March 2015 | Final Environmental Impact Report

# LOS ANGELES COUNTY GENERAL PLAN UPDATE

County of Los Angeles

*Prepared for:*

**County of Los Angeles**
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PLACEWORKS

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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 INTRODUCTION

This Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) has been prepared in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) as amended (Public Resources Code Section 21000 et seq.) and CEQA Guidelines (California Administrative Code Section 15000 et seq.).

According to CEQA Guidelines, Section 15132, the FEIR shall consist of:

(a) The Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) or a revision of the Draft;

(b) Comments and recommendations received on the DEIR either verbatim or in summary;

(c) A list of persons, organizations, and public agencies comments on the DEIR;

(d) The responses of the Lead Agency to significant environmental points raised in the review and consultation process; and

(e) Any other information added by the Lead Agency.

This document contains responses to comments received on the DEIR for the Los Angeles County General Plan Update during the public review period, which began June 23, 2014, and closed August 7, 2014. This document has been prepared in accordance with CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines and represents the independent judgment of the Lead Agency. This document and the circulated DEIR comprise the FEIR, in accordance with CEQA Guidelines, Section 15132.

## 1.2 FORMAT OF THE FEIR

This document is organized as follows:

***Section 1, Introduction.*** This section describes CEQA requirements and content of this FEIR.

***Section 2, Response to Comments.*** This section provides a list of agencies and interested persons commenting on the DEIR; copies of comment letters received during the public review period, and individual responses to written comments. To facilitate review of the responses, each comment letter has been reproduced and assigned a number: A-1 through A-17 for letters received from agencies and organizations, and R-1 through R-6 for letters received from residents and property owners. Individual comments have been numbered for each letter and the letter is followed by responses with references to the corresponding comment number.

***Section 3. Revisions to the Draft EIR.*** This section contains revisions to the DEIR text and figures as a result of the comments received by agencies and interested persons as described in Section 2, and/or errors and omissions discovered subsequent to release of the DEIR for public review.

The responses to comments contain material and revisions that will be added to the text of the FEIR. County of Los Angeles staff has reviewed this material and determined that none of this material constitutes the type of significant new information that requires recirculation of the DEIR for further public comment under CEQA Guidelines Section 15088.5. None of this new material indicates that the project will result in a significant new environmental impact not previously disclosed in the DEIR. Additionally, none of this material indicates that there would be a substantial increase in the severity of a previously identified environmental impact that will not be mitigated, or that there would be any of the other circumstances requiring recirculation described in Section 15088.5.

## 1.3 CEQA REQUIREMENTS REGARDING COMMENTS AND RESPONSES

CEQA Guidelines Section 15204 (a) outlines parameters for submitting comments, and reminds persons and public agencies that the focus of review and comment of DEIRs should be "on the sufficiency of the document in identifying and analyzing possible impacts on the environment and ways in which significant effects of the project might be avoided or mitigated. Comments are most helpful when they suggest additional specific alternatives or mitigation measures that would provide better ways to avoid or mitigate the significant environmental effects. At the same time, reviewers should be aware that the adequacy of an EIR is determined in terms of what is reasonably feasible. …CEQA does not require a lead agency to conduct every test or perform all research, study, and experimentation recommended or demanded by commenters. When responding to comments, lead agencies need only respond to significant environmental issues and do not need to provide all information requested by reviewers, as long as a good faith effort at full disclosure is made in the EIR."

CEQA Guidelines Section 15204 (c) further advises, "Reviewers should explain the basis for their comments, and should submit data or references offering facts, reasonable assumptions based on facts, or expert opinion supported by facts in support of the comments. Pursuant to Section 15064, an effect shall not be considered significant in the absence of substantial evidence." Section 15204 (d) also states, "Each responsible agency and trustee agency shall focus its comments on environmental information germane to that agency's statutory responsibility." Section 15204 (e) states, "This section shall not be used to restrict the ability of reviewers to comment on the general adequacy of a document or of the lead agency to reject comments not focused as recommended by this section."

In accordance with CEQA, Public Resources Code Section 21092.5, copies of the written responses to public agencies will be forwarded to those agencies at least 10 days prior to certifying the environmental impact report. The responses will be forwarded with copies of this FEIR, as permitted by CEQA, and will conform to the legal standards established for response to comments on DEIRs.

# 2. Response to Comments

Section 15088 of the CEQA Guidelines requires the Lead Agency (County of Los Angeles) to evaluate comments on environmental issues received from public agencies and interested parties who reviewed the DEIR and prepare written responses.

This section provides all written responses received on the DEIR and the responses to each comment prepared by the Leady Agency. Comment letters and specific comments are given letters and numbers for reference purposes. Where sections of the DEIR are excerpted in this document, the sections are shown indented. Changes to the DEIR text are shown in underlined text for additions and ~~strikeout~~ for deletions.

The following is a list of agencies and persons that submitted comments on the DEIR during the public review period.


| Number Reference | Commenting Person/Agency | Date of Comment | Page No. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Agencies & Organizations | | | |
| A1 | Endangered Habitats League | July 7, 2014 | 2-3 |
| A2 | County of Los Angeles Fire Department | July 10, 2014 | 2-17 |
| A3 | Puente Hills Habitat Preservation Authority | July 16, 2014 | 2-21 |
| A4 | Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy | July 28, 2014 | 2-25 |
| A5 | Caltrans | August 1, 2014 | 2-29 |
| A6 | City of Rancho Palos Verdes | August 5, 2014 | 2-35 |
| A7 | County of Ventura | August 5, 2014 | 2-39 |
| A8 | LACMTA (Metro) | August 5, 2014 | 2-45 |
| A9 | California Construction and Industrial Materials Association | August 6, 2014 | 2-59 |
| A10 | City of Carson | August 7, 2014 | 2-65 |
| A11 | City of Montebello | August 7, 2014 | 2-71 |
| A12 | City of Palmdale | August 7, 2014 | 2-75 |
| A13 | County Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County | August 7, 2014 | 2-79 |
| A14 | Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board | August 7, 2014 | 2-83 |
| A15 | Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board | August 7, 2014 | 2-93 |
| A16 | Southern California Gas Company | August 7, 2014 | 2-103 |
| A17 | California Department of Fish and Wildlife | August 21, 2014 | 2-107 |
| Residents & Property Owners | | | |
| R1 | Baldwin Stocker, LLC | August 6, 2014 | 2-123 |
| R2 | Freeport-McMoRan Oil & Gas | August 6, 2014 | 2-127 |
| R3 | Cone Fee Trust | August 7, 2014 | 2-133 |
| R4 | Joyce Dillard | August 7, 2014 | 2-141 |
| R5 | Babe Kirkpatrick (Garside) | August 7, 2014 | 2-147 |
| R6 | Angela Toghia | August 8, 2014 | 2-151 |

# 2. Response to Comments

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LETTER A1 – Endangered Habitats League (9 pages)

ENDANGERED HABITATS LEAGUE

DEDICATED TO ECOSYSTEM PROTECTION AND SUSTAINABLE LAND USE

July 7, 2014

Connie Chung, AICP, Supervising Regional Planner
Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning
320 West Temple Street, Room 1356
Los Angeles, CA 90012
Email: genplan@planning.lacounty.gov

**RE: 2014 Draft General Plan 2035 and Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Los Angeles County General Plan Update (SCH#2011081042)**

Dear Ms. Chung:

The Endangered Habitats League (EHL) appreciates the opportunity to comment on this project. For your reference, EHL is Southern California's only regional conservation group. We will focus on the environmental impacts of new development, and planning and mitigation strategies to reduce those impacts. General comments and recommendations will be provided first, followed by specific comments and recommendations.

**GENERAL COMMENTS**

EHL first wishes to voice its strong support for the expanded Significant Ecological Areas (SEAs) that are proposed[1]. These are a foundation for the future of the County and are the repository of the citizens' natural heritage. A1-1

Next, EHL supports "smart growth" planning that reduces the land consumed for development, reduces GHG emissions, builds around transit corridors, and protects natural resources while accommodating population and job growth. But due to a long history of large lot parcelization in the County, the goal of environmental protection is challenging. And even where lands are rezoned to 1 unit per 20 acres, this will be insufficient to protect the most important biological values, that is, the SEAs. Such densities, on top of existing parcelization, create habitat fragmentation and edge effects incompatible with maintaining existing biological values. (See enclosure, documenting adverse impacts beginning roughly at 1:40.) A1-2

[1] When determining the compatibility of the proposed AVAP with an affected SEA, it would make sense to consider the unique and exceptional circumstance of the Tejon Ranch Land-Use and Conservation Agreement, which in effect clusters development on a larger scale, albeit with some of the resulting ecological benefit occurring on the other side of a jurisdictional boundary.

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# 2. Response to Comments

We therefore request that the General Plan 2035 and its EIR contain four measures to address the adverse impacts of development and to achieve the goal of resource protection. Where possible, these should be included in the General Plan and its EIR as feasible *mitigation measures* for the reduction of biological and other impacts, allowing for subsequent, expeditious tiering by future development during CEQA review.

A1-2 Cont'd

**Reduced densities in environmentally constrained land**

As you consider the framework for land use, we urge that land use designations—and the densities therein—fully reflect infrastructure, public safety, and environmental constraints. It costs the taxpayer to provide services, utilities, roads, and police and fire protection to more remote locations. Often, such areas have high wildlife values, including but not limited to Significant Ecological Areas (SEAs). These same areas typically are high fire hazard. Reducing density automatically puts less life and property at risk of fire and, during a fire event, ensures that limited fire-fighting resources are spent stopped the fire's spread rather than defending dispersed home sites that should not have been built in the first place. As noted below, the draft land use map does not sufficiently take into account fire hazard and should be improved.

A1-3

Therefore, outside of urban centers and Economic Opportunity Areas, densities should be Rural, preferably at the RL40 category but at RL20 or RL10 where existing patterns of parcelization preclude the lowest density category[2]. *This is particularly vital within SEAs.* Estate and ranchette designations (H2, R1, R2, and R5) rarely support agricultural uses and are the epitome of unwise, inefficient, auto and GHG-intensive, and land-consumptive land use. Such categories should only be used when existing parcelization has already converted an area to "rural sprawl."

By down-planning estate densities to rural categories, the County of San Diego found billions of dollars in taxpayer savings[3] and will avoid putting life and property at risk of wildfire. Los Angeles County should follow suit, and instead focus growth at higher densities in appropriate locations. Recommendations regarding locations where the current draft land use map does not follow these principles will follow under specific comments.

**Transfer of development rights (TDR)**

In order to protect the natural resource value of SEAs, Los Angeles County needs an effective strategy in addition to traditional acquisition and to the mechanisms (e.g., set asides, mitigation) in the SEA Ordinance.

A1-4

[2] The unique circumstance of the Tejon Ranch Land-Use and Conservation Agreement may justify an exception to an RL designation because the Agreement effectively concentrates urban development on a small portion of its holdings, facilitating conservation over vast areas.
[3] The San Diego County General Plan Update EIR found savings of $1.6 billion in road construction costs alone, irrespective of ongoing maintenance. Also see <http://www.sdcounty.ca.gov/pds/docs/bos_may03_report.pdf> at page 21, Public Costs, for comparison of municipal *vs* unincorporated service costs.

2

TDR is a proven mechanism to preserve open space and one that creates positive outcomes for property owners who sell development rights and those who acquire them. It gives economic value to the open space that the public desires. TDR may be of the classic variety[4] or streamlined as a fee program. The latter would require payment of an open space fee as a condition of obtaining density and would allow the agency receiving the fees to effectively prioritize conservation properties. TDR should always use the post-Update, rezoned density as baseline for sending areas and should require participation by receiving sites not only to increase density above a baseline (bonus density) but also to attain plan density (at least beyond the lower end of the density range). Coordination with nearby cities would be ideal.

A1-4 cont'd

Because it shifts growth from more remote and habitat-rich areas to locations closer to jobs and services, TDR could be incorporated into the General Plan and its EIR as mitigation for impacts to biological resources, traffic, GHG, aesthetics, etc. We recommend retaining an experienced consultant to explore options and fashion a program, and that a work plan be advanced as soon as possible, so as to meet the target of implementation 1-2 years post Plan adoption.

**Site design**

In order to implement biologically sound site design during the land use process, the General Plan 2035 should "decouple" lot size from density. This allows development to be consolidated on smaller lots in the last sensitive portion of the site. To maintain community character in non-urban locations, a minimum lot size of ½-acre should be set, as it has in many rural San Diego communities. To obtain smaller lots via Density Controlled Development adds additional layers of time and money for project applicants, which discourages better planning and resource protection. Smaller lots should be available "by right" and routinely.

A1-5

Such consolidation of development should be *mandatory* at the Rural designations of RL5 - RL40, and should be used in the EIR as a key *mitigation measure* for biological, public safety, agricultural, and other impacts. The land set aside through such a subdivision could serve habitat or agricultural purposes but could not be developed in the future. An "off the shelf" model that provides standards, guidelines, and allowable uses (including agriculture) in the resulting open space is San Diego County's Conservation Subdivision Program[5].

**Growth policies**

The County may designate Economic Opportunity Areas (EOAs) or other designations or overlays that concentrate jobs and housing and provide improvements in services and transportation and water and sewerage infrastructure. These are growth

A1-6

[4] For example, see the City of Livermore's program at <http://www.cityoflivermore.net/civicax/filebank/documents/3051/>.
[5] See <http://www.sdcounty.ca.gov/pds/advance/conservationsubdivision.html>.

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# 2. Response to Comments

inducing. As a mitigation measure, General Plan 2035 should include protections against the sprawl that would otherwise follow such development, particularly along highway corridors. The most worrisome case is Highway 138. EHL recommends an urban growth boundary around EOAs or at a minimum a land use policy that prohibits extension of urban services between the proposed West and Central EOAs absent another comprehensive update of the General Plan. A1-6 cont'd

**SPECIFIC COMMENTS**

**Land use maps**

The Hazard, Environmental, and Resource Constraints Model and Map (Table C.1; Figure C.1) are good tools for assigning land use designations. Areas with constraints should receive the lower end of the density scale. *However, we recommend elevating Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones to Class II.* In today's world, where the inevitability of wind-driven fire is recognized, it is wholly irresponsible to "dig the hole deeper" by approving more and more at-risk development. Along with the SEA designation, Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones should result in RL40 (or RL20 or RL20 if existing parcelization predominates). A1-7

A review of the draft land use maps shows that several areas with SEA, other biological, or fire constraints have inappropriately high densities. These areas include West Chatsworth in the Santa Monica Mountains, around La Crescenta in the San Gabriel Mountains foothills, and Diamond Bar/Tonner Canyon in the Whittier-Chino-Puente Hills. These locations should be redesignated as RL40, or RL20 if existing parcelization precludes the lower category. It should be noted that parcel sizes in the Diamond Bar area are currently as large of 160 acres.

**Site design**

As noted, above, EHL recommends that minimum lot sizes in Rural and Estate categories be reduced to ½-acre. EHL recommends the following new Land Use Policy, modeled on a draft policy in Riverside County's GPA 960 update[6].

> *In Very High Fire Hazard Zones and in locations where biological or agricultural resources are present, require consolidated development on lots smaller than the underlying land use designation would allow. The density yield of the underlying land use designation should be consolidated on one- half-acre lots; however, for sites located adjacent to existing, larger estate lots, 10,000 square foot minimum lots may be considered.* A1-8

**Draft goals and policies**

[6] See <http://planning.rctlma.org/Portals/0/genplan/general_plan_2014/GPA960/GPAVolume1/LandUseElement-%20GPA%20No%20960%20Volume%201%202014-02-20.pdf> at page LU-56.

4

**Conservation and Natural Resources Element**

C/NR-1 SEA Preservation Program

EHL supports these mechanisms to achieve permanent protection of SEA resources, and urges quicker timelines and supporting work plan budgets.

C/NR-2 Mitigation Land Banking Program/Open Space Master Plan

EHL supports these mechanisms to achieve permanent protection of SEA resources while simultaneously streamlining development in less biologically important locations.

C/NR-4 Native Woodland Conservation Management Plan

EHL supports planning for the conservation of these important woodland communities but urges a 3-5 year timeline.

C/NR-5 Scenic Resources Ordinance

EHL supports preserving the scenic views that establish a sense of place. A1-9

Goals and Policies for Open Space Resources

EHL supports the proposed language for Goal C/NR 1 and Goal C/NR 2, and associated policies. *We note that all of this is predicated on securing expanded SEA boundaries.*

Goals and Policies for Biological Resources

EHL concurs with adding shrub habitats such as coastal sage scrub to the "including" list, as this community is very depleted yet still very biodiverse.

Policy C/NR 3.3 should not be limited to riparian resources, as upland communities are also badly in need of restoration. An example is returning non-native grassland to historic coastal sage scrub, which is an ongoing project in several Orange County locations.

Sensitive Site Design

Policy C/NR 3.8

We suggest that following improvement, as "discourage" is far too weak a word to comport with either CEQA or SEA policies.

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# 2. Response to Comments

~~*Discourage*~~ *Limit development in areas with identified significant biological resources, such as SEAs.*

Another option (from San Diego County's General Plan) is:

*Habitat Protection through Site Design. Require development to be sited in the least biologically sensitive areas and minimize the loss of natural habitat through site design.*

Policy C/NR 3.9

This policy and its component parts are *strongly* supported as they provide the necessary General Plan basis for on-the-ground implementation of SEA goals. Absent this policy, SEA protection would remain abstract and ineffectual. We particularly support the additional elements for contiguity and connectivity, both on- and off-site.

Policy C/NR 3.10

We agree that at the General Plan level, it is wisest to express mitigation requirements in terms of general goals rather than, for example, as "in kind" or "flexible," reserving more specific delineation to the SEA Ordinance or to County biological guidelines for CEQA implementation.

A1-9 cont'd

Policy C/NR 3.11

The weak term "discourage" in relation to riparian and wetland habitats would undermine CEQA, Calif. Dept. of Fish and Wildlife, and federal Clean Water Act standards and regulations. A much better option is found in San Diego County's General Plan Conservation and Open Space Element[7]:

*Wetland Protection. Require development to preserve existing natural wetland areas and associated transitional riparian and upland buffers and retain opportunities for enhancement.*

*Minimize Impacts of Development. Require development projects to:*
- *Mitigate any unavoidable losses of wetlands, including its habitat functions and values; and*
- *Protect wetlands, including vernal pools, from a variety of discharges and activities, such as dredging or adding fill material, exposure to pollutants such as nutrients, hydromodification, land and vegetation clearing, and the introduction of invasive species.*

Woodland Preservation Policy C/NR 4.1

[7] See <http://www.sdcounty.ca.gov/pds/gpupdate/docs/BOS_Aug2011/C.1-4_Conservation_and_Open_Space.pdf> at page 5-9.

6

We support this language and extending the policy to other native woodlands. A1-9 cont'd

**Land Use Element**

Goal LU 3 Growth Management

Policy LU 3.1: Protect and conserve greenfield areas, natural resources, and SEAs.

EHL supports this policy.

Policy LU 3.2: Discourage development in areas with environmental resources and/or safety hazards.
Policy LU 3.3: Discourage development in greenfield areas where infrastructure and public services do not exist.

EHL concurs with the intent of these policies yet the term "discourage" is weak and ineffective. We suggest substitution of the term "limit" which is consistent with the SEA program. A1-10

Goal LU 4 Infill Development

EHL supports these policies.

LU-6 Transfer of Development Rights Program

EHL strongly supports this well-conceived policy and the work plan it outlines. We appreciate it being advanced to a Year 1-2 schedule and urge all appropriate budgeting.

LU-7 Adaptive Reuse Ordinance

As a vital and proven way to revitalize older communities, EHL support this item.

**Safety Element**

Goal S 2 Flood Hazards

Policy S 2.1: Discourage development in the County's Flood Hazard Zones.

EHL concurs with the intent of this policy yet the term "discourage" is weak and ineffective. We suggest substitution of the term "limit." A1-11

Goal S 3 Fire Hazard

Policy S 3.1: Discourage development in VHFHSZs, particularly in areas with significant biological resources.

7

# 2. Response to Comments

Both the Safety and Land Use Elements should contain much stronger policies to reduce the life and property put at risk though ill-sited development. There is an enormous threat to public safety throughout the Very High Fire Hazard Zone and it is essential that decision-makers have an effective basis in the General Plan to limit development in these locations in response. It is not enough to improve site design and require defensible space. "Preventive medicine" on the land use planning front is needed, as well. Therefore, Policy S 3.1 should substitute the term "limit" for "discourage" to reflect the fact that we are living year-to year-in wildfire emergencies.

EHL also recommends the inclusion of a critically important new land use policy *to limit the expansion of the Wildland Urban Interface, or WUI.* The WUI is where homes are located near or among fire prone lands. This interface is where wildfires ignite, where loss of life and property occurs, and where firefighters spend finite time and resources defending structures rather than stopping the spread of wind-driven fires. We recommend adding this Land Use policy to the appropriate section of that element:

> *Assign land uses and densities in a manner that minimizes development in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones.*

Note that this policy is essential *verbatim* from San Diego County's General Plan, adopted in 2011[8]. A discussion on the importance of reducing development intensity in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones should be added to the Land Use and Safety Elements to accompany this new policy.

Policy S 3.7: Consider siting and design for developments located within VHFHSZs, particularly in areas located near ridgelines and on hilltops, to reduce the wildfire risk. A1-11 cont'd

EHL recommends strengthening this policy as follows. The question is whether Los Angeles County is serious about reducing fire hazard or merely wants to consider it.

> *Policy S 3.7: ~~Consider siting~~ Site and design ~~for~~ developments located within VHFHSZs, ~~particularly~~ such as in areas located near ridgelines and on hilltops, to reduce the wildfire risk.*

In addition, the following policy should be added to the Safety Element to add another important dimension to the site design topic. Note that this is a modification of a draft policy in Riverside County's current GPA 960 Update.

> *Require property owners to utilize consolidated site design within Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones by siting development on a compact footprint.*

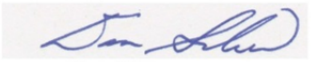
Consolidated site design, as opposed to dispersed development, produces home sites easier to defend during a fire event and requires far less destruction of vegetation in order to produce defensible space.

[8] See <http://www.sdcounty.ca.gov/pds/gpupdate/docs/LUE.pdf> at page 3-26.

8

EHL appreciates the progress being made in this historic General Plan 2035 update and looks forward to continuing to work with the Department of Regional Planning for successful protection of biological resources and sustainable patterns of land use.

Yours truly,



Dan Silver
Executive Director

Enclosure: Conservation Biology Institute, *Analysis of General Plan-2020 San Diego County*, December 2005

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# 2. Response to Comments

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**A1. Response to comments from Endangered Habitats League dated July 7, 2014.**

A1-1 Comment noted. No response required.

A1-2 Comment is hereby noted and will be forwarded to the appropriate County decision makers for their review and consideration.

A1-3 To determine the appropriateness of the General Plan Update land use designations, various factors were considered at a parcel level. Such factors include, but are not limited to: existing zoning of the subject property; existing uses and densities on the subject property; existing land use designations and zoning surrounding the subject property; existing uses and densities surrounding the subject property; plan amendments and/or zone changes; and previous approvals and projects under construction on the subject property. In general, undeveloped, never-disturbed rural land that is not part of an area plan or a community plan is proposed to be down-designated to RL20, which staff believes is a significant reduction from the current allowable density range of one unit per five acres to one unit per acre under the existing rural land use designation. Where parcelization already exists, other rural land use designations, such as RL 10, RL 2 and RL 1 are proposed accordingly to reflect the existing densities and existing lot sizes. County staff believes that this approach is a good balance between the goal of discouraging developments in areas with infrastructure, hazard, environmental and/or resource constraints, and the need to reflect the existing condition of those areas. In addition, future community-based planning efforts will provide further opportunities to refine the land use policy maps with broader outreach and public participation.

A1-4 As recommended in your comment letter dated July 7, 2014, the implementation timeframe of Program LU-6 Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) Program has been changed to 1-2 years.

A1-5 It is important to clarify that under the General Plan Update, the maximum allowable density and the required minimum lot size are not necessarily correlated. With that said, clustering development is permitted in certain areas without additional entitlements. Additionally, under the Hillside Management Area (HMA) Ordinance, natural open space is required to be configured into separate open space lots in certain land divisions that are located in an HMA and in a rural land use designation. In those cases, clustering is not simply allowed by the HMA Ordinance, but is a necessary site design tool in order to comply with the natural open space requirement set forth in the HMA Ordinance.

A1-6 There are two major policies in the General Plan Update that serve to concentrate jobs and housing in existing communities where infill developments are encouraged and improvements in services, transportation and other infrastructure are highly prioritized:

1) Transit Oriented Districts (TODs): TODs are areas where the General Plan Update encourages infill development, pedestrian-friendly and community-serving uses near transit stops. The goal is to encourage walking, bicycling, and transit use. The General Plan Update will expand the existing TODs from approximately a ¼ mile radius to ½ mile radius from the transit stations. In addition, new TODs will be established around transit stations in West Carson, Rancho Dominguez, Del Aire, East Los Angeles and East Pasadena-East San Gabriel. As part of the implementation of the General Plan Update, TODs will be accompanied by a specific plan, or a similar mechanism, with standards, regulations, and infrastructure plans that tailor to the unique characteristics and needs of each community, and address access and connectivity, pedestrian improvements, and safety. The TOD Program is designed to work in conjunction with regional and statewide efforts to incentivize transit-oriented development; creates infill development opportunities in many established unincorporated communities; and will result in co-benefits, such as an increase in transit use and physical activity.

2) Employment Protection Districts (EPDs): The General Plan Update identifies EPDs, which are existing economically viable industrial sites within the unincorporated areas. EPDs are protected by policies that discourage the conversion of industrial areas to non-industrial uses. These policies align with countywide economic development efforts, and will prevent any further loss or fragmentation of industrial areas.

In addition, Program LU-4 Growth Management Program, with the implementation timeframe of 1-2 years, calls for the development of a growth management program for the unincorporated areas that does the following:

1) Explore the feasibility of implementing a program that uses infrastructure and service levels as a threshold for development and permitting; and

2) Explore the feasibility of establishing greenbelts or other growth management strategies in urbanized areas.

Finally, the General Plan Update identifies various types of opportunity areas in the 11 Planning Areas, which include but are not limited to: Transit Centers, Neighborhood Centers, Corridors, and Economic Opportunity Areas. These areas, providing additional opportunities for future concentration of jobs and housing due to their central locations, connectivity, and access to public services and infrastructure, will be further studied during future community-based planning efforts.

While the General Plan Update identifies neither urban expansion areas(Antelope Valley, Santa Clarita Valley, Santa Monica Mountains, and East San Gabriel Valley) nor an urban growth boundary as part of its growth management strategy, it guides growth countywide through goals, policies and programs, such as those mentioned above, that do the following: discourage sprawling development patterns; protect areas with hazard, environmental and resource constraints; encourage infill development in areas near

transit, services and existing infrastructure; and make a strong commitment to ensuring adequate services and infrastructure. It also lays the foundation for future community-based planning initiatives that will identify additional opportunities for accommodating growth.

A1-7 As recommended in your comment letter dated July 7, 2014, the Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone has been elevated to Class II in the Hazard, Environmental, and Resource Constraints Model and Map. Also, as explained above under A1-3, various factors were considered when determining the appropriate land use designations and densities on the General Plan Land Use Policy Map. During future community-based planning efforts, the Hazard, Environmental and Resource Constraints Model will be used to inform the land use policy direction of future community-based planning initiatives, during which the land use policy maps may be further refined.

A1-8 For the most part, parcels that are designated rural RL under the General Plan Update are already zoned to have a minimum lot size of half an acre or larger. In general, where parcelization already exists, the existing zoning, which allows the minimum lot size to be less than half an acre, will remain unchanged in order to reflect the existing lot sizes, even though the parcels are proposed to be designated rural. Our General Plan Update zoning consistency effort has sought to minimize zone changes where possible. Future community-based planning initiatives, with broader outreach and public participation, would be a more appropriate tool for further refinement of the zoning/zoning map, which regulates the minimum lot sizes.

A1-9 As recommended in your comment letter dated July 7, 2014, the implementation timeframe of Program C/NR-4 Native Woodlands Conservation Management Plan has been changed to Years 3-5.

Also, Policy C/NR 3.3 has been edited as recommended: "Policy C/NR 3.3: Restore upland communities and significant riparian resources, such as degraded streams, rivers, and wetlands to maintain ecological function—acknowledging the importance of incrementally restoring ecosystem values when complete restoration is not feasible."

For Policy C/NR 3.8, staff believes that the word "discourage" is more appropriate to describe the nature of the SEA. Since the SEAs are not preserves, the proposed SEA Ordinance does not outright limit developments in an SEA. Instead, the proposed SEA Ordinance will create a more tiered approach to permitting in the SEAs that favors flexibility and sensitive design. While this tiered approach does not outright prohibit or restrict developments in the SEAs, the additional layers of processing time and money for project applicants will encourage better siting and more sensitive design and discourage otherwise. Also, staff believes that Policy C/NR 3.9 already covers the essence of the alternative language you suggested for Policy C/NR 3.8 (from San Diego County's General Plan). Finally, the word "discourage" is used in Policy C/NR 3.11 for

the same reason that the word "discourage" is used for Policy C/NR 3.8. However, as suggested, staff has extended Policy C/NR 3.11 to other native woodlands.

A1-10 Again, the term "discourage" is used in Policy LU 3.2 and LU 3.3 because the SEAs are not preserves and the proposed SEA Ordinance does not outright limit developments in an SEA.

A1-11 For Policy S 2.1 and S 3.1, the use of the word "discourage" is a result of much community outreach. However, as mentioned earlier, the Hazard, Environmental and Resource Constraints Model will be used during future community-based planning efforts to further refine the land use policy maps. The flood zones and the VHFHSZs, along with other constraints reflected in the model will inform the land use policy direction of these future community-based planning initiatives. With that said, the suggested policy language regarding land use and densities designation in the VHFHSZs is therefore unnecessary given that Policy LU 2.9 already requires the constraints model to be utilized when assigning land use and densities during future community-based planning initiatives.

Also, Policy S 3.7 has been revised to strengthen the language: "Policy S 3.7: ~~Consider siting~~ Site and design ~~for~~ developments located within FHSZs, ~~particularly~~ such as in areas located near ridgelines and on hilltops, in a sensitive manner to reduce the wildfire risk."

Finally, while staff does not think it is necessary to add the suggested policy in regards to "consolidated site design" (or clustering), please see section A1-5 above for more information on clustering or density-controlled developments in the unincorporated areas.

LETTER A2 – County of Los Angeles Fire Department (2 pages)

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
FIRE DEPARTMENT
1320 NORTH EASTERN AVENUE
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90063-3294

DARYL L. OSBY
FIRE CHIEF
FORESTER & FIRE WARDEN

RECEIVED
JUL 14 2014
BY:_____

July 10, 2014

Connie Chung, Planning Supervisor
Department of Regional Planning
Advance Planning
320 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Ms. Chung:

**COMPLETION/DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT, PROJECT 02-305, SCH NO. 2011081042, "LOS ANGELES COUNTY GENERAL PLAN UPDATE," IT INCLUDES GOALS, POLICIES, IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMS AND ORDINANCES, AND TO ACCOMMODATE NEW HOUSING AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNIES IN ANTICIPATION OF POPULATION GROWTH, COUNTYWIDE, LOS ANGELES COUNTY (FFER #201400105)**

The Completion/Draft Environmental Impact Report has been reviewed by the Planning Division, Land Development Unit, Forestry Division, and Health Hazardous Materials Division of the County of Los Angeles Fire Department. The following are their comments:

**PLANNING DIVISION:**

1. We have no comments at this time. A2-1

**LAND DEVELOPMENT UNIT:**

1. All future development must comply with all applicable code and ordinance requirements for construction, access, water mains, fire flows, and fire hydrants. A2-2

SERVING THE UNINCORPORATED AREAS OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY AND THE CITIES OF:

AGOURA HILLS
ARTESIA
AZUSA
BALDWIN PARK
BELL
BELL GARDENS
BELLFLOWER
BRADBURY
CALABASAS
CARSON
CERRITOS
CLAREMONT
COMMERCE
COVINA
CUDAHY
DIAMOND BAR
DUARTE
EL MONTE
GARDENA
GLENDORA
HAWAIIAN GARDENS
HAWTHORNE
HIDDEN HILLS
HUNTINGTON PARK
INDUSTRY
INGLEWOOD
IRWINDALE
LA CANADA FLINTRIDGE
LA HABRA
LA MIRADA
LA PUENTE
LAKEWOOD
LANCASTER
LAWNDALE
LOMITA
LYNWOOD
MALIBU
MAYWOOD
NORWALK
PALMDALE
PALOS VERDES ESTATES
PARAMOUNT
PICO RIVERA
POMONA
RANCHO PALOS VERDES
ROLLING HILLS
ROLLING HILLS ESTATES
ROSEMEAD
SAN DIMAS
SANTA CLARITA
SIGNAL HILL
SOUTH EL MONTE
SOUTH GATE
TEMPLE CITY
WALNUT
WEST HOLLYWOOD
WESTLAKE VILLAGE
WHITTIER

# 2. Response to Comments



2. Should any questions arise regarding subdivision, water systems, or access, please contact the Land Development Unit's FPEA Wally Collins at (323) 890-4243 or at Wally.Collins@fire.lacounty.gov. A2-2 cont'd

**FORESTRY DIVISION – OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS:**

1. The statutory responsibilities of the County of Los Angeles Fire Department, Forestry Division include erosion control, watershed management, rare and endangered species, vegetation, fuel modification for Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones or Fire Zone 4, archeological and cultural resources, and the County Oak Tree Ordinance. A2-3

2. The County of Los Angeles Fire Department, Forestry Division, has no further comments regarding this project.

**HEALTH HAZARDOUS MATERIALS DIVISION:**

1. The Health Hazardous Materials Division has no objection to the proposed project. A2-4

If you have any additional questions, please contact this office at (323) 890-4330.

Very truly yours,

FRANK VIDALES, CHIEF, FORESTRY DIVISION
PREVENTION SERVICES BUREAU

FV:jl

**A2. Response to comments from County of Los Angeles Fire Department dated July 10, 2014.**

A2-1 The County of Los Angeles Fire Department, Planning Division, has indicated that they have no comment at this time. No response required.

A2-2 Comment noted. No response required.

A2-3 Comment noted. No response required.

A2-4 The County of Los Angeles Fire Department, Health Hazardous Materials Division, has indicated that they have no comment at this time. No response required.

# 2. Response to Comments

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LETTER A3– Puente Hills Habitat Preservation Authority (2 pages)

**Puente Hills**
**Habitat Preservation Authority**
Endowment Provided by the Puente Hills Landfill

HABITAT AUTHORITY CELEBRATING 20 Years Preservation, Restoration, and Education

July 16, 2014

Connie Chung, AICP, Supervising Regional Planner
Department of Regional Planning
320 West Temple Street, Room 1356
Los Angeles, CA 90012

**Comments on Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Los Angeles County General Plan Update**

Dear Ms. Chung:

The Puente Hills Habitat Preservation Authority (Habitat Authority) appreciates the opportunity to comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR; SCH#2011081042) for the Los Angeles County General Plan Update (General Plan Update) dated June 19, 2014.

The Habitat Authority is a joint powers authority established pursuant to California Government Code Section 6500 *et seq*. with a Board of Directors consisting of the City of Whittier, County of Los Angeles, Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County, and the Hacienda Heights Improvement Association. According to its mission, the Habitat Authority is dedicated to the acquisition, restoration, and management of open space in the Puente Hills for preservation of the land in perpetuity, with the primary purpose to protect the biological diversity. Additionally, the agency endeavors to provide opportunities for outdoor education and low-impact recreation. The Habitat Authority owns and or manages over 3,800 acres which lie within the Cities of Whittier and La Habra Heights, as well as in the County unincorporated areas of the Puente Hills known as Hacienda Heights and Rowland Heights.

Please accept the following comment regarding impact 5.4-4 "The Proposed Project would affect wildlife movement of native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites". A3-1

A Joint Powers Agency created pursuant to California Government Code §6500 *et seq.*
7702 Washington Avenue, Suite C, Whittier, CA 90602 • Phone: 562 / 945 - 9003 • Fax: 562 / 945 - 0303

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# 2. Response to Comments



Due to the importance of wildlife corridors and nursery sites, please consider requiring additional mitigation measures, especially if the Project is in a Significant Ecological Area (SEA), in order to mitigate a Project to Less Than Significant.

It is clear from the language in the Draft General Plan that wildlife movement corridors and habitat connectivity are critical to the concept of SEAs. Appendix E of the General Plan Update acknowledges the importance of wildlife corridors and natural resources stating "Biological resources are important in a regional context, serving to connect resources in adjacent local jurisdictions. Critical biological resources are maintained through habitat connectivity, which sustains population genetic diversity, and provides refuge for migrant species." The SEA Designation Principles of this appendix also state that the intent of SEAs are to provide habitat linkages between core habitats.

A3-1 cont'd

However, the DEIR determined that even with mitigation measure BIO-1 and updates to the SEA Ordinance, certain projects may not be able to avoid or minimize impacts and do not provide mitigation for loss of wildlife movement or nursery sites. Due to the County's recognition of the importance of wildlife corridors, please exhort efforts to mitigate impacts to regional wildlife linkages and nursery sites to Less Than Significant.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the DEIR for the Los Angeles County General Plan Update. Please notify us when related documents are available for public review.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments. Feel free to contact me or Lizette Longacre, Ecologist, at (562) 945-9003 for further discussion.

Sincerely,

Bob Henderson
Chairman

cc: Board of Directors
Citizens Technical Advisory Committee

**A3. Response to comments from Puente Hills Habitat Preservation Authority dated July 16, 2014.**

A3-1 The commenter states that wildlife corridors are important such that the County should include additional mitigation measures in order that the Proposed Project impacts are reduced to less than significant.

The County has conservatively concluded that with the buildout of the General Plan Update, regional wildlife linkages and nursery sites will be impacted (See Page 5.4-116 of the Draft EIR). The County will monitor connectivity between core habitats through the development review and entitlement processes and will recommend or incorporate protection measures to avoid or minimize impacts to wildlife corridors and nursery sites. However, if development impacts regional wildlife linkages and impedes wildlife movement, connectivity will be lost on a regional scale in these vital landscape corridors and linkages.

# 2. Response to Comments

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LETTER A4 – Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (2 pages)

STATE OF CALIFORNIA–THE NATURAL RESOURCES AGENCY EDMUND G. BROWN, JR., *Governor*

**SANTA MONICA MOUNTAINS CONSERVANCY**
RAMIREZ CANYON PARK
5750 RAMIREZ CANYON ROAD
MALIBU, CALIFORNIA 90265
PHONE (310) 589-3200
FAX (310) 589-3207
WWW.SMMC.CA.GOV

July 28, 2014

RECEIVED
AUG 04 2014
BY:_____

Ms. Connie Chung
County of Los Angeles
Department of Regional Planning
General Plan Development Section
320 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, California 90012

**Comments on Draft Environmental Impact Report (SCH No. 2011081042) for the Los Angeles County General Plan Update**

Dear Ms. Chung:

The Conservancy offers the following comments regarding the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the proposed General Plan Update. The Conservancy is particularly concerned with how biological resources will be assessed on a project-specific level.

The DEIR for the proposed General Plan Update includes Mitigation Measure BIO-1, which requires an assessment of biological resources on a project-specific level. Mitigation Measure BIO-1 states in part:

> "A biological resources assessment report shall be prepared to characterize the biological resources on-site, analyze project-specific impacts to biological resources, and propose appropriate mitigation measures to offset those impacts."

Based on the above provision of Mitigation Measure BIO-1, a thorough project-specific analysis of constraints on-site is not included as part of the biological resources assessment report. To provide adequate mitigation potential, the biological resources assessment report must encourage the avoidance of impacts to biological resources based on the analysis of site constraints and provide detailed, scaled recommendations to avoid such impacts. A4-1

The Conservancy recommends that the biological resources assessment report include a distinct biological constraints analysis section that identifies, on detailed figures, which area of a project site and any adjacent parklands should be free of direct impacts, indirect impacts such as lighting and wildlife impermeable fencing, and fuel modification impacts.

# 2. Response to Comments



The sum of the biological resources and biological constraints assessment report must fully disclose both the extent and severity of the 200-foot wide fuel modification zones, including any overlap on public lands. Fuel modification zones often include irrigation. All analyses must address how such irrigation will collectively increase the range of undesired non-native Argentinian ants (*Linepithema humile*).

A4-1 cont'd

It is critical that the biological constraints analysis section also address direct and indirect impacts to adjacent parklands and all public lands. Private gains (e.g., a better house site) should not trump protection of public resource lands acquired with public dollars.

We appreciate your consideration of these comments. If you have any questions, please contact Paul Edelman, Deputy Director for Natural Resources and Planning, by phone at (310) 589-3200, extension 128, or by email at edelman@smmc.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Linda Parks

LINDA PARKS
Chairperson

**A4. Response to comments from Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy dated July 28, 2014.**

A4-1 The commenter has concerns that Mitigation Measure BIO-1 requiring a biological resources assessment as part of the discretionary approval process will not include a project-specific constraints analysis. The commenter further recommends that the biological resources assessment include "a distinct biological constraints analysis section that identifies, on detailed figures, which area of a project site and any adjacent parklands should be free of direct impacts, indirect impacts such as lighting and wildlife impermeable fencing, and fuel modification impacts."

The County requires biological constraints to be identified as part of the biological resources assessment, including the effects of implementation of any fire safety fuel modification. The County biologist considers impacts associated with fuel modification, landscape irrigation that may promote establishment of Argentine ant, and both direct and indirect impacts on any adjacent parklands or publicly owned property.

# 2. Response to Comments

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LETTER A5 – Caltrans (3 pages)

STATE OF CALIFORNIA—CALIFORNIA STATE TRANSPORTATION AGENCY EDMUND G. BROWN Jr., Governor

**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**
DISTRICT 7-OFFICE OF TRANSPORTATION PLANNING
100 S. MAIN STREET, MS 16
LOS ANGELES, CA 90012
PHONE (213) 897-9140
FAX (213) 897-1337
www.dot.ca.gov

*Serious drought.*
*Help save water!*

August 1, 2014

Ms. Connie Chung, AICP
Supervising Regional Planner
Department of Regional Planning
County of Los Angeles
320 West Temple Street, Room 1356
Los Angeles, CA 90012

RE: Los Angeles County General Plan Update
Vic. LA Countywide
SCH #: 2011081042
IGR/CEQA No. 140649AL-DEIR
Ref. IGR/CEQA No.131018AL Revision
Ref. IGR/CEQA No.130635AL-Re-NOP
Ref. IGR/CEQA No.120521AL-Draft GP
Ref. IGR/CEQA No.110830-NOP

Dear: Ms. Chung:

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the above referenced project. The project is a comprehensive update of the Los Angeles County General Plan and associated actions. The project includes goals, policies, implementation programs and ordinances. The project covers the unincorporated areas and accommodates new housing and employment opportunities in anticipation of population growth. The General Plan Update focuses growth in the unincorporated areas with access to services and infrastructure and reduces the potential for growth in environmentally sensitive and hazardous area. The project will replace the adopted General Plan.

In the interest of mutual cooperation throughout the environmental review of the Los Angeles County General Plan Update EIR, Caltrans provides following comments. On Table 1-2 (Page 1-12 of the DEIR), Proposed Project Buildout Projection (by Planning Area), there are a total of 11 planning areas. They are as follows:

1. Antelope Valley Planning Area
2. Coastal Islands Planning Area
3. East San Gabriel Valley Planning Area
4. Gateway Planning Area
5. Metro Planning Area
6. San Fernando Valley Planning Area

A5-1

*"Provide a safe, sustainable, integrated and efficient transportation system to enhance California's economy and livability"*

# 2. Response to Comments



7. Santa Clarita Valley Planning Area
8. Santa Monica Mountains Planning Area
9. South Bay Planning Area
10. West San Gabriel Valley Planning Area
11. Westside Planning Area

As shown above planning areas, buildout of the Proposed Project would result in 358,930 additional residential dwelling units compared to existing land uses. Buildout of the Proposed Project would result in an 86 percent increase in commercial uses and a 40 percent increase in industrial uses. Generally in urban areas, the existing freeways such as US-101, I-405, I-10 and SR-60 are operating at Level of Service (LOS) E or F during the peak hours. In rural areas, the freeway/highway such as SR-14 and SR-138 may be still operating at an acceptable LOS during the peak hours. When the project is at buildout, many freeway segments will be significantly impacted. However, this project is a program document with no proposed specific project. Caltrans will continue to work with the County Public Work in identifying potential traffic mitigation when a specific project is identified that may contribute project direct/cumulative impact to State Highway System (SHS). A5-1 Cont'd

Caltrans suggests that the County consider ı A5-1 g section 5.16.8 Mitigation Measures (Page 5.16-81 of DEIR) to include the following:

T-3 This fair share program also includes the State Highway System. A5-2

T-3.1 Before the CMP fee program is adopted by Metro and County of Los Angeles, any identified project that will contribute cumulative traffic impact on the State Highway System will participate in a local fair-share program adopted by the County that is supported by Caltrans. A5-3

T-5 The County shall require traffic engineering firms retained to prepare traffic impact studies for future development projects to consult with Caltrans, when a development proposal meets the requirements of statewide, regional, or areawide significance per CEQA Guidelines §15206(b). When preparing traffic impact studies, the most up to date Guide for the Preparation of Traffic Impact Studies from Caltrans shall be followed. Proposed developments meeting the criteria of statewide, regional or areawide significance include: A5-4

- Proposed residential developments of more than 500 dwelling units.
- Proposed shopping centers or business establishments employing more than 1,000 persons or encompassing more than 500,000 square feet of floor space.
- Proposed commercial office buildings employing more than 1,000 persons or encompassing more than 250,000 square feet of floor space.
- Proposed hotel/motel developments of more than 500 rooms.

When the CEQA criteria of regional significance are not met, Caltrans recommends transportation engineers and/or Lead Agency representatives consult

Ms. Connie Chung, AICP
August 1, 2014
Page 3

with Caltrans when a proposed development includes the following characteristics:

- All proposed developments that have the potential to cause a significant impact to state facilities (right-of-way, intersections, interchanges, etc.) and when required mitigation improvements are proposed in the initial study. Mitigation concurrence should be obtained from Caltrans as early as possible.
- Any development that assigns 50 or more trips (passenger car equivalent trips) during peak hours to a state highway/freeway.
- Any development that assigns 10 or more trips (passenger car equivalent trips) during peak hours to an off-ramp. On/off-Ramps that are very close to each other in which the project trips may cause congestion on the left turn lane storage to the on-ramp.
- Any development located adjacent to a State facility and may require a Caltrans Encroachment Permit.
- Any development will potentially cause safety concerns on the State facilities.
- When the County cannot determine whether or not Caltrans will expect a traffic impact analysis pursuant to CEQA.

A5-4 cont'd

In the General Plan, Caltrans suggests a policy to be reflected pursuant to the adopted State legislation (SB743) that may significantly alter the means in which traffic impact studies are prepared.

A5-5

We look forward in working with the County staff. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Mr. Alan Lin, Caltrans project coordinator, at (213) 897-8391 and refer to IGR/CEQA No. 140649AL

Sincerely,

DIANNA WATSON
Branch Chief
Community Planning & LD IGR Review

cc: Scott Morgan, State Clearinghouse

*"Provide a safe, sustainable, integrated and efficient transportation system to enhance California's economy and livability"*

# 2. Response to Comments

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**A5. Response to comments from Caltrans dated August 1, 2014.**

A5-1 Comment noted. No response required.

A5-2 To address your comment, new Mitigation Measure T-4 has been added to this FEIR:

T-4 The County of Los Angeles shall continue to secure the funding needed to implement the future planned improvements within the Project Area. A variety of funding sources shall be explored, such as Metro's CMP Fee Program as described under T-3, Metro Call for Project funds, and federal and state grant opportunities. If the CMP fee program is not adopted by Metro and the County of Los Angeles, other funding sources for regional transportation needs in the Project Area, including Caltrans facilities, shall be pursued such as a potential North County Development Impact Fee Program, development agreements for large projects, and/or mitigation agreements between future applicants and Caltrans for projects that impact Caltrans facilities.

A5-3 This comment has been addressed by new Mitigation Measure T-4 above.

A5-4 Per your request, Mitigation Measure T-5 (renumbered as Mitigation Measure T-6) has been revised as follows:

T-~~5~~6 The County shall require traffic engineering firms retained to prepare traffic impact studies for future development projects to consult with Caltrans, when a development proposal meets the requirements of statewide, regional, or areawide significance per CEQA Guidelines §15206(b). When preparing traffic impact studies, the most up to date Guide for the Preparation of Traffic Impact Studies from Caltrans shall be followed. Proposed developments meeting the criteria of statewide, regional or areawide include:

- Proposed residential developments of more than 500 dwelling units
- Proposed shopping centers or business establishments employing more than 1,000 persons or encompassing more than 500,000 square feet of floor space.
- Proposed commercial office buildings employing more than 1,000 persons or encompassing more than 250,000 square feet of floor space
- Proposed hotel/motel developments of more than 500 rooms

When the CEQA criteria of regional significance are not met, Caltrans recommends ~~transportation engineers and/or city representatives~~ that Project Applicants consult with Caltrans when a proposed development includes the following characteristics:

- All proposed developments that have the potential to cause a significant impact to state facilities (right-of-way, intersections, interchanges, etc.) and when required

mitigation improvements are proposed in the initial study. Mitigation concurrence should be obtained from Caltrans as early as possible.

- Any development that assigns 50 or more trips (passenger car equivalent trips) during peak hours to a state highway ~~(freeways).~~/freeway.
- Any development that assigns 10 or more trips (passenger car equivalent trips) during peak hours to an off-ramp. On/off-ramps that are very close to each other in which the project trips may cause congestion on the left-turn lane storage to the on-ramp.
- Any development located adjacent to or within 100 feet of a state highway facility and may require a Caltrans Encroachment Permit. (Exceptions: additions to single family homes or 10 residential units ~~of~~ or less).
- When ~~it~~ the County cannot ~~be determined~~ determine whether or not Caltrans will expect a traffic impact analysis pursuant to CEQA.

A5-5 Per your request, reference to SB 743 has been added to Implementation Program M-4.

LETTER A6 – City of Rancho Palos Verdes (1 page)

CITY OF RANCHO PALOS VERDES
CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE
ADMINISTRATION

5 August 2014

VIA ELECTRONIC AND U.S. MAIL

County of Los Angeles
Department of Regional Planning
ATTN: Connie Chung, AICP, Supervising Regional Planner
320 W. Temple St., Rm. 1356
Los Angeles, CA 90012

**SUBJECT Comments in Response to the Notice of Availability of a Draft Environmental Impact Report for Los Angeles County General Plan 2035**

Dear Ms. Chung:

The City of Rancho Palos Verdes appreciates the opportunity to comment upon the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the above-mentioned project. We have reviewed the DEIR as it responds to the City's scoping comments of 26 July 2013, and find that it addresses the issues that we raised previously. As such, we have no further comments on Los Angeles County General Plan 2035. A6-1

If you have any questions or need additional information, please feel free to contact me at (310) 544-5226 or via e-mail at *kitf@rpv.com*.

Sincerely,

**Kit Fox, AICP**
Senior Administrative Analyst

cc: Mayor Jerry Duhovic and Rancho Palos Verdes City Council
Carolynn Petru, Acting City Manager

M:\Border Issues\LA County General Plan Update\20140805_DEIRComments.docx

30940 HAWTHORNE BLVD. / RANCHO PALOS VERDES, CA 90275-5391 / (310) 544-5205 / FAX (310) 544-5291
WWW.PALOSVERDES.COM/RPV
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# 2. Response to Comments

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**A6. Response to comments from City of Rancho Palos Verdes dated August 5, 2014.**

A6-1 The City of Rancho Palos Verdes indicates that the DEIR adequately addresses their previous comments. No response required.

# 2. Response to Comments

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LETTER A7 – County of Ventura (3 pages)

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AGENCY

# county of ventura

**Planning Division**
Kimberly L. Prillhart
Director

August 5, 2014

Connie Chung, AICP, Supervising Regional Planner
Department of Regional Planning
320 West Temple Street, Room 1356
Los Angeles, CA 90012

E-mail: genplan@planning.lacounty.gov

Subject: Comments on the Notice of Competition and Availability of the Draft Environmental Impact Report

Dear Ms. Chung:

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the subject document. Attached are the comments that we have received resulting from intra-county review of the subject document. Additional comments may have been sent directly to you by other County agencies.

Your proposed responses to these comments should be sent directly to the commenter, with a copy to Laura Hocking, Ventura County Planning Division, L#1740, 800 S. Victoria Avenue, Ventura, CA 93009.

If you have any questions regarding any of the comments, please contact the appropriate respondent. Overall questions may be directed to Laura Hocking at (805) 654-2443.

Sincerely,

R/

Tricia Maier, Manager
Planning Programs Section

Attachments

County RMA Reference Number 11-022-2

800 South Victoria Avenue, L# 1740, Ventura, CA 93009 (805) 654-2481 Fax (805) 654-2509

*Printed on Recycled Paper*

# 2. Response to Comments

**VENTURA COUNTY**
**AIR POLLUTION CONTROL DISTRICT**
Memorandum

TO: Laura Hocking/Lori Gregory, Planning DATE: August 5, 2014

FROM: Alicia Stratton

SUBJECT: Request for Review of Draft Environmental Impact Report for Los Angeles County General Plan Update, County of Los Angeles (Reference No. 11-022-2)

Air Pollution Control District staff has reviewed the subject draft environmental impact report (DEIR), which is a comprehensive update of the general plan and associated actions. The project includes goals, policies, implementation programs and ordinances. The project covers the unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County and accommodates new housing and employment opportunities in anticipation of population growth. The General Plan Update focuses growth in the unincorporated areas with access to services and infrastructure and reduces the potential for growth in environmentally sensitive and hazardous areas. Build out of the project would result in 358,930 additional residential dwelling units compared to existing land uses and an increase in commercial uses and a 40 percent increase in industrial uses. The majority of new development is expected to occur in the Antelope Valley Planning Area, which will accommodate about 70.6 percent of new residential units and 76 percent of the population growth. Many of the remaining Planning Areas such as East San Gabriel Valley, Santa Monica Mountains, South Bay, San Fernando Valley, and Gateway Planning Areas are already built out, so significant growth is not expected in these areas. Ventura County is directly adjacent to Los Angeles County to the west. A7-1

Air quality issues are addressed in Section 5.3 of the DEIR. Air planning mandates of SCAQMD, AVAQMD, and SCAG are united in this discussion to address air quality issues and to achieve regional air quality improvement and goals, and to promote energy conservation design and development techniques, encourage alternative transportation modes, and implement transportation demand management strategies. Build out of the proposed project would generate additional vehicle trips and area sources of criteria air pollutant emissions that exceed SCAQMD and AVAQMD regional significance thresholds and would contribute to the nonattainment designations of the SoCAB and Antelope Valley portion of the planning area. Air Quality Impacts 5.3-1 and 5.3-2 would remain Significant and Unavoidable. Goals and policies are included in the project that would reduce air pollutant emissions, however, due to the magnitude of emissions generated by the build out of the project, no mitigation measures are available that would reduce impacts below SCAQMD or AVAQMD thresholds.

Added population growth resulting from the project will increase regional air pollution emissions, which will affect neighboring counties. We recommend that Section 5.3 of the DEIR be expanded to acknowledge and analyze how the population growth reflected in the project may impact air quality in neighboring counties, including Ventura County. A7-1 cont'd

If you have any questions, please call me at (805) 645-1426.

# 2. Response to Comments

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**A7. Response to comments from County of Ventura dated August 5, 2014.**

A7-1 Cumulative air quality impacts are discussed in Section 5.3.5 of the DEIR. With respect to Ventura County Air Pollution Control District, emissions associated with the Proposed Project would primarily occur within the South Coast Air Basin (SoCAB) and the Mojave Desert Air Basin (MDAB). The meteorological conditions and topography of the SoCAB substantially limit the dispersion of air pollution between the SoCAB and the South Central Coast Air Basin (SCCAB). Consequently, the Proposed Project would have a negligible effect on air quality in the SCCAB. Therefore, no significant impacts would occur as a result of the Proposed Project in the Ventura County Air Pollution Control District. Furthermore, cross-jurisdictional issues between the SoCAB and the SCCAB are dealt with in each jurisdiction's air quality management plans.

# 2. Response to Comments

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LETTER A8 – LACMTA (Metro) (11 pages)

Los Angeles County
Metropolitan Transportation Authority

One Gateway Plaza
Los Angeles, CA 90012-2952

213.922.2000 Tel
metro.net

Metro

August 5, 2014

Connie Chung, AICP, Supervising Regional Planner
Department of Regional Planning
320 West Temple Street, Room 1356
Los Angeles, CA 90012

**RE: Los Angeles County General Plan Update**
**Notice of Completion and Availability for Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR)**

Dear Ms. Chung,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed update to the Los Angeles County General Plan. This letter conveys recommendations from the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (LACMTA) concerning issues that are germane to our agency's statutory responsibility in relation to our facilities and services that may be affected by the proposed updates to the General Plan. The following comments address both the draft version of the Los Angeles County General Plan Update and the Draft Environmental Impact Report. Our comments are intended to guide the region's mobility agenda, and improve transit services to the County of Los Angeles.

**Expanding Transit Oriented Districts**

LACMTA encourages the expansion of Transit Oriented Districts from approximately ¼ mile radius to ½ mile radius to enhance the areas surrounding transit. Considering the growing transit network in Los Angeles County and the increasing need to shift people off of congested roadways onto expanding rail and bus facilities and other non-motorized modes of transportation, LACMTA encourages cities to promote concentrated, mixed-use development within existing and planned transit station corridors through General Plan updates and other regulatory controls.

1. LACMTA supports development of commercial and residential properties near transit stations and understands that increasing development near stations represents a mutually beneficial opportunity to increase ridership and enhance transportation options for the users of the developments.
2. LACMTA encourages the incorporation of transit-oriented, pedestrian-oriented parking provision strategies such as the reduction or removal of minimum parking requirements for specific areas and the exploration of shared parking opportunities or parking benefit districts. These strategies could be pursued to encourage more transit-oriented development and reduce automobile-orientation in design and travel demand.
3. The updates to the General Plan should address first-last mile connections to transit, encouraging development that is transit accessible with bicycle and pedestrian-oriented street design connecting stations with housing and employment concentrations. For reference, we would like to direct City staff to view the First Last Mile Strategic Plan, authored by LACMTA and the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), available on line at: http://media.metro.net/docs/sustainability_path_design_guidelines.pdf

A8-1

# 2. Response to Comments



**Complete Streets**

LACMTA also encourages the implementation of a Complete Streets Policy in the General Plan. Complete Streets are designed to enable safe access for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and transit riders of all ages and abilities. Multi-modal improvements to street infrastructure increase access to public transit by making it convenient, safe, and attractive. LACMTA is currently developing a Complete Streets Policy. For more information regarding LACMTA's guidelines regarding Complete Streets, please contact Tham Nguyen at (213)922.2606 or nguyentha@metro.net. A8-2

**Congestion Management Program**

We understand that the applicant has performed a Transportation Impact Analysis (TIA) as part of the DEIR. To reiterate the TIA requirements that are part of the State of California Congestion Management Program (CMP), we are submitting our formal guidelines as formality. A TIA, with roadway and transit components, is required under the State of California CMP statute. The CMP TIA Guidelines are published in the "2010 Congestion Management Program for Los Angeles County", Appendix D (attached). The geographic area examined in the TIA must include the following, at a minimum:

1. All CMP arterial monitoring intersections, including monitored freeway on/off-ramp intersections, where the proposed project will add 50 or more trips during either the a.m. or p.m. weekday peak hour (of adjacent street traffic).
2. If CMP arterial segments are being analyzed rather than intersections, the study area must include all segments where the proposed project will add 50 or more peak hour trips (total of both directions). Within the study area, the TIA must analyze at least one segment between monitored CMP intersections. A8-3
3. Mainline freeway-monitoring locations where the project will add 150 or more trips, in either direction, during either the a.m. or p.m. weekday peak hour.
4. Caltrans must also be consulted through the NOP process to identify other specific locations to be analyzed on the state highway system.

The CMP TIA requirement also contains two separate impact studies covering roadways and transit, as outlined in Sections D.8.1 – D.9.4. If the TIA identifies no facilities for study based on the criteria above, no further traffic analysis is required. However, projects must still consider transit impacts. For all CMP TIA requirements please see the attached guidelines.

**Development Review Process**

In fulfillment of its statutory obligations as the regional transit operator, regional transportation planning and programming agency, and Congestion Management Program Agency, Metro reviews and provides input on projects within Los Angeles County that may impact the region's mobility and transportation network, including potential impacts to Metro rights-of-way (ROWs), bus stops, transit facilities, station areas, and transit operations. We strive to encourage the safest possible conditions around our transit facilities, create synergies with surrounding developments, and support relevant plans and policies. A8-4

To ensure that Metro has sufficient time and meaningful opportunity to comment, per Public Resources Code §21003.1(a), Metro requests notification of all proposed projects that may impact our facilities and services as early in the planning or entitlement process as possible. We request notification, as detailed in the attached matrix, at the time of pre-application consultation, as suggested in CEQA Guidelines section 15060.5(b), or as soon as is practicable. In addition, Metro should receive Notices of Preparation (NOPs) for all projects requiring Environmental Impact Reports (EIRs). In our experience, early consultation can resolve potential problems that could otherwise arise in more serious forms later in the review process. If possible, this notification request should be formalized in the General Plan. A8-4 cont'd

If you have any questions regarding this response, please contact Xin Tong at 213-922-8804 or by email at TongX@metro.net. LACMTA looks forward to reviewing the Final EIR. Please send it to the following address:

LACMTA Development Review
One Gateway Plaza MS 99-23-4
Los Angeles, CA 90012-2952

Sincerely,

Xin Tong

Xin Tong
Development Review Coordinator, Countywide Planning

Attachment: CMP Appendix D: Guidelines for CMP Transportation Impact Analysis
Development Review Notification Matrix

# 2. Response to Comments

APPENDIX
D

## GUIDELINES FOR CMP TRANSPORTATION IMPACT ANALYSIS

*Important Notice to User: This section provides detailed travel statistics for the Los Angeles area which will be updated on an ongoing basis. Updates will be distributed to all local jurisdictions when available. In order to ensure that impact analyses reflect the best available information, lead agencies may also contact MTA at the time of study initiation. Please contact MTA staff to request the most recent release of "Baseline Travel Data for CMP TIAs."*

### D.1 OBJECTIVE OF GUIDELINES

The following guidelines are intended to assist local agencies in evaluating impacts of land use decisions on the Congestion Management Program (CMP) system, through preparation of a regional transportation impact analysis (TIA). The following are the basic objectives of these guidelines:

- Promote consistency in the studies conducted by different jurisdictions, while maintaining flexibility for the variety of project types which could be affected by these guidelines.
- Establish procedures which can be implemented within existing project review processes and without ongoing review by MTA.
- Provide guidelines which can be implemented immediately, with the full intention of subsequent review and possible revision.

These guidelines are based on specific requirements of the Congestion Management Program, and travel data sources available specifically for Los Angeles County. References are listed in Section D.10 which provide additional information on possible methodologies and available resources for conducting TIAs.

### D.2 GENERAL PROVISIONS

Exhibit D-7 provides the model resolution that local jurisdictions adopted containing CMP TIA procedures in 1993. TIA requirements should be fulfilled within the existing environmental review process, extending local traffic impact studies to include impacts to the regional system. In order to monitor activities affected by these requirements, Notices of Preparation (NOPs) must be submitted to MTA as a responsible agency. Formal MTA approval of individual TIAs is not required.

The following sections describe CMP TIA requirements in detail. In general, the competing objectives of consistency & flexibility have been addressed by specifying standard, or minimum, requirements and requiring documentation when a TIA varies from these standards.

***2010 Congestion Management Program for Los Angeles County***

## D.3 PROJECTS SUBJECT TO ANALYSIS

In general a CMP TIA is required for all projects required to prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) based on local determination. A TIA is not required if the lead agency for the EIR finds that traffic is not a significant issue, and does not require local or regional traffic impact analysis in the EIR. Please refer to Chapter 5 for more detailed information.

CMP TIA guidelines, particularly intersection analyses, are largely geared toward analysis of projects where land use types and design details are known. Where likely land uses are not defined (such as where project descriptions are limited to zoning designation and parcel size with no information on access location), the level of detail in the TIA may be adjusted accordingly. This may apply, for example, to some redevelopment areas and citywide general plans, or community level specific plans. In such cases, where project definition is insufficient for meaningful intersection level of service analysis, CMP arterial segment analysis may substitute for intersection analysis.

## D.4 STUDY AREA

The geographic area examined in the TIA must include the following, at a minimum:

- All CMP arterial monitoring intersections, including monitored freeway on- or off-ramp intersections, where the proposed project will add 50 or more trips during either the AM or PM weekday peak hours (of adjacent street traffic).
- If CMP arterial segments are being analyzed rather than intersections (see Section D.3), the study area must include all segments where the proposed project will add 50 or more peak hour trips (total of both directions). Within the study area, the TIA must analyze at least one segment between monitored CMP intersections.
- Mainline freeway monitoring locations where the project will add 150 or more trips, in either direction, during either the AM or PM weekday peak hours.
- Caltrans must also be consulted through the Notice of Preparation (NOP) process to identify other specific locations to be analyzed on the state highway system.

**If the TIA identifies no facilities for study based on these criteria, no further traffic analysis is required. However, projects must still consider transit impacts (Section D.8.4).**

## D.5 BACKGROUND TRAFFIC CONDITIONS

The following sections describe the procedures for documenting and estimating background, or non-project related traffic conditions. Note that for the purpose of a TIA, these background estimates must include traffic from all sources without regard to the exemptions specified in CMP statute (e.g., traffic generated by the provision of low and very low income housing, or trips originating outside Los Angeles County. Refer to Chapter 5, Section 5.2.3 for a complete list of exempted projects).

**D.5.1 Existing Traffic Conditions.** Existing traffic volumes and levels of service (LOS) on the CMP highway system within the study area must be documented. Traffic counts must

# 2. Response to Comments



be less than one year old at the time the study is initiated, and collected in accordance with CMP highway monitoring requirements (see Appendix A). Section D.8.1 describes TIA LOS calculation requirements in greater detail. Freeway traffic volume and LOS data provided by Caltrans is also provided in Appendix A.

**D.5.2 Selection of Horizon Year and Background Traffic Growth.** Horizon year(s) selection is left to the lead agency, based on individual characteristics of the project being analyzed. In general, the horizon year should reflect a realistic estimate of the project completion date. For large developments phased over several years, review of intermediate milestones prior to buildout should also be considered.

At a minimum, horizon year background traffic growth estimates must use the generalized growth factors shown in Exhibit D-1. These growth factors are based on regional modeling efforts, and estimate the general effect of cumulative development and other socioeconomic changes on traffic throughout the region. Beyond this minimum, selection among the various methodologies available to estimate horizon year background traffic in greater detail is left to the lead agency. Suggested approaches include consultation with the jurisdiction in which the intersection under study is located, in order to obtain more detailed traffic estimates based on ongoing development in the vicinity.

## D.6 PROPOSED PROJECT TRAFFIC GENERATION

Traffic generation estimates must conform to the procedures of the current edition of Trip Generation, by the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE). If an alternative methodology is used, the basis for this methodology must be fully documented.

Increases in site traffic generation may be reduced for existing land uses to be removed, if the existing use was operating during the year the traffic counts were collected. Current traffic generation should be substantiated by actual driveway counts; however, if infeasible, traffic may be estimated based on a methodology consistent with that used for the proposed use.

Regional transportation impact analysis also requires consideration of trip lengths. Total site traffic generation must therefore be divided into work and non-work-related trip purposes in order to reflect observed trip length differences. Exhibit D-2 provides factors which indicate trip purpose breakdowns for various land use types.

For lead agencies who also participate in CMP highway monitoring, it is recommended that any traffic counts on CMP facilities needed to prepare the TIA should be done in the manner outlined in Chapter 2 and Appendix A. If the TIA traffic counts are taken within one year of the deadline for submittal of CMP highway monitoring data, the local jurisdiction would save the cost of having to conduct the traffic counts twice.

## D.7 TRIP DISTRIBUTION

For trip distribution by direct/manual assignment, generalized trip distribution factors are provided in Exhibit D-3, based on regional modeling efforts. These factors indicate Regional Statistical Area (RSA)-level tripmaking for work and non-work trip purposes.

(These RSAs are illustrated in Exhibit D-4.) For locations where it is difficult to determine the project site RSA, census tract/RSA correspondence tables are available from MTA.

Exhibit D-5 describes a general approach to applying the preceding factors. Project trip distribution must be consistent with these trip distribution and purpose factors; the basis for variation must be documented.

Local agency travel demand models disaggregated from the SCAG regional model are presumed to conform to this requirement, as long as the trip distribution functions are consistent with the regional distribution patterns. For retail commercial developments, alternative trip distribution factors may be appropriate based on the market area for the specific planned use. Such market area analysis must clearly identify the basis for the trip distribution pattern expected.

## D.8 IMPACT ANALYSIS

CMP Transportation Impact Analyses contain two separate impact studies covering roadways and transit. Section Nos. D.8.1-D.8.3 cover required roadway analysis while Section No. D.8.4 covers the required transit impact analysis. Section Nos. D.9.1-D.9.4 define the requirement for discussion and evaluation of alternative mitigation measures.

**D.8.1 Intersection Level of Service Analysis.** The LA County CMP recognizes that individual jurisdictions have wide ranging experience with LOS analysis, reflecting the variety of community characteristics, traffic controls and street standards throughout the county. As a result, the CMP acknowledges the possibility that no single set of assumptions should be mandated for all TIAs within the county.

However, in order to promote consistency in the TIAs prepared by different jurisdictions, CMP TIAs must conduct intersection LOS calculations using either of the following methods:

- The Intersection Capacity Utilization (ICU) method as specified for CMP highway monitoring (see Appendix A); or
- The Critical Movement Analysis (CMA) / Circular 212 method.

Variation from the standard assumptions under either of these methods for circumstances at particular intersections must be fully documented.

TIAs using the 1985 or 1994 Highway Capacity Manual (HCM) operational analysis must provide converted volume-to-capacity based LOS values, as specified for CMP highway monitoring in Appendix A.

**D.8.2 Arterial Segment Analysis.** For TIAs involving arterial segment analysis, volume-to-capacity ratios must be calculated for each segment and LOS values assigned using the V/C-LOS equivalency specified for arterial intersections. A capacity of 800 vehicles per hour per through traffic lane must be used, unless localized conditions necessitate alternative values to approximate current intersection congestion levels.

# 2. Response to Comments



**D.8.3 Freeway Segment (Mainline) Analysis.** For the purpose of CMP TIAs, a simplified analysis of freeway impacts is required. This analysis consists of a demand-to-capacity calculation for the affected segments, and is indicated in Exhibit D-6.

**D.8.4 Transit Impact Review.** CMP transit analysis requirements are met by completing and incorporating into an EIR the following transit impact analysis:

- ❑ Evidence that affected transit operators received the Notice of Preparation.
- ❑ A summary of existing transit services in the project area. Include local fixed-route services within a ¼ mile radius of the project; express bus routes within a 2 mile radius of the project, and; rail service within a 2 mile radius of the project.
- ❑ Information on trip generation and mode assignment for both AM and PM peak hour periods as well as for daily periods. Trips assigned to transit will also need to be calculated for the same peak hour and daily periods. Peak hours are defined as 7:30-8:30 AM and 4:30-5:30 PM. Both "peak hour" and "daily" refer to average weekdays, unless special seasonal variations are expected. If expected, seasonal variations should be described.
- ❑ Documentation of the assumption and analyses that were used to determine the number and percent of trips assigned to transit. Trips assigned to transit may be calculated along the following guidelines:
  - ➢ Multiply the total trips generated by 1.4 to convert vehicle trips to person trips;
  - ➢ For each time period, multiply the result by one of the following factors:

    3.5% of Total Person Trips Generated for most cases, except:

    10% primarily Residential within 1/4 mile of a CMP transit center
    15% primarily Commercial within 1/4 mile of a CMP transit center
    7% primarily Residential within 1/4 mile of a CMP multi-modal transportation center
    9% primarily Commercial within 1/4 mile of a CMP multi-modal transportation center
    5% primarily Residential within 1/4 mile of a CMP transit corridor
    7% primarily Commercial within 1/4 mile of a CMP transit corridor
    0% if no fixed route transit services operate within one mile of the project

  To determine whether a project is primarily residential or commercial in nature, please refer to the CMP land use categories listed and defined in Appendix E, *Guidelines for New Development Activity Tracking and Self Certification*. For projects that are only partially within the above one-quarter mile radius, the base rate (3.5% of total trips generated) should be applied to all of the project buildings that touch the radius perimeter.
- ❑ Information on facilities and/or programs that will be incorporated in the development plan that will encourage public transit use. Include not only the jurisdiction's TDM Ordinance measures, but other project specific measures.

- Analysis of expected project impacts on current and future transit services and proposed project mitigation measures, and;
- Selection of final mitigation measures remains at the discretion of the local jurisdiction/lead agency. Once a mitigation program is selected, the jurisdiction self-monitors implementation through the existing mitigation monitoring requirements of CEQA.

## D.9 IDENTIFICATION AND EVALUATION OF MITIGATION

**D.9.1 Criteria for Determining a Significant Impact.** For purposes of the CMP, a significant impact occurs when the proposed project increases traffic demand on a CMP facility by 2% of capacity (V/C ≥ 0.02), causing LOS F (V/C > 1.00); if the facility is already at LOS F, a significant impact occurs when the proposed project increases traffic demand on a CMP facility by 2% of capacity (V/C ≥ 0.02). The lead agency may apply a more stringent criteria if desired.

**D.9.2 Identification of Mitigation.** Once the project has been determined to cause a significant impact, the lead agency must investigate measures which will mitigate the impact of the project. Mitigation measures proposed must clearly indicate the following:

- Cost estimates, indicating the fair share costs to mitigate the impact of the proposed project. If the improvement from a proposed mitigation measure will exceed the impact of the project, the TIA must indicate the proportion of total mitigation costs which is attributable to the project. This fulfills the statutory requirement to exclude the costs of mitigating inter-regional trips.
- Implementation responsibilities. Where the agency responsible for implementing mitigation is not the lead agency, the TIA must document consultation with the implementing agency regarding project impacts, mitigation feasibility and responsibility.

Final selection of mitigation measures remains at the discretion of the lead agency. The TIA must, however, provide a summary of impacts and mitigation measures. Once a mitigation program is selected, the jurisdiction self-monitors implementation through the mitigation monitoring requirements contained in CEQA.

**D.9.3 Project Contribution to Planned Regional Improvements.** If the TIA concludes that project impacts will be mitigated by anticipated regional transportation improvements, such as rail transit or high occupancy vehicle facilities, the TIA must document:

- Any project contribution to the improvement, and
- The means by which trips generated at the site will access the regional facility.

**D.9.4 Transportation Demand Management (TDM).** If the TIA concludes or assumes that project impacts will be reduced through the implementation of TDM measures, the TIA must document specific actions to be implemented by the project which substantiate these conclusions.

# 2. Response to Comments



## D.10 REFERENCES

1. *Traffic Access and Impact Studies for Site Development: A Recommended Practice*, Institute of Transportation Engineers, 1991.
2. *Trip Generation*, 5th Edition, Institute of Transportation Engineers, 1991.
3. *Travel Forecast Summary: 1987 Base Model - Los Angeles Regional Transportation Study (LARTS)*, California State Department of Transportation (Caltrans), February 1990.
4. *Traffic Study Guidelines*, City of Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT), July 1991.
5. *Traffic/Access Guidelines*, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works.
6. *Building Better Communities*, Sourcebook, Coordinating Land Use and Transit Planning, American Public Transit Association.
7. *Design Guidelines for Bus Facilities*, Orange County Transit District, 2nd Edition, November 1987.
8. *Coordination of Transit and Project Development*, Orange County Transit District, 1988.
9. *Encouraging Public Transportation Through Effective Land Use Actions*, Municipality of Metropolitan Seattle, May 1987.

**ATTACHMENT: NOTIFICATION MATRIX**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **DEVELOPMENT** | | |
| **Notification Required** | **Environmental Impact Reports** | All Environmental Impact Reports at the Notice of Preparation stage* |
| | **Mitigated Negative Declarations, Negative Declarations, Categorical Exemptions, and all other documents** | Within 500 feet of Metro ROW** |
| | | Immediately adjacent to Metro bus stops |
| **Notification NOT Required** | Conditional Uses to permit the sale of alcoholic beverages or Wireless Telecommunication Facilities | |
| | Renovation projects and Changes of Use permits with limited exterior impacts | |
| | Tenant Improvement projects interior to the building | |
| | Additions of less than 500 square feet | |
| **PLANNING/POLICY DOCUMENTS** | | |
| **Notification Required** | Updates to General Plan Land Use, Housing or Circulation/Transportation Elements | |
| | Specific Plans, TOD Overlays, Design Overlays within 500 feet of Metro ROW* | |
| | Streetscape Plans for streets where Metro Bus or Rail operates | |
| | Bicycle or Active Transportation Plans | |
| **PUBLIC WORKS PROJECTS** | | |
| **Notification Required** | Installation of bicycle lanes where Metro Bus or Rail is present | |
| | Utilities and other public works projects (e.g. water pipeline projects, utility relocations) that cross or are adjacent to Metro ROW* | |
| | Significant roadway improvements with alterations to roadway configurations (e.g. street widening, road diets) where Metro Bus or Rail operates | |

* All development projects that require preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) shall be subject to the Congestion Management Program (CMP) Land Use Analysis Program and must incorporate a CMP Transportation Impact Analysis (TIA) into the EIR. The CMP TIA Guidelines are published in the "2010 Congestion Management Program for Los Angeles County," Appendix D.

**For notification purposes, Metro ROW is defined as an existing or planned fixed-guideway system including Metro Rail, Metro fixed-guideway buses, and Metro-owned railroad ROW operated by Metrolink or freight companies or reserved for future service. Geographic data detailing our ROW is available for download at: http://developer.metro.net/introduction/metro-row/row-download/

Please send all documents to: Development Review
Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro)
One Gateway Plaza—Mail Stop 99-23-4
Los Angeles, CA 90012-2952

# 2. Response to Comments

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**A8. Response to comments from Metro dated August 5, 2014.**

A8-1 Program LU-2 Transit Oriented District Program specifies the components of a TOD plan, which will include a mobility strategy that will incorporate a strategy for parking management. Examples of the parking management strategies suggested in your comment letter dated August 5, 2014 have been added to Program LU-2 for clarification. Also, Policy 5.2 supports the implementation of parking strategies that facilitate transit use and reduce automobile dependence.

To address your comment regarding the first-last mile connections to transits, the following edits have been made to the General Plan Update:

- Additional language is added to Policy M 5.1: "Facilitate transit-oriented land uses and pedestrian-oriented design, particularly in the first-last mile connections to transit, to encourage transit ridership."

- Reference and additional language regarding first-last mile connections is added to the discussion of issue #3 Connecting Transportation and Land Use Planning in the Mobility Element.

- Additional language/reference to first-last mile connections is added to the Mobility Strategy under Program LU-2.

A8-2 Our complete street policies can be found in the Mobility Element under Goal M 1. Goal M 1 and the associated policies will be implemented through the following programs:

- Program M-2 Community Pedestrian Plan

- Program M-3 Safe Routes to School Program

A8-3 Comment noted. As discussed in Section 2.5 of traffic study prepared for the Proposed Project (see Appendix L of the DEIR), 15 Congestion Management Plan (CMP) intersections that are located within the County of Los Angeles unincorporated area boundaries have been assessed for 2035 with and without project conditions. No further analysis is required.

A8-4 Comment noted. The County ensures that all notifications to LACMTA will be done in compliance with all state requirements.

# 2. Response to Comments

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LETTER A9 – California Construction and Industrial Materials Association (CalCIMA) (4 pages)

CALCIMA
California Construction and
Industrial Materials Association

August 6, 2014 VIA EMAIL

Ms. Connie Chung
Los Angeles County Regional Planning Department
320 West Temple Street, 13th Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90012

**RE: Los Angeles County 2035 General Plan Draft Environmental Report**

Dear Ms. Chung,

The California Construction & Industrial Materials Association (CalCIMA) appreciates the opportunity to comment on the Los Angeles County 2035 General Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR). We further appreciate the willingness of Los Angeles County Regional Planning Department staff to incorporate our suggested policy and guideline changes into the Los Angeles County 2035 General Plan.

CalCIMA is a statewide trade association representing construction aggregate, ready-mix concrete and industrial materials producers in California. Our members supply the materials that build our state's infrastructure, including public roads, rail, and water projects; helps build our homes, schools and hospitals; assists in growing crops and feeding livestock; and plays a key role in manufacturing wallboard, roofing shingles, paint, glass, low-energy light bulbs, and battery technology for electric cars and windmills.

Our comments and suggested revisions to the DEIR are as follows:

**5.4.1 Environmental Setting**

CalCIMA is concerned with the analysis of the Significant Ecological Areas (SEA) overlay. The DEIR fails to adequately review impacts created by the SEA process as applied to Mineral Resource Zones (MRZs) included within the SEA. These impacts would present obstacles to future mining and economic activity vital to meeting the County's ongoing infrastructure needs. Redundant SEA regulatory reviews would also generate additional incurred operating and administrative expense and decrease overall economic potential. A9-1

Increasing the SEA overlay over significant mineral resource areas would directly conflict with the recognized needs of the County. Additionally, the proposed SEA expansion would pose considerable challenges to any future plans for aggregate companies to expand their operations, creating serious long-term impacts to the County through significant losses of high-paying jobs and tax revenue.

CalCIMA
1029 J Street, Suite 420
Sacramento, CA 95814
Phone: 916 554-1000
Fax: 916 554-1042

Regional Office:
1077 E Pacific Coast Hwy, Ste 342
Seal Beach, CA 90740
Phone: 562 370-7129
Fax: 916 379-5742

# 2. Response to Comments



The result of this added cost and procedural redundancy will jeopardize the production of construction materials from within the County. Public Resources Code Section 2711(d) recognizes that preservation of local sources of construction materials is vital to avoiding detrimental impacts to air quality and traffic that result from the importation of compensatory materials from remote sources. As such, the County must evaluate the extent to which the SEA's effect on mineral resources will increase air emissions, greenhouse gasses, and traffic, among other issues. A9-1 cont'd

To mitigate these impacts, we believe a reasonable compromise would be to modify the proposed boundary of the SEA encompassing MRZs that have already gone through the CEQA process and been designated *"regionally significant"* to the County and the State so that such MRZs are excluded from the SEA.

We further request that mining operators willing to reclaim their operations to open space be allowed to forgo SEATAC Review and, specifically the 4:1 compensatory land mitigation ratio. Additionally, CalCIMA requests that a member of the SEATAC board be specifically experienced in mining revegatation practices. A9-2

**5.4.5 CUMLATIVE IMPACTS**

The cumulative impacts analysis fails to consider impacts of the SEA program's expansion over identified mineral resource lands, specifically, any potential negative impacts upon the development of those lands. A9-3

**5.11 MINERAL RESOURCES**

CalCIMA appreciates the overall environmental analysis of mineral resources conducted as part of the DEIR. We strongly believe, however, there are specific items that require additional review and/or analysis.

Sections 2761(a) and (b) and 2790 of the *Surface Mining and Reclamation Act (SMARA)* provide for a mineral lands inventory process termed classification-designation. While the California Geological Survey and the State Mining and Geology Board (SMGB) are responsible for administering the process, the primary objective of the process is to provide local agencies, such as cities and counties, with information on the location, need and importance of minerals within their respective jurisdictions. It is also the intent of this process, through the adoption of General Plan Mineral Resources Management Policies (MRMPs) that this information be considered in future land use decisions. While the County's DEIR calls out the specific MRZs, we believe the DEIR does not have adequate supporting MRMPs. A9-4

Additionally, we believe the DEIR's analysis of the protection of these MRZs is wholly inadequate, especially given the fact the State has established specific standards that protect mineral resources in these areas.

CalCIMA Comment Letter on LA County General Plan DEIR
3

The designation of "regionally significant" resources zones requires that a lead agency's land use decisions involving designated areas are made in accordance with its MRMPs. The lead agency must also consider the importance of the mineral resources to the region or the State as a whole and not just within the lead agency's jurisdiction. CalCIMA fails to see how this critical requirement is adopted or even considered by the DEIR.

A9-5

The DEIR and General Plan fail to account for Public Resources Code Section 2762:

> *2762. (a) Within 12 months of receiving the mineral information described in Section 2761, and also within 12 months of the designation of an area of statewide or regional significance within its jurisdiction, a lead agency shall, in accordance with state policy, establish mineral resource management policies to be incorporated in its general plan that will:*
> *(1) Recognize mineral information classified by the State Geologist and transmitted by the board.*
> ***(2) Assist in the management of land use that affects access to areas of statewide and regional significance.***
> ***(3) Emphasize the conservation and development of identified mineral deposits.***
> *(b) A lead agency shall submit proposed mineral resource management policies to the board for review and comment prior to adoption.*

Moreover, CEQA requires that the lead agency evaluate and adopt feasible mitigation measures with regard to a potentially-significant impact even when the agency ultimately concludes that the impact is significant and unavoidable. (Pub. Resources Code § 21002). In order to approve a project despite a significant and unavoidable impact, the agency must find that "specific economic, legal, social, technological, or other considerations…make infeasible the mitigation measures or alternatives identified in the environmental impact report." (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15091(a)(3).) Implicit in this finding is a mandate to evaluate mitigation measures in the environmental impact report so as to ascertain their feasibility with regard to the mitigation of identified impacts. Moreover, in concluding that mitigation is infeasible, the agency must state "specific reasons" in support of that conclusion. (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15091(c).)

A9-6

In this case, the County concludes that impacts 5.11-1 and 5.11-2 are significant and unavoidable, yet the EIR is devoid of any analysis of mitigation that could avoid the impacts. Mitigation should be evaluated that would avoid the loss of mineral resources. For example, the County should evaluate whether the Airport designation described in conjunction with impact 5.11-1 can be revised to specifically allow for development of mineral resources within areas subject to the broad-ranging Airport designation. Similarly, the County should evaluate the extent to which mitigation or project design modifications could preserve mineral resources in the Little Rock Wash Area described in impact 5.11-2. Without this level of analysis, the EIR is inadequate and would not support the County's decision to approve the project.

**5.11.5 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS**

The cumulative impacts fail to adequately analyze several critical data points, including potentially significant economic impacts that could include decreased direct and ancillary economic activity, job losses and decreased tax revenues; the impacts of additional truck traffic based on importing materials; and significant additional air emissions and Greenhouse Gases generated from the import of additional materials.

A9-7

# 2. Response to Comments



In considering the negative impacts on mineral resource lands, we believe the DEIR's analysis fails to recognize the environmental benefits generated by the development of local sources of materials as recognized by the California Legislature. Public Resources Code 2711(d) specifically notes both the economic and environmental benefits of such resources:

> *"The Legislature further finds that the production and development of local mineral resources that help maintain a strong economy and that are necessary to build the state's infrastructure are vital to reducing transportation emissions that result from the distribution of hundreds of millions of tons of construction aggregates that are used annually in building and maintaining the state."*

A9-8

Further, it remains unclear why maintaining open space zoning in these mineral resource areas would not be consistent with the County's goals of both creating and maintaining open space, as well as the future development of these mineral resource lands and their subsequent reclamation to a land use consistent with the underlying zoning.

We request that the above be included and analyzed in the DEIR.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to submit comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Los Angeles County 2035 General Plan. We appreciate your consideration of our comments and look forward to a productive and open dialogue on these important revisions.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at (562) 370-7129.

Sincerely,

ADriscoll

Angela Driscoll,
Director, Local Government Affairs

**A9. Response to comments from CalCIMA dated August 6, 2014.**

A9-1 SEAs are a Special Management Area under the General Plan, with the Hillside Management and Significant Ecological Areas Ordinance that regulates development within SEAs. The commenter expresses concerns over the presence of the SEAs and that the SEA process itself will "jeopardize the productions of construction materials from within the County." The SEA Ordinance, which is a zoning overlay, does not prevent the operation of any specific use, such as mining, provided the use is permitted in the underlying zone. Within the SEAs, approximately 82% of analyzed applications for Conditional Use Permits were approved at the Regional Planning Commission. As the majority of SEA Conditional Use Permits are approved, we feel that the SEA Ordinance does not jeopardize the operation of permitted uses within an area designated SEA.

The designation of SEA does not specifically exempt particular uses, even where such uses meet other General Plan objectives. Many other large scale uses with regional importance are located in or partially within SEAs, such as landfills, oil operations, and water processing plants. County staff does not recommend creating an SEA map that exempts areas of high biological significance if such area also contains other resources.

A9-2 The Department of Regional Planning holds open applications for SEATAC members, which is a volunteer body. The requirements for SEATAC are focused on around each member's biological expertise within Los Angeles County. The Department of Regional Planning welcomes any member who has specific experience in mining reclamation techniques, provided that they are experienced with the County's biology and wish to volunteer, to serve on SEATAC.

A9-3 Cumulative impacts to mineral resources are discussed in Section 5.11.5 of the DEIR. It should be noted that the SEA designation does not prohibit use of lands for mineral extraction. As a result, the proposed expansion of the SEA boundaries would not result in cumulative impacts to mineral resources. Please refer to Response A9-1.

A9-4 County staff is currently reviewing the proposed General Plan Goals and Policies for consistency with SMARA requirements. If required, the Goals and Policies will be revised to maintain compliance with State law.

A9-5 As mandated by SMARA, aggregate mineral resources within the State are classified by the State Mining and Geology Board (SMGB) through application of the Mineral Resource Zone (MRZ) System. Chapter 9: Conservation and Natural Resources Element of the General Plan Update has been developed in accordance with Public Resources Code Section 2762. In addition, mineral resource zones have been mapped on Figure 9.6 of the General Plan Update. As a result, the County has determined that the General Plan Update is in compliance with State law.

A9-6 Although the DEIR does not identify any feasible mitigation measures to address mineral resource impacts, the General Plan Update does include policies to address potential impacts, including the following (Policies C/NR 10.2 through C/NR 10.6 have been added to the General Plan Update since distribution of the Draft EIR):

**Goal C/NR 10:** Locally available mineral resources to meet the needs of construction, transportation, and industry.

- **Policy C/NR 10.1:** Protect MRZ-2s and access to MRZ-2s from development and discourage incompatible adjacent land uses.
- **Policy C/NR 10.2:** Prior to permitting a use that threatens the potential to extract minerals in an identified Mineral Resource Zone, the County shall prepare a statement specifying its reasons for permitting the proposed use, and shall forward a copy to the State Geologist and the State Mining and Geology Board for review, in accordance with the Public Resources Code, as applicable.
- **Policy C/NR 10.3:** Recognize newly identified MRZ-2s within 12 months of transmittal of information by the State Mining and Geology Board.
- **Policy C/NR 10.4:** Work collaboratively with agencies to identify Mineral Resource Zones and to prioritize mineral land use classifications in regional efforts.
- **Policy C/NR 10.5:** Manage mineral resources in a manner that effectively plans for access to, development, and conservation of, mineral resources for existing and future generations.
- **Policy C/NR 10.6:** Require that new non-mining land uses adjacent to existing mining operations be designed to provide a buffer between the new development and the mining operations. The buffer distance shall be based on an evaluation of noise, aesthetics, drainage, operating conditions, biological resources, topography, lighting, traffic, operating hours, and air quality.

Most of the Mineral Resource Zones in Los Angeles County have agricultural zoning, and the General Plan Update retains such zoning for the majority of those areas. Agricultural zoning does not preclude the extraction of mineral resources, nor does an SEA designation, as discussed above. Therefore, the majority of Mineral Resource Zones are protected in perpetuity. The significant impact identified in the DEIR is related to lands designated for development, which may contain mineral resources. After development, these lands would no longer be available for mineral resource extraction. However, considering the long-range nature of the General Plan Update, these lands would be available for extraction of mineral resources prior to development, which is expected to occur post-2035. Taking these factors into consideration, along with the

other benefits of the Proposed Project, the County feels a Statement of Overriding Considerations is justified.

A9-7 CEQA requires an analysis of the physical impacts on the environment as a result of a proposed project. Analysis of economic impacts is not required unless it could lead to a direct or indirect physical impact on the environment. With respect to potential GHG impacts related to increased import of aggregate materials, no significant impact is anticipated. As described above in Responses A9-1 through A9-7, the Proposed Project adequately protects mineral resources within the Project Area so that importation of aggregate materials from distant locations would not be necessary.

A9-8 Most of the Mineral Resource Zones in Los Angeles County have agricultural zoning, and the updates to the General Plan would retain such zoning for the majority of those areas.

The commenter states, "it remains unclear why maintaining open space zoning in these mineral resource areas would not be consistent with the County's goals of both creating and maintaining open space, as well as the future development of these mineral resource lands and their subsequent reclamation to a land use consistent with the underlying zoning."

We are not aware of any particular mineral resource area with open space zoning that is being changed under the General Plan Update.

# 2. Response to Comments

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LETTER A10 – City of Carson (2 pages)

# CITY OF CARSON

Connie Chung, AICP, Supervising Regional Planner
Department of Regional Planning
320 West Temple Street, Room 1356
Los Angeles, CA 90012

August 7, 2014

Subject: City of Carson Comments on the Los Angeles County General Plan Update DEIR

Dear Ms. Chung,

City of Carson commends Los Angeles County's effort in the preparation of your General Plan update. We have had a chance to review your General Plan Update and the DEIR and have the following comments and concerns:

The City of Carson will be impacted by the proposed West Carson TOD and the Del Amo Station TOD. We believe the designation of TOD is appropriate for these locations. However, impacts from these high density and intensive TODs on the City of Carson infrastructure and services have not been properly addressed in the DEIR.

Specifically, fire, police, and library services will be impacted within the City. In addition, the additional population will impact City's parks and streets. The DEIR states that these impacts will be mitigated by the development impact fees imposed by the County; however, the DEIR is not clear how the collection of these fees by the County would mitigate impacts to City services, facilities, and infrastructure.

A10-1

TODs are a necessary component of future development of these areas to encourage alternative means of transportation other than single occupant automobiles. Therefore, future developments within these TODs should be required to provide a complete package of all modes of transportation to encourage the residents not to use their cars. These TOD Specific Plans should include specific provisions to include necessary infrastructure and/or programs for pedestrians, bicycles, personal transportation vehicles, neighborhood electric vehicles, car sharing services, and transit services.

A10-2

CITY HALL • 701 E. CARSON STREET • P.O. BOX 6234 • CARSON, CA 90749 • (310) 830-7600
WEBSITE: ci.carson.ca.us

# 2. Response to Comments

The DEIR should include a discussion to identify, construct, establish, connect, use, manage, maintain, and promote a complete mobility package to the residents, employees, and employers. In addition, the infrastructure, equipment, and management of this comprehensive network need to be discussed in the DEIR. If this complete transportation network is not established, managed, and used, higher densities would translate to more automobiles on City streets which has not been addressed in the DEIR. We believe this approach should be used for all proposed TODs within the County General Plan.

A10-2 cont'd

City of Carson appreciates the opportunity to comment on the General Plan Update DEIR. I can be reached at (310) 952-1761 or snaaseh@carson.ca.us if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Saied Naaseh
Associate Planner

**A10. Response to comments from City of Carson dated August 7, 2014.**

A10-1 The Proposed Project consists of a comprehensive update to the Los Angeles County General Plan, which provides the general land use designations for the unincorporated portions of Los Angeles County. The Project Proponent for the Proposed Project is the County. While the Proposed Project provides land use designations for the West Carson TOD and Del Amo Station TOD, no project-level entitlements will be granted if the Proposed Project is adopted. Any development proposed by the subject property owners will require separate development applications by the landowner/developer, project-level approvals including a specific plan or similar planning document, tract maps, and a project-level EIR. Therefore, the level of analysis provided in the DEIR is appropriate for a general plan, since project-specific details are not available at this time.

However, it should be noted that any future development projects within the Project Area including the West Carson TOD and Del Amo Station TOD, may tier off of the Program EIR for the Proposed Project to the extent permitted by CEQA. "Tiering" refers "to the coverage of general matters in broader EIRs (such as on general plans or policy statements) with subsequent narrower EIRs or ultimately site-specific EIRs incorporating by reference the general discussions and concentrating solely on the issues specific to the EIR subsequently prepared. Tiering is appropriate when the sequence of EIRs is: [¶] (a) From a general plan, policy, or program EIR to a . . . site-specific EIR." (CEQA Guidelines, § 15385).

Furthermore, as part of the implementation of the General Plan, TODs will be accompanied by a specific plan, or a similar mechanism, that will include standards, regulations, and infrastructure plans—and accompanying environmental review—that are tailored to the unique characteristics and needs of each community. These planning mechanisms will address access and connectivity, pedestrian improvements, and safety.

Please note that the City of Carson contracts with Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department for law enforcement services and the Los Angeles County Fire Department for fire service. In addition, library services in the City of Carson are provided by the County of Los Angeles Public Library. Potential impacts to these service providers as a result of the Proposed Project are provided in Section 5.14, *Public Services,* of the DEIR. Potential impacts to recreational facilities are provided in Section 5.15, *Recreation*. Traffic related impacts are addressed in Section 5.16, *Transportation and Traffic*.

A10-2 No project-specific planning for the West Carson TOD and Del Amo Station TOD area has occurred at this time. Only General Plan land use designations are being proposed as part of the Project. However, your comment is hereby noted and will be forwarded to the appropriate County decision makers for their review and consideration.

# 2. Response to Comments

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LETTER A11 – City of Montebello (1 page)

**From:** Lee, Nancy [mailto:NLee@cityofmontebello.com]
**Sent:** Thursday, August 07, 2014 5:24 PM
**To:** DRP General Plan Project
**Subject:** DEIR General Plan Update

Ms. Chung,

The City of Montebello Planning Division has the following comments regarding the DEIR for the update of the LA County General Plan:

1. Removal of a 488 acre site referred to as the Montebello Hills Specific Plan property from the proposed Puente Hills SEA land areas; A11-1
2. Encourage the redevelopment of sites that are adjacent to Montebello, specifically, sites that may be blighted; and A11-2
3. The necessity of Health Risk Assessments for sensitive land uses near industrial facilities, distribution centers, major transportation projects, dry cleaners, and gasoline dispensing facilities as discretionary projects requiring CEQA review could offers tools to address potential issues of the development of sensitive uses. A11-3

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the DEIR.

*Nancy Lee*
Assistant Planner

City of Montebello
1600 W. Beverly Boulevard
Montebello, CA 90640

www.cityofmontebello.com
323-887-1200 ext. 484
City Hall Business Hours:
Monday to Thursday
7:30 am to 5:30 pm

1

# 2. Response to Comments

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**A11. Response to comments from City of Montebello dated August 7, 2014.**

A11-1 The Montebello Hills Specific Plan is located outside of the County's jurisdiction in the incorporated City of Montebello, within an SEA that has been on the County's SEA map since 1980. The existing SEAs located within incorporated areas outside of the County's jurisdiction were retained without major changes, unless the areas had been developed in the interim. Although the Montebello Hills Specific Plan is currently in the entitlement process, it is the understanding of our staff that it has not reached the construction phase. As a result, at this point in time, the resources of this historic SEA still exist. Should the General Plan be adopted prior to finalization of this project, staff does not support adjusting the SEA boundaries.

Provided that the Montebello Hills Specific Plan project is constructed following adoption of this General Plan Update, staff believes it would be consistent with the aims of the SEA Program to amend the boundaries of the Puente Hills SEA to exclude developed portions of the Montebello Hills Specific Plan. This adjustment could be presented during any of the biennial status reports on the SEA Program established in Chapter 15: General Plan Maintenance.

A11-2 In general, the General Plan Update has policies and goals that support and encourage infill developments that enhance communities:

- Goal LU 4: Infill development and redevelopment that strengthens and enhances communities.

- Policy LU 4.1: Encourage infill development in urban and suburban areas on vacant, underutilized, and/or brownfield sites.

- Policy LU 4.2: Encourage the adaptive reuse of underutilized structures and the revitalization of older, economically distressed neighborhoods.

- Policy LU 4.3: Encourage transit-oriented development in urban and suburban areas with the appropriate residential density along transit corridors and within station areas.

- Policy LU 4.4: Encourage mixed use development along major commercial corridors in urban and suburban areas.

Specifically, East Los Angeles, South San Gabriel, and Whittier Narrows are the three unincorporated communities that are adjacent to the City of Montebello. While the General Plan Update sets the framework for all future community-based planning initiatives with broader goals and policies that apply to the unincorporated areas as a whole, future community-based plans will be a more appropriate tool to address planning challenges at a sub-regional and/or community level. For instance, an Area Plan will be prepared for the West San Gabriel Valley Planning Area, which covers the unincorporated communities of South San Gabriel and Whittier Narrows. During this

future area planning process, the County will be able to target specific sites and areas where infill developments and redevelopments should be further encouraged and promoted. The East Los Angeles 3rd Street Specific Plan and the East Los Angeles Community Standards District Update are the two community-based planning initiatives that were adopted by the Board of Supervisors on November 12, 2014. These initiatives address the blighted conditions on certain properties in unincorporated East Los Angeles. For more information regarding the planning initiatives in East Los Angeles, please contact the Community Studies East Section at (213) 974-6425 or email at commplan@planning.lacounty.gov.

A11-3 Related to your request, Mitigation Measure AQ-3 was included in the DEIR, which requires applicants to submit a health risk assessment (HRA) to the County prior to future discretionary project approval of projects involving sensitive land uses near these types of facilities.

LETTER A12 – City of Palmdale (2 pages)

PALMDALE
*a place to call home*

JAMES C. LEDFORD, JR.
*Mayor*
TOM LACKEY
*Mayor Pro Tem*
MIKE DISPENZA
*Councilmember*
STEVEN D. HOFBAUER
*Councilmember*
FREDERICK THOMPSON
*Councilmember*

38300 Sierra Highway
Palmdale, CA 93550-4798
Tel: 661/267-5100
Fax: 661/267-5122
TDD: 661/267-5167

*Auxiliary aids provided for communication accessibility upon 72 hours notice and request.*

August 7, 2014

Ms. Connie Chung, AICP,
Supervising Regional Planner
County of Los Angeles
Department of Regional Planning
330 West Temple Street, Room 1356
Los Angeles, CA 90012

**RE: Notice of Completion of the Draft EIR for the Los Angeles County General Plan Update**

Dear Ms. Chung:

Thank you for providing the City of Palmdale with the opportunity to comment on the Draft EIR Los Angeles County General Plan Update. The City of Palmdale takes pride in the affordable housing available to our residents, the commercial and industrial development, and the visual character that exists within the Antelope Valley.

Based upon information provided within the draft EIR, land use, air quality, traffic and water availability issues will be significant and unavoidable based upon the proposed project. The Antelope Valley Planning area is recognized in 2013 as having 24,739 housing units, a population of 93,490, a total of 31,838 jobs and a jobs-housing ratio of 1.29. Post 2035, the corresponding numbers are 278,158 housing units, a population of 1,070,571, a total of 51,219 jobs and a jobs-housing ratio of 0.18. The project proposed, increasing the population within unincorporated areas by over 50 people for every job created, is completely unacceptable to the City of Palmdale.

A12-1

Under the proposed project, the County of Los Angeles is pushing for a significant increase in the population and housing within the Antelope Valley while providing extremely limited employment opportunities. This will lead to either significant unemployment with the AV or a significant increase in the number of AV residents commuting on the already crowded State Route 14. This is completely contrary to the requirements of AB 32 (California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006) and SB 375 (Sustainable Communities and Climate Change Protection Act of 2008) and the AVAQMD's attainment plans. The proposed course of action will

*w w w . c i t y o f p a l m d a l e . o r g*

# 2. Response to Comments



significantly increase VMT within the region and have significant and unavoidable impacts of air quality and greenhouse gases. A12-1 cont'd

The Antelope Valley Reduced Intensity Alternative is the preferred alternative as it aligns with the Antelope Valley Area Plan, also known as the Town and Country. The Town and Country is proposed as a current component of the Los Angeles County General Plan, however not mentioned in the proposed Draft EIR. A12-2

The City of Palmdale appreciates the opportunity to comment on the draft Environmental Impact Report. Should you have any questions please contact Juan Carrillo or me at (661) 267-5200.

Sincerely,

Susan Koleda, AICP
Acting Planning Manager

**A12. Response to comments from City of Palmdale dated August 7, 2014.**

A12-1 Comment noted. The proposed land uses analyzed in the DEIR for the Antelope Valley Planning Area have been superseded by the recent approval of the Antelope Valley Area Plan by the Board of Supervisors on November 12, 2014.

A12-2 The Antelope Valley Area Plan, which was the basis for the Antelope Valley Reduced Intensity Alternative analyzed in the DEIR, was approved by the Board of Supervisors on November 12, 2014.

# 2. Response to Comments

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LETTER A13 – County Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County (2 pages)

COUNTY SANITATION DISTRICTS
OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY

1955 Workman Mill Road, Whittier, CA 90601-1400
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 4998, Whittier, CA 90607-4998
Telephone: (562) 699-7411, FAX: (562) 699-5422
www.lacsd.org

GRACE ROBINSON HYDE
*Chief Engineer and General Manager*

August 7, 2014

Ref File No.: 3022289

Ms. Connie Chung, AICP
Supervising Regional Planner
Department of Regional Planning
320 West Temple Street, Room 1356
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Ms. Chung:

**Los Angeles County General Plan Update**

The County Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County (Districts) received a Draft Environmental Impact Report for the subject project on July 2, 2014. We offer the following comments regarding sewerage service:

1. The Districts own, operate, and maintain only the large trunk sewers that form the backbone of the regional wastewater conveyance system. Local collector and/or lateral sewer lines are the responsibility of the jurisdiction in which they are located. As such, the Districts cannot comment on any deficiencies in the sewerage system within the unincorporated Los Angeles County (County) area, except to state that presently no deficiencies exist in Districts' facilities that serve the County. A13-1

2. The Districts should review development projects within the County in order to determine whether or not sufficient trunk sewer capacity exists to serve each project and to ensure projects are considered when planning future sewerage system relief and replacement projects. Please forward information on projects within the County to the undersigned. A13-2

3. For a copy of the Districts' average wastewater generation factors, go to www.lacsd.org, Wastewater & Sewer Systems, click on Will Serve Program, and click on the Table 1, Loadings for Each Class of Land Use link. A13-3

4. The Districts are empowered by the California Health and Safety Code to charge a fee for the privilege of connecting (directly or indirectly) to the Districts' Sewerage System for increasing the strength or quantity of wastewater attributable to a particular parcel or operation already connected. This connection fee is a capital facilities fee that is imposed in an amount sufficient to construct an incremental expansion of the Sewerage System to accommodate proposed projects. Payment of a connection fee will be required before a permit to connect to the sewer is issued. For more information and a copy of the Connection Fee Information Sheet, go to www.lacsd.org, Wastewater & Sewer Systems, click on Will Serve Program, and search for the appropriate link. A13-4

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# 2. Response to Comments



For more specific information regarding the connection fee application procedure and fees, please contact the Connection Fee Counter at extension 2727. A13-4 cont'd

5. In order for the Districts to conform to the requirements of the Federal Clean Air Act (CAA), the design capacities of the Districts' wastewater treatment facilities are based on the regional growth forecast adopted by the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG). Specific policies included in the development of the SCAG regional growth forecast are incorporated into clean air plans, which are prepared by the South Coast and Antelope Valley Air Quality Management Districts in order to improve air quality in the South Coast and Mojave Desert Air Basins as mandated by the CCA. All expansions of Districts' facilities must be sized and service phased in a manner that will be consistent with the SCAG regional growth forecast for the counties of Los Angeles, Orange, San Bernardino, Riverside, Ventura, and Imperial. The available capacity of the Districts' treatment facilities will, therefore, be limited to levels associated with the approved growth identified by SCAG. As such, this letter does not constitute a guarantee of wastewater service, but is to advise you that the Districts intend to provide this service up to the levels that are legally permitted and to inform you of the currently existing capacity and any proposed expansion of the Districts' facilities. A13-5

If you have any questions, please contact the undersigned at (562) 908-4288, extension 2717.

Very truly yours,

Grace Robinson Hyde

Adriana Raza
Customer Service Specialist
Facilities Planning Department

AR:ar

DOC: #3057535.D99

**A13. Response to comments from County Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County dated August 7, 2014.**

A13-1 Comment noted. No response required.

A13-2 Comment noted. The County will continue to coordinate with the County Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County as future development applications are submitted.

A13-3 Comment noted. No response required.

A13-4 Comment noted. No response required.

A13-5 Comment noted. No response required.

# 2. Response to Comments

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LETTER A14 – Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board (6 pages)

CALIFORNIA Water Boards

EDMUND G. BROWN JR. GOVERNOR

MATTHEW RODRIQUEZ SECRETARY FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

**Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board**

August 7, 2014

File: Environmental Doc Review
Los Angeles County

Connie Chung, Supervising Regional Planner
Los Angeles County
Department of Regional Planning
320 West Temple Street, Room 1356
Los Angeles, CA 90012
Email: genplan@planning.lacounty.gov

**COMMENTS ON NOTICE OF COMPLETION AND AVAILABILITY OF A DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY GENERAL PLAN UPDATE, LOS ANGELES COUNTY, STATE CLEARINGHOUSE NO. 2011081042**

The California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Lahontan Region (Water Board) staff received the Notice of Completion of a Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR) for the above-referenced plan (Plan) on July 2, 2014. The Draft EIR was prepared by Los Angeles County (County) and submitted in compliance with provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The General Plan will update the County's existing plan as its guide for the growth and development in the unincorporated areas of the County up to the year 2035. Water Board staff, acting as a responsible agency, is providing these comments to specify the scope and content of the environmental information germane to our statutory responsibilities pursuant to CEQA Guidelines, California Code of Regulations (CCR), title 14, section 15096. We encourage the County to take this opportunity to integrate urban development and sustainable practices and incorporate into the Plan strategies that promote watershed management, support "Low Impact Development" (LID), reduce the effects of hydromodification, and encourage recycled water uses. However, based on the projected population increases for the Antelope Valley, the Draft EIR does not adequately account for increases in the quantity of water required to sustain this growth, nor does it adequately address potential future degradation of water quality from anthropogenic sources such as industrial facilities, agriculture, and wastewater plants. A14-1

**AUTHORITY**

All groundwater and surface waters are considered waters of the State. Surface waters include streams, lakes, ponds, and wetlands, and may be ephemeral, intermittent, or perennial. All waters of the State are protected under California law. State law assigns responsibility for protection of water quality in the Lahontan Region to the Lahontan A14-2

AMY L. HORNE, PHD, CHAIR | PAITY Z. KOUYOUMDJIAN, EXECUTIVE OFFICER
14440 Civic Drive, Suite 200, Victorville, CA 92392 | www.waterboards.ca.gov/lahontan

RECYCLED PAPER

# 2. Response to Comments



Water Board. Some waters of the State are also waters of the U.S. The Federal Clean Water Act (CWA) provides additional protection for those waters of the State that are also waters of the U.S.

The *Water Quality Control Plan for the Lahontan Region* (Basin Plan) contains policies that the Water Board uses with other laws and regulations to protect the quality of waters of the State within the Lahontan Region. The Basin Plan sets forth water quality standards for surface water and groundwater of the Region, which include designated beneficial uses as well as narrative and numerical objectives which must be maintained or attained to protect those uses. The Basin Plan can be accessed via the Water Board's web site at http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/lahontan/water_issues/programs/basin_plan/references.shtml.

A14-2 cont'd

**INTEGRATING URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY**

The General Plan is the County's long-term blueprint for development in general, and the Housing Element is the County's specific plan to meet the existing and projected housing needs of all economic segments of the community. In the high desert, the quantity and quality of water is an integral component needed for development, especially in the Antelope Valley. To that end, we encourage the County to incorporate into the Plan strategies that promote watershed management, address existing impacts, support LID, avoid and minimize the effects of hydromodification, and encourage recycled water uses.

**A Watershed Approach**

A14-3

Healthy watersheds are sustainable. Watersheds supply drinking water, provide for recreational uses, sustain agriculture, provide natural flood control, and support ecosystems. Watershed processes include the movement of water (i.e. infiltration and surface runoff), the transport of sediment, and the delivery of organic material to surface waters. These processes create and sustain the streams, lakes, wetlands, and other receiving waters of our region. The watershed approach for managing water resource quality and quantity is a collaborative process that focuses public and private efforts on the highest priority problems within a drainage basin.

Beneficial Uses

The unincorporated areas of the County within the Lahontan Region include five surface water hydrologic areas and one groundwater basin: Neenach, Lancaster, Buttes, Rock Creek, and small portions of the El Mirage hydrologic areas and the Antelope Valley groundwater basin (Basin No. 6-44). The hydrologic areas have designated beneficial uses that include municipal and domestic supply (MUN), agricultural supply (AGR), groundwater recharge (GWR), freshwater replenishment (FRSH), water contact recreation (REC-1), non-contact water recreation (REC-2), warm freshwater habitat (WARM), rare, threatened, or endangered species (RARE), wildlife habitat (WLD), peak attenuation and flood storage (FLD), and water quality enhancement (WQE). The beneficial uses of the Antelope Valley groundwater basin include MUN, AGR, industrial service supply (IND), and FRSH. Water Board staff request that the Plan identify these hydrologic areas and the Antelope Valley groundwater basin, their beneficial uses, and

A14-4

describe in more detail how the County will protect these beneficial uses and sustain or improve water quality in the basin in the coming years. A14-4 cont'd

Increased Potential for Groundwater Quality Degradation

Water supply and groundwater quality are critical issues for future growth in the Antelope Valley. The Plan states that population is expected to grow 31.2% in the unincorporated areas between the present time and 2035; this increase in population will certainly require additional water supply as well as increased wastewater effluent from the wastewater plants at Palmdale and Lancaster, operated by the Los Angeles County Sanitation District (LACSD), and being discharged or recharged within the Antelope Valley. Historical discharges from the Palmdale plant are responsible for significant degradation of groundwater quality in the Antelope Valley groundwater basin due to nitrate (Lahontan Water Board, 2003)[1]. The Plan acknowledges issues of arsenic (Chapter 5-9), but does not mention nitrate or total dissolved solids (TDS) impacts, and does not discuss potential future water quality impacts from increased discharges from LACSD. As issues of increased sources of salts and nutrients have been of concern in our region, we request that this section of the Plan be expanded to discuss the potential for future impacts from continued or increased discharges from present and future sources. We also request additional discussion of what mitigation measures must be taken to preserve or improve existing water quality, in light of the projected population growth in the Antelope Valley. A14-5

The Plan should also discuss additional constituents of concern (COCs) as identified in the Draft Antelope Valley Salt and Nutrient Management Plan (SNMP) (see http://www.avwaterplan.org/). These COCs include boron, chloride, fluoride, nitrate, and TDS. The Plan does not discuss how increased population growth will affect these existing impacts, nor does it discuss mitigation measures for anticipated increases in discharge of these COCs. We request that this section be expanded to address these potential future impacts and to discuss the remaining assimilative capacities and mitigation measures that will be taken to preserve or improve existing groundwater quality. A14-6

The Antelope Valley Integrated Regional Water Management Plan (AVIRWMP) was prepared by a collaborative group of stakeholders, including the County and LACSD, to address both water quantity and water quality within the Antelope Valley. The AVIRWMP has been developed to sustain water quantity (i.e. imported water, stormwater recharge, recycled water uses, etc.), to manage salts and nutrients, and to maintain the quality of surface waters and groundwater within the Antelope Valley. The County is encouraged to continue to play an active stakeholder role in the development of these plans and to incorporate the implementation strategies into their sustainability Plan. We recommend that the water supply and water quality management goals and issues discussed in the AVIRWMP be incorporated into the County's Plan. A14-7

[1] Lahontan Regional Board, 2003. *California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Lahontan Region; Cleanup and Abatement Order No.R6V-2003-056, WDID NO. 6B190107069, Requiring Los Angeles County Sanitation District No. 20 Palmdale Water Reclamation Plant and the City of Los Angeles World Airports to Cleanup and Abate Waste Discharges to the Ground Waters of the Antelope Hydrologic Unit.*

# 2. Response to Comments



**Low Impact Development Strategies**

The Plan (Chapter 5-9) states that the County has developed its own Low Impact Development (LID) Standards Manual to comply with the requirements of the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Municipal Separate Stormwater Sewer System (MS4) permit for coastal watersheds. However, Water Board staff recommend that the LID Standards Manual should not be limited to only coastal watershed regions, but should be expanded to protect all waters of the State within the County.

We understand that LID development practices that would maintain aquatic values could also reduce local infrastructure requirements and maintenance costs, and could benefit air quality, open space, and habitat. Vegetated areas for stormwater management and infiltration onsite are valuable in LID and may enhance the aesthetics of the property. We appreciate the priority and importance of LID that the County has put forth in their Plan, and we request that a copy be added as appendix to the Draft EIR.

A14-8

**Stormwater Management**

Because increased runoff from developed areas is a key variable driving a number of adverse effects, attention to maintaining the pre-development hydrograph will prevent or minimize many problems and will limit the need for other analyses and mitigation. However, traditional methods for managing urban stormwater may not adequately protect the environment, as they tend to treat symptoms instead of causes. Such practices have led to channelization and stream armoring that permanently alter stream habitat, hydrology, and aesthetics that may result in overall degradation of a watershed. Stormwater control measures that are compatible with LID are preferred over more traditional measures. Examples include the use of bioretention swales, pervious pavement, and vegetated infiltration basins, all of which can effectively treat post-construction stormwater runoff, help sustain watershed processes, protect receiving waters, and maintain healthy watersheds in the face of urbanization. Any particular one of these control measures may not be suitable, effective, or even feasible on every site, but the right combination, in the right places, can successfully achieve these goals. We encourage the County to establish guidelines for implementing specific stormwater control measures into the Plan. Additional information regarding LID and sustainable stormwater management can be accessed online at http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/low_impact_development/.

A14-9

**Hydromodification**

Hydromodification is the alteration of the natural flow of water through a landscape (i.e. lining channels, flow diversions, culvert installations, armoring, etc.). Disturbing and compacting soils, changing or removing the vegetation cover, increasing impervious surfaces, and altering drainage patterns limit the natural hydrologic cycle processes of absorption, infiltration, and evapotranspiration, and increases the volume and frequency of runoff and sediment transport. Hydromodification results in stream channel instability, degraded water quality, changes in groundwater recharge processes, and aquatic habitat impacts. Hydromodification also can result in disconnecting a stream

A14-10

channel from its floodplain. Floodplain areas provide natural recharge, attenuate flood flows, provide habitat, and filter pollutants from urban runoff. Floodplain areas also store and release sediment, one of the essential processes to maintain the health of the watershed.

We encourage the County to identify existing sources of hydromodification and to develop mitigation measures to minimize those impacts, as well as establish guidelines that will help to avoid hydromodification from future projects. The guidelines should include maintaining natural drainage paths of Amargosa Creek, Anaverde Creek, Little Rock Wash, Big Rock Wash, and other ephemeral streams within the planning area and establishing buffers and setback requirements to protect channels and floodplain areas from encroaching development. Information regarding hydromodification can be accessed online at http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/stormwater/hydromodification.shtml. A14-10 cont'd

**Recycled Water Uses**

The State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) adopted the recycled Water Policy on February 3, 2009, and amended the policy on January 22, 2013. The purpose of the policy is to promote sustainable local water supplies by increasing the use of recycled water from municipal wastewater sources in a manner that implements state and federal water quality laws. The Recycled Water Policy establishes goals and mandates for recycled water use throughout the State. Incentives for implementing recycled water projects include grant opportunities and priority funding. The County is encouraged to consider the use of recycled water as an implementation strategy in their Plan. Current and planned future recycled water projects should be identified and evaluated in the Draft EIR. A14-11

**PERMITTING REQUIREMENTS**

A number of activities associated with Plan implementation projects may have the potential to impact waters of the State and, therefore, may require permits issued by either the State Water Board or Lahontan Water Board. The required permits may include:

1. Land disturbance of more than 1 acre may require a CWA, section 402(p) stormwater permit, including a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) General Construction Stormwater Permit, Water Quality Order (WQO) 2009-0009-DWQ, obtained from the State Water Board, or an individual stormwater permit obtained from the Lahontan Water Board;

2. New industrial operations which qualify under CWA, section 402(p) and which discharge their stormwater off-site to a water of the US, are required to obtain a permit under the Industrial General Permit program, 2014-0057-DWQ; and

3. Streambed alteration and/or discharge of fill material to a surface water, including water diversions, may require a CWA, section 401 water quality certification for impacts to federal waters (waters of the U.S.), or dredge and fill WDRs for impacts to non-federal waters, both issued by the Lahontan Water Board.

A14-12

# 2. Response to Comments



Some waters of the State are "isolated" from waters of the U.S. Determinations of the jurisdictional extent of the waters of the U.S. are made by the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). Projects that have the potential to impact surface waters will require the appropriate jurisdictional delineations. These delineations must be verified by USACE and are necessary to discern if the proposed surface water impacts will be regulated under section 401 of the CWA or through dredge and fill WDRs issued by the Water Board.

A14-12 cont'd

We request that the Draft EIR recognize the potential permits that may be required, as outlined above, and identify the specific activities that may trigger these permitting actions in the appropriate sections of the environmental document. Information regarding these permits, including application forms, can be downloaded from our web site at http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/lahontan/.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft EIR. If you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact me at (760) 241-7391 (tbrowne@waterboards.ca.gov) or Patrice Copeland, Senior Engineering Geologist, at (760) 241-7404 (pcopeland@waterboards.ca.gov).

Patrice J. Copeland

for: Tom Browne, PhD, PE
Water Resource Control Engineer

cc: California Department of Fish and Wildlife
(AskRegion6@wildlife.ca.gov)
Shirley Birosik, Watershed Coordinator, Los Angeles Regional Water Board
(shirley.birosik@waterboards.ca.gov)
Pavlova Vitale, Enforcement, Los Angeles Regional Water Board
(pavlova.vitale@waterboards.ca.gov)
Ginachi Amah, TMDL Section, Los Angeles Regional Water Board
(ginachi.amah@waterboards.ca.gov
State Clearinghouse
(state.clearinghouse@opr.ca.gov)

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**A14. Response to comments from Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board dated August 7, 2014.**

A14-1 Please refer to Responses A14-3 through A14-12.

A14-2 Comment noted. No response required.

A14-3 Comment noted. Related to your request, the following General Plan Goals and Policies have been incorporated in to the Proposed Project (see DEIR Page 5.9-25):

## Conservation and Natural Resources Element

- **Policy C/NR 5.1:** Support the LID philosophy, which seeks to plan and design public and private development with hydrologic sensitivity, including limits to straightening and channelizing natural flow paths, removal of vegetative cover, compaction of soils, and distribution of naturalistic BMPs at regional, neighborhood, and parcel-level scales.

- **Policy C/NR 5.2:** Require compliance by all County departments with adopted Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4), General Construction, and point source NPDES permits.

- **Policy C/NR 5.3:** Actively engage with stakeholders in the formulation and implementation of surface water preservation and restoration plans, including plans to improve impaired surface water bodies by retrofitting tributary watersheds with LID types of BMPs.

- **Policy C/NR 5.4:** Actively engage in implementing all approved Enhanced Watershed Management Programs/Watershed Management Programs and Coordinated Integrated Monitoring Programs/Integrated Monitoring Programs or other County-involved TMDL implementation and monitoring plans.

- **Policy C/NR 5.5:** Manage the placement and use of septic systems in order to protect nearby surface water bodies.

- **Policy C/NR 5.6:** Minimize point- and nonpoint- source water pollution.

- **Policy C/NR 5.7:** Actively support the design of new and retrofit of existing infrastructure to accommodate watershed protection goals, such as roadway, railway, bridge, and other–particularly–tributary street and greenway interface points with channelized waterways.

- **Policy C/NR 6.1:** Support the LID philosophy, which incorporates distributed, post-construction, parcel-level stormwater infiltration as part of new development.

- **Policy C/NR 6.2:** Protect natural groundwater recharge areas and regional spreading grounds.

- **Policy C/NR 6.3:** Actively engage in stakeholder efforts to disperse rainwater and stormwater infiltration BMPs at regional, neighborhood, infrastructure, and parcel-level scales.

- **Policy C/NR 6.4:** Manage the placement and use of septic systems in order to protect high groundwater.

- **Policy C/NR 6.5:** Prevent stormwater infiltration where inappropriate and unsafe, such as in areas with high seasonal groundwater, on hazardous slopes, within 100 feet of drinking water wells, and in contaminated soils.

- **Policy C/NR 7.1:** Support the LID philosophy, which mimics the natural hydrologic cycle using undeveloped conditions as a base, in public and private landuse planning and development design.

- **Policy C/NR 7.2:** Support the preservation, restoration and strategic acquisition of available land for open space to preserve watershed uplands, natural streams, drainage paths, wetlands, and rivers, which are necessary for the healthy function of watersheds.

- **Policy C/NR 7.3:** Actively engage with stakeholders to incorporate the LID philosophy in the preparation and implementation of watershed and river master plans, ecosystem restoration projects, and other related natural resource conservation aims, and support the implementation of existing efforts, including Watershed Management Programs and Enhanced Watershed Management Programs.

- **Policy C/NR 7.4:** Promote the development of multiuse regional facilities for stormwater quality improvement, groundwater recharge, detention/attenuation, flood management, retaining nonstormwater runoff, and other compatible uses.

A14-4 Protection of water resources is addressed in the Public Services and Facilities Element and Conservation and Natural Resources Element of the General Plan Update and has been prepared in compliance with State General Plan law. Potential impacts to hydrology and water quality as a result of the Proposed Project are discussed in Section 5.9, *Hydrology and Water Quality* of the DEIR. Please refer to Section 5.9 of the DEIR for a discussion of the hydrologic regions serving the Project Area and the regulatory programs intended to protect water quality in the Project Area.

A14-5 Potential impacts to hydrology and water quality as a result of the Proposed Project are discussed in Section 5.9, *Hydrology and Water Quality* of the DEIR. Potential impacts related to wastewater treatment are discussed in Section 5.17.1, *Wastewater Treatment and Collection*, of the DEIR.

A14-6 Per your request, the following text has been added to Page 5.9-18 of the DEIR:

Additional constituents of concern (COCs) have been identified in the Draft Antelope Valley Salt and Nutrient Management Plan (SNMP) These COCs include boron, chloride, fluoride, nitrate, and total dissolved solids (TDS).[1]

A14-7 Comment is hereby noted and will be forwarded to the appropriate County decision makers for their review and consideration.

A14-8 Water quality requirements for operation of developed land uses in the Project Area are in the LID Standards Manual issued by the County Department of Public Works in 2013. This applies to all development within the Project Area and is referenced in the DEIR. As a result, inclusion in the appendix FEIR is not considered necessary.

A14-9 Comment noted. See Response A14-8.

A14-10 As discussed on Page 5.9-5 of the DEIR, issues related to hydromodification are addressed in the County's Low Impact Development Standards Manual.

A14-11 Comment noted. Use of recycled water is discussed in Section 5.17.2, *Water Supply and Distribution Systems,* of the DEIR.

A14-12 The Proposed Project consists of an update to the Los Angeles County General Plan. No specific development is proposed at this time. However, the County acknowledges that future development will be required to obtain all necessary permits from the State Water Board or the Lahontan Water Board.

[1] Los Angeles County Department of Public Works. 2013, June. Draft Salt and Nutrient Management Plan for the Antelope Valley.

# 2. Response to Comments

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LETTER A15 – Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (5 pages)

CALIFORNIA Water Boards

EDMUND G. BROWN JR. GOVERNOR

MATTHEW RODRIQUEZ SECRETARY FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

**Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board**

August 7, 2014

Connie Chung, AICP, Supervising Regional Planner
Department of Regional Planning
320 West Temple Street, Room 1356
Los Angeles, CA 90012

LOS ANGELES REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD COMMENTS ON THE DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY GENERAL PLAN UPDATE

Dear Ms. Chung:

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the Los Angeles County General Plan update. We have two types of comments: general comments relating to relevant sections of the DEIR and specific comments on suggested changes in text to clarify or correct information.

General Comments – Hydrology/Water Quality

We are very concerned that the DEIR concludes the environmental impact from the project to hydrology/water quality is less than significant before mitigation and thus requires no mitigation. With regards to water quality, this conclusion appears to be based on assumed compliance with all stormwater and wastewater permits by businesses and municipalities. Water quality is already impaired in Los Angeles County at multiple locations for multiple pollutants as is acknowledged in the DEIR. Both point and nonpoint sources are contributors to the pollution. A number of Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) have been developed to address the needed reductions in pollutant loading from those sources. Others are still to be developed. Many TMDLs have implementation timelines of up to twenty years; impacts to beneficial uses will likely continue until full implementation occurs. Implementation of point source waste load reductions is occurring through requirements in various permits. A15-1

A review of annual performance reports on enforcement actions and penalties can be found on the State Water Board's website at http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/about_us/performance_report_1213/enforce/ . It shows that when just considering compliance with National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) wastewater permits (dry weather flows, in essence), there is on average a 25% rate for violations that threaten water quality. Most of these permits are for discharges from facilities and businesses needed to support the large urban population of the County. Discharges occur

CHARLES STRINGER, CHAIR | SAMUEL UNGER, EXECUTIVE OFFICER

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# 2. Response to Comments



throughout the County, some in cities and some in unincorporated areas. Rivers flow across city and county boundaries. Cities may affect water quality in the County and the reverse is also true. More growth will result in more permitted facilities or larger discharge volumes from existing facilities (affecting dry and wet weather flows) and more impervious surfaces resulting in more runoff during wet weather, particularly during larger storms. If the trend continues of a 25% violation rate, and particularly starting from a point where waters are already impaired, extra actions would need to be taken to bring water quality to an unimpaired status. The DEIR identifies less than significant impacts to water quality from this additional development. Mitigation would likely be needed that is not currently required by any permit. While it may be true that projects in the future that follow from this General Plan update will have their own DEIRs with recommendations for mitigation at a project-specific level, the DEIR should identify at a program level the impacts to water quality from this additional development and begin to identify mitigation measures in order to avoid potential deferred mitigation. Additionally, the significant impact from the cumulative development impact to water quality is not acknowledged in this DEIR and will likely not be addressed in future project-by-project DEIRs. A15-1 cont'd

As more vacant land is developed, the less opportunity municipalities will have to infiltrate water in a dispersed fashion to improve water quality in surface waters. Existing regional infiltration basins or spreading grounds can effectively recharge large volumes of water but dispersed areas set aside for infiltration in each watershed will help serve the needs of cities and the County in current efforts to comply with the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit and potentially help offset the pollutant load generated by activities of an increased population. Please closely collaborate with your Department of Public Works and the Los Angeles County Flood Control District to identify and preserve undeveloped areas that represent opportunity sites for regional stormwater capture and infiltration within each watershed in the County.

Although a significant portion of Los Angeles County has already undergone development, there still remain several large undeveloped areas within Los Angeles County. The DEIR references New Development requirements within the 2012 Los Angeles County MS4 Permit as "a mechanism to maintain a level of acceptable runoff conditions through the implementation of Best Management Practices (BMPs) that mitigate storm water quality problems." In areas where significant development has already occurred, redevelopment projects implementing Low Impact Development BMPs may result in acceptable storm water runoff quality relative to preconstruction runoff quality. While appropriate for "built out areas", the implementation of Low Impact Development BMPs may not be sufficient for new development in open space portions of Los Angeles County. The County should prescribe "Smart Growth" practices for areas that are just beginning to be developed. The USEPA webpage, ***Environmental Benefits of Smart Growth*** http://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/topics/eb.htm states, The built environment — the places where we live, work, shop, and play — has both direct and indirect effects on the natural environment. Where and how we develop directly affects natural areas and wildlife habitat and replaces natural cover with impervious surfaces such as concrete or asphalt. Development patterns and practices also indirectly affect environmental quality since they influence how people get around. Separating land uses, spreading development out, and providing little or no public transportation or safe walking and biking routes foster greater reliance on motor vehicles. As development grows more dispersed, people must drive further to reach their destinations, leading to more and longer vehicle trips. These increased trips create A15-2

more air emissions and greenhouse gases that contribute to global climate change. Ultimately, air pollution and climate change can also harm water quality and wildlife habitat. USEPA goes on to further state, *Smart growth practices can lessen the environmental impacts of development with techniques that include compact development, reduced impervious surfaces and improved water detention, safeguarding of environmentally sensitive areas, mixing of land uses (e.g., homes, offices, and shops), transit accessibility, and better pedestrian and bicycle amenities.* Utilizing compact development practices and central transportation hubs have been shown in studies to significantly improve storm water runoff quality. Compact development and open space preservation can help protect water quality by reducing the amount of paved surfaces and by allowing natural lands to filter rainwater and runoff before it reaches drinking water supplies. Runoff from developed areas often contains toxic chemicals, phosphorus, and nitrogen; nationwide, it is the second most common source of water pollution for estuaries, the third most common for lakes, and the fourth most common for rivers. (USEPA, *The National Water Quality Inventory: 2000 Report to Congress.*) A15-2 cont'd

General Comments – Tables and Figures

The DEIR makes reference to approximately 40,000 acres of private in-holding parcels which exist within the National Forests' boundaries. However, none of the maps show where these parcels are located. Since some portion of these parcels may eventually be developed, it will be important to know in which watersheds they are located and their distance to the nearest surface waterbody in order to assess potential impacts to water quality. A15-3

A number of tables (for example, Table 1-2) show proposed project buildout projections by land use for each planning area. It is unclear whether the projected acres for open space include all of the area currently designated as Significant Ecological Areas (SEAs) or minus some estimated acreage that is assumed will eventually be developed within the SEAs. A15-4

None of the maps depicting watersheds within Los Angeles County (or associated text) show the Los Cerritos/Alamitos Bay Watershed Management Area (Los Cerritos Watershed). Due to extensive hydromodification in the southern part of the county, Los Cerritos Channel drains to Alamitos Bay (and thence to the ocean) separately from the San Gabriel and Los Angeles Rivers. While small, the Los Cerritos Watershed has its own water quality impairments and TMDLs. A15-5

# 2. Response to Comments



Specific Comments

On Page 4-3, in the third paragraph of the section titled: "South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD), Antelope Valley Air Quality Management District (AVAQMD), and Mojave Desert Air Quality Management District (MDAQMD)", the document refers to the Los Angeles Regional Board's two Basin Plans adopted in 1975 but fails to mention the more recent 1994 version, which combines the two into a single Basin Plan. We suggest adding the following language for clarification: "In 1975, the Los Angeles Regional Board adopted two Basin Plans -- one for the Santa Clara Basin and another for the Los Angeles Basin. In 1994, these plans were updated and consolidated into the current Water Quality Control Plan for the Los Angeles Region (Basin Plan). Since 1994, numerous amendments have been made to the 1994 Basin Plan. The Basin Plan is currently undergoing another comprehensive update to reflect these amendments and to provide more current information on the Los Angeles Regional Board's programs. Los Angeles County is in the…" This clarification should be repeated on page 4-20, in the second paragraph under the section titled: "Hydrology and Water Quality." A15-6

We also recommend including a discussion of waste discharge requirements for groundwater quality protection under the section titled: "Hydrology and Water Quality" on page 4-20, following the discussion of the NPDES permitting program. This discussion should also be included in "5.9.1.1 Regulatory Setting" as part of the "Porter Cologne Water Quality Act" section, where it could be expanded to include the Salt and Nutrient Management Plan requirements of the State Water Board's Recycled Water Policy. A15-7

Consider including a discussion of the State Water Board's Recycled Water Policy in the "Regulatory Background" section of "5.17.2.Water Supply and Distribution Systems." This policy promotes water recycling, conservation, and increased reliance on local water supplies and is pertinent to the issue of water supply in the state and in Los Angeles County. A15-8

In Section 7.4.9 which discusses Hydrology and Water Quality impacts with the No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative (Page 7-13), there is a statement that "In terms of water quality, this alternative would have a less than significant impact, similar to the Proposed Project." As stated earlier in this letter, there are currently many impaired waterbodies in the County that are on a lengthy timeline to be addressed fully. For this reason, it cannot be concluded that the No Project/Existing General Plan alternative has a less than significant impact on water quality. A15-9

In conclusion, we want to be clear that water quality is currently impaired in many waterbodies in the County, both within cities and within the unincorporated area. Even with no additional development, a considerable amount of effort and resources will be needed to resolve these existing problems. Many actions are underway by the Regional Water Board, such as development of TMDLs, new permit requirements to implement these TMDLs, and increased enforcement of permit requirements, in order to attain fully supported beneficial uses as required by the Clean Water Act. Many other entities are involved with either complying with requirements issued by the Board and/or working collaboratively in such forums as the Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) planning process and the Watershed A15-10

Management Program and Enhanced Watershed Management Program permittee groups that have formed under the 2012 LA County MS4 Permit toward the same end. Many of the existing impairments are related directly or indirectly to activities or infrastructure needed to support the County's population at its current level of development. Additional proposed development on a timeline that coincides with implementation of actions that are geared to address the current water quality problems is highly likely to result in additional impairments that require additional mitigation. Pollutants also can interact synergistically and result in impacts to beneficial uses beyond what might be expected from individual pollutant loads. Please consider taking the time to re-evaluate your approach to this discussion in the appropriate sections of the DEIR.

A15-10 cont'd

Thank you for the consideration of our comments. Please contact Shirley Birosik at 213-576-6679 or at Shirley.Birosik@waterboards.ca.gov should there be any questions.

Sincerely,

CDEO for

Renee A. Purdy
Chief, Regional Programs Section

cc: Frances McChesney, Office of Chief Counsel, State Water Resources Control Board (via email)
Thomas Browne, Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board (via email)
Gary Hildebrand, Department of Public Works, Los Angeles County
Angela George, Department of Public Works, Los Angeles County

# 2. Response to Comments

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**A15. Response to comments from Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board dated August 7, 2014.**

A15-1 As discussed in Section 5.9, *Hydrology and Water Quality*, of the DEIR, impacts to hydrology and water quality were determined to be less than significant through compliance with existing regulatory programs and the goals and policies incorporated into the Proposed Project. For instance, the following General Plan Goals and Policies have been incorporated in to the Proposed Project related to water quality (see DEIR Page 5.9-25):

### Conservation and Natural Resources Element

- **Policy C/NR 5.1:** Support the LID philosophy, which seeks to plan and design public and private development with hydrologic sensitivity, including limits to straightening and channelizing natural flow paths, removal of vegetative cover, compaction of soils, and distribution of naturalistic BMPs at regional, neighborhood, and parcel-level scales.

- **Policy C/NR 5.2:** Require compliance by all County departments with adopted Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4), General Construction, and point source NPDES permits.

- **Policy C/NR 5.3:** Actively engage with stakeholders in the formulation and implementation of surface water preservation and restoration plans, including plans to improve impaired surface water bodies by retrofitting tributary watersheds with LID types of BMPs.

- **Policy C/NR 5.4:** Actively engage in implementing all approved Enhanced Watershed Management Programs/Watershed Management Programs and Coordinated Integrated Monitoring Programs/Integrated Monitoring Programs or other County-involved TMDL implementation and monitoring plans.

- **Policy C/NR 5.5:** Manage the placement and use of septic systems in order to protect nearby surface water bodies.

- **Policy C/NR 5.6:** Minimize point- and nonpoint- source water pollution.

- **Policy C/NR 5.7:** Actively support the design of new and retrofit of existing infrastructure to accommodate watershed protection goals, such as roadway, railway, bridge, and other–particularly–tributary street and greenway interface points with channelized waterways.

- **Policy C/NR 6.1:** Support the LID philosophy, which incorporates distributed, post-construction, parcel-level stormwater infiltration as part of new development.

- **Policy C/NR 6.2:** Protect natural groundwater recharge areas and regional spreading grounds.

- **Policy C/NR 6.3:** Actively engage in stakeholder efforts to disperse rainwater and stormwater infiltration BMPs at regional, neighborhood, infrastructure, and parcel-level scales.

- **Policy C/NR 6.4:** Manage the placement and use of septic systems in order to protect high groundwater.

- **Policy C/NR 6.5:** Prevent stormwater infiltration where inappropriate and unsafe, such as in areas with high seasonal groundwater, on hazardous slopes, within 100 feet of drinking water wells, and in contaminated soils.

- **Policy C/NR 7.1:** Support the LID philosophy, which mimics the natural hydrologic cycle using undeveloped conditions as a base, in public and private landuse planning and development design.

- **Policy C/NR 7.2:** Support the preservation, restoration and strategic acquisition of available land for open space to preserve watershed uplands, natural streams, drainage paths, wetlands, and rivers, which are necessary for the healthy function of watersheds.

- **Policy C/NR 7.3:** Actively engage with stakeholders to incorporate the LID philosophy in the preparation and implementation of watershed and river master plans, ecosystem restoration projects, and other related natural resource conservation aims, and support the implementation of existing efforts, including Watershed Management Programs and Enhanced Watershed Management Programs.

- **Policy C/NR 7.4:** Promote the development of multiuse regional facilities for stormwater quality improvement, groundwater recharge, detention/attenuation, flood management, retaining nonstormwater runoff, and other compatible uses.

In addition, new development will be required to comply with the water quality requirements in the LID Standards Manual issued by the County Department of Public Works in 2013. With the exception of the Antelope Valley and Santa Clarita Valley Planning Areas, future development will primarily consist of infill development and redevelopment. As a result, compliance with existing County standards have the potential to actually improve water quality as compared to existing conditions. With respect to the Antelope Valley and Santa Clarita Valley Planning Areas, water quality will be protected through compliance existing regulatory requirements and the goals and policies included in the General Plan Update.

A15-2 Comment noted. Smart growth principles have been incorporated into the Proposed Project as well as the Antelope Valley Area Plan. Both of these long-range planning documents direct future development to areas served by existing transportation facilities and infrastructure. The associated goals and policies also incorporate smart growth strategies.

A15-3 The DEIR analyzes the impacts of the Proposed Project. Proposed land use designations within forest land, including SEA designations, limit the potential for future development. Private inholdings within National Forests can be identified on the General Plan Land Use Policy Maps (see Appendix B to this FEIR) with designations other than the Open Space-National Forest (OS-NF) designation (see the Land Use Policy Map for Kagel/Lopez Canyons as an example). Therefore, a map specifically highlighting the private inholdings within National Forests is not considered necessary.

A15-4 The buildout projections consider all potential future development based on the proposed land use designations, including open space and areas covered by an

A15-5 Comment noted. Due to the scale of Figure 5.9-2, which covers all of Los Angeles County, the Los Cerritos Channel and Alamitos Bay Watershed Management Area is not shown. However, potential impacts to this watershed are addressed in Section 5.9, *Hydrology and Water Quality*, as part of the discussion for San Gabriel River Watershed.

A15-6 Per your request, Page 4-3 of the DEIR has been revised as follows:

Under the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Act, California's water quality control law, the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) has ultimate control over water quality policy and allocation of state water resources. The SWRCB, through its nine Regional Water Quality Control Boards (RWQCBs), carries out the regulation, protection, and administration of water quality in each region. Each regional board is required to adopt a water quality control plan or basin plan. In 1972, the SWRCB adopted the California Ocean Plan for ocean waters of California. Over the years, the Ocean Plan has been amended numerous times, with the most recent amendment in 2012. The Ocean Plan helps to protect the water quality of California's coastal ocean through the control of the discharge of waste into the ocean. The Ocean Plan identifies beneficial uses of ocean waters and establishes water quality objectives and implementation programs to protect those beneficial uses. In 1975, the Los Angeles Regional Board adopted two basin plans: one for the Santa Clara Basin and another for the Los Angeles Basin. In 1994, these plans were adopted and consolidated into the current Water Quality Control Plan for the Los Angeles Region (Basin Plan). Since 1994, numerous amendments have been made to the 1994 Basin Plan. The Basin Plan is currently undergoing another comprehensive update to reflect these amendments and to provide more current information on the Los Angeles Regional Board's programs. Los Angeles County is in the Los Angeles…

Per your request, Page 4-20 of the DEIR has been revised as follows:

The County works with other stakeholders, including the Los Angeles County Flood Control District, in various ways to manage the function and health of its watersheds. In 1975, the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (Los Angeles Regional Board) adopted two basin plans: one for the Santa Clara Basin and another for the Los

Angeles Basin. In 1994, these plans were adopted and consolidated into the current Water Quality Control Plan for the Los Angeles Region (Basin Plan). Since 1994, numerous amendments have been made to the 1994 Basin Plan. The Basin Plan is currently undergoing another comprehensive update to reflect these amendments and to provide more current information on the Los Angeles Regional Board's programs. The Basin Plans designate beneficial uses for inland and coastal surface waters, establish water quality objectives and implementation programs and policies to protect those uses.

A15-7 Waste discharge requirements are discussed on Page 5.9-3, *Hydrology and Water Quality*, of the DEIR. No additional changes are necessary.

A15-8 Per your request, the following text has been added to Page 5.17-19:

***State Water Resources Control Board Recycled Water Policy***

The purpose of the Recycled Water Policy is to increase the use of recycled water from municipal wastewater sources that meets the definition in Water Code Section 13050(n), in a manner that implements state and federal water quality laws. When used in compliance with the Recycled Water Policy, water recycling criteria in Title 22 of the California Code of Regulations, and all applicable state and federal water quality laws, the State Water Board finds that recycled water is safe for the approved uses. The State Water Board strongly supports recycled water as a safe alternative to potable water for such approved uses.

A15-9 Please refer to Response A15-1.

A15-10 Comment is hereby noted and will be forwarded to the appropriate County decision makers for their review and consideration.

LETTER A16 – Southern California Gas Company (2 pages)

Southern California Gas Company

A Sempra Energy utility®

Albert J. Garcia
Senior Environmental Counsel

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August 7, 2014

Connie Chung, AICP, Supervising Regional Planner
Department of Regional Planning
320 West Temple Street, Room 1356
Los Angeles, CA 90012

**RE: Comments of Southern California Gas Company to Los Angeles County General Plan Update 2035 Draft Environmental Impact Report**

Dear Ms. Chung,

Southern California Gas Company (SoCalGas) thanks you for giving us the opportunity to review the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the Los Angeles County General Plan Update (the "Project"). We applaud the County's efforts to update its general plan in a manner that considers orderly and appropriate land use designations.

SoCalGas also appreciates the County's acknowledgement of the importance of natural gas to the residents and economy of the Los Angeles Basin. In particular, we appreciate the DEIR's consideration of the potential impacts of the Project to Mineral Resources and Utility and Service Systems generally, and to SoCalGas' Playa Del Rey underground natural storage facility in the West Side Planning Area (DEIR p. 5.11-44, 5.11.45). Nonetheless, SoCalGas is concerned that the County has not properly evaluated the impacts that revising its Significant Ecological Area (SEA) boundaries would cause to SoCalGas' Aliso Canyon Natural Gas Storage Facility (Aliso Canyon), portions of which are proposed to be included within the new SEA boundaries.

Aliso Canyon is located north of Porter Ranch and is Southern California's largest natural gas storage facility (much larger than the Playa Del Rey facility). Aliso Canyon is vital to ensuring safe and reliable natural gas and electric service in Southern California (which is powered primarily by natural gas). Because of this, it is critical that SoCalGas maintain its ability to operate, repair, upgrade, and if necessary, expand operations within its property boundaries in order to properly serve our customers throughout Central and Southern California. A16-1

# 2. Response to Comments



SoCalGas is concerned that inclusion of portions of Aliso Canyon within SEA boundaries may impact its ability to operate its facilities appropriately.

Further, SoCalGas is concerned that inclusion of Aliso Canyon within revised SEA boundaries may, at a minimum, cause significant confusion and potential permitting delays. This is possible because the County has not considered whether it has appropriate discretionary authority to enforce an SEA land use designation at Aliso Canyon, the operation of which is subject to the jurisdiction of state regulatory agencies such as DOGGR and the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC)[1]. In the past, the CPUC has clearly recognized local jurisdictions rights to appropriate time, place and manner restrictions on facilities subject to its jurisdiction. However, the CPUC may, and often does, assert its preemptory jurisdiction over local ordinances that conflict with its authority, such as those that purport to grant local jurisdictions authority to issue discretionary permits such as Conditional Use Permits to facilities subject to CPUC jurisdiction. This is a likely scenario in the event the County revises the SEA boundaries to include Aliso Canyon.[2] A16-1 cont'd

Consequently, we urge the County to consider the potential impacts to SoCalGas' current and future operations at Aliso Canyon as a result of including portions of the facility within the revised SEA boundaries. This is particularly important given that the facility is not only of local importance, but of statewide concern as well.

If you have any questions, or would like to set up a meeting to discuss this matter further, we would be happy to oblige. Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

ALBERT J. GARCIA

[1] SoCalGas is a public utility subject to the Commission's jurisdiction, pursuant to Public Utilities Code § 216 and § 222, and the Aliso Canyon is a gas plant facility regulated by the Commission, pursuant to Public Utilities Code § 221.

[2] As recently as November, 2013, in Decision D.13-11-023, the CPUC asserted its preemptive jurisdiction at Aliso Canyon over potentially conflicting County ordinances in its evaluation of the Aliso Canyon Turbine Replacement Project. In the Decision, the CPUC determined that Aliso Canyon and the Turbine Replacement Project were matters of statewide concern. In particular, the CPUC confirmed its authority to "preempt local regulation of the Storage Field facilities and operations authorized by the [Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity] to the extent such local regulations either conflict or interfere with the Commission's plenary jurisdiction to regulate public utilities, or else interfere with a regulated public utilities' ability to comply with a Commission order."

**A16. Response to comments from Southern California Gas Company dated August 7, 2014.**

A16-1 Government Code Section 53091 preempts certain types of energy generation activities from local building and zoning. Such permitting exemptions matter during the construction of projects, to ensure that facilities are subject to the correct local and state level review. The establishment of SEAs does not in any way supersede the regulations of the State of California. Even where a facility is preempted from local land use review, the local government retains the right to establish zoning and land use for all areas within its jurisdiction, which includes the enforcement of land use designations and overlays within Aliso Canyon.

# 2. Response to Comments

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LETTER A17 – California Department of Fish and Wildlife (8 pages)

State of California – Natural Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
South Coast Region
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San Diego, CA 92123
(858) 467-4201
www.wildlife.ca.gov

*EDMUND G. BROWN JR., Governor*
*CHARLTON H. BONHAM, Director*

August 21, 2014

Ms. Connie Chung
County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning
320 West Temple Street, Room 1356
Los Angeles, CA 90012
E-mail: generalplan@lacounty.gov

**Subject: Comments on the Draft Program Environmental Impact Report for the Los Angeles County General Plan Update, County of Los Angeles (SCH #2011081042)**

Dear Ms. Chung:

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department) has reviewed the above-referenced Draft Program Environmental Impact Report (DPEIR). The DPEIR addresses the environmental effects associated with the implementation of the proposed Los Angeles County General Plan Update (Project). The Project, which is designed to cover build-out projections through the year 2035, includes revisions to nine proposed elements that will replace the existing adopted elements. The proposed elements include Land Use, Mobility, Air Quality, Conservation and Natural Resources, Park and Recreation, Noise, Safety, Public Services and Facilities, and Economic Development.

The Project includes only the unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County (County) including Santa Catalina Island and San Clemente Island, which is approximately 65 percent of the total 4,083-square-mile land area in the County. The unincorporated areas in the northern portion of the County are covered by large amounts of sparsely populated land and include the Angeles National Forest, part of the Los Padres National Forest, and the West Mojave Desert. The unincorporated areas in the southern portion of Los Angeles County consist of noncontiguous land areas, which are often referred to as the County's "unincorporated urban islands."

The Project also includes goals, policies, and programs which minimize hazard risks to life, property, and ecological resources by limiting development in Special Management Areas. Special Management Areas include, but are not limited to, Agricultural Resource Areas, Airport Influence Areas, Seismic Hazard Zones, Flood Hazard Zones, Significant Ecological Areas, Hillside Management Areas, and Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones.

The DPEIR analyzes three alternatives to the proposed Project: Reduced Intensity Alternative, No-Project/Existing General Plan Alternative, and Antelope Valley Reduced Intensity Alternative.

The following statements and comments have been prepared pursuant to the Department's authority as Trustee Agency with jurisdiction over natural resources affected by the Project (CEQA Guidelines § 15386) and pursuant to our authority as a Responsible Agency under CEQA Guidelines section 15381 over those aspects of the proposed Project that come under

*Conserving California's Wildlife Since 1870*

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the purview of the California Endangered Species Act (Fish and Game Code § 2050 *et seq.*) and Fish and Game Code section 1600 *et seq*.

Impacts to Biological Resources

1) Reduced Intensity Alternative – Page 7-16 of the DPEIR states the Reduced Intensity Alternative "would reduce the overall additional development intensity by 30 percent within each Planning Area as compared to the Proposed Project." Page 7-17 of the DPEIR states "Since the Reduced Intensity Alternative does not reduce the amount of land designated for development, impacts to biological resources would be similar to the Proposed Project, and would remain significant." The Department requests that the DPEIR define the word "intensity" as compared to the word "density" and clarify further why reducing intensity of development does not reduce impacts to biological resources. If the Reduced Intensity Alternative will allow build-out to occur over a greater area thereby resulting in potentially greater impacts to biological resources, please confirm this in the document. The Department recommends avoiding sensitive biological resources in the planning area by planning for denser developments within smaller footprints of land. This could reduce project footprints including fuel modification, access roads, and other infrastructure necessities. A17-1

2) Antelope Valley Reduced Intensity Alternative – Section 7.6., page 7-23 of the DPEIR states "Since the Antelope Valley Reduced Intensity Alternative reduces the residential development within the Antelope Valley Planning Area, impacts to biological resources would be reduced as compared to the Proposed Project, although they would remain significant." Table 7-1 of the DPEIR titled Summary of Development Alternatives states on page 7-7 that the Antelope Valley Reduced Intensity Alternative "Reduces, but does not eliminate, significant impacts to aesthetics, agriculture and forestry resources, air quality, GHG emissions, noise, population and housing, and transportation/traffic." The Department requests that the DPEIR clarify if the Antelope Valley Reduced Intensity Alternative reduces impacts to biological resources and if forestry resources are considered biological resources for the purposes of the DPEIR. These terms should be consistent. A17-2

3) Hillside Management Areas – Section 1.4.1, page 1-7 of the DPEIR states "The County of Los Angeles Hillside Management Area (HMA) Ordinance applies to all unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County that contain terrain with a natural slope of 25 percent or greater. The goal of the ordinance is to ensure that development preserves the physical integrity and scenic value of HMAs, provides open space, and enhances community character." The term "open space" can have broad interpretation. Often times hillsides can provide some of the last remaining habitat for biological resources and important watershed protection values because hillsides pose greater building constraints and are therefore some of the last areas to be left undeveloped in many portions of the planning area. Retaining hillside attribute contributions to biological and watershed integrity should be more clearly recognized in the PDEIR. A17-3

4) Agricultural Resource Areas (ARAs) – The Environmental analysis in Chapter 5.2 of the DPEIR describes ARAs designated within the Antelope Valley Planning Area (34,162 acres or 98 percent of the ARAs) and the Santa Clarita Valley Planning Area (740 acres) and states on page 5.2-24 "ARAs are areas where the Proposed Project promotes the preservation of agricultural land. These areas are protected by policies to prevent the A17-4

conversion of farmland to incompatible uses. ARAs consists of farmland identified by the California Department of Conservation and farms that have received permits from the Los Angeles County Agricultural Commissioner/Weights and Measures. The County encourages the preservation and sustainable utilization of agricultural land, agricultural activities and compatible uses within these areas." The DPEIR also explains that ARAs exclude proposed Significant Ecological Areas.

Chapter 5.2 of the DPEIR should determine if biological resource preservation within ARAs is considered a compatible use. If compatible the Department recommends it be a consideration in future planning efforts within these areas. The DPEIR should explain further why the proposed Significant Ecological Areas are not included within designated ARAs. If the reason for this exclusion is to further protect biological resources within SEAs from biologically incompatible agricultural practices such as type conversion of native habitat, use of pesticides and herbicides and other actions resulting in the loss of biological diversity, this should be clearly stated in the DPEIR under Chapter 5.2 and within the Biological Resources Chapter 5.4 of the DPEIR. A17-4 cont'd

The DPEIR should analyze how the proposed ARA program and related policies in the proposed General Plan Update that are designed to encourage the continued use of farmland may impact biological resources within ARAs. If policies in the General Plan may result in or facilitate lack of site specific biological resource assessment, impact and mitigation measures within ARAs or elsewhere in the planning area, this should be considered a significant direct and cumulative impact. The Department is concerned that unregulated agricultural practices may continue to result in the loss of biological diversity and associated special status species and jurisdictional waters within the planning area, minus a biological constraints analysis and resulting protective planning measures.

5) Existing Wildlife and Botanical Resource Conditions – Section 5.4.1.2 of the DPEIR describes existing biological resources within the Project planning area, and page 5.4-16, Figure 5.4-1 titled, Sensitive Biological Resources, shows the locations of special-status plant and wildlife species occurrences within the Project planning areas. Additional Figures of sensitive biological resources are located in Appendix H1 of this DPEIR, showing the designated critical habitat for each Project planning area. Page 5.4-21 through page 5.4-25 describes sensitive plant communities located within the designated special planning areas included within the Project planning area. These sensitive plant communities are derived from the Natural Diversity Data Base. Undocumented wildlife and plant communities and species accounts are likely to be described in Los Angeles County in the future following focused survey efforts from subsequent project impact reviews performed under CEQA and from other observations that contribute to this body of information. The Department recommends the DPEIR include a caveat that the known wildlife, plant community, and species occurrences referenced throughout the PDEIR may be subject to refinement based upon new information. The Project should include measures for adaptive management based upon any new species account information. A17-5

The Department recommends that the Project require as a standard, that all botanical assessments for CEQA purposes use the vegetation classifications found in the most current edition of *A Manual of California Vegetation*, which provides a standardized, systematic classification and description of vegetation in the State. Many CEQA documents received by the Department describe native vegetation in generic terms such as "chaparral"

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or "coastal sage scrub" that tend to downplay any significant vegetation resources on the Project site. The Department's guidelines should make it easier for the lead agency to determine which Projects are impacting rare habitat because the different dominant communities on-site will be described at a level to allow meaningful assessment. The classification system has been the State standard since 2009 and requiring this system in the Project will facilitate planning consistency.

Further guidance on nomenclature standards and assessing Project impact significance can be found on the following Department's website: http://www.dfg.ca.gov/biogeodata/vegcamp/natural_comm_background.asp. The Department recommends Desert Dune Scrub communities be added to the Vegetative Community List in the DPEIR. Representative scrub types found in Desert Dune Scrub include but are not limited to:

a) Halophytic saltbush

Halophytic saltbush communities are dominated by shadscale (Atriplex confertiflora) or spinescale (Atriplex spinifera), and occur adjacent to lakebeds, clay pans, and drainages. The depth of sand deposits determines the diversity of plant species in the saltbush communities (USACE, 2004). The areas nearest the lakebed and areas scoured by floods are dominated by heavy clay soils and contain spinescale. Plants such as alkali sacaton (Sporobolus airoides), Joshua trees, and four-wing saltbush (Atriplex canescens) are commonly found within this plant community (Jones and Stokes 2011).

A17-5 cont'd

b) Xerophytic saltbush

The xerophytic communities are dominated by allscale (*Atriplex polycarpa*) (Jones and Stokes 2008). These plant communities are generally located at slightly higher elevations than halophytic communities.

6. Wildlife Linkages – Page 5.4-89 of the DPEIR describes several Los Angeles County regional wildlife linkages and states "The South Coast Missing Linkages is the result of a collaborative inter-agency effort to identify missing landscape linkages throughout Southern California that are important to habitat connectivity. There are five linkages identified by South Coast Wildlands within Los Angeles County and the immediately surrounding areas." The South Coast Missing Linkages report is an excellent reference source from which to begin the evaluation of wildlife movement resources within the Project planning area. However this reference should not be relied upon solely for Project specific movement resource assessment and planning purposes because this reference is not an exhaustive study of the County and includes known wildlife movement opportunities. Subsequent CEQA review should evaluate the potential for additional wildlife movement resources on a project by project basis.

A17-6

7. Watershed and Groundwater Protection – Page 5.4-107 of the DPEIR describes policies in the Conservation and Natural Resources Element for in the General Plan for protecting biological resources. C/NR 3.9 states "Consider the following in the design of a Project that is located within an SEA, to the greatest extent feasible." One component of Element C/NR 3.9 states "Maintenance of watershed connectivity by capturing, treating, retaining, and/or infiltrating storm water flows on site." Page 5.9-24 of the DPEIR states "According to

A17-7

Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, a Project would normally have a significant effect on the environment if the Project would: HYD-2 Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of preexisting nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or CV."

The Department is concerned about the present and future status of groundwater availability in supporting and enhancing biological resources. This concern is based upon current drought conditions, the recognition of continued predicted droughts resulting from climate change, projected build-out scenarios analyzed in the Project, and continued unsustainable ground water pumping in the Project planning area. The Conservation and Natural Resources Element should discuss how protection of groundwater resources within the Project planning area will be facilitated and managed in a sustainable manner in order to maintain and restore biological resources. The Department recommends this discussion include present regulatory conditions and how the Project will accommodate for adaptive measures in policy and plans to incorporate any future ground water regulatory measures that may be implemented in the future. In addition to the Significant Ecological Areas, the Conservation and Natural Resource Element, the County should consider including a broader element that recognizes the watershed value of permeable surfaces within the entire Project planning area as a whole and their contribution to water quality, groundwater storage and biological value. A17-7 cont'd

8. Impact 5.4-1 – Development of the Proposed Project would impact, either directly or through habitat modifications, species identified as candidate, sensitive, or special-status in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations or by the Department or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. To reduce adverse biological effects from Impact 5.4-1, page 5.4-106 of the PDEIR states "Fuel modification of habitable structures would limit vegetation removal in dedicated open space areas." The Department is concerned that brush clearing activities within the County for the purposes of reducing wildfire or other hazards or for other purposes such as preparing properties for eventual development, often escape biological resource protective regulatory oversight by local governmental agencies responsible for implementing fuel modification, vector abatement or other clearing or grading related codes. This problem is likely to increase considering Project build-out projections. A17-8

   The Department recommends that the County Department of Regional Planning exercise its available authority to implement a brush clearing ordinance through the General Plan Update within the Project planning area that is protective of biological resources. This planning effort could greatly facilitate the preservation of biological diversity in the Project planning area. Protective measures for biological resources where vegetation clearing is to take place should include: pre-project surveys for native nesting birds and other special status wildlife and plant species and regulated waters of the state. Where these biological resources cannot be avoided because of public safety concerns and property protection, mitigation measures should be implemented to reduce direct and cumulative impact levels to biologi9cal resources.

9. Impact 5.4-5 – The Proposed Project would require compliance with adopted Habitat Conservation Plans, Natural Community Conservation Plans, or other approved local, regional, or state policies or ordinances protecting biological resources. Page 5.4-115 of the A17-9

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DPEIR states "As discussed above, Los Angeles County supports seven regional wildlife linkages: San Gabriel – Castaic Connection, San Gabriel – San Bernardino Connection, Santa Monica – Sierra Madre Connection, Sierra Madre – Castaic Connection, Tehachapi Connection, Antelope Valley Connection, and the Puente Hills –Chino Hills Connection. There are 11 linkages along principal water courses, 9 linkages along ranges of mountains and hills, and an important linkage along the San Andreas Fault." Realizing that the Project is designed to address the County's policy for many years and the likelihood that additional linkages and other sensitive biological resources will be documented in the future, the Project should recognize this potential throughout the Project resource assessment, impact analysis and mitigation measures. For example the above statement should read "As discussed above, Los Angeles County supports seven known regional wildlife linkages: San Gabriel – Castaic Connection, San Gabriel – San Bernardino Connection, Santa Monica – Sierra Madre Connection, Sierra Madre – Castaic Connection, Tehachapi Connection, Antelope Valley Connection, and the Puente Hills –Chino Hills Connection. There are 11 known linkages along principal water courses, 9 known linkages along ranges of mountains and hills, and one known important linkage along the San Andreas Fault." A17-9 cont'd

10. Mitigation Measure BIO-1 – Page 5.4-117 of the DPEIR states: "Mitigation measure BIO–1 and the update to the SEA Ordinance may provide some protection measures to avoid or minimize impacts to wildlife corridors and nursery sites; however, for those Projects where avoidance or minimization of impacts is infeasible, the policies proposed in the Proposed Project do not provide for mitigation for loss of wildlife movement opportunities or nursery sites. If development impacts regional wildlife linkages and impedes wildlife movement, connectivity will be lost on a regional scale in these vital landscape corridors and linkages. Thus, impacts to wildlife movement remain significant at the General Plan level."

    The Department does not concur with the conclusion in the DPEIR that unavoidable loss of wildlife movement opportunities or nursery sites within or outside of an SEA does not warrant mitigation. Without mitigation, the Project and subsequent projects would result in direct and cumulative loss of biological diversity. Mitigation opportunities for wildlife corridors and nursery sites are best established during large scale planning efforts such as this General Plan. Wildlife corridor areas can be delineated and set aside in the General Plan for current and future conservation efforts. An assessment could be placed on development within the Project area to secure the acquisition of these critical linkages and sites, therefore reducing impacts to wildlife corridors and nursery sites and ensuring biological diversity. A17-10

11. Mitigation Measure BIO–1 – Page 5-4-122 of the DPEIR states: "Biological resources shall be analyzed on a Project-specific level by a qualified biological consultant. A general survey shall be conducted to characterize the Project site, and focused surveys should be conducted as necessary to determine the presence/absence of special status species (e.g., focused sensitive plant or wildlife surveys). A biological resources assessment report should be prepared to characterize the biological resources on-site, analyze Project-specific impacts to biological resources, and propose appropriate mitigation measures to offset those impacts. The report should include site location, literature sources, methodology, timing of surveys, vegetation map, site photographs, and descriptions of biological resources on-site (e.g., observed and detected species as well as an analysis of those species with potential to occur onsite)." A17-11

Scientifically sound methodologies are necessary to insure the adequacy of biological resource assessments, especially if these assessments are utilized by the lead agency to determine Project significance. Without a focused survey effort, many special status species can be missed and presumed absent from a project site utilizing reconnaissance level survey approaches that adhere to general parameters intended to predict presence or absence. These general parameters include but are not limited to reliance upon literature searches of reported species lists, species range and soil type assumptions and ignoring presence of species that are considered common throughout the majority of their range but are rare or unique within the County or a particular location within the County. Because this problem is especially the case for detecting botanical species, the Department recommends that a thorough, recent floristic-based assessment of special status plants and natural communities be performed in the Project area, following the Department's Protocols for Surveying and Evaluating Impacts to Special Status Native Plant Populations and Natural Communities (see http://www.dfg.ca.gov/habcon/plant/). A17-11 cont'd

12. Mitigation Measure BIO-2 – Page 5.4-122 of the DPEIR describes how unavoidable impacts to special statues species will be addressed and states: "Relocations into areas of appropriate restored habitat would have the best chance of replacing/incrementing populations that are lost due to habitat converted to development. Relocation to restored habitat areas should be the preferred goal of this measure. A qualified biologist shall be on site to conduct surveys, to perform or oversee implementation of protective measures, and to determine when construction activity may resume."

    This method of mitigation should be used only as a last resort when a Project cannot avoid impacts to special status species and their habitat. Relocating wildlife and botanical species off of a Project site onto an adjacent recipient site often fails to result in the persistence of species in perpetuity. In order for this measure to have any potential for success in the majority of cases, adjacent habitat in need of restoration and presumably void or below carrying capacity of the targeted species would need to be restored to functioning levels that are supportive of the target species prior to Project commencement and with the restoration goals and success criteria carefully planned. A17-12

13. Mitigation Measure BIO–3 – Page 5.4-123 of the DPEIR states "No feasible mitigation measures are available that would reduce impacts to wildlife movement completely. However, corridors shall not be entirely closed by any development, and partial mitigation shall be mandatory for impact on wildlife corridors and wildlife nursery sites. This shall include provision of a minimum of half the corridor width. (The width shall be at least what is needed to remain connective for the top predators using the corridor.) Mitigation can include preservation by deed in perpetuity of other parts of the wildlife corridor connecting through the development area; it can include native landscaping to provide cover on the corridor. For nursery site impacts, mitigation shall include preservation by deed in perpetuity for another comparable nursery site of the same species." A17-13

    BIO-3 appears to contradict previous statements in the DPEIR which states on page 5.4-117 "Mitigation measure BIO–1 and the update to the SEA Ordinance may provide some protection measures to avoid or minimize impacts to wildlife corridors and nursery sites; however, for those Projects where avoidance or minimization of impacts is infeasible, the policies proposed in the Proposed Project do not provide for mitigation for loss of wildlife movement opportunities or nursery sites. If development impacts regional wildlife linkages

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and impedes wildlife movement, connectivity will be lost on a regional scale in these vital landscape corridors and linkages. Thus, impacts to wildlife movement remain significant at the General Plan level." Mitigation for loss of wildlife movement opportunities or nursery sites should be a standard Project approval condition by the lead agency. A17-13 cont'd

14. Proposed Zoning – Appendix C and section 4.3-2 of the DPEIR describe that proposed zoning amendments will apply to approximately 3,500 parcels. The Department recommends that any proposed rezoning of areas within or adjacent to natural open space or proposed Significant Ecological Areas that would result in adverse impacts to biological resources be analyzed in the DPEIR for biological impacts, avoidance and mitigation measures. A17-14

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the DPEIR for the Project and to assist in further minimizing and mitigating Project impacts to biological resources. If you have questions regarding this letter, please contact Mr. Scott Harris by telephone at (626) 797-3170 or email at Scott.P.Harris@wildlife.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Betty J. Courtney
Environmental Program Manager I
South Coast Region

ec: Erinn Wilson, CDFW, Los Alamitos
Kelly Schmoker, CDFW, Laguna Niguel
Scott Harris, CDFW, Pasadena
Victoria Chau, CDFW, Los Alamitos
State Clearing House, Sacramento

Literature Review:
(Sawyer et al. 2008). Adjoining habitat areas should be included in this assessment where site activities could lead to direct or indirect impacts off site. Habitat mapping at the alliance level will help establish baseline vegetation conditions.

**A17. Response to comments from California Department of Fish and Wildlife dated August 21, 2014.**

A17-1 The commenter requests a definition for the term "intensity" in contrast to the term "density" in reference to the Reduced Intensity Alternative. The commenter also recommends avoidance of sensitive biological resources through denser developments within smaller development footprints.

The planning term density in general refers to the amount of development within a given area. For residential development, this is measured in the number of dwelling units per acre. Density for nonresidential development is most often calculated as a measurement of floor area ratio (FAR). For planning purposes, density is used as a control for development intensity. The term intensity in planning context is a measure of the extent to which an area of land is developed.

By far, the greatest land use categories of the General Plan are Rural and Natural Resources, comprising 93% of the land use categories of the County (Chapter 6, Land Use Element, page 62). Both of these categories have low density development, regardless of development footprint size. As a consequence, development intensity would also be lower than for urban areas.

General Plan Chapter 3, *Guiding Principles*, includes an "Employ Smart Growth" principle, to protect and conserve the County's natural and cultural resources, and an "Excellence in environmental resource management" principle, to provide policy guidance to protect and conserve natural resources. The Hillside Management CUP allows clustered development at the base of the slope, limited grading, and ensures that the drainage configuration remains as natural as possible. Hillside design guidelines are imposed as design conditions, making a more sensitive development that respects the natural topography and biological resources of the area. During the development entitlement process, projects will be evaluated for their potential to impact sensitive biological resources and developments will be required to feature smaller development footprints when deemed necessary by such evaluation.

A17-2 The commenter requests clarification if the Antelope Valley Reduced Intensity Alternative reduced impacts to biological resources and clarification if forestry resources are considered to be biological resources.

As stated in Chapter 7.7 Environmentally Superior Alternative (page 7-28), the Antelope Valley Reduced Intensity Alternative would lessen impacts to agriculture and forestry, and biological resources. However, as stated in Chapter 7.6.4, *Biological Resources* (page 7-23), biological resources impacts would remain significant although impacts would be reduced by the Antelope Valley Reduced Intensity Alternative as compared to the Proposed Project because the residential development would be reduced within the Antelope Valley Planning Area.

While related, forestry resources are not considered to be biological resources, which is why they are treated in different sections. Forestry resources are associated with forest lands, as defined in the California Public Resources Code Section 12220(g). Forest land is land that can support 10-percent native tree cover of any species, including hardwoods, under natural conditions, and that allows for management of one or more forest resources, including timber, aesthetics, fish and wildlife, biodiversity, water quality, recreation, and other public benefits.

A17-3 SEAs are excluded in the ARAs because agricultural activities are not promoted in the SEAs. Historically, agricultural development has severely reduced many biotic communities that were once common in Los Angeles County. As the SEA designation is given to lands that contain irreplaceable biological resources, agricultural activities should not be promoted on these lands. The ARAs and the SEAs are therefore two special areas with different goals and policy focuses that should not overlap.

The commenter states that retention of hillside attributes contribute to biological and watershed integrity, which should be more clearly recognized in the DEIR.

The County concurs that hillside areas contribute to biological diversity and to watershed definition. The policy of the County is to preserve significant natural features in hillside areas. The goal of hillside development is to preserve significant habitat, natural watercourses, wildlife corridors and distinctive natural features.

A17-4 The commenter requests clarification on whether biological resource preservation is a compatible use in Agricultural Resource Areas (ARAs) and an explanation why the proposed Significant Ecological Areas (SEAs) are excluded from ARAs. The commenter suggests that if the reason for exclusion of SEAs within the ARAs is to further protect biological resources within SEAs, then this should be clearly stated in DEIR Chapters 5.2 and 5.4. The commenter also requests that an analysis of biological resource impacts from the proposed ARA program should be provided. Lastly, the commenter expresses concern that agricultural practices will result in the loss of biological diversity.

Agricultural Resource Areas are defined in the General Plan Update (Chapter 9.V Agricultural Resources, Page 145) as consisting of farmland identified by the California Department of Conservation, including Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, Farmland of Local Importance, and Unique Farmland. Lands receiving permits from the Los Angeles County Agricultural Commissioner/Weights and Measures are also considered ARAs. The County promotes the preservation of agricultural land within areas identified as ARAs. As such, preservation of biological resources would not be considered a compatible use.

The SEAs were not designated within ARAs because the priorities in these two designations are not considered to be compatible since the promotion of agricultural uses is contrary to the goal of biological resource conservation for the SEAs. The

exclusion of SEAs within the ARAs is not to further protect biological resources within SEAs but to promote the preservation of agricultural lands, which is inconsistent with the goals of the SEA Program. However, it should be noted that, although the ARAs and SEAs function separately as policy tools, General Plan Update policies related to agriculture and natural resource protection are not mutually exclusive; the General Plan Update promotes the preservation of both agricultural land and biological resources.

The areas within ARAs are zoned for agricultural uses being permitted uses. As such, these areas would not ordinarily require discretionary approval to conduct agricultural practices and environmental review would not be undertaken. As a consequence, no specific analysis of project specific impacts to biological resources would be completed. Although not specifically referenced, the buildout of the Proposed Project includes agricultural uses as one of the components contributing to biological resource impacts, which are concluded to be significant for impacts to special-status species and associated habitat and on wildlife movement and nursery sites. As such, the concern expressed by the commenter about agricultural practices resulting in the loss of biological diversity is a real possibility. However, it should be noted that a small number of special-status wildlife species, including short-eared owl, ferruginous hawk, Swainson's hawk, loggerhead shrike, white-faced ibis, actual make use of agricultural fields as one of their preferred habitats.

A17-5 The commenter recommends that the DEIR acknowledge that the current representation of sensitive biological resources within the County are not static and that new information in regard to sensitive biological resources will be result from future discoveries. The commenter also recommends that botanical assessments use vegetation descriptions contained in *A Manual of California Vegetation* to avoid the use of generic terms like chaparral or coastal sage scrub. Lastly, the commenter recommends the addition of desert dune scrub communities, specifically halophytic saltbush (allscale scrub) and xerophytic saltbush (shadscale scrub), to the County's list of vegetation communities list in the DEIR.

While it is true that sensitive biological resources change over time, for example, a State or federally-listed species could be removed from listing after successful efforts to increase stable population, the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) does not require environmental analysis for future unknown scenarios because such an analysis would be speculative. If new information regarding special-status species becomes available and known in the future, project specific environmental analysis at the time would be undertake and would address potential impacts to such special-status species.

The County ordinarily requests that biological resource reports make use of the current standard manuals for the reference of biological resources. For vegetation descriptions, the County strongly encourages all consultants preparing such reports to following the

procedures for vegetation classification contained *A Manual of California Vegetation*; however, this is not a formal requirement.

It is noted and appreciated to learn that both shadscale scrub and allscale scrub are located within the Los Angeles County as desert vegetation communities. The plant communities listed under Section 5.4.1.2 Existing Conditions (beginning on page 5.4-10) was not intended to be a comprehensive list, but the more common pant communities identified within Los Angeles County. It should be noted that shadscale scrub and any forms of allscale scrub occurring within Los Angeles County are not considered to be sensitive communities by CDFW.[2]

A17-6 Reference to three new bills (AB 1739, SB 1168 & 1319, signed by the Governor on 9/16/2014) has been added (as a text box) in the Conservation and Natural Resources Element. These three bills create a framework for local sustainable groundwater management plans, with a definition of sustainable groundwater management, an implementation timeline, and measurable objectives and milestones. Local water agencies and the County will work together to ensure compliance with this legislation.

Also, Implementation Programs C/NR 10 Water Quality Initiatives and C/NR 11 Watershed and Rivers Master Plans will be an appropriate tool where the watershed value of permeable surfaces and the multi-benefit outcomes, such as water quality benefits, enhanced aquatic habitats, and restored natural features will be discussed and analyzed.

The commenter cautions the County to not rely solely on the South Coast Missing Linkages report, while being an excellent reference source, because the report is not exhaustive and only includes known wildlife movement opportunities.

This comment is noted and appreciated. The South Coast Missing Linkages report is currently the most comprehensive report completed for the Southern California region. It is acknowledged that the report is not exhaustive, but by containing the known wildlife movement opportunities, this is an important basis for any subsequent studies. As part of the County's ongoing effort to improve the understanding of wildlife movement, the County's SEA Connectivity and Constriction mapping effort is designed to provide greater specificity to the more general linkages identified by the South Coast Missing Linkages reports. This effort will be continued.

A17-7 The commenter expresses concern about the availability of groundwater in supporting biological resources, especially during the current drought conditions. The commenter requests discussion of the protection of groundwater resources with recognition of the value of permeable surfaces.

[2] List of Vegetation Alliances and Associations. Vegetation Classification and Mapping Program, California Department of Fish and Game. Sacramento, CA. September 2010.

The commenter is referred to Chapter 5.9, *Hydrology and Water Quality*, of the DEIR for discussion and analysis of the Proposed Project on groundwater resources. For example, the impact from an increase in impervious areas is concluded to be less than significant (see Impact 5.9-2, Page 5.9-30).

A17-8 The commenter expresses concern that fire protection measures such as fuel modification around habitable structures may escape biological resource protection regulation. The commenter recommends that the County implement a brush clearing ordinance through the General Plan Update that is protective of biological resources, such as requiring pre-project native nesting bird surveys.

The commenter is referred to Chapter 5.8, *Hazards and Hazardous Materials*, for discussion of fire hazards and the use of fuel modification to reduce risk to lives and property (under Impact 5.8-5, Page 5.8-21). The County Fire Department is open to modification of fuel modification guidelines to reduce the impact on native biological resources, especially sensitive species. This is done on a project specific basis for most locations in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones have unique features that must be considered.

It is now typically routine for discretionary approvals for County-approved projects that pre-project implementation nesting bird surveys be conducted in compliance with Section 3503 of the California Fish and Game Code and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

A17-9 The commenter recommends clarifying language that the DEIR-stated wildlife linkages are currently known but with the understanding that additional linkages could likely be documented in the future.

As mentioned in Response A17-5 above, CEQA requires an analysis of known environmental impacts and speculation about future impacts to unknown resources is not allowed. Therefore, the analysis contained in the DEIR is based on the information that is currently documented such as the wildlife linkages referenced. While it is conceivable that additional linkages may be documented in the future, there can be no evaluation at this time.

A17-10 The commenter disagrees with the DEIR statement that wildlife linkage connectivity could be lost through development impacts, assuming that such a significant impact would not warrant mitigation to reduce such impact. The commenter continues by suggesting potential mitigation in delineating wildlife corridor areas to be set aside for current and future conservation efforts.

The County recognizes the importance of wildlife corridors and has identified as best is currently known the corridors that provide for wildlife linkage connectivity. The DEIR conservatively acknowledges that impacts to these corridors may occur in the future as many of the linkage areas are presently under private ownership. While environmental

analysis, including for impacts to wildlife corridors, would be undertaken for discretionary approvals in the future, it cannot be assumed that wildlife corridor areas for future conservation that can be set aside because those properties may not become publicly owned.

A17-11 The commenter recommends a thorough, recent floristic-based assessment of special status plants and natural communities be performed for each development request within the Project Area, which should be consistent with the CDFW's Protocols for Surveying and Evaluating Impacts to Special Status Native Plant Populations and Natural Communities, for the implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-1.

As mentioned in Response A15-5 above, the County ordinarily requests that biological resource reports make use of the current standard manuals for the reference of biological resources. For assessment of special status plants and natural communities, CDFW's Protocols for Surveying and Evaluating Impacts to Special Status Native Plant Populations and Natural Communities is one of the standard protocols that the County recommends.

A17-12 The commenter states that in order for proposed Mitigation Measure BIO-2 to be successful that habitat in need of restoration and presumably void or below carrying capacity of the targeted species must be adjacent to the approved development site and the adjacent habitat would need to be restored to functioning levels that are supportive of the target species.

Mitigation Measure BIO-2 will be implemented on a project by project basis and relocation of individual wildlife species may not always be possible. Where restoration is included in project mitigation measures, the goals and success criteria of the restoration efforts will be documented prior to initiation of approved projects.

A17-13 The commenter questions whether Mitigation Measure BIO-3 for impacts to wildlife movement may be contradictory with statements in the DEIR (page 5.4-117) that the policies proposed in the Proposed Project do not provide for mitigation for loss of wildlife movement opportunities or nursery sites. The commenter also suggests that mitigation for loss of wildlife movement opportunities or nursery sites should be a standard approval condition by the lead agency.

It is assumed that the commenter understands that Mitigation Measure BIO-3, while acknowledging that there are no feasible mitigation measures available that would completely reduce impacts to wildlife movement from the build out of the General Plan, individual projects will be required to offer mitigation for significant impacts to documented wildlife movement corridors or nursery sites. Consequently, the commenter's suggestion is precisely the intent of Mitigation Measure BIO-3 and no additional changes are necessary.

A17-14 The commenter recommends that parcels proposed for rezoning that are within or adjacent to natural open space or proposed Significant Ecological Areas that would result in adverse impacts to biological resources be analyzed in the DPEIR for biological impacts, avoidance and mitigation measures.

Analysis of the rezoned properties for impacts to biological resources would be speculative at this time because no specific projects are currently proposed. Where discretionary approval is required for project development on these properties in the future, the environmental analysis of impacts to biological resources would be evaluated at that time.

# 2. Response to Comments

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LETTER R1 – Baldwin Stocker, LLC (2 pages)

**BALDWIN STOCKER, LLC**
**785 Turkey Hill Road**
**Corinth, VT 05039**
**802-439-9144**
**spanier1@mac.com**

**Jonathan G. Spanier**
**President**

August 6, 2014

BY EMAIL and USPS EXPRESS MAIL

Connie Chung, AICP, Supervising Regional Planner
Department of Regional Planning
320 West Temple Street, Room 1356
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: Comments on the draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the 2014 Revised Draft General Plan 2035 (RDGP).

Dear Ms. Chung:

We are writing this letter in response to several provisions in the DEIR issued on June 19, 2014 and in the interest of protecting our rights as a private landowner in the areas affected by the DEIR and its related RDGP.

Baldwin Stocker, LLC (BSLLC) owns 120 acres of surface and mineral rights in the Inglewood Oil Field (IOF) and has reserved those rights in numerous documents dating back to the 19th century, most recently in Document No. 20140380477.

First and foremost, the DEIR and RDGP policies should be consistant with the Baldwin Hills Community Standards District (CSD) adopted by Los Angeles County in 2008. The CSD imposed the stricktest standards for any urban oil field in the United States in order to protect the health and safety of the adjacent residential communities. R1-1

PUBLIC DESIGNATION ON THE INGLEWOOD OIL FIELD

The DEIR and RDGP designate surface parcels within the IOF owned by the City of Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (DWP) as Public and R1-2

# 2. Response to Comments

Semi Public (P). We understand that DWP has the right to use this surface property for operation and maintenance of high-voltage power lines as part of the electric system of the City of Los Angeles. However, those rights are subject to the terms of an underlying oil and gas lease executed in 1923 with Anita M. Baldwin, and further described in that Deed recorded on May 29, 1959 as Document No. 1503 and that Deed recorded November 7, 1946 as Document No. 2403 in the Official Records of Los Angeles County.

We are concerned that the proposed P land use designation does not acknowledge these private rights and accordingly could interfere with BSLLC's vested and mineral rights by disallowing any new, oilfield activities or uses within this surface area and allowing incompatible uses into this area – which in turn conflicts with other policies of the RDGP, DEIR and CSD and comprises the security and safety of the IOF. One solution to this issue that would provide consistency throughout RDGP, the DEIR, the CSD, and BSLLC's vested and mineral rights would be to include a statement within the purpose of the P land use designation disclosing "that uses compatible with the surrounding development (including but not limited to oil and gas production) are permitted". R1-2 cont'd

ZONING OF THE IOF

In the course of revising and amending the GP 2035 over the past several years, the IOF has been alternatively designated as Mineral Resources (MR) and Heavy Agriculture (A-2) For example, as MR in the DEIR; and as A-2 in map ZC16 updated May 15, 2014. Kindly clarify which classification is currently being proposed for adoption going forward and the differences between the two classifications. R1-3

Notwithstanding any of the above, the undersigned reserves all surface and subsurface rights owned in Los Angeles County.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of our comments and concerns. Please feel free to contact me should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Forrest B Spanie

**R1. Response to comments from Baldwin Stocker, LLC dated August 6, 2014.**

R1-1 The General Plan Update is a countywide planning document providing general intended uses and development intensities. Specificity regarding allowable uses on parcels is provided though the parcel zoning and zoning regulations that implement the proposed land use designations. The Baldwin Hills Community Standards District (CSD) is not being modified as part of this process and will not be affected by the adoption of the General Plan Update.

R1-2 The General Plan Update proposes to designate the parcels within the Inglewood Oil Field (IOF) as Mineral Resources (MR), with the publicly-owned portions of the "utility corridors" designated Public and Semi-Public (P). The P land use designation was applied to parcels including those that are shown by the Assessor as being publicly-owned and either accommodate public utilities or may accommodate public utilities in the future. This is consistent with the purpose statement of P and our revision to the purpose statement of P that public access is not conferred. The Land Use Legend provides general intended uses and development intensities. Specificity regarding allowable uses on parcels is provided though the parcel zoning and zoning regulations, such as the Baldwin Hills Community Standards District (CSD), that implement the proposed land use designations. The publicly-owned portions of the utility corridors that are to be designated P are within the CSD and have compatible zoning that will not be changed. As is the case with the existing land use designations under the 1980 General Plan, the proposed land use designations would not affect recorded deed restrictions, easements or other mechanisms related to access.

R1-3 The General Plan Update proposes to designate parcels within the Inglewood Oil Field (IOF) as Mineral Resource (MR), with the publicly-owned portions of the "utility corridors" designated Public and Semi-Public (P). The Land Use Legend provides general intended uses and development intensities. Specificity regarding allowable uses on parcels is provided though the parcel zoning and zoning regulations, such as the Baldwin Hills Community Standards District (CSD), that implement the proposed land use designations. Map ZC.16 depicts proposed zone changes as of May 2014, including for some parcels within the IOF to ensure compatibility with the CSD and the proposed MR land use designation. The majority of the IOF already has compatible zoning that will not be changing.

# 2. Response to Comments

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LETTER R2 – Freeport-McMoRan Oil & Gas (3 pages)

FREEPORT-McMoRAN OIL & GAS

Freeport-McMoRan Oil & Gas
5640 South Fairfax Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90056

Telephone: 323-298-2200

August 6, 2014

Ms. Connie Chung, AICP
Supervising Regional Planner
Department of Regional Planning
320 West Temple Street, Room 1356
Los Angeles, CA 90012

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL and FEDERAL EXPRESS

**RE: June 2014 General Plan Update Draft Environmental Impact Report; and, July 2014 Revised Draft General Plan**

Dear Ms. Chung:

As Operator of the Inglewood Oil Field ("IOF"), Freeport-McMoRan Oil & Gas ("FM O&G") has reviewed the subject Draft Environmental Impact Report ("DEIR") and Revised Draft General Plan ("RDGP"). FM O&G appreciates the County's consideration and implementation of many of our comments on the prior versions of the Draft General Plan. Nonetheless, as reflected in this letter and the attachment thereto, we remain concerned that the DEIR and proposed General Plan Update are not completely consistent with the Baldwin Hills Community Standards District ("CSD") and accordingly may work as an impairment of our vested rights to continue operations and responsibly develop the mineral rights underlying the surface of the IOF. We respectfully request that the EIR and RDGP be clarified as indicated in the attachment to this letter to ensure full consistency and avoid future confusion. R2-1

Thank you in advance for your consideration of our comments and concerns. Please feel free to contact me should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Laura Vlk
Senior EH&S Specialist

Cc Steve Rusch, Vice President EH&S and Government Affairs
Jennifer Cox, Manager Land
John Martini, Manager EH&S and Government Affairs
Candace Salway, Manager EH&S
Jon Sanabria, County of Los Angeles, Deputy Director
Jill M. Jones, County of Los Angeles, Deputy County Counsel
Leon Freeman, County of Los Angeles, Planner

# 2. Response to Comments

**Freeport-McMoRan Oil & Gas**
**Requested Changes to the**
**June, 2014 Los Angeles County Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) and**
**July, 2014 Revised Draft General Plan (RDGP)**
**August 6, 2014**

**Land Use Designations**

The DEIR and RDGP designate surface parcels within the IOF owned by the City of Los Angeles Department of Water and Power ("DWP") as Public and Semi Public ("P"). DWP has the right to use this surface property for operation and maintenance of high-voltage power lines as part of the electric system of the City of Los Angeles, however, those rights are subject to the terms of the underlying oil and gas lease that impacts the subsurface as further described in that Deed recorded on May 29, 1959 as Document No. 1503 and that Deed recorded 11/7/1946 as Document No. 2403 in the Official Records of Los Angeles County.

We are concerned that the proposed P land use designation for the surface of the land does not properly accommodate the private rights under the oil and gas lease and accordingly could interfere with FM O&G's vested and mineral rights by disallowing any new, oilfield activities or uses within this surface area. In addition, by allowing incompatible uses into an active oil field, the proposed public use designation conflicts with other policies of the RDGP, conflicts with the CSD, and compromises the security and safety of the IOF. R2-2

The RDGP and the project description in the DEIR should contain clear language specifying that mineral and oil and gas production uses are expressly permitted in the P zone, and limiting any public or semi-public uses to those that are completely compatible with mineral and oil and gas production.

**Preservation / Conservation / Protection**

FM O&G also remains concerned with the County's use of the terms "preserve" and "conserve". We have made this comment on numerous occasions and there is nothing in the text of the RDGP or DEIR that clarifies the intent of this wording. As such, FM O&G requests such a clarification in the County's response to comments. The use of these terms could result in the interpretation that any area subject to such policies must remain permanently in its current state which in the case of the IOF would eliminate the ability to utilize the property for oil and gas production activities. This would also conflict with the Baldwin Hills Community Standards District ("CSD") Section E.7, which was put in place to implement mitigation measures to permit oil and gas related activities in a way that is compatible with adjacent property and protects the environment. The following changes to the DEIR and RDGP eliminates these issues: R2-3

1. RDGP, pg. 138; Sensitive Local Native Resources: Change as follows:
   "The County considers authoritatively defined sensitive local native resources, including species on watch lists, as important resources to identify and ~~conserve~~ protect."

2. RDGP; change goal C/NR 3 as follows:
   "Permanent, sustainable preservation of genetically and physically diverse biological resources and ecological systems including: habitat linkages, forests, coastal zone, riparian habitats, streambeds, wetlands, woodlands, alpine habitat, chaparral, shrublands, and SEAs as feasible."

3. Change policy C/NR 3.1 as follows:
   "Protect~~Conserve~~ and enhance the ecological function of diverse natural habitats and biological resources."

4. Change policy C/NR 3.10 as follows:
"Requires environmentally superior mitigation for unavoidable impacts on biologically sensitive areas and permanently preserve mitigation sites if feasible."
5. Policy C/NR 7.2 requires the County to support the preservation, restoration and strategic acquisition of available land for open space to preserve "watershed uplands." "Watershed uplands" generally include nonpoint source inputs from the watershed, including hydrologic runoff characteristics from increased imperviousness of the watershed [e.g., urban, agricultural, and forestry best management practices (BMPs)]. This includes nearly the entire Los Angeles Basin. As such, we recommend and advocate that the County remove the reference to "upland watershed" from this policy and change the words "preservation" and "preserve" to "protection" and "protect," respectively.

R2-3 cont'd

**Other:**

1. DEIR Pg 5.3-49; Impact 5.3-4; AQ-2: This mitigation is derived from the South Coast Air Quality Management District's (SCAQMD) New Source Review (NSR) requirements as set forth in SCAQMD Rules 212 & 1303. Within these requirements, criteria pollutants (i.e. particulate matter) are regulated differently than Toxic Air Contaminants (TACs). TAC's may require a Health Risk Assessment. Criteria Pollutant thresholds do not result in any requirement for a HRA. As such, we recommend and advocate that AQ-2 be changed as follows:

   "If the Health Risk Assessment (HRA) shows that the incremental cancer risk exceeds ten in one million (I0E-06), ~~particulate matter concentrations would exceed 2.5µg/m3,~~ or the appropriate non-cancer hazard index exceeds 1.0, the applicant will be required to identify and demonstrate that best available control technologies for toxics (T-BACTs) are capable of reducing potential cancer and noncancer risks to an acceptable level, including appropriate enforcement mechanisms."

   FM O&G recommends that mitigation for criteria pollutants are written so that they are consistent with SCAQMD regulations related to criteria pollutants.

R2-4

2. DEIR Pg. 5.10-12: Westside Planning Area: This section describes the Baldwin Hills as being centered around the Kenneth Hahn State Recreation Area (308 acres) and does not mention the Inglewood Oil Field ("IOF"). The IOF is approximately 1,000 acres, and field operators, including FM O&G, have and are actively exploring for, producing and processing oil and gas (as well as related activities) for over 100-years. To reflect actual conditions, please include this description and remove the statement the Baldwin Hills are centered around the Kenneth Hahn State Recreation Area.

3. DEIR Pg. 5.11-46: Section 5.11.5: This section should also acknowledge oil and gas sites.

R2-5

4. On page 5.15-17 of the DEIR, revise the first bullet (New Park Opportunities) as follows:
"....Study the possibility of developing multi-benefit parks and trails in areas, such as floodway channels, power line alignments, major water and sewer easements, flood basins and impoundment areas, and transportation rights of ways where such multi-benefit parks and trails can be safely accommodated taking into account existing or future anticipated uses."

R2-6

Page **2** of **2**

# 2. Response to Comments

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**R2. Response to comments from Freeport-McMoRan Oil & Gas dated August 6, 2014.**

R2-1 The General Plan Update is a countywide planning document providing general intended uses and development intensities that determine how and where the County will grow through the year 2035. Specificity regarding allowable uses on parcels is provided though the parcel zoning and zoning regulations, such as the Baldwin Hills Community Standards District (CSD), that implement the proposed land use designations. The Baldwin Hills CSD is not being modified as part of this process and will not be affected by the adoption of the General Plan Update.

R2-2 The General Plan Update proposes to designate the parcels within the Inglewood Oil Field (IOF) as Mineral Resources (MR), with the publicly-owned portions of the "utility corridors" designated Public and Semi-Public (P). The P land use designation was applied to parcels including those that are shown by the Assessor as being publicly-owned and either accommodates public utilities or may accommodate public utilities in the future. This is consistent with the purpose statement of P and our revision to the purpose statement of P that public access is not conferred. The Land Use Legend provides general intended uses and development intensities. Specificity regarding allowable uses on parcels is provided though the parcel zoning and zoning regulations, such as the Baldwin Hills Community Standards District (CSD), that implement the proposed land use designations. The publicly-owned portions of the utility corridors that are to be designated P are within the CSD and have compatible zoning that will not be changed. As is the case with the existing land use designations under the 1980 General Plan, the proposed land use designations would not affect recorded deed restrictions, easements or other mechanisms.

R2-3 Specificity regarding allowable uses on parcels is provided though the parcel zoning and the zoning regulations, and in the case of the Inglewood Oil Field (IOF), specifically the Baldwin Hills Community Standards District (CSD). The CSD is not being modified in this process and remains fully functional in implementing the proposed General Plan policies and land use designations. All General Plan goals and policies are weighted equally and cannot be considered out of context. The changes requested would not add meaningful clarification and could serve to weaken the County's commitment to protecting important biological resources.

R2-4 Particulate matter can have serious health effects on sensitive receptors, such as hospitals, schools, etc. As a result, your suggested changes to Mitigation Measure AQ-2 are not considered appropriate.

R2-5 Per your request, Page 5.10-12 of the DEIR has been revised as follows:

Although there are few unincorporated areas in the Westside Planning Area, they are widely dispersed and contain a diverse range of land uses. The largest unincorporated area in the Planning Area is located at it southern boundary, directly south of the City of

## 2. Response to Comments

Culver City. Commonly referred to as the Baldwin Hills, it is centered on the recreational uses of Kenneth Hahn State Recreational Area and includes the communities of Ladera Heights and Viewpark/Windsor Hills. Ladera Heights and ViewPark/Windsor Hills consist primarily of single-family residential uses. However, commercial and multifamily residential uses are oriented along Slauson Avenue and the major arterial connecting it and downtown Inglewood to the south. Major institutional uses are located in the northwest portion of the Baldwin Hills: Holy Cross Catholic Cemetery and West Los Angeles College. Approximately one mile to the west, a small unincorporated island includes single family and public uses. Also included in the Westside Planning Area is the Inglewood Oil Field covering approximately 1,000 acres, making it one of the largest contiguous urban oil fields in the United States.

R2-6 Your comment will be considered in preparation of the County Parks and Recreation Master Plan, at the time it is prepared.

LETTER R3 – Cone Fee Trust (5 pages)

**CONE FEE TRUST**

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EMAIL: 4GOSNELL@CHARTER.NET

**VIA EMAIL & US MAIL**

August 7, 2014
Ms. Connie Chung, AICP
Supervising Regional Planner
Department of Regional Planning
320 West Temple Street, Room 1356
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: **Comments on the draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the 2014 Revised Draft General Plan 2035 (RDGP)**

Dear Ms. Chung:

We are writing to you in response to several provisions in the DEIR issued on June 19, 2014 in the interest of protecting our rights as a private landowner in the Inglewood Oil Field (IOF) located in Los Angeles County.

The Cone Fee Trust (CFT) owns approximately 34 acres in the IOF and we work diligently to protect our rights as a private landowner including, without limitation, all rights attendant to the oil and gas production and use rights concerning our land and all other uses developed and being developed. The Inglewood Oil Field (IOF) is and has been regulated by the strictest Community Standard District (CSD) in our country. The CSD was the product of nearly two years of County review and study, extensive public comment and review, extraordinary and detailed factual and operational presentations by the oil and gas operator at the IOF and a myriad of drafts before final adoption by the County Board of Supervisors. The oil and gas operators (PXP and now, Freeport McMoRan Oil and Gas) have diligently complied and proactively worked with the County and the governing agencies to ensure that the CSD's provisions are and have been satisfied. Hence, and while CFT greatly appreciates the County's consideration and implementation of many of our comments during the General Plan process, we remain very concerned that the current DEIR and RDGP are inconsistent with the CSD, would lead to potential disputes regarding the rights of the owners and operators at the IOF which are already vested and protected and not subject to usurpation by any agency or other affiliate and, consequently, give rise to needless litigation involving the County, third parties and the IOF ownership and operators. Respectfully, the DEIR and RDGP should clearly stipulate that the CSD governs the oil and gas operations at the IOF, that the IOF property remains private property and is not "open space" or "designated open space" and that in the event of any conflict between the DEIR and the RDGP, on the one hand, and the CSD and the private property rights of the IOF ownership, on the other hand, the CSD and the private property rights of the IOF owners controls. R3-1

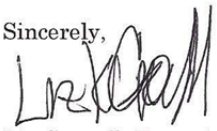
# 2. Response to Comments

The General Plan and corresponding DEIR do not protect our rights as land owners of oil and gas producing private property in the RDGP or the EIR various portions of the sections of these two documents including but not limited to the Preservation / Conservation / Protection sections, the Westside Planning Area, and the New Park Opportunities section.

Please consider and kindly adopt our attached specific comments so that the County can avoid contradicting the CSD and otherwise exposing the County to potential inverse condemnation claims by the IOF ownership and litigation by those in the public who will attempt to use the County's EIR and GP (if not corrected) as a springboard for needless and costly litigation. We believe that the attached changes, and the comments of Freeport McMoRan and other IOF owners, are well grounded and should be adopted and put the DEIR and the RDGP in the right direction. Thank you and the entire team for considering our comments and all the hard work that you have all contributed to this incredible process.

R3-1 cont'd

Sincerely,



Liz Gosnell, Trust Agent
Cone Fee Trust
2245 East Colorado Boulevard, Suite 620
Pasadena, CA 91107
Enclosure

**CONE FEE TRUST COMMENTS/REQUESTED CHANGES TO THE JUNE 2014 DEIR AND RDGP ISSUES BY THE COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES**

**I. Land Use Designations:**

**A. Section IV Land Use Legends.**

The DEIR and RFGP propose to designate surface parcels within the IOF (seemingly those surface parcels only owned by the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP) as "Public and Semi-Public (P)." The LADWP's use rights are for the operation and maintenance of high-voltage power lines, but those rights, for example, appear quite limited in scope and duration with owners having granted limited use easements which, upon termination, revert fully to the owners; other limited use rights derive from other recorded records which do not support any conversion of the LADWP's narrow and specific use in the IOF to a public (park, trail, general access) use.

In CFT's view, the proposed P land use designation for the surface of the land is dissonant with the existing vested rights of the IOF owners and the oil and gas operators as well as the owners' private property rights. As currently drafted, and without the explicit references to the IOF and its non-public uses, third parties are likely to mis-interpret the drafted use description as somehow permitting the right to cause trails or other public access uses on designated utility land that is used by easement. The breadth of the P description is inapplicable to the LADWP power-line utility easement and it is neither the intent or purpose of those easements to permit any conversion thereof as an easement for public use. Moreover, from obvious health and safety and security points of view, such potential "public uses" are counter-intuitive to the mineral and oil and gas uses of the IOF and the owners' rights to use their private property. The proposed P language should expressly reference the IOF and be revised as follows (see bold, italics language below):

R3-2

"Purpose: Public and semi-public facilities and community-serving uses, including public buildings and campuses, schools, hospitals, cemeteries, and fairgrounds; airports and other major transportation facilities.

Other major public facilities, including planned facilities that may be public-serving but generally not publicly accessible, such as landfills,

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# 2. Response to Comments

solid and liquid waste disposal sites, multiple use stormwater treatment facilities, and major utilities.

In the event that the public or semi-public use of mapped facilities is terminated, alternative uses that are compatible with the surrounding development, in keeping with community character, are permitted.

***With respect to the P designated area within the Inglewood Oil Field (see, Chapter 6, Table 6.2, p. 78), and notwithstanding the above descriptions, (1) mineral and gas and oil production uses (including those currently in use and or hereafter permitted) are expressly permitted within the IOF and within said P designated area, (2) the IOF is private property and not designated open space, and (3) other than for the LADWP's operation and maintenance of high-voltage power lines, the P use descriptions (set forth above) do not apply to the P designated area in the IOF and are not permitted."***

R3-2 cont'd

**B. Special Management Areas/Open Space.**

In the "Special Management Areas" section, CFT views this general description of Open Space Areas as including private property as potentially misleading. Specifically, the drafted clause states:

"**Open Space Resource Areas**
Open Space Resource Areas refer to public and private lands, and waters that are preserved in perpetuity or for long-term open space and recreational uses. Existing open spaces in the unincorporated areas include County parks and beaches, conservancy lands, state parklands, and federal lands. Open spaces can also include deed-restricted open space parcels and easements. The County acknowledges that there exists private property within the county (which has, for example, A-2 and MR designations) which is neither Open Space or an Open Space Resource Area (e.g., the Inglewood Oil Field and the private property comprising same). Open Space Resource Areas are described in greater detail in the Conservation and Natural Resources Element."

R3-3

While CFT does not believe that the County is attempting to recharacterize the IOF and its private property as an "Open Space Resource Area" or "Open Space," to eliminate the risk of any public confusion on the subject, CFT requests the above redlined sentence be added to the clause above.

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**C. IOF Zoning Designation**

The draft County documents refer to the zoning of the IOF as Mineral Resources (MR) and Heavy Agriculture (A-2). Consistent with the comments of other IOF owners, we kindly request that the County confirm the designation(s) for the IOF and any differences between said designations. In addition, we request that the County amend the designations to include "and activities related to the drilling for and production of oil and gas and related mineral resource development, and such other existing and/or compatible uses within the activities permitted in such zone." R3-4

**II. Park**

In addition to DEIR page 5.15-17, the DEIR and RDGP make reference to park considerations and acquisitions. As we have indicated previously, the IOF is private property and is not now or is intended to be designated or referred to, even hypothetically, as a future park or future acquisition site for a park or other recreational uses/activities. For example, the "New Park Opportunities" bullet point on page 5.15-17 should be amended to state:

"...Study the possibility of developing multi-benefit parks and trails in areas, such as floodway channels, power line alignments (where not otherwise limited by existing easement terms or underlying uses (or otherwise prohibited by this Plan or private property rights), major water and sewer easements, flood basins and impoundment areas, and transportation of rights of ways where such multi-benefit parks and trails can be safely accommodated taking into account existing or future anticipated uses and without violating private property rights." R3-5

In addition, as previously discussed, the DEIR and RDGP should remove any suggestion or reference to "One Big Park" or other plans or studies to convert the IOF (or any portion therof) to parkland, park grounds, trails or such other "uses." Such terminology or references to "plans" (or diagrams or other charts purporting to indicate such park, etc.) uses in the IOF would also subject the County to inverse condemnation and/or other claims and damages. Further, because the IOF is private property, and not open space, any references to such park uses would be misleading and contrary to the facts.

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# 2. Response to Comments

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**R3. Response to comments from Cone Fee Trust dated August 7, 2014.**

R3-1 The General Plan Update is a countywide planning document providing general intended uses and development intensities. All General Plan goals and policies are weighted equally and cannot be considered out of context. Specificity regarding allowable uses on parcels is provided though the parcel zoning and zoning regulations that implement the proposed land use designations. The Baldwin Hills Community Standards District (CSD) is not being modified as part of this process and will not be affected by the adoption of the General Plan Update. There are no references to the Inglewood Oil Field (IOF), either directly or indirectly, in any discussion of open space or open space acquisition and no part of the IOF is indicated on the Open Space Resources Policy Map.

R3-2 The General Plan Update proposes to designate the parcels within the Inglewood Oil Field (IOF) as Mineral Resources (MR), with the publicly-owned portions of the "utility corridors" designated Public and Semi-Public (P). The P land use designation was applied to parcels including those that are shown by the Assessor as being publicly-owned and either accommodates public utilities or may accommodate public utilities in the future. This is consistent with the purpose statement of P and our revision to the purpose statement of P that public access is not conferred. The Land Use Legend provides general intended uses and development intensities. Specificity regarding allowable uses on parcels is provided though the parcel zoning and zoning regulations, such as the Baldwin Hills Community Standards District (CSD), that implement the proposed land use designations. The publicly-owned portions of the utility corridors that are to be designated P are within the CSD and have compatible zoning that is not changing. As is the case with the existing land use designations under the 1980 General Plan, the proposed land use designations would not affect recorded deed restrictions, easements or other mechanisms.

R3-3 The General Plan Update contemplates the future use of privately owned parcels within the Inglewood Oil Field (IOF) in the same manner and to the same extent as the Baldwin Hills Community Standards District. Furthermore, there are no references to the IOF, either directly or indirectly, in any discussion of open space or open space acquisition and no part of the IOF is indicated on the Open Space Resources Policy Map. Staff believes that further clarification of this point is unnecessary.

R3-4 The General Plan Update proposes to designate the parcels within the Inglewood Oil Field (IOF) as Mineral Resources (MR), with the publicly-owned portions of the "utility corridors" designated Public and Semi-Public (P). The P land use designation was applied to parcels including those that are shown by the Assessor as being publicly-owned and either accommodate public utilities or may accommodate public utilities in the future. This is consistent with the purpose statement of P and our revision to the purpose statement of P that public access is not conferred. The Land Use Legend

provides general intended uses and development intensities. Specificity regarding allowable uses on parcels is provided though the parcel zoning and zoning regulations, such as the Baldwin Hills Community Standards District (CSD), that implement the proposed land use designations. The publicly-owned portions of the utility corridors that are to be designated P are within the CSD and have compatible zoning that will not be changed. As is the case with the existing land use designations under the 1980 General Plan, these proposed land use designations have no effect on recorded deed restrictions, easements or other mechanisms. The MR land use designation was previously modified to include the changes substantially as referenced.

R3-5 Your comment will be considered in preparation of the County Parks and Recreation Master Plan, at the time it is prepared. The General Plan Update contemplates the future use of parcels within the Inglewood Oil Field (IOF) in the same manner and to the same extent as the Baldwin Hills Community Standards District (CSD). Furthermore, there are no references to the IOF, either directly or indirectly, in any discussion of open space or open space acquisition and no part of the IOF is indicated on the Open Space Resources Policy Map.

LETTER R4 – Joyce Dillard (4 pages)

**From:** Joyce Dillard [mailto:dillardjoyce@yahoo.com]
**Sent:** Thursday, August 07, 2014 4:43 PM
**To:** DRP General Plan Project
**Subject:** Comments LA COUNTY DEIR General Plan due 8.7.2014

The County has acreage of

- 38.8% Open Space
- 35.4% Rural
- 16.57% Other

Emphasis should be placed on maintaining natural lands and the beneficial uses and effects of flood control, forestry, deserts, flora, fauna and wildlife to the overall health of the citizens in the County.

You state:

> ***BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES***
> ***5.4.3 Relevant General Plan Goals and Policies***
> ***Conservation and Natural Resources Element***
>
> ***Policy C/NR 3.9:*** *Consider the following in the design of a project that is located within an SEA, to the greatest extent feasible:*
> *• Preservation of biologically valuable habitats, species, wildlife corridors and linkages;*
> *• Protection of sensitive resources on the site within open space;*
> *• Protection of water sources from hydromodification in order to maintain the ecological function of riparian habitats;*
> *• Placement of the development in the least biologically sensitive areas on the site (prioritize the preservation or avoidance of the most sensitive biological resources onsite);*
> *• Design required open spaces to retain contiguous undisturbed open space that preserves the most sensitive biological resources onsite and/or serves to maintain regional connectivity;*
> *• **Maintenance of watershed connectivity by capturing, treating, retaining, and/or infiltrating storm water flows on site**; and*
> *• Consideration of the continuity of onsite open space with adjacent open space, in project design.*

R4-1

Comment:

Storm water flows onsite could be interpreted as Low Impact Development, as required by the Los Angeles Regional Water Board's MS4 permit CAS004001 or it could mean flood control as in a dam or reservoir. Watershed connectivity has to do with the function of flow, not necessarily of water

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# 2. Response to Comments

supply. Birds and wildlife should be a consideration. Urban wildlife protection is missing from this discussion. R4-1 cont'd

This should be explored in more detail.

You state:

*5. Environmental Analysis*
***CULTURAL RESOURCES***
***Parks and Recreation Element***

- ***Policy P/R 5.1:*** *Preserve historic resources on County park properties, including buildings, collections, landscapes, bridges, and other physical features.*
- ***Policy P/R 5.2:*** *Expand the collection of historical resources under the jurisdiction of the County, where appropriate.*
- ***Policy P/R 5.3:*** *Protect and conserve natural resources on County park properties, including natural areas, sanctuaries, and open space preserves.*
- ***Policy P/R 5.4:*** *Insure maintenance, repair, rehabilitation, restoration, or reconstruction of historical resources in County parks and recreational facilities are carried out in a manner consistent with the most current Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings.* R4-2
- ***Policy P/R 5.5: Preserve and develop facilities that serve as educational resources that improve community understanding of and appreciation for natural areas, including watersheds***
- ***Policy P/R 5.7:*** *Integrate a range of cultural arts programs into existing activities, and partner with multicultural vendors and organizations*

Comment:

Watersheds, as ecological preserves, should not have facilities onsite, as it disrupts nesting and other aspects of birds and wildlife.

Facilities should be developed to encourage exploration. Trails need to be considered as there are mitigation effects.

You state:

*5. Environmental Analysis*
***HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY***
***Conservation and Natural Resources Element***

- ***Policy C/NR 5.1: Support the LID philosophy, which seeks to plan and design public and private development with hydrologic sensitivity, including limits to straightening and channelizing natural flow paths, removal of vegetative cover, compaction of soils, and distribution of naturalistic BMPs at regional, neighborhood, and parcel-level scales.*** R4-3
- ***Policy C/NR 5.2:*** *Require compliance by all County departments with adopted Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4), General Construction, and point source NPDES permits.*
- ***Policy C/NR 5.3: Actively engage with stakeholders in the formulation and implementation of surface water preservation and restoration plans, including***

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***plans to improve impaired surface water bodies by retrofitting tributary watersheds with LID types of BMPs.***

- ***Policy C/NR 5.4:*** *Actively engage in implementing all approved Enhanced Watershed Management Programs/Watershed Management Programs and Coordinated Integrated Monitoring Programs/Integrated Monitoring Programs or other County-involved TMDL implementation and monitoring plans.*
- ***Policy C/NR 5.5:*** *Manage the placement and use of septic systems in order to protect nearby surface water bodies.*
- ***Policy C/NR 5.6:*** *Minimize point- and nonpoint- source water pollution.*
- ***Policy C/NR 5.7:*** *Actively support the design of new and retrofit of existing infrastructure to accommodate watershed protection goals, such as roadway, railway, bridge, and other–particularly– tributary street and greenway interface points with channelized waterways.*
- ***Policy C/NR 6.1: Support the LID philosophy, which incorporates distributed, post-construction, parcel-level stormwater infiltration as part of new development.***
- ***Policy C/NR 6.2:*** *Protect natural groundwater recharge areas and regional spreading grounds.*
- ***Policy C/NR 6.3:*** *Actively engage in stakeholder efforts to disperse rainwater and stormwater infiltration BMPs at regional, neighborhood, infrastructure, and parcel-level scales.*
- ***Policy C/NR 6.4:*** *Manage the placement and use of septic systems in order to protect high groundwater.*
- ***Policy C/NR 6.5:*** *Prevent stormwater infiltration where inappropriate and unsafe, such as in areas with high seasonal groundwater, on hazardous slopes, within 100 feet of drinking water wells, and in* ***contaminated soils.***
- ***Policy C/NR 7.1: Support the LID philosophy, which mimics the natural hydrologic cycle using undeveloped conditions as a base, in public and private land use planning and development design.***
- ***Policy C/NR 7.2:*** *Support the preservation, restoration and strategic acquisition of available land for open space to preserve watershed uplands, natural streams, drainage paths, wetlands, and rivers, which are necessary for the healthy function of watersheds.*
- ***Policy C/NR 7.3: Actively engage with stakeholders to incorporate the LID philosophy in the preparation and implementation of watershed and river master plans, ecosystem restoration projects, and other related natural resource conservation aims, and support the implementation of existing efforts, including Watershed Management Programs and Enhanced Watershed Management Programs.***
- ***Policy C/NR 7.4:*** *Promote the development of multiuse regional facilities for stormwater quality improvement, groundwater recharge, detention/attenuation, flood management, retaining nonstormwater runoff, and other compatible uses.*

R4-3 cont'd

Comment:

Permitting is based on Source Point pollution at outfall measurement points. Urban runoff is not a Clean Water Act definition. *Ambient Water Quality Criteria for the Protection of Human Health* is the EPA standard, not a haphazard approach. *LID philosophy* is not measured or monitored

There are many Watershed Management Programs, including the new ones formed by the MS4 permitting. Enhanced Watershed Management Programs are part of that permitting.

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# 2. Response to Comments

There is no Safe Harbor allowed, yet you take the policy to incorporate them without a policy to reduce pollutant loads to satisfy the requirements of the law.

Contaminated soils should be addressed further. There can be contamination from chemicals or natural contamination from oil deposits, methane and related gas emissions. R4-3 cont'd

With the Los Angeles River Ecosystem Feasibility Study proceeding with the US Army Corps of Engineers, flood control, drainage area mitigation needs to be revised.

Note:

There are errors in Table *1-2 Proposed Project Buildout Projections (by Planning Area)*. Hacienda Heights Community Plan and Walnut Park Neighborhood Plan do not total correctly. R4-4

Joyce Dillard
P.O. Box 31377
Los Angeles, CA 90031

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**R4. Response to comments from Joyce Dillard dated August 7, 2014.**

R4-1 Waste discharge requirements for discharges to municipal storm drain systems in the Los Angeles Water Board Region are set forth in Order No. R4 2012-0175 ("MS4 Permit") issued by the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board in 2012. The MS4 permit process is primarily related to the protection of water quality rather than biological resources. Please refer to Section 5.4, *Biological Resources*, of the DEIR for a discussion of potential impacts to biological resources, including birds and wildlife.

R4-2 Comment is hereby noted and will be forwarded to the appropriate County decision makers for their review and consideration.

R4-3 The MS4 Permit for Los Angeles County was adopted in 2012 and is not subject to review as part of the Proposed Project. Similarly, the Los Angeles River Ecosystem Feasibility Study is not related to the Proposed Project. However, your comment is hereby noted and will be forwarded to the appropriate County decision makers for their review and consideration.

R4-4 Thank you for your comment. Table 1-2 from the DEIR will be revised accordingly.

# 2. Response to Comments

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LETTER R5 – Babe Kirkpatrick (1 page)

**From:** Babe Kirkpatrick (Garside) [mailto:bkghome@gmail.com]
**Sent:** Thursday, August 07, 2014 5:09 PM
**To:** DRP General Plan Project
**Subject:** General Plan Update Program - CEQA

Connie Chung, AICP, Supervising Regional Planner
Department of Regional Planning
320 West Temple Street, Room 1356
Los Angeles, CA 90012
Fax: (213) 626-0434
Email: genplan@planning.lacounty.gov

Dear Ms. Chung,

Thank you for this opportunity to comment.

It is reasonably foreseeable that adoption and implementation of the proposed County General Plan would potentially result in adverse environmental impacts, including potential adverse impacts on the traditions of a Native American.
Please, as part of the EIR consider the Wild still intact within the Santa Monica Mountains. Also the Sound scape, View sheds as seen from currently existing and proposed trails and Watersheds effected by ephemeral streams. R5-1

Respectfully submitted,

Ms. Babe Kirkpatrick (Garside)
20543 Callon Dr.
Topanga
310 455-7765

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# 2. Response to Comments

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**R5. Response to comments from Babe Kirkpatrick dated August 7, 2014.**

R5-1 Please refer to Section 5.5, *Cultural Resources*, of the DEIR for a discussion of potential impacts to cultural resources, including Native American resources. With respect to resources within the Santa Monica Mountains Planning Area, the land use designations for this area severely limit the amount of potential development. As a result, potential impacts related to aesthetics and noise are expected to be minimal.

# 2. Response to Comments

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LETTER R6 – Angela Toghia (2 pages)

Angela Toghia
1300 Kentucky Springs Road
Acton, California 93510

August 8, 2014

Connie Chung
Supervisor Regional Planning
320 W Temple Street Room 1356
Los Angeles, California 90012
E-mail: genplan@planning.lacounty.gov

Subject: DEIR Los Angeles County

The "need" for this General Plan to be updated, is partly based on estimated population growth. It currently is against the law for immigrants to enter the country without going through the proper channels. The DEIR cannot estimate population growth that includes illegal immigrants as part of the population of the county, state, or country. I would like to see the census data for 1990, 2000, & 2010, account for the illegal immigrants and adjust the population to reflect US Citizens and Legal Residents the only parties considered when projecting population growth for Los Angeles County unincorporated areas. I believe the projected population growth is significantly overstated in the DEIR figures and feel that Regional Planning cannot project growth by including the illegal immigrants part of that growth. R6-1

Additionally, I find it disturbing that the DEIR is not available in print at the Acton County Library nor is map three of three large maps available to review as stated it would be. When I requested the library have a printed copy for review, I was directed to Los Angeles or Lancaster, neither of which is convenient or feasible for a working tax payer who lives in one of the areas affected by the General Plan. I think it is a reasonable expectation to have these documents available in the unincorporated areas. They are not. This prevents any public participation let alone "extensive" public participation. Five people attended the scoping meeting. That is not extensive participation by the public. I have found it extremely difficult to review the General Plan documents, goals, and policies on the internet. There are so many aspects of it that refer to other sections and without it in print I cannot cross reference the various parts and programs that are on all different web pages. R6-2

Additionally, the first chapter of the DEIR executive summary on public comments received during the Notice of Preparation dismisses those inquiring about the Antelope R6-3

# 2. Response to Comments

Valley indicating the AV plan is not being amended because of the General Plan. In this summary the comments regarding the Antelope Valley Area Plan or questions about the AV are absolutely relevant as the General Plan applies to the unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County including the Antelope Valley. Responses to them should have been notated. R6-3 cont'd

It is unacceptable to me that many items under this proposed project have significant impacts, no mitigation or alternatives, and that Regional Planning, the leading agency, finds these significant impacts unavoidable. It absolutely is avoidable, by not adopting any of the proposed changes. R6-4

I disagree with 100% of all aspects of the proposed "update". The county is using the environment as the pretense to implement the UN Agenda 21 goals and following the guidelines of Local Agenda 21 to accomplish it. I urge all members of Regional Planning and employees of Los Angeles County to research this and how you are implementing in in our County. I am perfectly capable of being a good steward to our planet on my own and refuse to have government dictate where I can recreate, live, and extremely regulate what I can use my land for based off of exaggerated population estimates and climate change. The climate has been changing since the beginning of time and will continue to do so regardless of human population or desertification. R6-5

I request that any future documents that relate to the goals, policy changes or proposals, DEIR's, and Zoning code changes, maps, and any other part of the General Plan Update and programs related to it, be available at the Acton County Library in print in a timely manner for review. I also request that the Board of Supervisors reject the DEIR as it does not provide for mitigation of the issues that have significant impacts and grossly exaggerates population projections and potential hazards. R6-6

Sincerely,

Mrs Angela Toghia

Mrs. Angela Toghia

**R6. Response to comments from Angela Toghia dated August 8, 2014.**

R6-1 The Los Angeles County General Plan was last updated in 1980. The General Plan is being updated to maintain compliance with State law. The population and employment data presented in Section 5.13, *Population and Housing*, of the DEIR is based on regional projections adopted by the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG). SCAG's population projections consider birthrates, legal immigration, and illegal immigration.

R6-2 The Department of Regional Planning exceeded all CEQA noticing and document availability requirements.

R6-3 The County of Los Angeles is also the lead agency for the Antelope Valley Area Plan (AVAP); however, the AVAP is a separate project and has its own EIR, which was certified by the County Board of Supervisors on November 12, 2014.

R6-4 Continuation of the Existing General Plan is analyzed in Chapter 7.4 of the DEIR as the No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative. This alternative, which is required by CEQA, assumes that the Existing General Plan and implementing zoning would remain unchanged. The Existing General Plan originally adopted on November 25, 1980 would remain in effect, and no update to the Existing General Plan goals and policies would occur. Under the No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative, a total of 602,024 dwelling units (additional 301,546 units from existing), a total population of 2,199,477 (additional 1,133,063 persons from existing), and total of 444,393 employees (additional 191,734 employees from existing) would occur at buildout. As a result, a significant amount of new development could occur within the Project Area whether or not the Proposed Project is approved.

R6-5 Comment is hereby noted and will be forwarded to the appropriate County decision makers for their review and consideration.

R6-6 The Department of Regional Planning will continue to meet or exceed all applicable state and local public noticing requirements.

# 2. Response to Comments

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# 3. Revisions to the Draft EIR

## 3.1 INTRODUCTION

This section contains revisions to the DEIR based upon (1) additional or revised information required to prepare a response to a specific comment; (2) applicable updated information that was not available at the time of DEIR publication; and/or (3) typographical errors. This section also includes additional mitigation measures to fully respond to commenter concerns as well as provide additional clarification to mitigation requirements included in the DEIR. The provision of these additional mitigation measures does not alter any impact significance conclusions as disclosed in the DEIR. Changes made to the DEIR are identified here in ~~strikeout text~~ to indicate deletions and in <u>underlined text</u> to signify additions.

**Approval of Antelope Valley Area Plan**

The above buildout projections identified in Table 3-6 of the DEIR utilized the 1986 Antelope Valley Area Plan land use designations to estimate population, housing, and employment projections for the Antelope Valley Planning Area. On November 12, 2014, after release of the DEIR, the County Board of Supervisors adopted an update to the Antelope Valley Area Plan, which is consistent with the buildout projections identified in the Antelope Valley Reduced Intensity Alternative analyzed in the DEIR. The Proposed Project, as analyzed in the DEIR, assumed 278,158 dwelling units, 1,070,571 population, 51,219 employees, and a jobs/housing ratio of 0.18 for the Antelope Valley Planning Area. With adoption of the Antelope Valley Area Plan Update, anticipated growth in the Antelope Valley has been substantially reduced. The revised numbers are 106,180 dwelling units, 405,410 population, 134,351 employees, and a jobs/housing ratio of 1.3. The County will make the necessary updates to the Proposed Project to be consistent with the recently adopted Antelope Valley Area Plan. As compared to the Proposed Project analyzed in the DEIR, the subsequent reductions in allowable residential development associated with the recently adopted Antelope Valley Area Plan result in reduced impacts to agriculture, air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, greenhouse gas emissions, mineral resources, noise, transportation/traffic, and water supply and eliminates the previously identified significant impact related population and housing. Since the Proposed Project, as revised, was analyzed in the DEIR as the Antelope Valley Reduced Intensity Alternative, and no new significant impacts are related to the changes, no revisions to the DEIR are necessary.

## 3.2 DEIR REVISIONS IN RESPONSE TO WRITTEN COMMENTS

The following text has been revised in response to comments received on the DEIR.

Page 4-3, Section 4, *Environmental Setting*, is hereby modified as follows:

Under the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Act, California's water quality control law, the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) has ultimate control over water quality policy and allocation of state water

resources. The SWRCB, through its nine Regional Water Quality Control Boards (RWQCBs), carries out the regulation, protection, and administration of water quality in each region. Each regional board is required to adopt a water quality control plan or basin plan. In 1972, the SWRCB adopted the California Ocean Plan for ocean waters of California. Over the years, the Ocean Plan has been amended numerous times, with the most recent amendment in 2012. The Ocean Plan helps to protect the water quality of California's coastal ocean through the control of the discharge of waste into the ocean. The Ocean Plan identifies beneficial uses of ocean waters and establishes water quality objectives and implementation programs to protect those beneficial uses. In 1975, the Los Angeles Regional Board adopted two basin plans: one for the Santa Clara Basin and another for the Los Angeles Basin. In 1994, these plans were adopted and consolidated into the current Water Quality Control Plan for the Los Angeles Region (Basin Plan). Since 1994, numerous amendments have been made to the 1994 Basin Plan. The Basin Plan is currently undergoing another comprehensive update to reflect these amendments and to provide more current information on the Los Angeles Regional Board's programs. Los Angeles County is in the Los Angeles…

Page 4-20, Section 4, *Environmental Setting*, is hereby modified as follows:

The County works with other stakeholders, including the Los Angeles County Flood Control District, in various ways to manage the function and health of its watersheds. In 1975, the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (Los Angeles Regional Board) adopted two basin plans: one for the Santa Clara Basin and another for the Los Angeles Basin. In 1994, these plans were adopted and consolidated into the current Water Quality Control Plan for the Los Angeles Region (Basin Plan). Since 1994, numerous amendments have been made to the 1994 Basin Plan. The Basin Plan is currently undergoing another comprehensive update to reflect these amendments and to provide more current information on the Los Angeles Regional Board's programs. The Basin Plans designate beneficial uses for inland and coastal surface waters, establish water quality objectives and implementation programs and policies to protect those uses.

Page 5.4-105, Section 5.4, *Biological Resources*, is hereby modified as follows:

- **Policy C/NR 3.3:** Restore upland communities and significant riparian resources, such as degraded streams, rivers, and wetlands to maintain ecological function—acknowledging the importance of incrementally restoring ecosystem values when complete restoration is not feasible.

Page 5.8-15, Section 5.8, *Hazards and Hazardous Materials*, and Page 5.14-9, Section 5.14, *Public Services*, are hereby modified as follows:

- **Policy S 3.7:** ~~Consider siting~~ Site and design ~~for~~ developments located within FHSZs, such as ~~particularly~~ in areas located near ridgelines and on hilltops, in a sensitive manner to reduce the wildfire risk.

Page 5.9-18, Section 5.9, *Hydrology and Water Quality*, is hereby modified as follows:

An emerging contaminant of concern is hexavalent chromium or chromium-6. Chromium-6 can occur naturally in the environment from the erosion of natural chromium deposits, but can also be produced by industrial processes where it is used for chrome plating, dyes and pigments, and leather and wood preservation. This element has been known to cause cancer when inhaled and has also been linked to cancer when ingested. California has proposed an MCL of 10 ppb. Twelve wells belonging to various agencies within the southern portion of the Antelope Valley have tested in excess of this proposed MCL within the last 10 years; these wells require continued monitoring (AVEKWA 2012).

Additional constituents of concern (COCs) have been identified in the Draft Antelope Valley Salt and Nutrient Management Plan (SNMP) These COCs include boron, chloride, fluoride, nitrate, and total dissolved solids (TDS).[13]

[13] Los Angeles County Department of Public Works. 2013, June. Draft Salt and Nutrient Management Plan for the Antelope Valley.

Page 5.10-12, Section 5.10, *Land Use and Planning*, is hereby modified as follows:

Although there are few unincorporated areas in the Westside Planning Area, they are widely dispersed and contain a diverse range of land uses. The largest unincorporated area in the Planning Area is located at it southern boundary, directly south of the City of Culver City. Commonly referred to as the Baldwin Hills, it is centered on the recreational uses of Kenneth Hahn State Recreational Area and includes the communities of Ladera Heights and Viewpark/Windsor Hills. Ladera Heights and Viewpark/Windsor Hills consist primarily of single-family residential uses. However, commercial and multifamily residential uses are oriented along Slauson Avenue and the major arterial connecting it and downtown Inglewood to the south. Major institutional uses are located in the northwest portion of the Baldwin Hills: Holy Cross Catholic Cemetery and West Los Angeles College. Approximately one mile to the west, a small unincorporated island includes single family and public uses. Also included in the Westside Planning Area is the Inglewood Oil Field covering approximately 1,000 acres, making it one of the largest contiguous urban oil fields in the United States.

Pages 5.14-16 and 5.14-17, Section 5.14, *Public Services*, are hereby modified as follows:

The majority of new development pursuant to the Proposed Project would occur in the Santa Clarita Valley and Antelope Valley Planning Areas (82 percent of future housing units). As described above, a mitigation fee has been adopted for the Santa Clarita Valley to fund capital improvements for law enforcement, and no significant impacts are anticipated. Currently, no mitigation fee has been adopted for the Antelope Valley Planning Area, which is expected to grow by approximately one million residents. However, tax revenues generated by new land uses in the Antelope Valley are anticipated to grow proportionally to the need for law enforcement services generated in that Planning Area. As described above, a portion of such General Fund revenues are allocated for Sheriff's services. ~~This is considered a potentially significant impact without mitigation.~~ Potential impacts in the remaining Planning Areas are not anticipated to be significant because of

they are largely built out, with limited potential for growth. Therefore, impacts to law enforcement services are anticipated to be less than significant.

Pages 5.14-17 and 5.14-18, Section 5.14, *Public Services*, are hereby modified as follows:

## LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE BEFORE MITIGATION

Without mitigation, the following impacts would be **potentially significant**:

- ~~**Impact 5.14-2** Currently no mitigation fee has been adopted for the Antelope Valley Planning Area, which is a high growth area. This is considered a potentially significant impact.~~ Upon implementation of regulatory requirements and standard conditions of approval, the following impacts would be less than significant: 5.14-2.

## MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

~~Impact 5.14-2~~

~~PS-4 Prior to adoption of the Antelope Valley Area Plan, the County shall identify an implementation program to ensure adequate funding is available to provide law enforcement services within the Antelope Valley Planning Area. The funding mechanism must provide sufficient revenue to pay for land acquisition, engineering, construction, installation, purchasing, or any other direct costs for capital law enforcement facilities and equipment needed to serve the new development in the Antelope Valley Planning Area.~~

## LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

Compliance with existing regulatory programs would reduce potential impacts to law enforcement to a level that is less than significant. ~~The mitigation measures identified above would reduce potential impacts associated with law enforcement to a level that is less than significant. Therefore, no significant unavoidable adverse impacts relating to law enforcement services remain.~~

Page 5.16-19, Section 5.16, *Transportation and Traffic*, is hereby modified as follows:

- **Policy M 5.1:** Facilitate transit-oriented land uses and pedestrian-oriented design, particularly in the first-last mile connections, to transit to encourage transit ridership.

Page 5.16-82 and 5.16-83, Section 5.16, *Transportation and Traffic*, are hereby modified as follows (note that Mitigation Measure T-4 is now Mitigation Measure T-5 and that Mitigation Measure T-5 is now Mitigation Measure T-6):

T-4 The County of Los Angeles shall continue to secure the funding needed to implement the future planned improvements within the Project Area. A variety of funding sources shall be explored, such as Metro's CMP Fee Program as described under T-3, Metro Call for Project funds, and federal and state grant opportunities. If the CMP fee program is not adopted by Metro and the County of Los Angeles, other funding sources for regional transportation needs in the Project Area, including Caltrans facilities, shall be pursued such as a potential North County Development Impact Fee Program, development agreements for large projects, and/or mitigation agreements between future applicants and Caltrans for projects that impact Caltrans facilities.

T-~~4~~5 The County shall work with Caltrans as they prepare plans to add additional lanes or complete other improvements to various freeways within and adjacent to unincorporated areas. This includes adding or extending mixed flow general purpose lanes, adding or extending existing HOV lanes, adding Express Lanes (high occupancy toll lanes), incorporating truck climbing lanes, improving interchanges and other freeway related improvements.

T-~~5~~6 The County shall require traffic engineering firms retained to prepare traffic impact studies for future development projects to consult with Caltrans, when a development proposal meets the requirements of statewide, regional, or areawide significance per CEQA Guidelines §15206(b). When preparing traffic impact studies, the most up to date Guide for the Preparation of Traffic Impact Studies from Caltrans shall be followed. Proposed developments meeting the criteria of statewide, regional or areawide include:

- Proposed residential developments of more than 500 dwelling units
- Proposed shopping centers or business establishments employing more than 1,000 persons or encompassing more than 500,000 square feet of floor space.
- Proposed commercial office buildings employing more than 1,000 persons or encompassing more than 250,000 square feet of floor space
- Proposed hotel/motel developments of more than 500 rooms

When the CEQA criteria of regional significance are not met, Caltrans recommends ~~transportation engineers and/or city representatives~~ that Project Applicants consult with Caltrans when a proposed development includes the following characteristics:

- All proposed developments that have the potential to cause a significant impact to state facilities (right-of-way, intersections, interchanges, etc.) and when required mitigation

improvements are proposed in the initial study. Mitigation concurrence should be obtained from Caltrans as early as possible.

- Any development that assigns 50 or more trips (passenger car equivalent trips) during peak hours to a state ~~highway (~~freeway~~s)~~.
- Any development that assigns 10 or more trips (passenger car equivalent trips) during peak hours to an off-ramp. On/off-ramps that are very close to each other in which the project trips may cause congestion on the left-turn lane storage to the on-ramp.
- Any development located adjacent to or within 100 feet of a state highway facility and may require a Caltrans Encroachment Permit. (Exceptions: additions to single family homes or 10 residential units ~~of~~ or less).
- When the County ~~it~~ cannot ~~be determined~~ determine whether or not Caltrans will expect a traffic impact analysis pursuant to CEQA.

Page 5.17-19, Section 5.17, *Utilities and Service Systems*, is hereby modified as follows:

The Urban Water Management Planning Act states that every urban water supplier that provides water to 3,000 or more customers or provides over 3,000 acre-feet (af) of water annually should make every effort to ensure the appropriate level of reliability in its water service to meet the needs of its various categories of customers during normal, dry, and multiple dry years. Both SB 610 and SB 221 identify the urban water management plan (UWMP) as a planning document that can be used by a water supplier to meet the standards in both statutes. Thorough and complete UWMPs are foundations for water suppliers to fulfill the specific requirements of these two statutes, and they are important source documents for cities and counties as they update their general plans. Conversely, general plans are source documents as water suppliers update the UWMPs. These planning documents are linked, and their accuracy and usefulness are interdependent (DWR 2008).

***State Water Resources Control Board Recycled Water Policy***

The purpose of the Recycled Water Policy is to increase the use of recycled water from municipal wastewater sources that meets the definition in Water Code Section 13050(n), in a manner that implements state and federal water quality laws. When used in compliance with the Recycled Water Policy, water recycling criteria in Title 22 of the California Code of Regulations, and all applicable state and federal water quality laws, the State Water Board finds that recycled water is safe for the approved uses. The State Water Board strongly supports recycled water as a safe alternative to potable water for such approved uses.

## 3.3 ADDITIONAL DEIR REVISIONS

The following text has been revised to update information or correct errors.

Table 1-4, Page 1-39, Section 1, *Executive Summary*, is hereby modified as follows:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Impact 5.9-5: Implementation of the Proposed Project could place housing within 100 year flood hazard areas. | ~~Potentially Significant~~ Less than significant. | ~~HYD-1 Prior to approval of a tentative map, future project applicants/developers shall provide proof to the Department of Public Works that all structures are located outside the 100-year floodplain.~~ No mitigation measures are required. | Less Than Significant |

Table 1-4, Page 1-42, Section 1, *Executive Summary*, is hereby modified as follows:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Impact 5.13-1: The Proposed Project would directly result in population growth in the Project Area | ~~Potentially Significant~~ Less Than Significant | ~~PH-1 Prior to adoption of the Antelope Valley Area Plan Update, the County shall identify land use changes to achieve a minimum jobs-housing ratio of 1.3 for the Antelope Valley Planning Area.~~ No mitigation measures are required. | Less Than Significant |

Table 1-4, Page 1-43, Section 1, *Executive Summary*, is hereby modified as follows:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Impact 5.14-2: Buildout of the Proposed Project would introduce new structures, residents and employees into the LASD service boundaries, thereby increasing the requirement for law enforcement facilities and personnel. | ~~Potentially Significant~~ Less than significant. | ~~PS-4 Prior to adoption of the Antelope Valley Area Plan, the County shall identify an implementation program to ensure adequate funding is available to provide law enforcement services within the Antelope Valley Planning Area. The funding mechanism must provide sufficient revenue to pay for land acquisition, engineering, construction, installation, purchasing, or any other direct costs for capital law enforcement facilities and equipment needed to serve the new development in the Antelope Valley Planning Area.~~ No mitigation measures are required. | Less Than Significant |

Page 5.1-23, Section 5.1, *Aesthetics*, is hereby modified as follows:

Growth anticipated during the planning period of the Proposed General Plan Update would have the potential to affect the visual character and quality of the Project Area and its surroundings. As shown in Table 3-7, *Summary of Existing and Projected Units, Population, Employment and Jobs/Housing Ratios by Planning Area*,

buildout of the Proposed Project is anticipated to increase the number of units in the Project Area from 300,478 to ~~668,910~~ 659,409, an increase of ~~368,432~~ 358,931 units at buildout. Additionally, some of the guiding principles of the Proposed Project advocate the use of Smart Growth development strategies—which aim to create compact, walkable, and transit-oriented communities—as well as excellence in environmental resource management. Part of the way that the Proposed Project seeks to adhere to these principles is by encouraging more compact development patterns, including infill development in areas with existing infrastructure and access to transit, rather than continuing historical sprawling land use patterns. To complement this key goal, the Proposed Project would create TODs. Figure 5.1-3, *Transit Oriented Districts Policy Map*, shows the location of the TODs established in the Proposed Project.

Page 5.3-31, Section 5.3, *Air Quality*, and Table 1-3 in Chapter 1, *Executive Summary*, is hereby modified as follows:

**Impact 5.3-4: Buildout of the Proposed Project could result in new ~~source~~ sources of criteria air pollutant emissions and/or toxic air contaminants proximate to existing or planned sensitive receptors. [Threshold AQ-4]**

Page 5.4-123, Section 5.4, *Biological Resources*, and Table 1-3 in Chapter 1, *Executive Summary*, are hereby modified as follows:

BIO–1 Biological resources shall be analyzed on a project-specific level by a qualified biological consultant. A general survey shall be conducted to characterize the project site, and focused surveys should be conducted as necessary to determine the presence/absence of special-status species (e.g., focused sensitive plant or wildlife surveys). For proposed discretionary projects within SEAs, a ~~A~~ biological resources assessment report shall be prepared to characterize the biological resources on-site, analyze project-specific impacts to biological resources, and propose appropriate mitigation measures to offset those impacts. The report shall include site location, literature sources, methodology, timing of surveys, vegetation map, site photographs, and descriptions of biological resources on-site (e.g., observed and detected species as well as an analysis of those species with potential to occur onsite).

Pages 5.5-23 and 5.5-24, Section 5.5, *Cultural Resources*, and Table 1-3 in Chapter 1, *Executive Summary*, are hereby modified as follows:

CUL-4 Prior to the issuance of any grading permit, applicants shall provide written evidence to the County of Los Angles that a County-certified archaeologist has been retained to observe grading activities greater than six feet in depth and salvage and catalogue archaeological resources as necessary. The archaeologist shall be present at the pre-grade conference, shall establish procedures for archaeological resource surveillance, and shall establish, in cooperation with the applicant, procedures for temporarily halting or redirecting work to permit the sampling, identification, and evaluation of the artifacts as appropriate.

If the archaeological resources are found to be significant, the archaeological observer shall determine appropriate actions, in cooperation with the project applicant, for exploration and/or salvage. Prior to the release of the grading bond the applicant shall obtain approval of the archaeologist's follow-up report from the County. The report shall include the period of inspection, an analysis of any artifacts found and the present repository of the artifacts. Applicant shall prepare excavated material to the point of identification.

Applicant shall offer excavated finds for curatorial purposes to the County of Los Angeles, or its designee, on a first refusal basis. These actions, as well as final mitigation and disposition of the resources, shall be subject to the approval of the County. Applicant shall pay curatorial fees if an applicable fee program has been adopted by the Board of Supervisors, and such fee program is in effect at the time of presentation of the materials to the County or its designee, all in a manner meeting the approval of the County.

Unanticipated discoveries shall be evaluated for significance by a County-certified archaeologist. If the archaeological resources are found to be significant, then the project shall be required to perform data recovery, professional identification, radiocarbon dates as applicable, and other special studies; submit materials to the County of Los Angeles, or its designee, on a first refusal basis ~~California State University Fullerton~~; and provide a comprehensive final report including appropriate records for the California Department of Parks and Recreation (Building, Structure, and Object Record; Archaeological Site Record; or District Record, as applicable).

CUL-5 Prior to the issuance of any grading permit, applicants shall provide written evidence to the County of Los Angles that a County-certified paleontologist has been retained to observe grading activities greater than six feet in depth and salvage and catalogue paleontological resources as necessary. The paleontologist shall be present at the pre-grade conference, shall establish procedures for paleontologist resource surveillance, and shall establish, in cooperation with the applicant, procedures for temporarily halting or redirecting work to permit the sampling, identification, and evaluation of the artifacts as appropriate.

If the paleontological resources are found to be significant, the paleontologist observer shall determine appropriate actions, in cooperation with the project applicant, for exploration and/or salvage. Prior to the release of the grading bond the applicant shall obtain approval of the paleontologist's follow-up report from the County. The report shall include the period of inspection, an analysis of any artifacts found and the present repository of the artifacts. Applicant shall prepare excavated material to the point of identification.

Applicant shall offer excavated finds for curatorial purposes to the County of Los Angeles, or its designee, on a first refusal basis. These actions, as well as final mitigation and disposition of the resources, shall be subject to the approval of the County. Applicant shall pay curatorial fees if an applicable fee program has been adopted by the Board of

Supervisors, and such fee program is in effect at the time of presentation of the materials to the County or its designee, all in a manner meeting the approval of the County.

Unanticipated discoveries shall be evaluated for significance by a County-certified a paleontologist. If the paleontological resources are found to be significant, then the project shall be required to perform data recovery, professional identification, radiocarbon dates as applicable, and other special studies; submit materials to the County of Los Angeles, or its designee, on a first refusal basis~~, California State University Fullerton~~; and provide a comprehensive final report including appropriate records for the California Department of Parks and Recreation.

Page 5.9-43, Section 5.9, *Hydrology and Water Quality*, is hereby modified as follows:

### Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Upon implementation of regulatory requirements and standard conditions of approval, the following impacts would be less than significant: 5.9-1, 5.9-2, 5.9-3, 5.9-4, 5.9-5, 5.9-6, and 5.9-7.

~~Without mitigation, the following impacts would be **potentially significant**:~~

- ~~**Impact 5.9-5** Buildout of the Proposed Project would place housing or structures that would redirect flood flows in 100-year flood zones (Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan only).~~

### Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

~~HYD-1 Prior to approval of a tentative map, future project applicants/developers shall provide proof to the Department of Public Works that all structures are located outside the 100-year floodplain.~~

### Level of Significance After Mitigation

Compliance with existing regulatory programs ~~and the mitigation measure identified above~~ would reduce potential impacts to hydrology and water quality to a level that is less than significant.

Page 5.11-46, Section 5.11, *Mineral Resources*, is hereby modified as follows:

## Conclusion

Many smaller oil fields in Los Angeles Count have become inaccessible due to urban development. Buildout of the Proposed Project, which is anticipated to involve the development of ~~368,432~~358,931 additional housing units and 4 million additional square feet of nonresidential space in the Project Area, would result in

development of land above oil and natural gas reserves. This would result in reductions in availability of fossil fuel reserves.

Page 5.13-9, Section 5.13, *Population and Housing*, is hereby modified as follows:

## 3.3.2 Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Without mitigation, the following impacts would be less than significant: 5.13-1 and 5.13-2.

~~Without mitigation, the following impacts would be **potentially significant**:~~

- ~~**Impact 5.13-1** As shown in Table 5.13-3, the Antelope Valley Planning Area goes from an existing jobs-housing ratio of 1.29 to 0.18 at buildout, which is considered housing-rich. This would be considered a significant impact without mitigation.~~

## 3.3.3 Mitigation Measures

~~PH-1 Prior to adoption of the Antelope Valley Area Plan Update, the County shall identify land use changes to achieve a minimum jobs-housing ratio of 1.3 for the Antelope Valley Planning Area.~~

On November 12, 2014, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors approved the Antelope Valley Area Plan, which governs land use in the Antelope Valley Planning Area. Buildout of the Antelope Valley Area Plan would result in a job-housing balance of 1.3 in the Planning Area, which is considered a healthy balance of jobs and housing. Therefore, Mitigation Measure PH-1 is not required to mitigate Impact 5.13-1 to a level that is less than significant.

## 3.3.4 Level of Significance After Mitigation

~~The mitigation measure identified above would reduce p~~Potential impacts to population and housing ~~to a level that is~~ are less than significant.

Pages 5.15-17 and 5.15-18, Section 5.15, *Recreation*, are hereby modified as follows:

An increase in population, regardless of location, would result in increased demand for recreational facilities, which has the potential to result in the deterioration of existing facilities. Table 5.15-5, *Increase in Population and Housing Units by Planning Area,* identifies the anticipated increase in population by Planning Area under the Proposed Project. As shown in this table, ~~1,066,414~~ 1,290,476 new residents are anticipated in the unincorporated areas.

# 3. Revisions to the Draft EIR

Page 5.16-82, Section 5.16, *Transportation and Traffic*, is hereby modified as follows:

T-3 The County shall participate with Metro, the ~~Congestion Management Program (CMP) Agency~~ CMP Agency in Los Angeles County, on a potential Congestion Mitigation Fee program that would replace the current CMP Debit/Credit approach. Under a countywide fee program, each jurisdiction, including the County, will select and build capital transportation projects, adopt a fee ordinance, collect fees and control revenues. A fee program will require a nexus analysis, and apply only to net new construction on commercial and industrial space and additional residential units and needs to be approved by Metro and the local jurisdictions. A countywide fee, if adopted, will allow the County to mitigate the impacts of development via the payment of the transportation impact fee in lieu of asking each development project for individual mitigation measures, or asking for fair share payments of mitigation. The fee program would itself constitute a "fair-share" program that would apply to all development (of a certain size) within the unincorporated areas.

Table 5.2-2, Page 5.2-4, Section 5.2, *Agriculture and Forestry Resources*, is hereby modified as follows:

| Planning Area | Prime Farmland | Farmland of Statewide Importance | Unique Farmland | Subtotal: Prime, Statewide, Unique | Farmland of Local Importance | Grazing Land | Subtotal: Local Importance, Grazing | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Antelope Valley | 23,231 | 749 | 463 | 24,443 | 6,723 | 135,342 | 142,065 | 166,508 |
| Santa Clarita Valley | 1,039 | 181 | 264 | 1,484 | 130 | 55,222 | 55,352 | 56,836 |
| Santa Monica Mountains | 104 | - | 204[1] | 308[1] | - | - | ~~308~~ | ~~616~~308 |
| San Fernando Valley | - | - | - | - | - | 14,629 | 14,629 | ~~0~~14,629 |
| Coastal Islands, East San Gabriel Valley, West San Gabriel Valley, Gateway, Metro, South Bay, and Westside | | | | | | | | |
| Total | 24,374 | 930 | 931 | 26,235 | 6,853 | 205,193 | 212,046 | 238,281 |

General Plan Policies and Implementation Programs:

In addition to the text revisions above, policies and implementation programs have been modified, added to, or removed from the General Plan Update since distribution of the Draft EIR. Policies and programs referenced in the Draft EIR are hereby modified to be consistent with those identified in Appendix A to this Final EIR.

General Plan Figures and Maps:

General Plan Update figures and Land Use Policy Maps included in Appendix C to the Draft EIR have been modified as shown in Appendix B to this Final EIR.