

Los Angeles  Department of Water & Power

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July 31, 2015

The Honorable City Council  
c/o Office of the City Clerk  
Room 395, City Hall  
Mail Stop 160

Attention: Councilmember Felipe Fuentes  
Chairperson, Energy and Environment Committee

Honorable Members:

Subject: Council File (CF) No. 15-0234 – Community Outreach Plan Relative to the  
Pacoima Spreading Grounds Project

Council File (CF) No. 15-0234-S1 – Status and Community Outreach Plans for  
the Pacoima Spreading Grounds, Tujunga Spreading Grounds, and Pacoima  
Reservoir Projects

This report is prepared in response to the two Los Angeles City Council Motions made  
by Councilmember Felipe Fuentes. Both Council Motions (referenced above) relate to  
the status and community outreach plans of the Pacoima Spreading Grounds, Tujunga  
Spreading Grounds, and Pacoima Reservoir Projects.

CF 15-0234 was introduced February 25, 2015. The Council Motion requests the  
Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP) to collaborate with the  
Los Angeles County Flood Control District (LACFCD) to report on a community  
outreach plan for residents of Mission Hills and Arleta relative to the Pacoima Spreading  
Grounds Improvement Project; including the upcoming Mitigated Negative Declaration  
and report regarding the formation of a public input process relating the Project's  
impacts and potential community benefits such as new open space.

**Los Angeles Aqueduct Centennial Celebrating 100 Years of Water 1913-2013**

111 N. Hope Street, Los Angeles, California 90012-2607 Mailing address: Box 51111, Los Angeles, CA 90051-5700  
Telephone: (213) 367-4211 www.LADWP.com

CF 15-0234-S1 was introduced May 15, 2015. The Council Motion requests LADWP collaborate with LACFCD to report on the status of the Pacoima Spreading Grounds, Tujunga Spreading Grounds, and Pacoima Reservoir Projects, including timelines for construction, potential impacts, and mitigation measures to limit impacts to the surrounding communities and report on community outreach plans for each of the three projects.

### **Background**

LADWP is pursuing stormwater capture projects to maintain and enhance a reliable source of local water supply. Today, the City of Los Angeles (City) relies on imported sources for over 85 percent of its water. Given the current multiple dry year conditions, it is important that the City identify opportunities to capture stormwater to reduce the amount of imported water that the City purchases. Throughout the last eight years, LADWP, LACFCD, and other partner agencies have implemented stormwater capture projects that have increased the average annual groundwater recharge capacity throughout the City by approximately 11,500 acre-feet per year (AFY).

Multi-agency collaboration on development of future stormwater capture facilities is also ongoing. The City needs to capitalize on opportunities presented by storm events to augment its local water supply through stormwater capture. Implementation of regional and distributed projects for stormwater capture can reduce the City's dependence on imported water sources.

### **Project Narratives**

A detailed schedule illustrating the Pacoima Reservoir, Pacoima Spreading Grounds, and Tujunga Spreading Grounds Projects is enclosed for your information. Remainder of the requested information is discussed in the following three project specific narratives.

#### **1. Pacoima Spreading Grounds Improvement Project**

Pacoima Spreading Grounds, owned and operated by LACFCD, was built in the 1930s and is one of the major water conservation facilities that provide groundwater recharge for the San Fernando Groundwater Basin. Pacoima Spreading Grounds is a 169-acre parcel located adjacent to the Pacoima Wash Channel downstream from the Pacoima Dam. The site is primarily utilized for recharging the San Fernando Groundwater Basin.

Currently, the spreading grounds' percolation rate has been reduced due to a low permeability clay layer underlying the infiltration basins. The proposed project will increase the spreading grounds' percolation rate by removing the clay layer and augment its storage capacity from 530 to 1,200 acre-feet by implementing the following measures. The new facility will benefit from simplified operations through the deepening and consolidation of basins and new inter-basin structures. The project will reconfigure the spreading basins from 12 to 6 basins. An automated rubber dam will replace the existing radial gate and four 54-inch diameter reinforced concrete pipes will replace the existing open canal. Pipes will help eliminate potential risks of localized flooding. The project is located in Mission Hills near the intersection of the CA 118 Highway and Interstate 5.

Construction timeline is anticipated to begin in late 2016 and continue over a period of approximately two years.

#### Potential Impacts and Mitigation

- LACFCD is completing a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for the project which will identify mitigation measures to reduce the project's potential impacts to the community. MND is scheduled to be released for public review and comment in summer of 2015.
- LACFCD will send mailers out to residents within 500 feet of the project site informing them of the project and that MND is available for review and comment.
- MND will have a 45 day California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) public review and comment period. LACFCD will hold a public meeting in the area to present the project, answer community questions, and solicit public comments on the CEQA document.
- LACFCD will provide a written response to any comments received on the CEQA document during the 45 day public review and comment period.
- MND will be posted to the project Web site. LACFCD will post updates on project status and dates of public meetings on the project Web site.

#### Previous Outreach

- September 30, 2014 - LACFCD and LADWP staff met separately with Council District (CD) 7 staff, and community members from the Mission Hills Community

- Action Group to discuss the Pacoima Spreading Grounds project, other projects occurring in the community, answer questions, and respond to concerns.
- December 1, 2014 - LACFCD staff gave a presentation and answered questions at the Mission Hills Neighborhood meeting CD 7.
  - December 17, 2014 - LACFCD staff attended the first meeting of the Pacoima Spreading Grounds Ad Hoc Committee at the request of the Mission Hills Neighborhood Council.
  - May 1, 2015 - LACFCD staff attended the Pacoima Spreading Grounds Ad Hoc Committee meeting.
  - LACFCD established a project Web site, available at:  
<http://dpw.lacounty.gov/wrd/Projects/PacoimaSG/index.cfm>
  - Project fact sheet is posted on the project Web site. The project's CEQA Initial Study was posted on the project Web site December 31, 2014, for public viewing.
  - February 3, 2015 - LACFCD met with CD7 staff to explain the project and current status.

#### Continuing Outreach and Planned Steps

- LACFCD will coordinate with LADWP to develop an e-mail distribution list for local stakeholders and interested community members. Interested community members can ask to be added to the distribution list by e-mailing [spreadinggrounds@dpw.lacounty.gov](mailto:spreadinggrounds@dpw.lacounty.gov).
- LACFCD will notify staff from LADWP of significant project updates and the dates of community meetings.
- LACFCD will send mailers out to residents within 500 feet of the project site informing them of the construction start date.
- A sign will be posted outside the construction site providing the telephone number for the on-site construction inspector to report community complaints.
- LACFCD will post status updates project Web site and send updates to the e-mail distribution list as appropriate.

- Outreach for the planned open space and passive recreational improvements at the intake area will be conducted separately from the outreach for the basin improvement project.
- Planned open space and passive recreational improvements are currently in a preliminary design phase. When a conceptual design is completed for presentation to the community, LACFCD will coordinate with the City to conduct outreach to the community.

## 2. Pacoima Dam Sediment Removal (PRSR) Project

PRSR Project proposes to remove three million cubic yards of sediment plus additional sediment that could accumulate in the reservoir over the approximate five-year project duration. The proposed PRSR Project would restore flood control and water conservation capacity to the reservoir; increase the reliability of operations and safety of Pacoima Dam; and create a long-term, safe, and reliable means of access to the Reservoir.

Construction timeline is anticipated to begin in late 2017 and continue intermittently (during dry seasons) over a period of approximately five years.

### Potential Impacts and Mitigation

The proposed project's potential environmental impacts will be analyzed in accordance with CEQA and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Mitigation measures will be identified as part of this process. This information will be available for public review and comment when the draft CEQA/NEPA document is completed, which is anticipated in summer 2016.

### Previous Outreach

- October 2013 - Two community informational meetings were held.
- March 2015 - Three CEQA/NEPA public scoping meetings were held.

### Continuing Outreach and Planned Steps

- Community meetings will be held once the draft CEQA/NEPA document is released.
- Project's Web site: [www.lasedimentmanagement.com/Pacoima](http://www.lasedimentmanagement.com/Pacoima)
- Project team's e-mail: [reservoircleanouts@dpw.lacounty.gov](mailto:reservoircleanouts@dpw.lacounty.gov)
- Twitter updates: <https://twitter.com/LACoWater>

E-mails are sent to the stakeholder list with meeting notifications and other project updates. Interested community members can currently ask to be added to join the stakeholder list, by contacting the project team at [reservoircleanouts@dpw.lacounty.gov](mailto:reservoircleanouts@dpw.lacounty.gov).

### 3. Tujunga Spreading Grounds (TSG) Enhancement Project

TSG is a 150-acre facility owned by LADWP and operated by LACFCD used for recharging the San Fernando Groundwater Basin. Through project enhancements, the facility will increase its storage capacity from 100 to 790 acre-feet (AF) and nearly double its intake capacity resulting in an average additional recharge of 8,000 acre-feet per year. The facility's total expected recharge will be 16,000 AFY, enough water to supply 40,000 single-family homes.

Enhancements include deepening and consolidation of 20 existing basins into 9 large spreading basins, installation of two high-flow intakes with inflatable rubber dams, and modification of the existing intake to improve water quality and removal of sediments. Other features to be installed include control houses, slide gates and spillways, and a remote control telemetry system. The project plan incorporates community access and open space for passive recreation, limited to operational constraints. The project is located along the Tujunga Wash Channel at its confluence with the Pacoima Diversion Channel, within Council District 6.

#### Construction Timeline

Construction for TSG will begin late fall of 2015 and continue through summer of 2017. A groundbreaking event is anticipated for early 2016.

#### Potential Impacts and Mitigation

In compliance with the CEQA process, preparations for the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) began in 2012. Through community input and requests made by the local communities, the EIR shaped the project to alleviate community concerns and reduce potential impacts on the community. One of the greatest concerns was the emissions and traffic generated from trucks hauling nearly 1.2 million cubic yards of soil away from the site. LADWP and LACFCD sought alternative construction methods to limit soil hauling vehicle emissions during construction.

As a result, an electric soil conveyor system was found to be feasible due to the project's location and proximity to a receiving facility, this option was adopted, thus eliminating a major public concern. In addition, open space attributes with

educational signage and aesthetic features will be incorporated to enhance appearance of the spreading grounds.

In June 4, 2013, the Final EIR was approved and adopted by the Board of Water and Power Commissioners and can be found at [www.ladwp.com/envnotices](http://www.ladwp.com/envnotices).

#### Previous Outreach

Below is a timeline of past outreach events including EIR outreach:

- 2009 - LACFCD and LADWP met with CD 7 staff prior Draft EIR release.
- 2010 - LACFCD and LADWP met with CD 6 staff prior to release of the Draft EIR.
- September 2012 - LACFCD and LADWP held a Public Meeting for the Draft EIR.
- August 7, 2014 - CD 6 Staff Meeting.
- August 11, 2014 - City Hall CD 7 Staff Meeting.
- August 12, 2014 - Sun Valley Area Neighborhood Council Meeting (CD 2, 6, and 7).
- September 15, 2014 - North Hollywood West Neighborhood Council Meeting (CD 2).
- September 24, 2014 - Mission Hills Neighborhood Council Meeting (CD 7).

#### Continuing and Planned Outreach

- Mailers will be sent to residents within 500 feet of the project site informing of the start date of construction.
- Continue to hold community project update meetings with local neighborhood councils and when requested.
- Construction site signage for comments/questions hotline will be provided.
- Ground-breaking/ribbon-cutting ceremony.
- Informational project Web site is under development.

#### Conclusion

The City is a part of a complex multi-jurisdictional region. As such, implementing effective local stormwater capture projects involves a collaborative effort between non-governmental and governmental agencies including LADWP and LACFCD. Stormwater capture projects augment groundwater supply, improve water quality in rivers and streams, decrease flooding, provide open space and recreational opportunities, and enhance habitat.

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According to 2014 Upper Los Angeles River Area Watermaster report, the average annual groundwater recharge from centralized facilities into the San Fernando Groundwater Basin is 27,000 AFY. This represents the baseline condition. Additionally, LADWP's 2010 Urban Water Management Plan has set forth goals to increase stormwater capture by an additional 25,000 acre-feet (AF) by 2035. This would increase the average annual recharge into the San Fernando Groundwater Basin to 52,000 AFY.

Mayor Eric Garcetti's Executive Directive No. 5 (ED5) promotes an aggressive long-term approach to water use efficiencies, to ensure a sustainable water supply for the City. It challenges Angelinos to change their behavior and attitudes relative to water consumption. LADWP is currently pursuing plans to accelerate its local water resource development goals, including stormwater capture, in response to ED5.

To further exploit stormwater capture potential, LADWP, in partnership with LACFCD, LASAN, and other local government and non-government agencies is undertaking the development of a Stormwater Capture Master Plan (SCMP). SCMP will serve as an implementation plan, providing project prioritization to economically maximize the benefit from future stormwater capture projects for water supply.

If you have any questions or require further information, please contact me at (213) 367-1338, or Ms. Winifred J. Yancy, Director of Intergovernmental Affairs and Community Relations, at (213) 367-0025.

Sincerely,



Marcie L. Edwards  
General Manager

AC:yrg/vf  
Enclosures

c/enc: Councilmember Bob Blumenfield, Vice-Chair, Energy and Environment Committee  
Councilmember Paul Koretz, Member  
Councilmember Gilbert A. Cedillo, Member  
Councilmember Mitch O'Farrell, Member  
Mr. Adam R. Lid, Legislative Assistant

Councilmember Nury Martinez, Council District 6  
Ms. Winifred J. Yancy



## Regional Watershed Management Projects

ID	Task Name	Duration	Start	Finish	Predecessors	2009		2010		2011		2012		2013		2014		2015		2016		2017		2018		2019		2020		2021		2022		2023		2024	
						M1	M2	M1	M2	M1	M2	M1	M2	M1	M2	M1	M2	M1	M2	M1	M2	M1	M2	M1	M2	M1	M2	M1	M2	M1	M2	M1	M2	M1	M2	M1	M2
1	<b>Tujunga Spreading Grounds</b>	<b>112.64 months</b>	<b>Thu 9/30/12</b>	<b>Fri 1/25/18</b>		<b>Tujunga Spreading Grounds</b>																															
1	Design	80 mons	Thu 7/30/09	Wed 9/16/15																																	
2	Environmental & Outreach	76 mons	Thu 7/30/09	Wed 5/27/15																																	
3	Construction	24 mons	Fri 3/25/16	Fri 1/26/18	2,1																																
2	<b>Pacoima Spreading Grounds</b>	<b>91.25 months</b>	<b>Fri 4/8/11</b>	<b>Thu 4/5/18</b>		<b>Pacoima Spreading Grounds</b>																															
1	Design	66 mons	Fri 4/8/11	Thu 4/28/16																																	
2	Environmental & Outreach	41 mons	Mon 4/8/13	Fri 5/27/16																																	
3	Construction	21 mons	Thu 8/25/16	Thu 4/5/18	2,1																																
3	<b>Pacoima Dam Sediment Removal Project</b>	<b>112.8 months</b>	<b>Fri 4/13/12</b>	<b>Fri 12/29/23</b>		<b>Pacoima Dam Sediment Removal Project</b>																															
1	Design	75 mons	Fri 4/13/12	Thu 1/11/18																																	
2	Environmental & Outreach	62 mons	Wed 10/10/12	Tue 7/11/17																																	
3	Construction	72 mons	Mon 6/25/18	Fri 12/29/23	2,1																																

MOTION

Three major water infrastructure projects are planned for the Northeast San Fernando Valley: the Pacoima Spreading Grounds Basin Enhancement Project, the Tujunga Spreading Grounds Enhancement Project, and the Pacoima Reservoir Sediment Removal Project.

The Los Angeles County Flood Control District (County), which owns and operates the Pacoima Spreading Grounds, intends to expand that basin to increase its storage capacity. The basin is a source of water for the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (DWP). Council File 15-0234 requested the DWP to collaborate with the County on a community outreach plan.

The DWP and the County are also working to reconfigure the spreading basins at the Tujunga Spreading Grounds and make other improvements to increase groundwater recharge there.

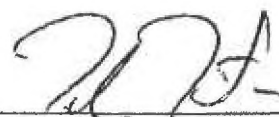
Additionally, the County is undertaking a project to remove sediment that has collected in the Pacoima Reservoir and is currently preparing an Environmental Impact Report.

Construction on these three projects will impact the communities surrounding them. It would be appropriate for the DWP and County to report to Council on the status the projects and efforts to engage local communities.

I THEREFORE MOVE that Council request the Department of Water and Power (DWP) to collaborate with the Los Angeles County Flood Control District (County) to report in 90 days on the status of the Pacoima Spreading Grounds, Tujunga Spreading Grounds, and Pacoima Reservoir projects, including timelines for construction, potential impacts and mitigation measures to limit impacts to the surrounding communities.

I FURTHER MOVE that the DWP and County report on community outreach plans for each of the three projects.

PRESENTED BY:

  
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FELIPE FUENTES,  
Councilmember, 7<sup>th</sup> District

SECONDED BY:

   
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MOTION

Stormwater flows diverted to the Pacoima Spreading Grounds recharge the San Fernando Groundwater Basin, which is a long-term local water supply source for the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power.

The Los Angeles County Flood Control District (County), which owns and operates the spreading grounds, intends to expand the basin to increase its storage capacity. When complete, the spreading grounds will be able to conserve an additional 10,500 acre-feet of water annually, enough to serve 26,250 families.


The proposed project calls for the removal of approximately 1.37 million cubic yards of material from the spreading grounds; the material will be transported by truck to the nearby Vulcan Material Company facilities for disposal.

The County released its Initial Study on the basin enhancement project in December 2014 and is preparing a Mitigated Negative Declaration, which is expected later this year. It is critical that project impacts are minimized for residents living near the spreading grounds and that the surrounding communities are well informed about the project's progress.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the Department of Water and Power collaborate with the Los Angeles County Flood Country District to report to the Council in 60 days on a community outreach plan for residents of Mission Hills and Arleta relative to the Pacoima Spreading Grounds Project; including the upcoming Mitigated Negative Declaration.

I FURTHER MOVE that Department of Water and Power collaborate with the Los Angeles County Flood Country District and report regarding the formation of a public input process relating to the Project's impacts and potential community benefits such as new open space.

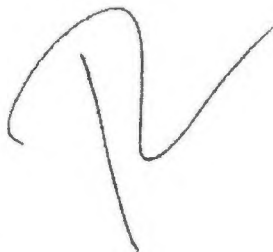
PRESENTED BY:

  
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FELIPE FUENTES  
Councilmember, 7<sup>th</sup> District

SECONDED BY:

  
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