



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
AGENDA LETTER

Agenda Number:

Clerk of the Board of Supervisors  
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101  
(805) 568-2240

**Department Name:** Flood Control  
**Department No.:** 054  
**For Agenda Of:** June 6, 2017  
**Placement:** Administrative  
**Estimated Tme:**  
**Continued Item:** No  
**If Yes, date from:**  
**Vote Required:** Majority

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**TO:** Board of Directors, Flood Control and Water Conservation District

**FROM:** Department Scott D. McGolpin, Public Works Director, 568-3010  
Director(s)  
Contact Info: Thomas D. Fayram, Deputy Public Works Director, 568-3436

**SUBJECT:** 2017 Updated Debris Basin Maintenance and Removal Plan and Maria Ygnacio Creek Main Branch Removal Project - First and Second Supervisorial Districts

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**County Counsel Concurrence**

As to form: Yes

**Auditor-Controller Concurrence**

As to form: N/A

**Other Concurrence:** N/A

**Recommended Actions:**

That the Board of Directors:

- a) Find that pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines Section 15162, no new effects will occur and no new mitigation measures would be required as a result of the project and therefore pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act Section 15168 (c)(2), that the Updated Debris Basin Maintenance and Removal Plan is within the scope of the project covered by the Program Environmental Impact Report for the Updated Routine Maintenance Program (01-EIR-01) approved in 2001 and no new environmental document is required;
- b) Consider the addenda to the previously certified Program Environmental Impact Report (01-EIR-01) and determine that the addenda contained within the Updated Debris Basin Maintenance and Removal Plan have been completed in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act and adopt the mitigation measures included for each project as the Mitigation and Monitoring Plan pursuant to State California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines Section 15168 (c)(3);
- c) Adopt the California Environmental Quality Act Findings included in the Updated Debris Basin Maintenance and Removal Plan; and
- d) Approve individual projects described in the Updated Debris Basin Maintenance and Removal Plan.

**Summary Text:**

This item is on the agenda in order to approve the Updated Debris Basin Maintenance and Removal Plan, which include projects defined within the scope of impacts identified by the Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) for Routine Flood Control Maintenance Activities.

In 2003, the Flood Control District (District) Board of Directors approved the Debris Basin Maintenance Plan and the District has been implementing routine and long-term maintenance under that Plan since then. The 2017 Debris Basin Maintenance and Removal Plan (DBMRP) provides updated descriptions of the seventeen debris basins located on the south coast of Santa Barbara County between Goleta and Carpinteria, describes the routine and long-term maintenance that will occur at each basin, and incorporates plans and descriptions for five debris basin removal/modifications that will occur between 2017-2025.

Projects within the scope of the 2001 PEIR for the Routine Flood Control Maintenance Activities are described as individual Addenda to the PEIR for each drainage where a debris basin is located. The routine and long-term maintenance, as well as basin removals, utilize appropriate maintenance practices described and analyzed in the PEIR and the mitigation measures incorporated into each of the projects become the mitigation and monitoring program to ensure that impacts are mitigated to the fullest extent feasible. The Draft Updated Debris Basin Maintenance and Removal Plan was circulated for public review and the District accepted public comment until May 10, 2017. No comments were received on the draft document.

The District has current long-term permits for routine maintenance with the Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE), CA Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) and the CA Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). The ACOE permit includes basin removal. The District is in the process of obtaining long-term basin removal permits from the RWQCB and CDFW and these permits are expected to be complete by August 2017.

The basins subject to these modifications will remain in District right-of-way and as such can be reactivated following fires in their respective watersheds to their original intended purpose. In non-fire years, the basins often accumulate large amounts of fine grain sediment that is costly to excavate and move to a suitable disposal site. Disposal sites are increasingly difficult to locate and costs for this maintenance work is extremely expensive. Modifying the basins will allow for the passage of finer grain sediment and also restores the natural process which will benefit coastal beaches from being starved of these sediments.

**Background:**

The District owns and maintains 17 debris basins along the south coast between Goleta and Carpinteria and has conducted routine and long-term maintenance of these basins since 1996 under the District's Program Environmental Impact Report for Routine Maintenance which was originally approved in 1992 and subsequently updated in 2001. All but two of the basins were constructed after the Coyote Fire in 1964, the Romero Fire in 1971, and the Painted Fire in 1990. Santa Monica debris basin is part of the Carpinteria Valley Watershed Project, and Montecito Debris Basin was built after the 1995 and 1998 flooding events.

The first Debris Basin Maintenance Plan, tiered off the PEIR, was written in 1996 and updated in 2003. This 2017 Updated Debris Basin Maintenance and Removal Plan further updates the maintenance of the debris basins and includes removal plans for five debris basins. Prior to 1996, the debris basins were maintained on

an as-needed basis. The District generally conducts annual routine debris basin maintenance between August and November.

As part of debris basin maintenance permitting with the Army Corps of Engineers, the District received a Final Biological Opinion (B.O.) issued by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) in 2016 for a consultation for Southern California steelhead trout. The B.O. requires the District to remove or modify five debris basins within the next 10 years, with three of the five removals to occur within the first five years. The five debris basins selected for removal are Maria Ygnacio Main Branch Debris Basin, Maria Ygnacio East Branch Debris Basin, Rattlesnake Debris Basin, San Ysidro Debris Basin, and Cold Springs Debris Basin.

Removal/modifications of the debris basins will eliminate barriers to steelhead habitat and will restore natural sediment delivery that has been interrupted for over 50 years. This will also reduce maintenance costs due to elimination of maintenance for these five basins. If there is a fire in a watershed where a basin has been removed or modified, temporary pipe debris rack(s), similar to the racks that were installed after the Gap and Jesusita Fires, could be installed within the basins to trap debris, while allowing flows and sediment to continue through the system.

**Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:**

Budgeted: Yes

**Narrative:**

The costs associated with the work identified in the Debris Basin Maintenance and Removal Plan will be included every year in the Water Resources Division of the Public Works Department.

**Special Instructions:**

Direct the Clerk of the Board to send a copy of the minute order of these actions to the Flood Control District office, Attn: Christina Lopez

**Attachments:**

Attachment A: 2017 Updated Debris Basin Maintenance and Removal Plan  
Attachment B: 2001 Program EIR for the Updated Routine Maintenance Program

**Authored by:**

Maureen Spencer, Operations and Environmental Manager, 568-3437