term construction activities and long-term operational activities would be less than significant. Mitigation was required for the topics of Aesthetics (potential removal of sycamore trees); Biological Resources (potential impacts to trees, snakes/turtles, nesting birds, bats, and construction within the creek); Geology and Soils (potential hazards related to earthquakes/landslides); Hazards and Hazardous Materials (potential for emergencies, spills, wildfire), and Noise (construction noise near homes).

Are any trees being removed?

Design of each project component is being done to minimize impacts to trees and impacts in general. The IS/MND accounts for the removal of up to three sycamore trees in the vicinity of the Culvert Crossing and six non-native Cedars in the vicinity of the Debris Dam. No Oak trees are planned to be removed for this Project.

How long will the Project last?

The first element of construction (at the Dam) is anticipated to begin in late 2015 and the last element of the construction (at the Debris Dam) is anticipated to end in late 2017.

How can the public be involved in the process?

CEQA requires that public, responsible agencies, and other local and state governmental agencies have an opportunity to review and comment on the environmental document. No public meetings are required. An MND must be circulated for public review for a minimum of 20 days, or 30 days if it is submitted to the State Clearinghouse. During the public review period, the public may provide written comments for consideration and inclusion in the public record. In order to provide more opportunity for review and comment, the LACFCD has voluntarily extended the public review period for this IS/MND by an additional 15 days, resulting in a 45-day public review period. Additionally, LACFCD voluntarily hosted a community meeting to discuss the Project and the IS/MND on November 5, 2014. At this meeting, stakeholders had an opportunity to speak to Project staff, view topical exhibit boards, and provide written comments. Written comments on the IS/MND should be sent to LACFCD and be postmarked by Thursday, December 4, 2014. Comments can be transmitted as follows:

Mail: County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works
Water Resources Division - Attn: SASFMSS Project
P.O. Box 1460
Alhambra, CA 91802-1460

Electronic Mail: damprojects@dpw.lacounty.gov

Fax: (626) 979-5436

Emailed and faxed comments should include "SASFMSS Project" in the subject line.

Where can I get more information?

Visit the Project website at: www.dpw.lacounty.gov/wrd/projects/SantaAnita

