



RIVERSIDE COUNTY FLOOD CONTROL
AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

DATE: June 12, 2009

TO: Interested Individuals and Organizations

FROM: Mark H. Wills, Chief of Regulatory Division *Mark H. Wills*

RE: Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report
for the Eagle Canyon Dam and Debris Basin Project

The Riverside County Flood Control and Water Conservation District (District) will be the Lead Agency and will prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and Environmental Assessment (EA) for the proposed Eagle Canyon Dam and Debris Basin Project. The project site is located at the mouth of Eagle Canyon in the hills to the southwest of East Palm Canyon Drive (Highway 111) in both the city of Palm Springs and Cathedral City. The canyon discharges into a wash between Canyon Plaza Drive and Perez Road, southwest of East Palm Canyon Drive. A portion of the project would be sited within Agua Caliente Indian Reservation property. The canyon floor is approximately 100 to 150 feet wide throughout the length of the project site. The axis of the canyon is aligned generally southwest to northeast.

The proposed project would include the construction, operation and maintenance of an earthen dam, debris catchment and underground storm drain. The project will provide flood detention and flood hazard mitigation for the developed portion of Cathedral City located downstream of the canyon. The outlet works would be ungated and the dam would, therefore, only hold water for brief periods of time following significant flood events. The debris basin would keep sediment and debris from flowing downstream and would be cleaned out on a periodic basis to prevent buildup of debris and soils. Stormwater flows from the wash would be conveyed through approximately 3300 lineal feet of 42" drainage pipeline (Line 43), which extends to East Palm Canyon Drive (Highway 111) and follows the right-of-way for approximately 1,000 LF, terminating at the West Cathedral Channel, which is located southeast of Eagle Canyon next to Bankside Drive. Prior to construction of the project, the Project Proponent anticipates remediation of potentially hazardous materials resulting from illegal dumping that previously occurred on the site.

The Environmental Checklist Form (Initial Study), completed in June 2009, identified the potential for significant impacts relative to the issue areas as follows:

- Aesthetics (scenic vista; scenic resources, including scenic highway; degrade visual quality);
- Air Quality (conflict with air quality plan; violate air quality standard; increase criteria pollutants);

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- Biological Resources (sensitive species; riparian habitat; Federally protected wetlands; wildlife movement; conflict with local policies; conflict with adopted Habitat Conservation Plan);
- Cultural Resources (historical resources; archaeological resources; paleontological resources; human remains);
- Geology and Soils (ground failure, including liquefaction; soil erosion; unstable soils);
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials (release of hazardous materials; hazardous materials site);
- Hydrology and Water Quality (alter existing drainage pattern; alter rate or amount of surface runoff; exceed capacity of existing drainage system; place structures within a 100-year flood hazard area; risk of hazards involving flooding as a result of dam failure);
- Land Use and Planning (conflict with applicable land use plan, policy or regulation; conflict with applicable habitat conservation plan);
- Mineral Resources (loss of availability of a known mineral resource; loss of availability of resource recovery site);
- Noise (exceed noise standards; excessive groundborne noise or vibration; increase in ambient noise); and
- Transportation/Traffic (increase in traffic; exceed level of service standard).

A copy of the Initial Study may be viewed at City Hall, 68700 Avenida Lalo Guerrero, Cathedral City, CA 92234.

This letter is a request for environmental information that you or your organization believes should be addressed in the EIR/EA. Due to time limits, as defined by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), your response should be sent at the earliest possible date, but no later than thirty (30) days after receipt of this notice. Comments and questions may be directed to Kris Flannigan, P.E., Senior Civil Engineer, 1995 Market Street, Riverside, CA 92501.

In addition to receiving written comments, the District will be conducting a public scoping meeting **at 3:00 p.m. and at 6:00 p.m. on Thursday, June 18, 2009**. The meeting will be held at the City Council Chambers, 68700 Avenida Lalo Guerrero, Cathedral City, CA 92234.

MHW:cw
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