

RECLAMATION

Managing Water in the West

Draft FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Contra Costa Water District Shortcut Pipeline Improvements Project

FONSI-09-098



Mission Statements

The Department of the Interior protects and manages the Nation's natural resources and cultural heritage; provides scientific and other information about those resources; and honors its trust responsibilities or special commitments to American Indians, Alaska Natives, and affiliated island communities.

The mission of the Bureau of Reclamation is to manage, develop, and protect water and related resources in an environmentally and economically sound manner in the interest of the American public.

BUREAU OF RECLAMATION
South-Central California Area Office, Fresno, California

FONSI-09-098

Contra Costa Water District Shortcut Pipeline Improvements Project

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Introduction

In accordance with section 102(2)(c) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended, the South-Central California Area Office of the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation), has determined that the Contra Costa Water District Shortcut Pipeline Improvements Project is not a major federal action that will significantly affect the quality of the human environment and an environmental impact statement is not required. This draft Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) is supported by Reclamation's Environmental Assessment (EA) Number EA-09-098, *Contra Costa Water District Shortcut Pipeline Improvements Project*, and is hereby incorporated by reference.

No final decision shall be made on the FONSI until public review has been completed and comments, if any, considered.

Background

The Shortcut Pipeline (Shortcut) is a cement-mortar-lined and coated steel water supply pipeline built in 1972 to convey untreated water roughly 28,000 feet from the Contra Costa Canal to the Martinez Reservoir in north-central Contra Costa County, California. The pipeline consists of 42-, 48-, and 60-inch-diameter pipe segments and associated appurtenances, including valves for sealing, draining, and refilling of the pipe, monitors to detect settling, and a cathodic protection system to prevent corrosion. The Shortcut is owned by Reclamation and operated by the Contra Costa Water District (District), and is the main source of water supply for the City of Martinez as well as the Shell Oil Martinez refinery.

Critical repairs and improvements necessary to ensure reliable long-term water supply using the Shortcut Pipeline have been identified. They consist of a set of short-term, access road construction and infrastructure rehabilitation activities, followed by long-term ongoing operation and maintenance (O&M) activities. Due to timing constraints and safety concerns a limited number of repairs were completed on the pipeline in January, 2011 within portions of the pipeline easement that are within the Shell and Tesoro Oil Refineries (referred to by Contra Costa as Phase 1 of the Project). Reclamation completed a Categorical Exclusion Checklist for the repairs on April 5, 2010 (Reclamation 2010).

Proposed Action

Under the Proposed Action, a variety of improvements would be made to the Shortcut and the immediately surrounding area in order to facilitate reliable pipeline operations and O&M, and thereby improve service reliability as described in section 2.2 of EA-09-098.

Environmental Commitments

The District shall implement the environmental protection measures included in Appendices A and C of EA-09-098 to reduce environmental consequences associated with the Proposed Action. Environmental consequences for resource areas assume the measures specified would be fully implemented.

Findings

Reclamation's finding that implementation of the Proposed Action will result in no significant impact to the quality of the human environment is supported by the following findings.

Resources Eliminated from Detailed Analysis

As described in Table 2 of EA-09-098, Reclamation analyzed the affected environment and determined that the Proposed Action does not have the potential to cause direct, indirect, or cumulative adverse effects to the following resources: environmental justice Indian Sacred Sites, Indian Trust Assets, socioeconomic resources, or recreation.

Air Quality

The operation of construction machinery associated with the Proposed Action would result in short-term emissions of air pollutants. Construction emissions are estimated to be below the thresholds established by the Air District (Table 4 in EA-09-089) during the 18 month schedule for the Proposed Action. Once construction is complete, the pipeline would be operated in the same way as it has in the past. Therefore, no changes in operational emissions are anticipated as a result of the Proposed Action.

Biological Resources

A total of 1.895 acres of permanent loss of habitat (pickleweed, grassland and wetland combined) would occur due to road construction, and a total of 2.622 acres of temporary impact (pickleweed, grassland and wetland combined) would occur (Table 7 in EA-09-098). The acreages for grassland impacts were calculated by including any contiguous grassland within 100 meters of any wetland habitat.

Under the Proposed Action, no federally listed plant species would be affected. The only one with a potential to occur in the Proposed Action Area was the soft bird's-beak, but appropriately timed surveys ruled out its occurrence.

Potentially occurring and documented birds, protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, could be subject to disturbance and habitat loss, but would be protected from take by the implementation of preconstruction surveys and conservation measures.

Of the federally listed species only the salt marsh harvest mouse and critical habitat for the North American green sturgeon occur in the Proposed Action Area and therefore may be impacted by the Proposed Action. On September 23, 2015, Reclamation received a Biological Opinion from the Service, addressing effects on the salt marsh harvest mouse. Contra Costa requested minor amendments to the Biological Opinion that would enable Contra Costa to perform routine O&M, and as a result, Reclamation requested re-initiation of consultation on November 18, 2016. A

revised Biological Opinion was received from the Service on December 22, 2016 (Appendix A of EA-09-098).

Cultural Resources

Reclamation determined that the Proposed Action constitutes an undertaking as defined in 36 CFR § 800.16(y) and involves the type of activity that has the potential to cause effects on historic properties under 36 CFR § 800.3(a). Through the Section 106 process, Reclamation reached a finding of no historic properties affected for the proposed undertaking. Reclamation notified the State Historic Preservation Officer of this finding, pursuant to the requirements of 36 CFR § 800.4(d)(1) (Appendix B of EA-09-098).

Global Climate Change

Annual construction and operational emissions of carbon dioxide equivalents are estimated to be 232 and 150 metric tons per year (2017 and 2018, respectively), and area well less than the Bay Area Air Quality Management District's 1,100 metric tons per year project threshold for annually reporting greenhouse gases emissions (see Table 4 in EA-09-098). Accordingly, the Proposed Action would result in below *de minimis* impacts to global climate change. Once construction is complete, the pipeline would be operated in the same way as it has in the past. Therefore, no changes in operational emissions are anticipated as a result of the Proposed Action.

Hazardous Waste

The proposed pipeline would not involve the use or transport of hazardous materials or hazardous wastes, nor result in any hazardous emissions. Design and siting of the Proposed Action activities would be in accordance with State and local regulations to prevent public health risk exposure. Because, the Proposed Action area includes former and closed disposal sites, with contaminated soil or groundwater which could contain hazardous materials, pre-construction testing will be performed in locations where possible hazardous wastes may be present. In addition, Contra Costa shall follow Contra Costa County Health Services, California Department of Toxic Substances Control, Regional Water Quality Control Board, California Division of Occupational Safety & Health, and Federal OSHA regulations (CCWD 2011).

Contra Costa would dispose of any groundwater containing hazardous materials at an appropriate location for such materials. If groundwater levels are greater than anticipated, construction of temporary detention basins may be employed at some locations for groundwater disposal from dewatering sites. Given that the Shortcut Pipeline is located within former hazardous waste sites it is possible that contaminated soil could be encountered when work is performed at some locations. All soils that are contaminated will remain on site or removed to an appropriate location for hazardous materials.

Water Resources

The Shortcut Pipeline would be out of service, temporarily, during portions of the construction period of the Proposed Action. Although the District's customers could still receive water deliveries by way of the Loop Canal, capacity would be greatly reduced. In order to reduce the temporary disruptions and inconvenience to water users, work requiring pipeline shutdown would be scheduled for when demand is lower. Completion of the Proposed Action would ultimately provide Contra Costa's customers with a more reliable source of water.

Cumulative Impacts

Cumulative impacts result from incremental impacts of the Proposed Action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions. Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor but collectively significant actions taking place over a period of time. Significance exists if it is reasonable to anticipate a cumulatively significant impact on the environment.

Air Quality

Construction-related emissions are considered temporary, and do not exceed the Bay Area Air Quality Management District's thresholds of concern, so cumulative adverse effects would not occur. Since long-term operational emissions would be unchanged as a result of the Proposed Action, they also would not contribute to cumulative air quality impacts.

Biological Resources

Biological resources have been impacted by past development, and would continue to be affected by other types of activities that are ongoing but unrelated to the Proposed Action. These may include adjacent development projects or maintenance activities, and can include predation by feral cats and impacts due to rodenticide use to control species such as black rats. The measures incorporated into the Proposed Action would minimize any cumulative contribution to impacts to biological resources.

Cultural Resources

Cultural resources have been previously recorded outside of the current area of potential effect, but in the vicinity of the project area. Continued development and construction activities unrelated to the Proposed Action could cause effects on significant cultural resources (i.e., historic properties). Additionally, the unanticipated discovery of cultural resources during implementation of the Proposed Action is always a possibility. In the event that historic properties are encountered during construction or maintenance activities associated with the Shortcut Pipeline, Reclamation would follow the post-review discovery process outlined at 36 CFR § 800.13 and any adverse effects on historic properties would be resolved through the National Historic Preservation Act Section 106 process.

Global Climate Change

Greenhouse gases emissions generated by the Proposed Action are expected to be extremely small, as seen in Table 4 of EA-09-098. While any increase in greenhouse gases emissions would add to the global inventory of gases that would contribute to global climate change, the Proposed Action would result in potentially minimal to no increases in greenhouse gases emissions.

Hazardous Waste

The Proposed Action may create an impact through excavation, stockpiling, transportation of soil, and the use of construction water, or contaminated groundwater. The District has measures to reduce any impacts (CCWD 2011). As the District would comply with all requirements to mitigate hazardous waste impacts, it is not anticipated that the Proposed Action would have cumulative adverse impacts resulting from hazardous waste.

Water Resources

Temporary disruption in water service to Contra Costa's customers would occur during the Proposed Action; however, there would be cumulatively beneficial impacts over the long-term as water supply would be more reliable. Additionally, the completion of this Proposed Action, when combined with future O&M activities, would reduce the need to discharge large amounts of water prior to future maintenance activities.