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COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

"To Enrich Lives Through Effective and Caring Service"

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IN REPLY PLEASE
REFER TO FILE

February 18, 2025

The Honorable Board of Supervisors
County of Los Angeles
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, California 90012

Dear Supervisors:

**ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES CORE SERVICE AREA
TEMPORARY WAIVER OF WASTESHED RESTRICTION AND
INCREASE IN DISPOSAL TONNAGE LIMITS AT LOCAL LANDFILLS
(SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICTS 3 AND 5)
(3 VOTES)**

SUBJECT

Public Works is seeking Board approval for a temporary waiver of wasteshed restrictions and an increase in the short-term disposal tonnage limits at local landfills to allow proper disposal of fire-related debris from the January 2025 Windstorm and Critical Fire Events, including the Palisades Fire, Eaton Fire, Hurst Fire, Kenneth Fire, and multiple other fires.

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT THE BOARD:

1. Find that the proposed activities recommended herein are exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act for the reasons stated in this Board letter and in the record of the project.
2. Find that the temporary waiver of the wasteshed restrictions at the Calabasas Landfill to allow it to accept debris generated by the January 2025 Windstorm and Critical Fire Events is necessary to eliminate immediate threats to life, public health and safety, and improved property, and to ensure economic recovery of the affected communities to the benefit of the community-at-large.
3. Authorize the Calabasas Landfill to temporarily accept material from outside of the wasteshed to accommodate the emergency disposal of debris generated by the January 2025 Windstorm and Critical Fire Events, effective immediately and continuing for six (6) months initially, with a possible extension, as necessary, by the Director of Public Works, in concert with the Chief Engineer of the County Sanitation Districts, as part of disaster response and recovery efforts and when it is in the

public interest to do so, provided that the excess tonnage amounts consist solely of debris resulting from the January 2025 Windstorm and Critical Fire Events.

4. Authorize the Sunshine Canyon and Lancaster Landfills to temporarily increase their tonnage limits as described below, effective immediately and continuing for 120 days initially, with a possible extension by the Board, upon joint recommendation from the Directors of Public Health and Public Works, as part of disaster response and recovery efforts and when it is in the public interest to do so, provided that the excess tonnage amounts consist solely of debris resulting from the January 2025 Windstorm and Critical Fire Events:

a. For Lancaster Landfill, increase the daily solid waste intake tonnage limit authorized under its Conditional Use Permit by 4,000 tons, from 3,000 tons to 7,000 tons per day; and

b. For Sunshine Canyon Landfill, increase the daily tonnage limit authorized under its Conditional Use Permit by 2,900 tons, from 12,100 tons to 15,000 tons per day, with a corresponding increase in the weekly tonnage limit.

PURPOSE/JUSTIFICATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTION

Approval of the recommended actions will find that the proposed activities are exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and authorize a temporary waiver of wasteshed restrictions and increase in the short-term disposal tonnage limits at local landfills to allow proper disposal of debris resulting from the January 2025 Windstorm and Critical Fire Events.

Starting on January 7, 2025, the County of Los Angeles (County) was impacted by severe and life-threatening windstorms and resulting wind-driven destructive fires (January 2025 Windstorm and Critical Fire Events), including the Palisades Fire, Eaton Fire, Hurst Fire, Kenneth Fire, and multiple other fires (collectively, LA County Fires). These unprecedented simultaneous sudden and unforeseen events caused loss of life, widespread damage, and destruction to residential structures, businesses, public facilities and infrastructure, power outages, downed trees, road closures, and significant debris.

On January 7, 2025, the Chair of the County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors (Board) proclaimed the existence of a local emergency for the January 2025 Windstorm and Critical Fire Events (Proclamation of Local Emergency) in the County. Similarly, the Governor proclaimed a state of emergency, and the President approved a major disaster declaration in the County. The Board ratified the Proclamation of Local Emergency on January 14, 2025. The Proclamation of Local Emergency enables the County to more effectively respond to the January 2025 Windstorm and Critical Fire Events, to accelerate the procurement of vital supplies, carry out cleanup and reconstruction efforts, seek and utilize mutual aid, and seek State and Federal funding assistance.

Due to the devastating destruction of property, the LA County Fires have resulted in huge volumes of fire debris that must be removed immediately to reduce and eliminate immediate threats to life, public health and safety, and/or significant damage to property, including improved property, and to ensure economic recovery of the affected communities to the benefit of the community-at-large. Materials taken to the Calabasas, Sunshine Canyon, and Lancaster Landfills will not include household hazardous waste.

Implementation of Strategic Plan Goals

These recommendations support the County Strategic Plan: North Star 2, Foster Vibrant and Resilient Communities, Focus Area Goal D, Sustainability, Strategy i, Climate Health, by providing a safe and efficient way to dispose of debris resulting from the January 2025 Windstorm and Critical Fire Events.

FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING

There will be no impact to the County General Fund.

FACTS AND PROVISIONS/LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

Federal, State, and local agencies are preparing regional landfills, including the Calabasas, Lancaster, and Sunshine Canyon Landfills, to accept debris resulting from the LA County Fires. The operators of these landfills are requesting that the County waive wasteshed limitations and increase permitted disposal limits on an emergency basis to the extent that it is within the County's authority to do so.

The Calabasas Landfill is an existing Class III municipal solid waste landfill located within the unincorporated area of Agoura in the County of Los Angeles. It is owned by the County and operated by County Sanitation Districts under a Joint Powers Agreement. The landfill

currently operates under a wasteshed restriction pursuant to County Ordinance No. 91-0003, adopted October 1990 (Section 12.48.040 of the Los Angeles County Code), which allows it to receive waste only from the Cities of Calabasas, Hidden Hills, Agoura Hills, Malibu, Westlake Village, and Thousand Oaks; a portion of the City of Los Angeles; and certain unincorporated areas of Los Angeles and Ventura counties. However, the ordinance provides that the Board can authorize the landfill to accept waste from outside the wasteshed area when necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety.

The Special Use Permit (SUP) for the Calabasas Landfill does not impose a daily tonnage and, therefore, does not require Board action to increase the daily tonnage limit. However, the daily tonnage limit is restricted by the Facility's Solid Waste Facility Permit, which is under the Local Enforcement Agency's purview.

The Conditional Use Permits (CUPs) for both Lancaster Landfill and Sunshine Canyon Landfill impose daily, weekly, and/or monthly tonnage limits, but provide that the Board can increase these limits upon the joint recommendation of the Departments of Public Health and Public Works as necessary to appropriately manage the overall County waste stream for the protection of public health and safety. In accordance with these CUPs, the Department of Public Health, acting as the Local Enforcement Agency, and the Department of Public Works jointly recommend the Board to allow:

1. Lancaster Landfill to increase the daily tonnage limit authorized under its CUP by 4,000 tons, from 3,000 tons to 7,000 tons per day, provided that the excess tonnage consists solely of debris related to the LA County Fires. Previously in November 2024, the Department of Regional Planning approved a 6-month temporary waiver for Lancaster Landfill to increase the daily permitted intake of solid waste from 3,000 tons per day to 5,000 tons per day to accommodate debris from the Bridge

Fire. The recommended actions will further increase the daily permitted intake of solid waste from 3,000 tons per day to 7,000 tons per day to accommodate additional debris from the LA County Fires.

2. Sunshine Canyon Landfill to increase the daily tonnage limit authorized under its CUP by 2,900 tons, from 12,100 tons to 15,000 tons per day, with a corresponding increase in the weekly tonnage limit, provided that the excess tonnage amount consists solely of debris related to the LA County Fires.

The recommended actions are in response to the January 2025 Windstorm and Critical Fire Events and are necessary to reduce or eliminate immediate threats to life, public health and safety, and improved property, as well as to ensure economic recovery of the affected communities to the benefit of the community-at-large.

ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTATION

The recommended actions are statutorily exempt from CEQA. Approval of the temporary waiver of wasteshed restrictions and increase in the short-term disposal tonnage limits at local landfills in response to emergency conditions created by the January 2025 Windstorm and Critical Fire Events is necessary to reduce and eliminate sudden and unexpected immediate threats to life, public health and safety, property, including improved property and essential public services, and is therefore exempt from CEQA pursuant to Section 21080, subdivision (b)(3) and (4) of the Public Resources Code and Section 15269, subdivisions (a) and (c) of the State CEQA Guidelines.

The significant amount of fire-related debris exceeds the permitted capacity of local waste disposal capabilities. A temporary waiver of wasteshed restrictions and an increase in the short-term disposal tonnage limits at local landfills are necessary to allow proper disposal of fire-related debris without disrupting regular solid waste operations.

Upon the Board's approval of the recommended actions, Public Works will file a Notice of Exemption with the County Clerk and with the State Clearinghouse at the Governor's Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation in accordance with Section 21152 of the Public Resources Code and will post the notice to the County's website in accordance with Section 21092.2.

IMPACT ON CURRENT SERVICES (OR PROJECTS)

There will be no impact on current services as a result of the required action.

CONCLUSION

Please return one adopted copy of this letter to the Department of Public Works, Environmental Programs Division.

The Honorable Board of Supervisors

2/18/2025

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Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Pestrella". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

MARK PESTRELLA, PE

Director

MP:MH:et

c: Chief Executive Office (Chia-Ann Yen), County
Counsel, Executive Office, Board of Supervisors,
Los Angeles County Sanitation District