

RECLAMATION

Managing Water in the West

Finding Of No Significant Impact

Pure Water Monterey Groundwater Replenishment Project – Monterey Regional Water Pollution Control Agency

FONSI 17-05-MP

Prepared by:



Nathaniel J. Martin
Natural Resource Specialist
Mid-Pacific Region

Date: 5-11-17

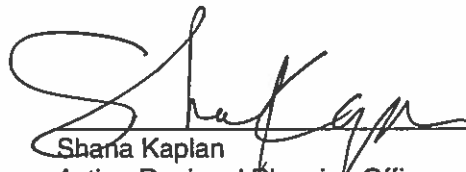
Concurred by:



Vanessa Emerzian
Project Manager
Mid-Pacific Region

Date: 5/11/17

Approved by:



Shana Kaplan
Acting Regional Planning Officer
Mid-Pacific Region

Date: 5/20/17



1 Background

The Bureau of Reclamation may provide the lesser of 25% or \$20 million of construction costs to the Monterey Regional Water Pollution Control Agency (MRWPCA) for construction of a portion of its Pure Water Monterey Groundwater Replenishment Project (GWR Project). In accordance with Section 102(2)(c) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), as amended, the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) to analyze impacts of providing Title XVI funds to the GWR Project.

The MRWPCA is undertaking the GWR Project in partnership with the Monterey Peninsula Water Management District (MPWMD) to create a reliable source of water supply to replace existing water supply sources for northern Monterey County. The primary objective of the GWR Project is to replenish the Seaside Basin with 3,500 AFY of purified recycled water to replace a portion of California American Water Company's (CalAm) water supply as required by State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) orders. Additional recycled water for agricultural irrigation in northern Salinas Valley would be provided by augmenting inflows to an existing water recycling facility at MRWPCA's Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant (Regional Plant). The GWR Project would provide additional source waters to provide additional recycled water for use in the Castroville Seawater Intrusion Project's agricultural irrigation system. It is anticipated that in normal and wet years approximately 4,500 to 4,750 acre-feet per year (AFY) of additional recycled water supply could be created for agricultural irrigation. In drought conditions, the GWR Project could provide up to an additional 1,000 AF for agricultural irrigation due to a drought reserve component of the GWR Project.

The GWR Project facilities are located within unincorporated areas of the Salinas Valley and within the cities of Salinas, Marina, and Seaside. The GWR Project will collect new raw waters (agricultural wash water, urban storm water runoff, and surface waters) and combine them with existing raw wastewater inflows to the Regional Plant. Secondary-treated effluent that is not further treated to tertiary levels for agricultural irrigation will be conveyed to a new Advanced Water Purification Facility (AWPF). The purified recycled water produced at the AWPF will meet or exceed federal and state drinking water standards, including Title 22 of the California Code of Regulations and its requirements for groundwater replenishment with recycled water.

2 Alternatives Including the Proposed Action

2.1 No Action

Under the No Action Alternative, Reclamation would not award the MRWPCA with Title XVI funds for construction of a portion of the Proposed Action.

MRWPCA will receive funds from project partners, loan proceeds from the State Water Board through the CWSRF, and grant funds from the State Water Board Proposition 1 program. These funding sources are sufficient for the construction of some components of the GWR Project that will move forward prior to the opportunity to compete for Title XVI funds. As such, a portion of this construction will occur regardless of whether Reclamation would provide funding for the GWR Project. Thus, some environmental effects of the construction and operation of the GWR Project would occur under the No Action Alternative.

There are system components of the GWR Project that would be constructed or installed no sooner than 2018 and would be operated as part of full implementation of the GWR Project. The Reclamation funding would be used for these system components that are not already under construction. If Reclamation does not provide funding, MRWPCA may need to secure other funds through additional CWSRF loan funds or grants. The availability of additional funding sources other than the Title XVI program is unknown at this time.

2.2 Proposed Action

Under the Proposed Action, Reclamation would provide partial funding for components required to fully implement the GWR Project, a water supply project that will serve northern Monterey County. As noted above, these components include upgrades to increase the operational efficiency, reliability, and flexibility of treatment, conveyance, and storage facilities at the Regional Treatment Plant (including the AWPf and other treatment facilities) and at the Seaside Basin injection well facilities. The upgrades would include improvements to the treatment systems to enable additional system automation controls, process upgrades, performance, operational ease, and efficiency of existing facilities. In addition, the funds would be used for new or modified injection and monitoring wells and appurtenant facilities (up to a total of 4 injection well clusters as evaluated in the EIR and federal compliance documents), if needed to better meet water quality or quantity requirements and objectives.

3 Findings

Based on the attached EA, Reclamation finds that the Proposed Action is not a major Federal action that will significantly affect the quality of the human environment. The EA describes the existing environmental resources in the area of the Proposed Action, and evaluates the effects of

the No Action and Proposed Action alternatives on the resources in the vicinity of the Proposed Action. This EA was prepared in accordance with National Environmental Policy Act, Council on Environmental Quality regulations (40 CFR 1500-1508), and Department of the Interior Regulations (43 CFR Part 46). Effects on several environmental resources were examined and found to be absent or minor. That analysis is provided in the attached EA, and the analysis in the EA is hereby incorporated by reference.

Following are the reasons why the impacts of the proposed action are not significant:

1. The proposed action will not significantly affect public health or safety (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(2)).
2. The proposed action will not significantly impact natural resources and unique geographical characteristics such as historic or cultural resources; parks, recreation, and refuge lands; wilderness areas; wild or scenic rivers; national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands (Executive Order (EO) 11990); flood plains (EO 11988); national monuments; migratory birds; and other ecologically significant or critical areas (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(3) and 43 CFR 46.215(b)).
3. The proposed action will not have possible effects on the human environment that are highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(5)).
4. The proposed action will neither establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects nor represent a decision in principle about a future consideration (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(6)).
5. There is no potential for the effects to be considered highly controversial (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(4)).
6. The proposed action will not have significant cumulative impacts (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(7)).
7. The proposed action will not adversely affect any districts, sites, highways, structures, or objects listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(8)). Pursuant to 54 USC § 306108, commonly known as Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, and its implementing regulations at 36 CFR Part 800, Reclamation notified the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) of a finding of no historic properties affected for the undertaking through correspondence on April 19, 2016 (Appendix B of the EA). Through correspondence dated April 19, 2016, the SHPO responded with no objection to Reclamation's finding.
8. The proposed action would not adversely affect listed or proposed threatened or endangered species (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(9)).
9. The proposed action will not violate federal, state, tribal or local law or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(10)).
10. The proposed action will not affect any Indian Trust Assets (512 DM 2, Policy Memorandum

dated December 15, 1993). A records search was conducted on 12/21/2016 and found that the closest ITA to the Proposed Action was 21.68 miles northeast of the Proposed Action (Appendix N of the EA).

11. Implementing the proposed action will not disproportionately affect minorities or low-income populations and communities (EO 12898).

12. The proposed action will not limit access to, and ceremonial use of, Indian sacred sites on Federal lands by Indian religious practitioners or significantly adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites (EO 13007 and 512 DM 3).