

**CITY OF LOS ANGELES**  
OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK  
ROOM 395, CITY HALL  
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90012  
**CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT**  
**MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION**  
(Article I, City CEQA Guidelines)

<b>LEAD CITY AGENCY AND ADDRESS:</b> Bureau of Sanitation 1149 Broadway, Suite 500 Los Angeles, CA 90015-2213	<b>COUNCIL DISTRICT</b> 7
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<b>PROJECT TITLE: LOPEZ CANYON EQUESTRIAN TRAILS AND TRAILHEAD PROJECT (W.O. SEQTRAILS)</b>	<b>T.G.</b> Page 482, Grids H4-H7
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**PROJECT LOCATION:** The proposed project is located in the Lake View Terrace area in the northeast quadrant of the City of Los Angeles. The Lake View Terrace area is located approximately 15 miles from downtown Los Angeles. The nearest adjacent cities include Burbank and Glendale to the southeast. A majority of the project would be located within the Lopez Canyon Landfill property boundaries and associated "buffer" lands, while the northern trail extent would be located within the Angeles National Forest (Los Angeles River Ranger District).

**DESCRIPTION:** The proposed project consists of an equestrian trail loop and trailhead staging area near the community of Sylmar in the northern San Fernando Valley. LASAN is proposing to operate the trail loop system within the Lopez Canyon Landfill, which ceased refuse disposal in 1996 and formally closed in 2012, and City owned "buffer" lands. The proposed trail loop as evaluated in the public review draft Initial Study/Mitigated Declaration (IS/MND) would extend up to five miles and would traverse three jurisdictions: (1) City of Los Angeles, (2) County of Los Angeles, and (3) U.S. National Forest. The trail loop would be constructed in up to three phases contingent on available funding. The trailhead staging area would be constructed in conjunction with Phase 1.

LASAN released a draft IS/MND in September 2016. Following an extended public comment period and coordination with the U. S. Forest Service, LASAN has decided to reduce the limits of the original project to include only eastern portions of Phase 1 and 3 on lands owned by LASAN. The final project will exclude portions of Phase 1 west of the Frank Family Trust, Phase 2, Future Connection 1, and Phase 3 trail segments within U. S. Forest Service lands.

**NAME AND ADDRESS OF APPLICANT IF OTHER THAN CITY AGENCY:**

**FINDING:** LA Sanitation (LASAN) has determined the proposed project will not have a significant effect on the environment. See attached Initial Study.

**SEE THE ATTACHED PAGES FOR ANY MITIGATION MEASURES IMPOSED**

**Any written objections received during the public review period are attached, together with the responses of the lead City agency.**

**THE INITIAL STUDY PREPARED FOR THIS PROJECT IS ATTACHED**

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<b>SIGNATURE (Official):</b>  Khalil Gharios, Division Manager Solid Resources Processing and Construction Division	<b>DATE:</b>
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# MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION ATTACHMENT: MITIGATION MEASURES FOR THE LOPEZ CANYON EQUESTRIAN TRAILS AND TRAILHEAD PROJECT

The following mitigation measures will reduce the potential impacts of biological resources; cultural resources; hazards and hazardous materials; noise; and transportation/traffic to below a level of significance.

## **BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES**

**BIO-1      Designate a Qualified Biologist.** Prior to commencement of construction activities, LASAN shall designate a qualified project biologist who shall be responsible for overseeing compliance with protective measures for biological resources during clearing and work activities within and adjacent to areas of native habitat. The project biologist shall be familiar with the local habitats, plants, and wildlife and shall maintain communications with the contractor to ensure that issues relating to biological resources are appropriately and lawfully managed. The project biologist shall review final plans, designate areas that need temporary fencing, and monitor construction. The biologist shall monitor activities within designated areas during critical times such as vegetation removal, the installation of Best Management Practices (BMPs) and fencing to protect native species, and ensure that all avoidance and minimization measures are properly constructed and followed. The project biologist shall conduct a training session for all construction personnel and biological monitors. At minimum, the training shall include: (1) a description of sensitive biological resources, including sensitive communities, plant species, and wildlife species; (2) avoidance measures being implemented for sensitive biological resources; and (3) identification of the boundaries of permitted access and work areas.

**BIO-2      Worker Awareness Training Program.** Project personnel and contractors that will be on-site during construction of the trail improvements shall complete environmental worker awareness training conducted by the project biologist. The training shall advise workers of potential impacts to sensitive habitat and sensitive species and the potential penalties for impacts to such habitat and species. At a minimum, the program shall include the following topics: occurrences of the sensitive species and sensitive vegetation communities in the area, a physical description and their general ecology, sensitivity of the species to human activities, legal protection afforded these species, penalties for violations of Federal and State laws, reporting requirements, and work features designed to reduce the impacts to these species.

Included in this program shall be color photos of the sensitive species, which shall be shown to the employees. Following the

education program, the photos shall be posted in the contractor and resident engineer's office, where they shall remain through the duration of the work. Photos of the habitat in which sensitive species are found shall also be posted on-site. The contractor shall be required to provide LASAN with evidence of the employee training (e.g., sign-in sheet or stickers) upon request. Employees and contractors shall be instructed to immediately notify the project biologist of any incidents, such as construction vehicles that move outside of the work area boundary. The project biologist shall be responsible for notifying the appropriate regulatory agency within 72 hours of any similar incident.

**BIO-3 Management of Invasive Weeds.** The project biologist shall monitor the project site immediately prior to and during construction to identify the presence of invasive weeds (those identified by the California Invasive Plant Council [Cal-IPC] as having a moderate or high level of invasiveness or plants considered locally invasive) and recommend measures to avoid their inadvertent spread in association with the project. Such measures may include inspection and cleaning of construction equipment and use of eradication strategies. All heavy equipment shall be washed and cleaned of debris prior to entering sensitive habitat areas to minimize the spread of invasive weeds.

**BIO-4 Establish Project Limits.** All native or sensitive habitat areas outside and adjacent to the project limits shall be designated as Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs) on project maps. Prior to construction, the Contractor (LASAN) shall delineate the construction area and erect construction fencing along the perimeter of the identified construction area to protect adjacent sensitive habitats and sensitive plant populations. ESAs shall be temporarily fenced by the Contractor during construction with orange plastic snow fence, orange silt fencing, or, in areas of flowing water, with stakes and flagging. This fencing shall be marked clearly in the field and confirmed by the project biologist prior to any clearing, and the marked boundaries shall be maintained throughout the duration of construction work. Staging areas, including lay down areas and equipment storage areas, shall be flagged and fenced with ESA fencing. No personnel, equipment, or debris shall be allowed within the ESAs. Fencing and flagging shall be installed by the Contractor in a manner that does not impact habitats to be avoided and such that it is clearly visible to personnel on foot and operating heavy equipment. The Contractor shall submit to LASAN final plans for initial clearing and grubbing of habitat and project construction 10 days prior to initiating impacts. Temporary construction fencing and markers shall be maintained in good repair by the Contractor until the completion of each phase of project construction and removed upon completion of each project phase.

No work activities, materials or equipment storage or access shall be permitted outside the identified work area without express written permission from LASAN. All parking and equipment storage related to the project shall be confined to the identified work area by the Contractor. Undisturbed areas and off-site sensitive habitat shall not be used for parking or equipment storage. Project-related vehicle traffic shall be restricted to the project limits, established roads and construction access points, and designated staging areas within the identified work area.

**BIO-5 Construction Staging and Vehicle Use.** All construction-related vehicles and equipment storage shall occur in the staging area and/or previously disturbed areas as approved by the project biologist. Project-related vehicle traffic shall be restricted to established roads, construction areas, and staging and parking areas. If construction activity extends beyond the construction fencing into sensitive vegetation communities, areas of disturbance shall be quantified and an appropriate restoration approach shall be developed in consultation with the appropriate resource agencies. For example, if construction extends beyond the limits of the construction fencing, temporarily disturbed areas shall be restored to the natural (preconstruction) conditions, which may include the following: salvage and stockpiling of topsoil, re-grading of disturbed sites with salvaged topsoil, and re-vegetation with native locally available plant species.

**BIO-6 Prepare Compensatory Restoration Plan.** Impacts to sensitive vegetation communities (blue elderberry stands, chaparral [both alliances], coastal sage scrub [all alliances], mule fat thickets, and willow riparian [Arroyo Willow and Black Willow Thickets]) shall be mitigated through the restoration or enhancement of habitat onsite at a 1:1 ratio. Restoration/enhancement shall be provided through the removal of non-native plant species onsite, including tree of heaven, pepper tree, olive tree, and non-native plants associated with non-native grasslands, and the replacement with native plant communities. If sufficient suitable area is not available within the vicinity of the project impact area, then offsite mitigation options will be pursued. A Restoration Plan shall be prepared for the project that will detail the communities to be restored, location for restoration, container plant palettes and/or seed mixes, and maintenance and monitoring requirements.

**BIO-7 Informational Signage.** Educational signage at the trailheads shall include information on the sensitivity of the vegetation communities (including jurisdictional resources) and native plant and animal species that naturally occur along the trail. Such signage shall include information reminding hikers and equestrians to stay on the designated trails. Periodic low stature signs shall be placed along the trails reminding hikers and equestrians of sensitive habitat

areas and to please stay on the trails to help protect sensitive habitat, plants, and wildlife.

**BIO-8 Long-Term Management of Invasive Weeds.** Long-term trail maintenance shall include the removal of invasive weeds (those identified by the California Invasive Plant Council [Cal-IPC] as having a moderate or high level of invasiveness or plants considered locally invasive) immediately adjacent to the trails.

**BIO-9 Pre-Construction Special Status Plant Surveys.** Prior to construction of each phase, a qualified biologist retained by LASAN shall conduct pre-construction surveys for special status plant species including Plummer's mariposa lily. If one or more species are detected, then LASAN shall consult with the appropriate resource agencies to develop additional minimization measures prior to project construction (if necessary). These additional measures may include construction monitoring, seed or bulb collection, and seeding or planting of bulbs.

**BIO-10 Coastal California gnatcatcher (CAGN) and Least Bell's Vireo (LBVI) Avoidance and Minimization Measures.** LASAN shall implement the following avoidance and minimization measures prior to and during construction of the proposed project:

- a. If feasible, construction activities including vegetation trimming or removal within CAGN habitat (all coastal sage scrub communities) shall occur outside of the CAGN breeding season. The breeding season for CAGN is defined as February 15 through August 31 each year.

Regardless of the time of year that construction takes place, preconstruction clearance surveys shall be conducted in all coastal sage scrub habitat prior to habitat removal because CAGN is resident in coastal sage scrub year-round. Additionally, during the breeding season, preconstruction clearance surveys shall be conducted in all suitable habitat within 500 feet of proposed construction activities. A minimum of three focused surveys shall be conducted on separate days by a qualified biologist to determine the presence of CAGN. The surveys shall begin a maximum of seven (7) days prior to project construction and one survey shall be conducted by the project biologist the day immediately prior to the initiation of work. Should CAGN be detected within the work area, work shall be directed to unoccupied areas until the biologist determines that the CAGN has left the work area.

- b. If feasible, construction activities including vegetation trimming or removal with LBVI habitat (all willow riparian communities and mule fat thickets) shall occur outside of the

LBVI breeding season. The breeding season for LBVI is defined as March 15 through September 15 each year.

If construction must occur during the breeding season for LBVI, then pre-construction nesting LBVI surveys shall be conducted by a qualified biologist. A minimum of three focused surveys shall be conducted on separate days by a qualified biologist to determine the presence of LBVI. The surveys shall begin a maximum of 7 days prior to project construction and one survey shall be conducted by the project biologist the day immediately prior to the initiation of work. Should LBVI be detected within the work area, work shall be directed to unoccupied areas until the biologist determines that the LBVI has left the work area.

- c. If an active CAGN or LBVI nest is found within the work area, work will be immediately halted and redirected to areas at least 500 feet away until the biologist determines that the young have fledged or nest(s) has been abandoned.

If an active CAGN or LBVI nest is found within 500 feet of project construction, the project biologist shall work with the contractor so as to maintain noise levels of less than 60 dBA Leq at the nest location. If noise levels cannot be maintained below that level, then construction work shall be postponed within 500 feet of the nest(s) until the young have fledged.

- d. A qualified biologist shall conduct full-time monitoring during clearing of CAGN and LBVI habitat to ensure that work limits are not exceeded and that these target wildlife species are not present during habitat removal.
- e. Pets of project personnel shall not be allowed on the project site.

**BIO-11 Pre-Construction Nesting Surveys.** Should clearing and grubbing be initiated during nesting season (February 15 through August 30), pre-construction nesting surveys shall be conducted within 7 days of construction commencement. Should a nest be found within or adjacent to the construction work area, a buffer shall be installed and the nest area shall be avoided until the young fledges or the nest becomes inactive. The size of the buffer shall be determined by a qualified biologist based on the topography, noise/activity in the vicinity, and bird behavior.

**BIO-12 Prepare Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) and Secure Permit Authorizations.** LASAN shall prepare a SWPPP in accordance with the Clean Water Act. The SWPPP shall prohibit the disposal or temporary placement of excess fill, brush or other debris in U. S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), and California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) jurisdictional areas or their banks. The City will

be responsible for securing and complying with all required permits, including but not limited to, the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) General Construction Permit per the requirements of the Clean Water Act.

The SWPPP shall require the storage of hazardous materials and equipment stored overnight, including small amounts of fuel to refuel hand-held equipment, to include secondary containment when within 50 feet of open water to the fullest extent practicable. Secondary containment shall consist of a ring of sand bags around each piece of stored equipment/structure. A plastic tarp/visqueen lining with no seams shall be placed under the equipment and over the edges of the sandbags, or a plastic hazardous materials (HazMat) secondary containment unit shall be utilized by the Contractor.

No fuel containers or hazardous materials shall be placed or stored outside of the designated staging areas. Vehicle and equipment refueling shall occur within the designated staging areas, but at least 50 feet away from open water areas and 25 feet from habitat with potential to support federally listed species to the fullest extent practicable.

Appropriate BMPs shall be used by the Contractor to control erosion and sedimentation to prevent deposition in waterways. No sediment or debris shall be allowed to enter drainages. Appropriate BMPs shall be used by the Contractor during construction to limit the spread of re-suspended sediment and contain debris.

Construction and post-construction erosion and sediment control devices used for the proposed project, including fiber rolls and bonded fiber matrix, shall be made from biodegradable materials such as jute, with no plastic mesh, to avoid creating a wildlife entanglement hazard.

## **CULTURAL RESOURCES**

**CR-1 Prepare for Discovery of Archaeological Resources.** On-site workers will be informed of the potential for discovery of archaeological resources or human remains during excavation or trenching as part of the Project's worker awareness program training.

If an archaeological or cultural resource is encountered during ground- excavation activities within 50 feet of the discovery until a qualified archaeologist can evaluate whether the resource is a unique archaeological resource or historical resource as defined in Public Resources Code Section 21083.2 and/or 14 C.C.R. Section 15064.5 or a tribal cultural resource as defined in Public Resources Code Section 21074 in consultation with the tribes. Work may continue in other areas. The project archaeologist in consultation



with the tribal representatives shall determine importance and significance of the resource as tribal cultural resources, historical resources or unique archaeological resources, defined above. Recovery of artifacts or excavation for resource evaluations will be the responsibility of the City under the direction of a qualified archaeologist.

## **HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS**

**HAZ-1**      **Fire Prevention and Response Plan.** LASAN shall be required to develop a Fire Safety Plan prior to beginning construction. The construction Fire Safety Plan shall address the following:

- Procedures for reporting a fire.
- Personnel and fire safety equipment the contractor will have on site.
- Procedures to be taken on “red flag days” (days of extreme fire danger). On red flag days, trail construction would be discontinued.
- Procedures to ensure that all power equipment is fire safe.
- LASAN will bring only the necessary amount of fuel and fuel mixtures to operate the machinery on site. No flammable products will be stored or left on the project site. LASAN will be responsible for any clean-up of such contaminants in compliance with all applicable local, state, and federal laws.
- All power equipment used on the trail will have spark arrestors.
- LASAN shall have fire extinguishers and five gallon water pumps on site when operating power equipment.

## **NOISE**

**N-1**      **Construction Noise Mitigation.** Prior to any grading activity, the project operator will require all construction contractor/subcontractor employees to attend the worker environmental awareness program (WEAP) training prior initiating their activities. All contract and subcontract employees will be required to implement the following noise attenuation measures during all phases of construction:

- a) Noise levels of any Project use or activity will be maintained at or below adopted County noise standards (Section 41.40 of the Los Angeles Municipal Code). The use of noise-producing signals, including horns, whistles, alarms, and bells, will be for safety warning purposes only.
- b) No person shall, between the hours of 7:00 P.M. and 7:00 A.M. of the following day, perform any construction or repair

work of any kind upon, or any excavating for, any building or structure, where any of the foregoing entails the use of any power driven drill, riveting machine excavator or any other machine, tool, device or equipment which makes loud noises to the disturbance of persons occupying sleeping quarters in any dwelling hotel or apartment or other place of residence. In addition, the operation, repair or servicing of construction equipment and the job-site delivering of construction materials in such areas shall be prohibited during the hours herein specified.

- c) Construction equipment will be muffled per manufacturer's specifications.
- d) All stationary construction equipment will be placed in a manner so that emitted noise is directed away or blocked from sensitive receptors nearest the project site.

## **TRANSPORTATION/CIRCULATION**

**T-1 Project Ingress/Egress Safety.** LASAN shall include traffic safety improvements for the project access driveway at Terra Vista Way to increase sight distances from the point of access and from adjacent roadways (e.g. Terra Vista Way). This will include the provision of signage (as needed) in all directions to notify vehicles approaching or passing the site access driveway, roadway re-striping or median, and, if necessary, realignment. The roadway improvements will be coordinated with the City's Department of Transportation and Bureau of Engineering as part of the encroachment permit approval process. Traffic control measures will be implemented in conjunction with construction.